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Bringing alternative indicators into policy

Review report on Beyond GDP indicators: categorisation, intentions and impacts

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Contact:	Tomáš Hák (CUEC), tomas.hak@czp.cuni.cz
Authors:	Tomáš Hák, Svatava Janoušková (CUEC)
	Saamah Abdallah, Charles Seaford, Sorcha Mahony (nef)
Contributors:	BRAINPOoL consortium partners
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Executive Summary

GDP does not allow for the health of our children,

the quality of their education, or the joy of their play.

Robert Kennedy (March 1968)

The aim of the BRAINPOoL project is to enhance and speed up both the development and the effective use of indicators that can balance the use of GDP so as to support the sustainable development policy process in the EU. In later work packages we will investigate the barriers to effective use of these indicators and what can be done to overcome these barriers. In this work package (WP1), we have set out the range of 'Beyond GDP' indicators and what lessons can be learnt from the producers and promoters of these indicators given their relative success or failure.

This report

The central assumption of the BRAINPOoL project is that indicators, if effectively embedded in the policy making process, are an effective transmission mechanism to connect research and policy. The creation of 'Beyond GDP' indicators can be seen as key to re-orienting policy, in turning an otherwise unfocused desire for change into concrete plans.

In this project 'Beyond GDP indicators' are defined as:

those indicators and indicator sets that have been proposed as necessary and central to the measurement of societal progress in a broad sense, other than those indicators, such as GDP or the unemployment rate, that are already playing this role.

As such, this definition is less about the indicators themselves, and more about how people propose they are used as well as about the selection and definition of assessed phenomena important for societal progress. National Statistics Offices (NSOs), Eurostat, OECD, the World Bank and other institutions are responding to the desire of governments at least to consider a more nuanced set of economic policy objectives than growth pure and simple. At the same time NGOs – that do not consider the existing official attempts sufficient and effective – are using indicators as an advocacy tool, and seeking more radical societal change. Some, but not all, of this activity is effective, that is it helps policy makers, and those influencing policy makers, crystallise their objectives, assess their performance, and as a result change and improve what they do.

This report:

- Presents the range of different indicators and indicator initiatives
- Explores the intentions of indicator promoters and producers
- Reviews why some of this activity is successful and some not so effective, as understood by the indicator producers and promoters themselves.
- Presents in detail information on a few representative initiatives

Methodology

There is no standard methodology to achieve the range and level of knowledge on Beyond GDP indicators required for this report, so a number of methods were employed:

- Development of a long list of existing indicators and indicator initiatives to establish the basic characteristics, intentions, impacts and potential categorisations of a broad spectrum of Beyond GDP initiatives.
- Semi-structured interviews with 18 selected indicator producers/promoters to establish the history, intentions, target audience, outreach methods and impacts of the indicators on policy and different types of audience. The information was also used to develop fact sheets on each indicator.
- Basic media analysis to obtain information on how indicators appear in both public and expert media. An assessment of levels of media coverage of indicators can be used as one proxy for real indicator impact.
- Further in-depth interviews and analysis of two key actors in the promotion of alternative indicators to policy makers (Ecological Footprint and OECD) to assess their intentions, strategies and reasons for success.

Categorisation framework

An increasingly broad variety of indicators reflecting trends in the state of the social and physical environment are presently in use. Despite their important functions to decision makers (such as monitoring progress made towards fulfilling policy goals) the number and diversity of these indicators is making it more and more difficult for their relevance and meaning to be appreciated. This report considers a number of ways indicators can be usefully classified and include:

- Level of impact – international, national, local
- Indicator domains – environmental, social, economic
- Indicator approaches – subjective, objective
- Indicator types – single indicator, set/dashboard, aggregated, composite
- Envisaged users – politicians/policy makers, public, experts
- Link to GDP – adjusting GDP, “replacing” GDP, supplementing GDP

This categorisation then served well in the selection of indicators for more in-depth study with the objective of gaining a wide view of indicator intentions and impact.

Results from the media survey

The media attractiveness of an indicator is important, not least for politicians hoping to reach wide audiences and influence public opinion, and is taken in this report to represent one objective proxy for indicator impact. This report examines media attractiveness through (i) *how often*, (ii) *in what context*, and (iii) *in what kind of media* the 17 selected indicators (grouped in *international*, *national* and *local* categories) appear. Several results of this exercise are of note:

- Despite its application in a small, remote country with very specific living conditions, Bhutan’s ‘Gross National Happiness’ is an initiative that has managed to feature heavily in public and international media. The index with its media-friendly ‘happiness’ theme, far outstrips the alternative economic indicator ISEW or the socially-oriented HLY index in media exposure.
- Indicators benefit from delivering simple and meaningful concepts. The Human Development Index (HDI) and Ecological Footprint (EF) are by some margin the most popular international-level ‘Beyond-GDP’ indicators. What they measure may be complicated, but both indicator sets manage to illustrate a complex reality using

a single figure that allows straightforward trend monitoring and comparisons between countries.

Indicator promoters: intentions and audiences

Through interviews with indicator promoters we have identified nine key categories of intentions including influencing the public, enhancing knowledge, pursuing democratic goals, providing tools for others and encouraging data collection. By far the most important goal, however, was to influence policy, with an important distinction between indicators associated with broad 'macro-economic' objectives and indicators aimed at informing specific finer-grained 'micro' policy decisions.

Another important distinction is between those initiatives that present themselves as being neutral providers of information (often NSO initiatives fall into this category), and those that have clear and explicit goals beyond measurement that they believe alternative indicators can advance (Ecological Footprint which has environmental goals and SPIRAL which aims to support the promotion of social cohesion are examples).

Interviewees were asked about the audience they targeted and the channels they used to reach them. While unsurprisingly the primary channel and audience was often direct contact with policy makers, it is interesting to note that the direction of travel (even from 'grassroots' NGOs) was not always 'upwards' and the general public and civil society are seen as a key audience even for official initiatives, perhaps in an attempt to establish public support for an agenda.

Influences: What counts as success?

Almost all indicator producers we surveyed want to influence or be useful to policy makers and thus ultimately have a real world impact. However, we have identified several other forms of influence that indicators can have, which may ultimately contribute to real societal change (or act as stepping stones to achieving that change). These other forms of influence are:

- Internal influence and external reputation of the organisation
- Influence with the rest of the Beyond GDP movement and on data collection processes
- Influence with opinion formers: media, education, academics
- Influence with the public
- Influence on policy making and assessment process
- Influence on specific policies; influence on practice
- Real societal change

Despite most of the indicator initiatives being less than 10 years old, a large section of this report describes the influences these indicator initiatives believe they have achieved. Some of these are worth highlighting:

- The most basic influences noted were transmission to or reference by a decision maker.
- The next step up from this is use of Beyond GDP indicators in assessment. Examples of this include GPI, ISEW and QUARS being integrated into regional or local official assessment frameworks in the US, UK and Italy. Also noteworthy is the Ecological Footprint being used to set environmental impact targets in several national governments.

- Actual policy changes connected to indicators were also reported. These include (i) the implementation of schemes to improve habitat for farmland birds after changes to the UK Defra Sustainable Development Indicator set (ii) the investment of $15 billion by the UAE government to develop alternative energy sources spurred on by a poor ranking in the Ecological Footprint.
- The most prolific successes, however, were achieved by local level indicators, perhaps because the distance between producer and user of the indicators is much smaller making it easier to achieve a better 'fit' while also achieving legitimacy and relevance. For example, the Jacksonville Community Council Indicators is believed to have been instrumental in reducing infant mortality rates, recidivism and water pollution in the area. The Council of Europe SPIRAL project, meanwhile, achieved change to the delivery of food relief in France and the transformation of the approach to homelessness in Belgium.

Lessons: What contributes to success?

Several lessons can be drawn from our research on how indicator promoters and producers can achieve their intentions. The following 5 are worth highlighting:

- Indicators were successful when they had real relevance for policy makers. Crucially they need to measure something that policy makers believe they can influence. Subjective well-being indicators when used incorrectly can appear to fail this test which explains efforts to build the evidence base for how policy can influence well-being. Another factor here is cost. In the current climate, indicators that provide clues for low cost policies or indeed those can help save money are of particular interest.
- Salience for a broader audience is also crucial and entails the elements of simplicity, understandability and good communication. Initiatives are effective when they allow one to produce a simple and attractive message that relates a meaningful concept. Using communications experts and avoiding taboo words were also identified as being important.
- Indicators need credibility and legitimacy. Aside from the requirement of quality data, the appearance of neutrality was seen as the best route to achieve this with some interviewees comparing advocacy organisations' data unfavourably with that of NSOs.
- Developing the indicators with the audiences at whom they are targeted and/or encouraging participation (in the way that the Jacksonville Community Council Indicators initiative has done) is also seen as a key success factor. The importance of relationship building also applies to policy makers with most initiatives that had achieved policy success citing direct face-to-face channels as vital.
- Several barriers to the success of Beyond GDP indicators have also been identified. The economic crisis was viewed by many interviewees as a challenge for this agenda as it has moved the policy focus. Ideology and vested interests are also noted barriers with subjective well-being and composite indicators receiving strong resistance from those with libertarian or right of centre political views.

Indicator policy fact sheets

In order to meet the goal of bringing alternative indicators closer to decision and policy makers we have condensed what we consider to be all the important pieces of information about the indicators we have studied into practical fact sheets. These lay out in depth the indicator characteristics (methodological foundation, presentation style, frequency of

appearance etc.) and some factors related to the policy process (use by media and intentions and perceptions of indicators providers). We envisage these fact sheets could be a valuable resource for decision makers, journalists and other indicator producers, promoters and experts.

Two in-depth case studies

The final section of this report describes the results of working more closely with two indicator promoters, the OECD and its new 'Better Life Index' and the Global Footprint Network's 'Ecological Footprint'. These more in-depth case studies aim to dig deeper in understand the success factors relevant to bringing indicators into policy while allowing lessons to flow in both directions and testing new ideas to promote indicators.

The case studies go into considerable detail on the intentions, methodology, strategy, users, media visibility and impact of these indicators on a variety of audiences. We consider these studies to be of interest to anyone wishing to gain a deeper understanding of the success factors for Beyond GDP indicators through the analysis of these two important empirical examples.

Chapter 1: Report goals

During the past ten years there has been an observable increased interest in alternative indicators providing decision makers (at all levels) with valuable information for decision-making processes. Ideally, this information expands alternatives, clarifies choices and enables policy makers to achieve desired outcomes. Decision makers, however, often lack the information needed for good decision-making. By concentrating efforts on increasing the supply of scientific information, scientists may not be producing information considered relevant or useful by decision makers, and may simply be producing too much of the wrong kind of information. On the other hand, actual and potential users may have specific information needs that go unmet (McNie 2007).

The central assumption of the BRAINPOoL project is that indicators, if effectively embedded in the policy making process, are an effective transmission mechanism to connect research and policy. The aim of the project is therefore to enhance and speed up both the development and the effective use of indicators that can balance the use of GDP so as to support the sustainable development policy process in the EU.

This project focuses on what have been called “Beyond GDP” indicators. What are such indicators? The term “Beyond GDP” began to gain currency in 2007, with the *Beyond GDP* conference held at the European Parliament. The term implies that Beyond GDP indicators are those that provide information that GDP does not. Of course, there are thousands of indicators which capture information not present in GDP – the key feature must be that somehow Beyond GDP indicators capture information that people using GDP should know, i.e. that Beyond GDP indicators should somehow be used in at least some contexts where GDP is used. Therefore to understand what is a ‘Beyond GDP’ indicator, one needs to know how GDP is perceived to be used.

This we will explore further in WP2. In brief though, it is clear that proponents of Beyond GDP indicators do not fault the use of GDP as a measure of economic production, but rather its dominating role for assessing societal progress (van den Bergh, 2009). As such one can define Beyond GDP indicators and indicator sets as those that have been *proposed as being necessary and central to the measurement of societal progress, in a broad sense*, other than those indicators, such as GDP itself, that are already playing this role. As such, our definition is less about the indicators themselves, and more about how people propose they are used.

What do Beyond GDP indicator proponents understand by ‘societal progress’? Many working in the field of Beyond GDP indicators use, or have used, the language and concepts of sustainable development. Sustainable development is often understood based on three pillars: the economic, environmental and social (World Health Organisation, 2005). One of the most influential Beyond GDP initiatives, the Commission set up by the French Prime Minister in 2008 (Stiglitz *et al*. 2009) divides the issues into three domains: Classical GDP issues, sustainable development and environment, and quality of life. Lastly, the European Statistical System Committee’s *Sponsorship Group on Measuring Progress, Well-being and Sustainable Development* divided into three working groups: Household perspectives (on economic issues), environmental sustainability and quality of life (European Statistical System Committee, 2011).

Later in this report, we propose a similar framework (see Figure 19) which highlights the social, economic and environmental domains. The measurement of societal progress, and therefore the role of Beyond GDP indicators, appears to be understood as involving the comprehensive measurement of at least one of these domains, and normally more than one.

Whilst this definition implies a focus on what we will later call ‘macro-level’ indicators (indicators that are intended to provide information about very broad policy areas and society as a whole), we will find that many indicators and indicator sets focussed on quite detailed policy-making (what we will call the ‘micro-level’) have also been considered as Beyond GDP

indicators. The relationship between these two levels and the potential for micro-level indicators to truly be 'Beyond GDP' is something that warrants further investigation.

The project is structured into seven work packages (WP) with particular objectives. WP 1 titled "Characterizing supply: Analysing and framing the research reservoir" has the central objective of bringing together the indicator pool in a format that will help inform the core of this project, in order to understand the processes by which the indicators might be adopted by policy makers. With respect to the supply-side of Beyond GDP indicators, a lot of work has already been done to map out and evaluate the comparative strengths and weaknesses of existing alternative indicators. The project brings together these existing overviews of Beyond GDP indicators and the research that underpins them, and attempts to assess the degree to which they have become embedded in policy making to date. The following questions, inter alia, are central to this objective:

- How can we categorise these attempts?
- What assumptions and approaches have their producers/promoters taken when it comes to promoting the adoption of indicators at different policy levels?
- What is the current state of institutionalization of these indicators? Where and how are they currently used in policy making? What is their current impact on decision making?

The project – and this particular Report – responds to an increasing call for better indicators of human well-being and sustainability around the world. Various alternatives and complements to GDP are discussed in terms of their motives and objectives, as well as use and impact on policy making.

On the one hand there exists a large number of initiatives supplying politicians and policymakers with new or re-established "beyond GDP" indicators as a reaction to the political interest in having single indicators, aggregates and indices (we will call them all indicators) bringing together information about quality of life, that is not only about the economic performance of a society, but is complemented with information about the other important societal and environmental aspects. The indicators are developed at different levels (international, national and local) to help focus attention on different salient policy problems, to enable evidence-based policy processes, or to help keep the track towards fulfilment of political goals and targets.

Interest in Beyond GDP indicators has not only grown amongst politicians and policy makers in recent years. Media interest, which in turn has raised the general public's interest, has also increased in the last decade. For example articles with titles such as "Forget about GDP. The real question is: Are we happy?" have been appearing with ever greater frequency in major newspapers worldwide. It might signal that the role of the indicator to promote and sustain wider public awareness of central societal and environmental issues is becoming more and more significant.

It is thus more than clear, that beyond GDP indicators have the potential to be used at different levels of decision making processes and as a communication tool between politicians, policy makers and the general public (directly or through the media).

On the other hand, the large number of beyond GDP initiatives can be overwhelming for potential users (Morse, 2004). It can cause misunderstandings and misuse among different types of users as well as providers. Therefore, attempts to categorise "beyond GDP" initiatives are necessary to enable users to appreciate the meaning and relevance of the wide range of existing beyond GDP indicators, and for indicator providers/producers to identify the gaps in the beyond GDP indicator reservoir.

The main outcome of WP1 (aside from a table of Beyond GDP indicators/approaches, and a list of contacts amongst indicator producers/promoters, etc.) is this report, presenting the categorisation framework developed, reconciling rhetoric and exploring the intentions and impacts of different indicator producers/promoters, including two case studies.

- The categorisation framework helps to structure existing beyond GDP indicators and sort different indicator types in accordance with proposed indicator categories within the categorisation framework. The categorisation framework is applied to the indicator reservoir (a long list) from which the most relevant indicator examples were identified for an in depth survey (a short list)
- The indicators from the short list are surveyed in more depth using different research methods to uncover intentions of the indicator producers/promoter and the impact/success of the selected indicators. It also touches the scientific basis of the indicators (methodology, data, etc.). The results are shaped into “policy fact sheets” which provide the information in a format that is easily comprehensible to a wide community of potential users.

The Report is structured into the following sections:

1.1 Theoretical part of the report

- Chapter 1 presents what the Report is aiming to do and how it fits into the overall project
- Chapter 2 introduces detailed information about the approach and methods applied to fulfil the WP1 tasks. It informs on desk-based analysis, media analysis, questionnaire-based survey and interviews in terms of how these methods were applied to learn about an impact, successes and failures of the surveyed indicators and how they relate to the three types of relevance – political, public and scientific.
- Chapter 3 and 4 provides a theoretical background for the categorisation framework construction. It deals with different definitions, approaches and views on indicators, and existing categorisation of beyond GDP indicators. The chapters are based on a literature review. These chapters also deal with the roles of indicators in the decision making process and connect the selected categories from the categorisation framework with this process.

1.2 Empirical part of the report

- Chapters 5 and 6 focus on the results of interview survey and media analysis of selected indicators.
- Chapter 7 distils the key findings gained from the desk-based analysis, interview survey and media analysis and summarizes these findings into the policy fact sheet form. The chapter also describes the different potential uses of the policy fact sheets.
- Chapter 8 provides two case studies (Ecological Footprint and OECD Better Life Index) which enable a deeper insight into the process of indicator impact/success.
- Chapter 9 provides the conclusions of the whole Report.

Chapter 2: Methodology

2.1 Overall approach

There is no standard methodology to achieve the necessary level of knowledge on the most relevant Beyond GDP indicators. Therefore we have employed several research methods. The entire research framework (link between various approaches and methods, phasing, outcomes of each phase etc.) is shown in Fig.1.

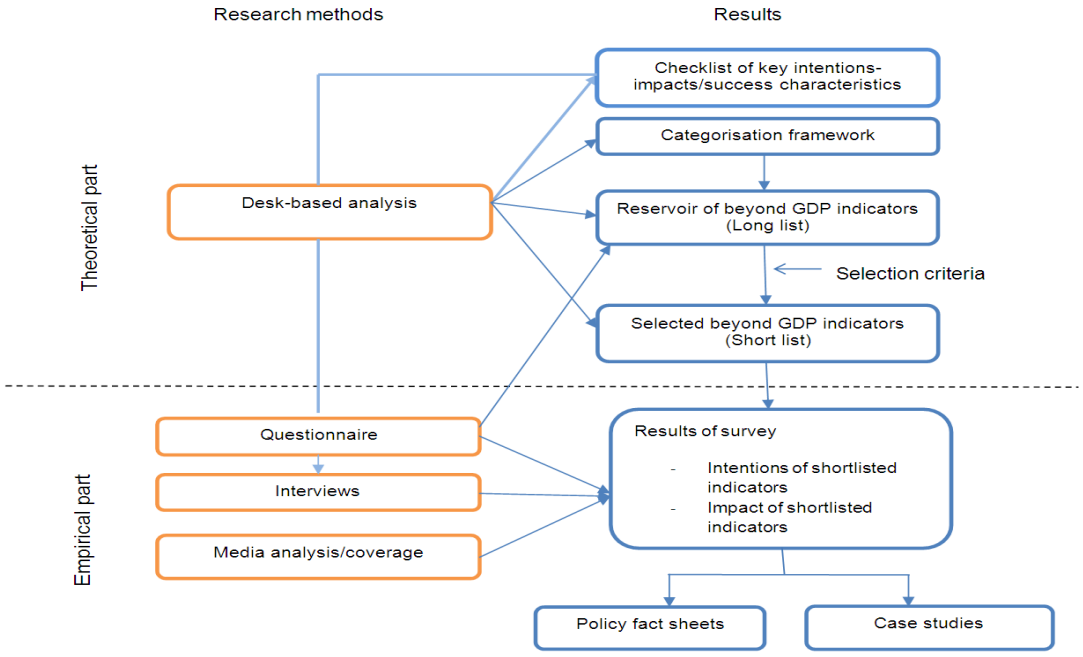

Fig. 1: Workpackage 1 research framework

2.2 Theoretical phase

This phase is based on a desk-based survey and analysis. There is a vast amount of sources on all aspects of Beyond GDP indicators (currently, just Google Scholar provides over 1,000 documents contemplating the “beyond GDP” topic): we reviewed the most relevant works while attempting to avoid repeating earlier efforts and brought them together in a coherent framework (categorization framework). The most relevant sources appear as citations directly in the text, while other relevant sources that are not specifically related to the text (but provide context) appear at the end of the Report.

We reviewed various relevant types of sources (scientific journals, experts’ media, web pages, etc.) which helped us to bring together all the information needed for indicator reservoir development (the long list of existing indicators and indicator initiatives) and categorisation framework creation. This analysis helped answer such question as:

- What Beyond GDP initiatives exist and what are their basic characteristics?
- What are the intentions and impacts of the selected Beyond GDP initiatives?
- How can Beyond GDP initiatives be categorised? Etc.

To answer these questions, we have analysed different attempts at indicator definition and indicator categorisation based on diversity of aspects – indicator domains, level of impact, assessment approach, types of indicator, the link between the indicators and GDP,

envisaged users, or level of policy influence (macro policy, micro policy), the indicator terminology and rhetoric.

Besides interviews, the desk-based analysis also proved to be an effective tool in completing the information about the indicator providers and promoters´ intentions and indicator impact. The desk-based analysis created a platform for the interviews and enabled the interviewees to be asked more precise questions eliciting specific knowledge. Without an overall deep understanding of the indicator and indicator provider, it wouldn´t be possible to get any interesting information about intentions and impact because a lot of time would be wasted by having to explain the basic features of the indicator and the organisation itself to the interviewees.

2.3 Empirical phase

2.3.1 Interviews

We conducted semi-structured interviews with 18 selected indicator producers/promoters (see Annex) covering three main areas:

- Background on the interviewee, and the initiative (including how the indicators were developed)
- Intentions behind the initiative, the audience it was targeted at, and how the audience was reached
- The impacts of the initiative (predominantly in terms of policy and data collection, but also in terms of impact on the media, the public in general, experts, and any other target groups)

The interviews were conducted during March and April 2012, in English, by either Saamah Abdallah from **nef** (the new economics foundation) or Tomáš Hák and Svatava Janoušková from CUEC (Charles University Environment Center). 10 interviews were conducted face-to-face, 8 by phone/Skype, 1 by email, and, for 1, the first half was conducted face-to-face and the second half by phone/Skype. Interviews lasted between half an hour, and one and a half hours. The interviews were mostly recorded on Dictaphone to facilitate analysis. However, we did not transcribe the interviews.

The information gained from the interviews was used in several ways. Firstly, the information was used to understand the intentions of indicator providers/promoters and the impact of the indicators on different types of audience (Results presented in Chapter 6). Secondly, the information is used in the fact sheets (Chapter 7).

Thirdly, the interviews on the Ecological Footprint (Ecological Footprint Network) and Better Life Initiative (OECD) have been used to write up the case studies in Chapter 8. The two institutes represent key actors in promoting alternative indicators to policy makers and as such their intentions, strategies of the indicator promotion, the reasons for the success of their indicators and other aspects related to the indicators success were described in depth. Lastly, in some cases (the 2 interviews with the OECD), the interviews will help informing activities in WP3.

The interview guide can be found in the Annex.

2.3.2 Media analysis/media coverage

For Beyond GDP indicators there is an imperative to be attractive to the media: No media coverage equals no pressure on politicians and influence in politics. As stated in Jasperson et al.(1998):

> *"Media serve as the primary mechanism by which elite opinion is communicated to the public. The more coverage an issue receives, the further up the agenda it supposedly moves."*

In the same paper there is a citation from Lyengar (1991):

> *"Experimental evidence demonstrates that when news coverage focuses more on a particular issue, people are more likely to cite that issue as the most important concern facing the nation."*

GDP is a wonderful example of how an indicator can influence public opinion. Nearly every day it is possible to find some information about GDP in a wide scale of media sources with the result that everyone roughly "knows" GDP and its meaning (although of course few people fully understand what it is and how it is calculated). Furthermore, GDP is used as a proxy for progress: When GDP is rising; it is assumed that the country is improving. Because the public is sensitive to GDP, the political sphere uses the indicator to communicate the necessary information about a country´s development using this indicator rather than looking for another/alternative one.

The media are interested in presenting necessary political information to the public – and this is also the politicians' interest when the information helps them to achieve their political goals (e.g. Strömberg (2001), Soroka, S.N. (2002)). However, journalists prefer presenting information that they expect the public to be interested in. Fig. 2 represents relationships between the political sphere, media and general public.

Fig. 2. Relationships between the political sphere, media and general public

Despite the role of media and its relationship to other stakeholders in the decision-making process being a complex one, media coverage is a good proxy for assessing real indicator impact. Obviously, alternative indicators could have the same impact on the public and political sphere as GDP has if the media would present the information to the public in a similar way as GDP is, and to a similar degree.

Media analysis has been used in our project to obtain information on how much each issue/indicator appears in the public media (newspapers, magazines and wire feeds) and in expert media (scholarly journals, trade journals, reports, thesis and dissertations, and books). This information can help us partially reveal the impact/success of the indicator (those used on the international level, in particular). Our analysis produces three important numbers – *total number of results*, *number of public media coverage* and *number of experts' media coverage*. The total number of media coverage results tells us about the impact/success of the indicator in general in current days (the number interpretation is straightforward: the more the better). The ratio between public and expert media tells if the issue is communicated rather to the lay public or to experts. A chart showing a trend in the media coverage since its launch is part of the indicator factsheet (see Fig. 3). It enables, for example, to connect appearance of the indicator in the media with the concrete political situation at a chosen time as well as to track appearance of the indicator over the whole period of time (to get a sense of change over time). The figures from the media analysis also enable comparisons between indicators.

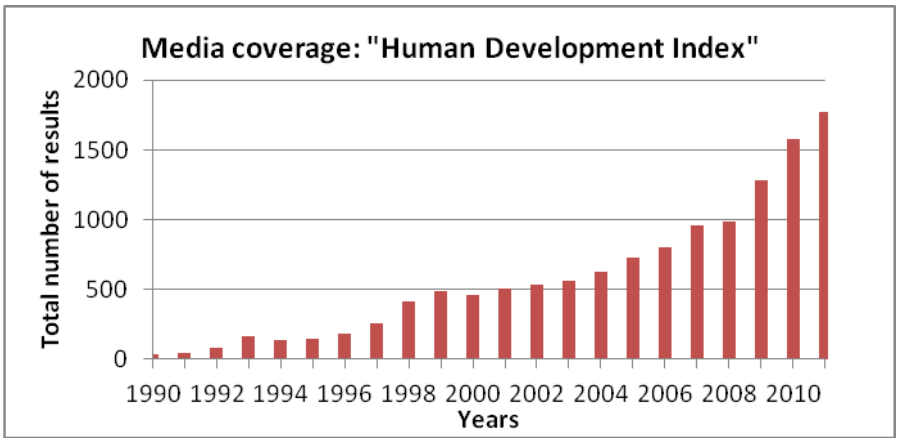

Fig.3 Trend in media coverage of the selected indicator (HDI)

We used the ProQuest Central[1] database to retrieve the above information. It is the largest aggregated full-text database on the market today totalling more than 19,370 titles – with over 13,010 titles in full text. While ProQuest Central provides access to millions of much-coveted full text articles from thousands of scholarly journals, it also provides access to information not available in other aggregated resources such as:

- Over 800 full text U.S., Canadian and international newspapers (e.g. the Wall Street Journal, Los Angeles Times etc.)
- Over 56,000 full text dissertations in the areas of business, psychology, physical sciences, health, education and more, helping end users build a more robust results set
- Concise business information from thousands of market and industry reports across hundreds of industries in 90 countries, spanning the UK, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Asia Pacific, North America, and Latin America
- ProQuest Central is designed to be the single-most used database in the library and beyond. It covers over 160 subjects including core subject areas such as: Business and economics, Health and medical, News and world affairs, Science, Social Sciences, Humanities, Psychology etc.

For a deeper insight into selected indicators (e.g. Ecological Footprint), we employed another tool for media analysis – the Dialog. It is a search engine providing online-based information services in such fields as business, science, engineering, finance and law. It allows one to search more than 800 million unique records of key information, accessible via the internet or through delivery to enterprise intranets. Content areas include, but are not limited to, aerospace, biomedical research, biotechnology, business and finance, chemicals, energy and environment, food and agriculture, government regulations, intellectual property, medicine, news and media, pharmaceuticals, reference, social sciences, and science and technology.

Dialog is the world's largest provider of online information databases, with 2 billion records in 600 databases of intelligently organized information. The Dialog enables to get more in depth information about the selected indicator. Except the total number of results of media coverage it provides also well-arranged information on the type of journal and on the

[1] Available at: http://www.proquest.com

frequency of the searched information in particular media. It further enables to survey the relevant journals in terms of their content, number of readers, etc.

2.3.3 Questionnaire

We developed a brief questionnaire which was sent out to the indicator initiative promoters identified on the long list. The questionnaire (see in Annex), consisted of five questions on the following topics:

- Intended impact and audience,
- Channels of communication, and
- Impact itself.

It also asked whether the initiative promoters had carried out their own evaluation of their impact.

The questionnaire helped us to add missing information needed for the reservoir of beyond GDP indicators (long list) development that was not possible to find using desk-based analysis. Moreover, the information gained from questionnaire served as a knowledge platform for the interview and provided us with useful and often unique information about the above topics for the broader scale of indicators than only those shortlisted. The results of the Questionnaire are included in the Annex.

2.4 Link WP1 – WP2

As indicated above, BRAINPOoL looks at the issue of developing, promoting and using the Beyond GDP indicators as a mismatch between demand and supply sides[2]. WP 1 deals in details with the indicators attributes from the providers' perspective that may positively affect the potential use (users). In other words, WP1 provides insight into characteristics or qualities of indicators that should be embedded in the indicators to be interesting and attractive enough for the defined user groups (politicians, experts, public). WP 2 analyses how and for what purpose the indicators have been employed by particular users. It sheds some light on the issue of various uses of indicators and on aspects that are crucial for taking the indicators up and their use in real policy making (see Figure 6).

When describing and analysing the indicator attributes, it is necessary to understand and take fully into account the policy/political context framing the conditions of the indicators development. It is obvious that any indicator becomes relevant, useful and attractive when dealing with some pressing event (natural disaster during the flooding time) or a long-term issue of the utmost importance for the country (sea level rising due to climate change). The policy/political context significantly effects both sides – indicators providers/promoters and users – that understating its key factors relevant for effective use of indicators has become a key research challenge.

Besides an overall policy/political context there are many diverse relations and processes between indicators providers/promoters and users. The providers should get the potential users involved in the review process or design the indicators presentation to fit the user needs (understanding, timeliness, accessibility etc.). The users can actively influence the indicators development by defining the needs at appropriate times. Such information feedbacks are not matter of course and must be actively encouraged and promoted.

[2] The functional link between these parts of the indicators development and use that also denotes the link between the two parts of the project: Workpackage 1 and Workpackage 2 are described in detail in Chapter 3.

2.4.1 Diagram for understanding indicator use

We have combined much of this into a diagram presenting how we understood the interaction between indicator producers and their indicators, and potential users (Figure 4)

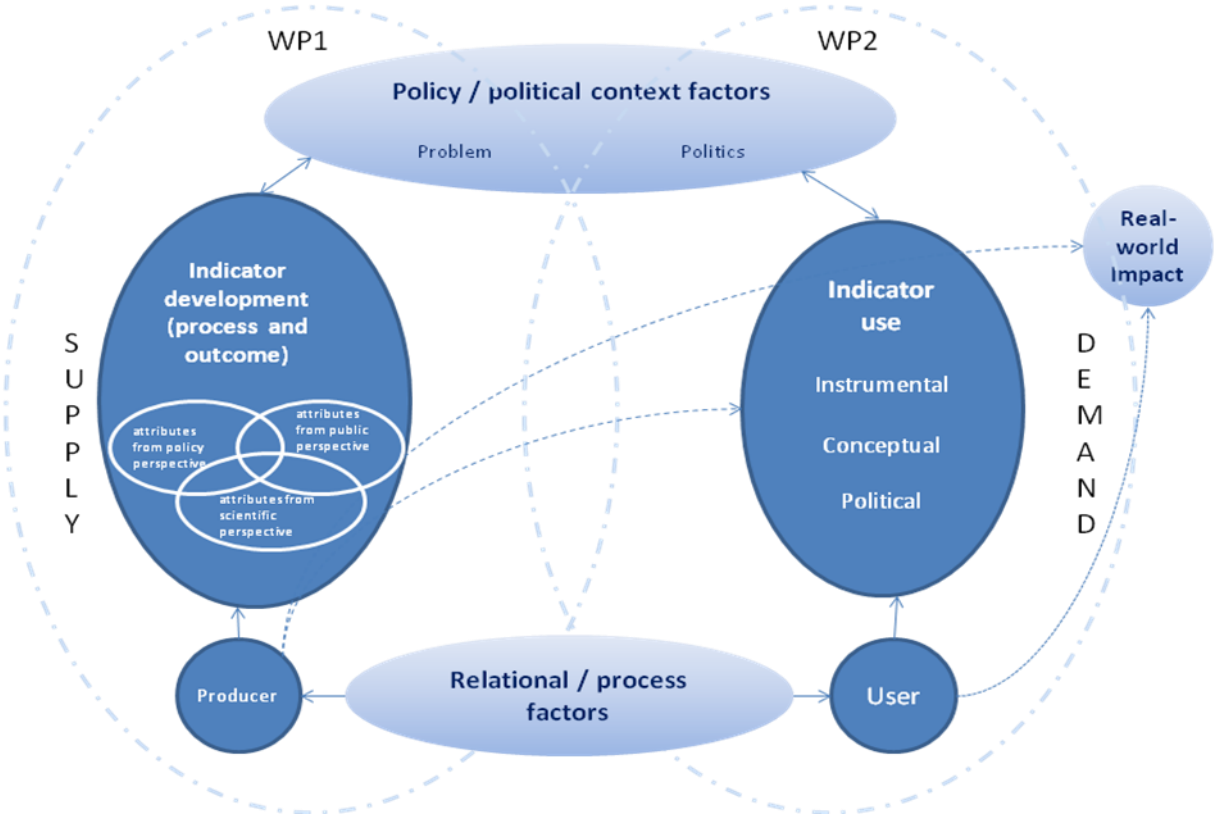

Figure 4: Model of indicator use

The thick arrows represent actual connections. So the producer produces an indicator. The producer and/or the indicator engage with the user. The user has a use. The use leads to some real world impact.

The dotted arrows represent intentions. The producer has some intention regarding how their indicator is used. In some (not all) cases the producer has some intention about some real world impact they want the use of their indicator to produce (e.g. reduce environmental impact). The potential user also has some intention about real world impact.

How does this framework work for Beyond GDP indicators? First, it is worth highlighting that the framework underplays the different roles within the policy cycle that many models for understanding indicators have focused on. This is because, as we have discussed earlier, many indicators can fill multiple roles. Furthermore, we hypothesise that Beyond GDP indicators are likely to play a more conceptual role than instrumental/rational one.

Secondly, the distinction between intentions related to indicator use and real world impact is probably important.

2.5 Link to other European projects

The BRAINPOol project is linked to several other European projects – either on going or finished ones. Some of the EU projects complement the information gained in the BRAINPOol about the alternative indicators especially in terms of their methodological development. Other EU projects have bigger thematic intersections with BRAINPOol. These projects – particularly the finished ones – could inspire BRAINPOol in many aspects. As far as the on-going latest projects BRAINPool are concerned, they may serve as a reservoir of useful new information. For examples see Fig.5

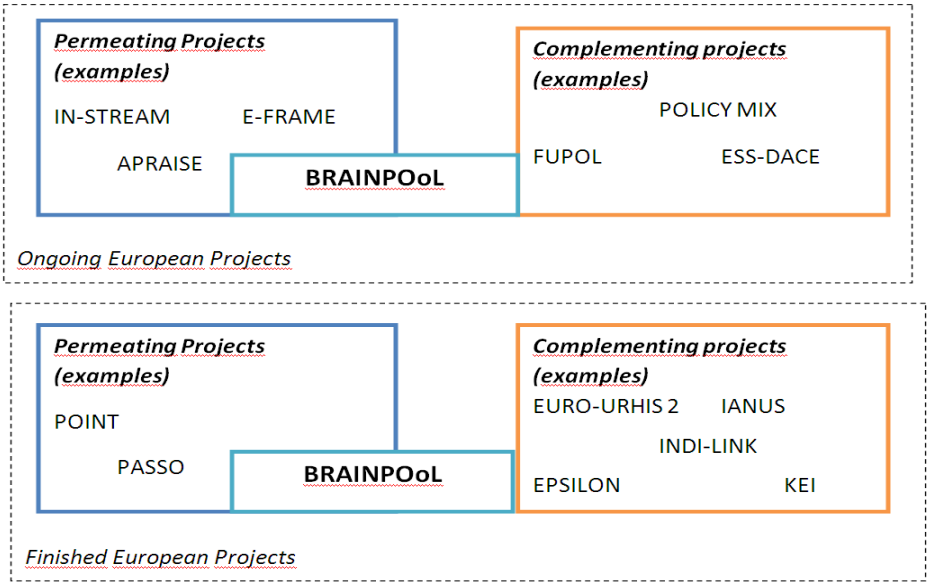

Fig. 5 Links of BRAINPOol to other European Projects

Chapter 3: The roles of indicators in the decision-making process

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we will consider the various ways that indicators can influence the decision-making process. We will focus on decision-making within the policy context, but we will also consider non-policy related influences. Many frameworks for understanding the role of indicators have been put forward in the past. Deliverable D5 of the FP7 project POINT (Policy use and influence of indicators) provides a summary of these different frameworks (POINT, 2009). Rather than repeat this, we have identified tools that are useful for this project, which we present here.

This chapter is structured in the following way. In section 1 we present a summary of three overall roles of indicators – instrumental, conceptual and political. These three roles will be explained, with particular detail given to the instrumental role, which has been the most thoroughly researched. We will consider the relationship between audience and complexity, and also how these roles could be relevant outside of the government policy world.

Section 2 will outline a typology for classifying influence and impacts/success, with some sense of hierarchy – from an indicator simply attracting attention, to a measurable impact on people's lives being achieved as a result of an indicator's use.

Lastly (section 3), we will consider what factors are considered important in determining whether an indicator will have an impact or not.

The chapter will conclude with a checklist of key intentions-impacts/success characteristics specifically relating these different frameworks to Beyond GDP indicators. It will also present a diagram putting Beyond GDP indicators and their producers into a framework to help understand their impact.

3.2 Indicator roles

The POINT project distinguished between three different ways of understanding indicator use:

- Instrumental use
- Conceptual use
- Political use

This echoes the distinction made by Boulanger (2007), between three different models for understanding indicators in policy – rational-positivist, discursive-constructivist and strategic-political. It also is informed by seminal work by Carol Weiss (1979). Weiss identified six forms of research utilisation, including knowledge-driven or problem-solving (both linking to what we label instrumental), enlightenment (conceptual) and political and tactical (both linking to what we label political).

The three categories of use are not mutually exclusive. It should be noted that this categorisation is designed to help understand the intentions of the user of the indicator, rather than the producer. As this is more relevant to WP2, we do not explore it extensively from the interviews in this WP. Nevertheless, we will on occasion refer to it in Chapter 6 where we present the influences that the initiatives covered have had.

3.2.1 Instrumental use

Much research has focussed on the instrumental use of indicators. In this model, indicators are seen as objective information tools to improve policy-making. Typically, the discourse used in this model is about solving problems and providing information. An indicator has an influence when it is 'used' directly by a policy-maker and this consciously influences their decisions.

POINT distinguishes between 'system' and 'performance' indicators – the former measures how something is doing, the latter measures how *someone* is doing. Beyond GDP indicators tend to fall into the former category.

Several frameworks exist for categorising the different functions of system indicators from an instrumental perspective. Many take the policy cycle as a starting point. Figure 5, shows the policy cycle used in the FP7 project INSTREAM.[3]

Figure 5: Indicators and the policy cycle

Other studies have already attempted to place Beyond GDP indicators around this cycle. For example Wesselink *et al*. (2007) place the ecological footprint within the 'problem recognition' part of the cycle, whilst the EU Sustainable Development Strategy indicators are placed within the 'monitoring and reporting' part of the cycle. The same paper categorises GDP itself as a 'problem recognition' indicator.

Other similar frameworks can be found in EEA (1999) and Michaelson *et al*. (2009).

The implication of many of these frameworks is that, for indicators to be successful, they must fulfil a clearly defined role within such policy cycles. However, Michaelson *et al*. (2009), proposes a set of well-being indicators that can be used *across* the policy cycle. The ecological footprint, as an example, might be considered to be useful for setting targets and monitoring progress towards them, not just for recognising problems. These two examples highlight that it might be unwise to take the policy cycle too literally in the context of Beyond GDP indicators.

Of course, it is individuals that make decisions and not indicators. How do indicators influence decisions under the rational instrumental model? One way of understanding their

[3] Available at: www.in-stream.eu

influence is in terms of incentives (Michaelson et al., 2009). If a policy-maker is responsible for something being assessed through a certain indicator, then they have an incentive to enact policies or actions which will lead to change in whatever is being measured by that indicator. For example, their pay or career progression may be determined by change in that indicator. This mechanism can also be understood to be at play for units, departments and ultimately, governments. For example, there has been much speculation that the results of the 2012 elections in the USA will hinge upon whether the unemployment rate falls below 8%.[4]

3.2.2 Conceptual use

This, second approach to understanding indicator use, sees their prime value to be more conceptual and less about their actual direct use. In this model, indicators influence how policy-makers think through a process of 'enlightenment'. Indicators (or indeed the framework they are placed in) might affect how decision-makers define problems, or provide new perspectives on problems.

This is particularly relevant for Beyond GDP indicators, given the conceptual power of GDP itself. Often critics of the Beyond GDP will stress that GDP is not actually used very much in policy-making (Ormerod, 2012). Whatever truth there may be in this, the true role of GDP is likely to be much more subtle than that, given the way it is constantly referenced in the media and by politicians. This referencing may create a 'framing' effect (as described by George Lakoff, 2010) whereby, without explicit targets, policies are preferred if they are believed to contribute to growth. If this is the main influence of GDP, then consideration of 'Beyond GDP' indicators needs to focus on conceptual use just as much as instrumental use.

3.2.3 Political use

Political use encompasses three sub-categories:

- Legitimisation use – where indicators are used to justify or bolster a decision which has already been taken. Where the indicators that are successful tend to be ones that provide the desired message. This is also called strategic use.
- Tactical use – quite a specific use of indicators, whereby decisions are postponed or avoided with the excuse that data is being awaited. The content of the indicator is actually of little relevance.
- Symbolic use – whereby indicators are being used to convey a message or present an image.

3.2.4 Audience and complexity

Another way to understand the potential use of indicators is to consider the audience they are aimed at. A typical split is between three groups – technical, professional and public. The public requires easy understanding, simple indicators. Technical audiences require greater detail, which will allow them to carry out analysis. Professional audiences (general policy-makers) require something in between. This is often presented as a triangle as in Figure 6 (e.g. Scrivens & Lasiello, 2010).

This diagram does not typically include politicians. We would place them in between the public and professionals. In terms of what they might be expected to do with indicators, they are closer to policy-makers (professionals), but in terms of the level of detail they might be expected to process, they are probably closer to the public.

[4] e.g. http://www.bizjournals.com/atlanta/morning_call/2012/04/uga-prof-obama-re-election-likely-if.html

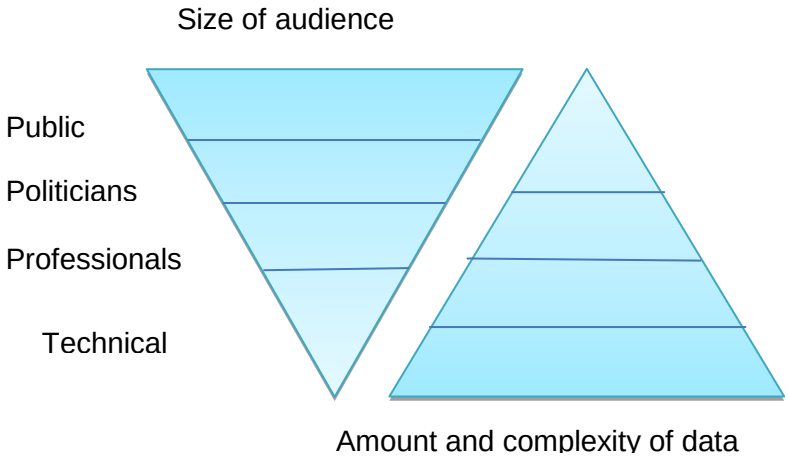

Fig.6 : Analysis of indicator audiences. (Scrivens & Iasiello (2010) – modified diagram)

3.2.5 Use outside of policy

As we noted, indicator use may not be restricted to the policy world. However, we would suggest that the three categories identified here are relevant for all organisations. Organisations such as businesses may use indicators in the same way – including instrumental, conceptual and 'political' (in the latter case, symbolic use may be important for companies wishing to demonstrate, for example, an ethical approach).

Indicators might also be expected to influence individuals and their decisions through framing (i.e. conceptual use). For example, someone completing a life expectancy survey might then be influenced to change their health-related behaviours.

3.3 Degrees of use

A common approach to understanding the utilisation of research, and possibly indicators, is the 'ladder of research utilization' (Knott & Wildawsky, 1980). It identifies six steps in how research influences practitioners and professionals (referred to here as 'the audience'):

- Transmission of results to the audience
- Cognition/Understanding of the research by the audience
- Reference of research by the audience in reports, or strategies
- Effort to adopt the results by the audience
- Influence: Research influences choice and decisions made by the audience
- Application: Research is applied to action by the audience

Two things can be noted about this ladder. Firstly, there are two stages to the ladder which precede what can be called use, influence or impact. Transmission of results and their understanding need not lead to any change in what someone says or does.

Secondly, the ladder fits somewhat within the rationalistic model of indicator use. The conceptual/discursive model, and to some extent the political/strategic one, can work perfectly well without an individual actually 'understanding' or consciously 'referencing' an

indicator. The indicator may influence their choices and decisions unconsciously. In other words, the ladder might not always apply strictly.

How to the words ‘use’, ‘influence’ and ‘impact’ fit on this ladder? We follow the POINT project in defining influence as “*changes to or effects on policy related processes or results*” but stress that this can either be conscious or unconscious. However we differ from them and indeed previous literature in our understanding of the word ‘use’. For Rich (1997), ‘use’ may simply mean that information has been transmitted, i.e. it refers to the bottom two rungs of the ladder. However, this seems to be a rather unnatural use of the word. We understood use as a *conscious* influence. What others have called ‘use’ in the past, we refer to as ‘transmission’ or ‘dissemination’.

The word ‘impact’ does not require separate definition. It implies a more action-oriented outcome, but this is a matter of nuance rather definition. Where we specifically refer to ‘real world impact’, we mean an outcome on people’s lives or environmental conditions as a result of an indicator’s influence.

Based on POINT, we developed the following typology for understanding indicator influence, in WP1. As well as policy, we also consider other areas where indicators might hope to have an influence, including the media, public thinking, or amongst practitioners or businesses. It is fair to say that we have focussed on ‘conscious’ influences, given the difficulty in measuring or assessing unconscious influence

3.3.1 Policy influences:

- Transmission: Policy-maker or politician becomes aware of an indicator
- Reference: Policy-maker or politician mentions or references an indicator
- Policy-Influence: Government action as a result of an indicator
- Real world impact: Some measurable change in people’s lives or environmental conditions as a result of an indicator

3.3.2 Public/Media influences:

- Transmission: Media refer to an indicator
- Cognition: Public is made aware of, or better understand, a particular issue as result of an indicator
- Reference: Issue is discussed as a result of an indicator

3.3.3 Other:

- Academic article
- Data collection (by NSI)
- Data reporting (by NSI)
- Education materials

3.4 Success factors

What factors contribute to an indicator having influence? We distinguish between four clusters of factors:

- Indicator factors
- User factors
- Policy/context factors
- Relational factors

The first three clusters were identified in POINT.

3.4.1 Indicator factors

Before considering what factors make an indicator successful, one has to consider the audience the indicator is intended for. As such, we categorise indicator factors first and foremost by the actor to which they refer:

- Public
- Policy
- Scientific

Cash *et al*. (2002) identifies three overall factors that determine whether an indicator has influence:

- Salience – the relevance of the indicator to a particular actor's decisions
- Credibility – perception of whether an indicator meets standards of scientific plausibility and technical adequacy
- Legitimacy – perceptions regarding the process of indicator production and who was involved

Each of these overall factors has several facets. For example, the salience of an indicator, as defined above, is partly determined by its interpretability, comparability and whether it is action-oriented. We are dealing with indicator factors in Chapter 4.

Considering these overall factors and the audience groups, an indicator that may be, for example, very salient for one actor, may not be for a second one. Also, certain factors may be more important to some audiences than others. Data quality, for example, is of greater importance to technical audiences than to the public.

Nevertheless, further indicator factors determinate the indicators´ influence. Important indicators' factors are especially those linked to the indicators´ user side. Only the commonly used indicators have capacity to influence someone. Based on the literature review, an indicator that communicates a simplified reality in a comprehensible and influencing way should have the following factors:

- match the interest of the target audience;
- be attractive to the eye and accessible;
- be easy to interpret;
- invite action (read further, investigate, ask questions, do something);
- be representative of the issue or area being considered;
- show developments over a relevant time interval (a period in which changes can be shown;
- go with a reference value for comparing changes over time;
- go with an explanation of causes behind the trends;
- be comparable with other indicators that describe similar areas, sectors or activities;
- be scientifically well-founded; and
- be based on sound statistics.

We believe (and the interviews with the indicator producers supported this assertion through empirical findings) that the above indicator factors are crucial for the indicator impact/success, but different indicator user groups focus more or less on different factors (as discussed below). For example, whilst the public is concerned about the attractiveness and comprehensibility of an indicator´s presentation, the scientists' interest focuses far more on methodological soundness and data accuracy. Obviously, there are many overlaps among the user groups' interests in indicator factors. We have clustered the above indicator factors according to the focus of three types of indicator users (politicians and policy-makers, public and experts/scientists) in order to collect the information about the selected indicator "equipment" with such attributes from conducted interviews. It enables the potential users to choose the indicator most fitting for their purpose and the indicator provider can improve or amend the missing or weak attribute (the attractive way of presentation, for example).

Fig. 7 shows arrangement of the indicator factors according to the user group´s focus.

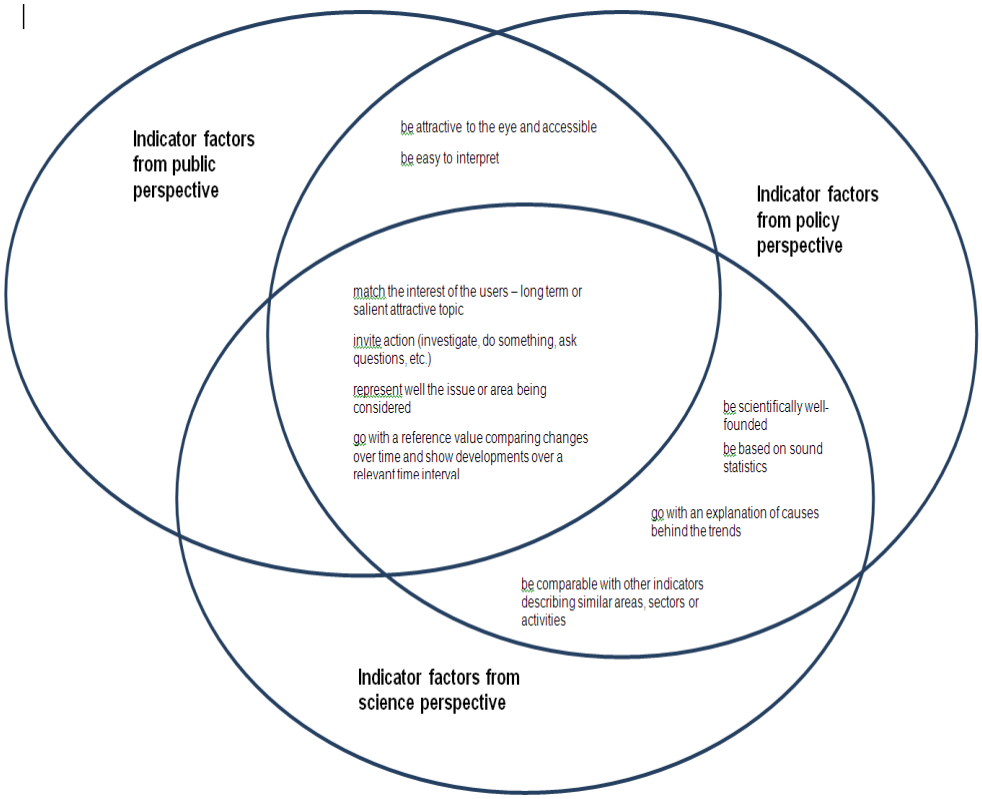

Fig. 7: Indicator factors according to user group´s focus

3.4.2 Policy/Context factors

Kingdon (2011) describes three types of processes that are important to understand how innovation enters the decision agenda in government – politics, policy and problems. Politics relates to the prevailing rhetorics and interests in government and the public. Policy refers to the different policy tools that are available. Problems refer to the emergence, either gradually or suddenly, of a particular problem that needs to be solved. Within this framework, Beyond GDP indicators can be understood as part of the policy cycle – they are a tool that may or may not lead to innovation. For them to do so, according to Kingdon (2011) they need to be coupled with political will and a problem which they are seen as solving. Based on this, one should expect that politics and the problem space should be important factors in determining the influence of an indicator. Bache & Reardon (2011) argue that, in the UK, the politics and policy processes have been coupled in relation to well-being, but that a clear 'problem' has yet to be identified.

3.4.3 Relational/process factors

A fourth set of factors not explicitly isolated in the POINT project, but hinted at, are those defining the relationship between the indicator producer and the potential user, and the process of their engagement. For POINT, this is included within 'user factors', where the authors note that users are more likely to accept an indicator, if they see it as having developed within their organisation. We suggest generalising this specific hypothesis into a range of factors that should be explored.

3.5 Summary in the context of Beyond GDP indicators

In this chapter, we have presented the following checklist of key intentions-impacts/success characteristics which we hope will be useful during BRAINPOoL:

Audiences:	Policy influences:
▸ Technical/Scientific	▸ Transmission
▸ Policy/Professional	▸ Reference
▸ Politicians	▸ Policy-Influence
▸ Public	▸ Real world impact
Success factors:	**Types of indicator use:**
▸ Indicator factors:	▸ Instrumental use
From perspective of public	▸ Conceptual use
From perspective of policy	▸ Political use
From perspective of science	*Legitimisation*
▸ User factors	*Tactical*
Academic background	*Symbolic*
Indicator use	
▸ Policy/context factors	
Political factors	
Problem factors	
▸ Relationship/process factors	

We use this checklist (apart from the last distinction between indicator uses) in WP1 for the structured evaluation of interview results. The success factors are further incorporated into the fact sheets to provide the information on impacts/success of selected indicators to the potential users in a comprehensible way.

Chapter 4: Categorisation framework development

4.1 Indicator definitions and frameworks

A wide variety of indicators are presently in use. These indicators reflect trends in the state of the social and physical environment. One of the most important functions of these indicators is to monitor the progress made in fulfilling policy goals. As such, indicators have become indispensable to decision-makers and other stakeholders. However, it is becoming more and more difficult for policy-makers to grasp the relevance and meaning of the existing indicators, especially given the number and diversity of indicators presently in use. And new indices as well as indicator sets are still to be expected. Therefore, some means of structuring them is needed.

The economic, social, and environmental dimensions or pillars of sustainable development have many different characteristics, including time scales, ranging from a long-term view of sustainability in general to the short-term perspective of policy and economic measures. Environmental systems evolve slowly and have longer time lags between cause and effect than economic systems. A parallel mismatch in time scales occurs between the methods in the disciplines that study the different pillars. This makes it hard to present sustainability to policymakers, who tend to act on experience rather than insight and therefore take action only when a problem is observable, and not when a problem is predicted, especially if the prediction is uncertain. A key challenge for sustainability indicators therefore is to reflect time lags, the trade-offs between the short and long term, and the distinction between weak and strong sustainability. Sustainability indicators may be easier to understand and interpret when assembled in some conceptual framework, perhaps with a hierarchical arrangement of sub-domains. The three pillars (economic, social, and environmental) are one such framework, but many others are possible (sectoral frameworks – health, transport, etc.; thematic frameworks – biodiversity, poverty, etc.). Frameworks may help to interrelate indicators from the natural and social sciences, to position both stock and rate indicators, and to identify interlinkages (Moldan and Dahl, 2007). The European Environmental Agency (EEA, 1999) has developed and used a framework that is useful in describing the relationships between the origins and consequences of environmental problems. It is a modified OECD framework called driving force-pressure-state-impact-response (DPSIR). The embedded causal chain recognizes forces that act on the environment, changes that take place in the environment as a consequence of the drivers and pressures and societal reaction to those changes.

Similar to the great variety and number of indicator frameworks, there are also many indicator definitions. General users often mix terms like variables, data, statistics, indicators, indices, etc. For our purposes, we understand data as a body of facts of given phenomena. An indicator is then an observed manifestation of a phenomenon under study. Indicators are constructed from raw and processed data, and they can be further combined to form complex indices. An indicator simplifies phenomena of interest to people and helps them understand complex realities.

As there are many different definitions of what is meant by the term “indicator”, there is a great amount of literature sources dealing with a number of indicator characteristics, as we illustrate below. There are also a number of attempts of how to categorise the indicators according to different purposes. In this project, we have proposed an innovative framework enabling the categorisation of the Beyond GDP indicators and make a link between the indicator categories and indicator factors (intentions and impact).

4.2 Categorisation framework

The proposed categorisation framework (Fig. 8) was developed on the basis of desk-based analysis. Reviewing the number of different literature sources dealing with indicator taxonomies enabled us to distil the most important Beyond GDP indicator categories. The chosen categories enable quick orientation in: *what is the indicator's impact level*, *what is the indicator's assessment approach*, *what domains (environmental, social, economic) the indicator covers*, *how the indicator is constructed*, *who are the envisaged indicator users* and *how are the indicators linked to the "Beyond GDP movement"*. Each of the named categories in the indicator framework is described below. The framework is presented in a table form which enables quick orientation of the potential users among various indicator initiatives.

Indicator/ Initiative	Level of impact			Domains			Dominant Assessment Approach		Type of indicator					Envisaged users			Link to GDP		
											Compound indicators								
	International	National	Local	Environmental	Social	Economic	Objective	Subjective	Set of indicators/ Dashboard	Single Indicator	Aggregated indicator	Composite indicator	Index	Politicians/ Policy-makers	Public	Experts	Adjusting GDP	"Replacing" GDP	Supplementing GDP
Better Life Index (OECD)	x			x	x	x	x		x					x	x	x		x	
DEFRA sustainable development indicators		x		x	x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x			x
Domestic Material Consumption	x			x		x	x				x			x	x	x			x
Ecological Footprint	x			x		x	x					x		x	x	x			x
Eurostat set of sustainability indicators	x			x	x	x	x		x					x	x	x			x
Eurostat set of well-being indicators	x				x		x	x	x					x		x			x
Gallup-Healthways Well-being Index		x			x			x					x	x					x
Genuine Progress Index / Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare	x			x	x	x	x				x			x	x	x	x		
Gross Domestic Product	*x*					*x*	*x*				*x*			*x*	*x*	*x*			
Gross National Happiness		*x*			*x*		*x*	*x*	*x*					*x*	*x*			*x*	
Happy Life Years	x				x		x	x				x		x	x			x	
Human Development Index	*x*				*x*	*x*	*x*						*x*	*x*	*x*	*x*		*x*	
Jacksonville Community Indicators			x	x	x	x	x		x					x	x	x			x
Measuring National Well-being Programme (UK)		x		x	x	x	x	x	x					x	x				x
OECD Handbook of Subjective Well-Being	x				x			x	x					x		x			x
Regional Index on Alternative Quality of Life Indicators (QUARS)		x		x	x	x	x						x	x	x			x	
Societal Progress Indicators and Responsibilities for All (SPIRAL)	x				x		x	x	x					x	x	x			x
UN CSD sustainable development indicators	x			x	x	x	x		x					x		x			x

Fig. 8: Indicators categorization framework

4.2.1 Level of impact – international, national, local

Indicator providers should develop and promote indicators for a particular spatial and geopolitical scale. The same indicator may have different meaning in different contexts or when applied on different scales. A national average value or global figure can mask regional disparities or significant inequities between societal groups. Some issues are affected by regional inputs and require regional action in order to be addressed effectively. Discrepancy in the choice of real units affects the comparability of studies and ultimately the strength of the statistical associations.

Scale differences or the variation in results obtained when data are aggregated into fewer and larger units is one manifestation of the scaling problem.

Both ecological and socio-economic activities have causes and consequences that reveal different characteristics at multiple temporal and spatial scales. While ecologists have understood the importance of scale for some time, social scientists have only recently realized the importance of scale when studying relationships between people and the environment. Scale definition is required to comprehend the concept of sustainable systems. It is also a necessary prerequisite for understanding the relationships between indicators and selecting appropriate monitoring methods at any given level in a hierarchy.

The choice of scale interacts with the grain and extent of data and must be commensurate with the system being monitored, particularly regarding the monitoring properties of system behaviour. Patterns evident at one level of resolution can be lost at lower or higher levels. To compensate for this, in general, we need indicators in a nested hierarchical structure covering different geopolitical and geographical scales or units (Mitchell, 2010).

Besides choosing an appropriate scale for indicator application, it is also necessary to be aware of indicator sensitivity to geography. It means that negative trends in some indicators can appear in other areas even if the trends are improving in the initial area (reducing crime in one area may simply move the crime to other areas rather than eliminating it).

4.2.2 Indicator domains – environmental, social, economic

Beyond GDP indicators are supposed to speak about development of human, social and economic systems able to be sustained far into the future and be kept in harmony with the biophysical systems of the planet. Thus, they should provide information on what is likely to be the most challenging and widely endorsed policy/strategy concept – sustainable development. Traditionally, sustainability indicators are structured according to the explicit pillars of the whole concept – social, environmental and economic. Some organizations promote a fourth, institutional pillar.

Most indicators and indicator sets have assembled indicators for each of the pillars and have neglected the links between them. There have been good attempts to cover the overlaps with specifically designed indicators (e.g. decoupling indicators, for more information see OECD 2002) or by developing whole systems and accounts, and combining the metrics of different domains (e.g. the system of integrated environmental and economic accounting, for more information see UN 2003); nevertheless, the development of interlinking indicators is still a particular challenge.

Social indicators – give insights into a broad range of social issues, concerns and trends, such as life expectancy, poverty rates, unemployment rates, disposable income, and education levels, etc. They are also used to give insights into broader notions of social progress. Examples: Canadian Index of Wellbeing, Capability Index, Corruption Perceptions Index, etc. Social indicators also cover the indicators very often referred to as well-being or quality of life indicators.

Environmental indicators – shed light on the state and development of the environment and related issues such as human health. These indicators can provide information about very specific and local matters, such as water pollution or solid waste generation. They can also be used to gauge more general environmental matters at the global level such as climate change. Examples: SO_2 emissions, Ecological Footprint, EEA Core Set of Indicators, etc.

Economic indicators – Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the most widely used measure of economic activity. Since GDP mainly measures market production, the economic pillar often comprises investments, labour productivity, employment, etc. These indicators serve economic assessment well without the necessity of defining particular assumptions about economic sustainability (strong vs. weak sustainability etc.). Besides these “simple” indicators like labour productivity, national debt or employment rate, there are also more complex metrics like Adjusted Net Savings, Genuine Progress Indicator, Index of Sustainable Economic Wealth etc.

4.2.3 Indicator approach – subjective, objective

Beyond GDP indicators are supposed to measure characteristics or processes of the human-environment system. Specifying the characteristics of the system or entity can be very subjective (in some cases political, philosophical and/or cultural differences may prevent a wider consensus). It is important to realize that science cannot (always) validate the goals set for the system, but it can validate the ability of the chosen indicators to measure the system characteristics properly.

Quality of life or well-being measures can be both “subjective” and “objective”. Objective measures, which are the most represented among sustainability indicators, attempt to capture objective conditions and opportunities by looking at indicatory variables, such as leisure time, health, marital status, education, disposable income, etc. It is a reasonable approach since quality of life to a great extend depends on people’s objective living conditions.

On the other hand, subjective measures have always been part of the traditional tool-kit of economists and statisticians. However, the specific feature of the subjective measures of quality of life belonging to Beyond GDP indicators is that what people report about their own conditions has no obvious objective counterpart. While it is possible to compare “perceived” and “actual” inflation, for example, only respondents can provide information about their own subjective states and values (Stiglitz et. al, 2009). These indicators are based on self-reporting by individuals, which makes it possible to capture direct measures of high complexity such as life-satisfaction. Subjective approaches distinguish between the dimensions of quality of life (like family, work, financial conditions, etc.) and the objective factors shaping these dimensions (sense of purpose, fulfilment of goals, perception by the others, etc.).

According to Stiglitz, one of the cross-cutting challenges is to better assess the relationship between the various dimensions of quality of life. Some of the most important policy questions relate to how developments in one area (e.g. education or environmental conditions) affect developments in others (e.g. health status or life satisfaction), and how developments in all fields are related to those in income.

4.2.4 The indicator types

Despite this Report putting the main emphasis on compound indicators (this term further denotes aggregated and composite indicators as well as indices), there are many other approaches to designing sustainability indicators.

Indicator (a single/individual indicator): This includes the results of processing (to various extents) and interpretation of primary data. Examples include SO_2 emissions for a particular country per year or employment rates. Single indicators are very seldom used.

Sets of indicators (dashboards) are a widespread approach to the general issue of sustainable development. They consist in gathering and ordering series of indicators that bear a direct or indirect relationship to socio-economic progress and its sustainability. There have been hundreds of national-level initiatives to develop and implement indicators suitable for sustainability reporting, and most countries have adopted and used sets of sustainability indicators. Part of the problem, however, is that sustainability cannot be addressed solely at the national level. In a globalized world, all nations are part of a natural system with complex interactions among all its parts, and many nested subsystems. National territories, economies and societies are only one level of system organization, although perhaps the most significant level today because governance is strongest at the national level. The main criticism of these dashboards is their heterogeneity. They also deliver too much information to be efficient communication tools, even when their main messages are summed up in a limited set of headline indicators. More fundamentally, these dashboards may appear as lacking a clear definition of what exactly is required for sustainability, and even a clear definition of what sustainability consists of. The most striking feature in this respect is the

apparent confusion that is conveyed by these dashboards between indicators of current levels or trends in wellbeing, and on the effective sustainability of these levels and/or trends. In defence of these dashboards, one may first recall that their hybrid character is in fact consubstantial to the initial Brundtland program of simultaneously caring about development and its sustainability. Development can be rapid but non-sustainable in the long run. Symmetrically, sustainability can be warranted but with very low levels of development. The originality of these strategies is to orient policy making in directions combining both aspects, i.e. seeking the highest level of current development that is compatible with long term sustainability.

Compound indicators – Compounds (or "composite indicators" according to the Stiglitz report or OECD terminology) are one way to circumvent the problem raised by the extreme richness of dashboards and to synthesize their abundant and purportedly relevant information into one single number. Initiatives in this respect have also been numerous with a larger role played by academics and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), while dashboards are usually built with the close involvement of official statistical institutes. The general idea of those indexes is to re-scale elementary components in order to ensure comparability and to aggregate them, with possibly unequal weights, to produce one figure. Environmental and sustainability indicators have taken on such importance because they provide ''a sign or signal that relays a complex message, potentially from numerous sources, in a simplified and useful manner''. They provide an important source of information for policy makers and help to guide decision-making as well as monitoring and evaluation, because they can provide valuable information on complex issues in a relatively accessible way. Packaging of data into indicators is a way of simplifying complex and detailed information. Decision-makers and the public lose interest rapidly if presented with more than a few indicators.

A study by UNDP made an inventory of more than 130 such indices in 2006 and showed that the number of indices had surged in the past 20 years. The number of institutions producing such indices has expanded with the launch of their own "signature" index (with a corresponding ranking or assessment). The first indices and ratings to come out were on sovereign risk and economic issues. However, throughout the years, the issues covered have broadened to include aspects of gender, environmental performance, corruption, globalization and competitiveness measures, including technological aspects and innovation capacity. The increasing availability of information, together with the emergence of new global issues and a growing demand for transparency from key constituencies, may have been the propelling factors that explain this burgeoning trend. These indices have several uses (based on the purpose, the user and other criteria):

There is no consensus on terminology applied to various kinds of compound indicators. There are three main types of compound indicators according to the overall concept and the process of combining the sub-indicators and data. This tentative terminology has not been harmonized and thus some authors may label the same indicators differently:

- Aggregated indicators. Summations of accounts constructed from raw data measured in the same unit, such as the System of National Accounts (money), material accounts (weight), and energy accounts (energy). The data are aggregated by "simple" addition with no need for weighting or conversion to a different unit. Examples are Gross Domestic Product, Total Material Requirement, and Total Energy Requirement. Reliability is affected by completeness of data coverage and the organizational consistency of the accounting framework, and, if measurements are converted to another unit, by the method of doing so.
- Composite indicators. This combines various aspects of a given phenomenon, based on a sometimes complex concept, into a single number with a common unit (e.g., years, hypothetical hectares). The data is not necessarily derived from accounts.
- Indices. Combinations of lower-level indicators (sub-indicators). When indicators measure the same class of components and are in a common unit (or they are

transparently transformable into a common unit) a combination of indicators is straightforward. It is more complex when many different components are measured in dissimilar units, as in the Human Development Index, Wellbeing Index or Environmental Performance Index. All of these indices convert indicator measurements to a performance score by applying standardized statistical normalization methods.

4.2.5 Envisaged users

Indicators are by definition communication tools. Failure to communicate makes the indicators worthless. However, because sustainable development is a multi-stakeholder process, indicators must be communicable to a variety of different actors. It is the capacity of the indicator to reach its target audience that determines its use and potential success. Some users need simple, structured information (voters, non-specialist media, and decision makers), whereas others prefer an intermediate level of detail (local government, policy implementers, non-government organizations, funding bodies, and industries), and technicians and academics may need more technical information (see also Chapter 3).

In targeting governments, it is useful to distinguish between ministers and parliamentarians who make decisions, policy implementers and enforcers such as regulatory bodies and environmental protection agencies, and policymakers who are mostly civil servants, scientists, economists, and social scientists who design policy portfolios, evaluate policy alternatives, construct and evaluate indicators of sustainability, and brief ministers.

At the heart of our interest are three categories of potential users – decision and policy makers, journalists and other indicator producers/promoters or experts. The summative information on the impact/success factors of particular indicators important for potential indicator users are provided in Chapter 7.

4.2.6 Link to GDP

The Beyond GDP initiatives – and many others at national and/or sub-national level – have proposed indicators to alter or complement GDP and the other main economic indicators. EC distinguishes development of new measures of societal progress and attempts to enlarge GDP (EC, 2007). The latter starts from GDP (or other figures from the System of National Accounts) but adjusts for some of its shortcomings to deliver a more comprehensive overview of a country's wealth or well-being. Examples may be Adjusted Net Savings, Environmentally Sustainable National Income, Genuine Progress Indicator, Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare, and Sustainable National Income.

Costanza et al. (2009) speaks on (i) indexes that correct GDP (e.g. ISEW, GPI, and GreenGDP); (ii) indexes that do not use GDP (e.g. EF, subjective WB, GNH) and (iii) indexes that include GDP (HDI, HPI). All these initiatives stem from the realization that GDP is a measure of economic quantity, not economic quality or welfare.

A similar, comprehensive and comprehensible typology with regards to links between these alternatives and GDP was introduced by the European Parliament (EC 2007). It came with the following grouping of Beyond GDP indicators:

- Indicators adjusting GDP – they adjust GDP to incorporate a variety of economic, social or environmental factors which are not included in the conventional measure. These indicators can better capture living standards and welfare (e.g. ISEW, GPI etc.).
- Indicators replacing GDP (e.g. HDI, Gender-related HDI, EF, HPI, QUARS)
- Indicators supplementing GDP based on a national accounts system – Recent revisions of the System of National Accounts (SNA) have tried to widen the scope of the conventional national accounts to incorporate data and indicators relating to environmental and social factors (e.g. SEEA, NAMEA)

- Indicators supplementing GDP setting social and environmental information in relation to GDP (SDI, decoupling indicators, civil freedom indicators, MDG indicators).

4.3 Stock of Beyond GDP indicators and selection procedure leading to the indicator short list

Our framework helped us to roughly categorise the Beyond GDP indicators collated in the stock of indicators – Long list (see Annex) but it serves especially as a matrix for the selection of indicators for the more in-depth survey. Our intention was to cover all categories in the framework to have an overall view of indicator intentions and impact. Thus, not just to have an idea about the well-known international indicators, but the national or local as well, not just to have awareness about the most popular compound indicators, but the sets as well, or not just to have knowledge about the objective measures, but the subjective as well, etc.

We found over 100 indicator initiatives that can be considered as 'Beyond GDP' initiatives, with many more that could have been included if we were trying to make an exhaustive list.

Indeed several key initiatives have progressed substantially since the list was finalised at the beginning of 2012. For example, Eurostat have set up an Expert Group on Quality of Life Indicators[5] which is refining the recommendations of the Sponsorship Group on Measuring Progress, Well-being and Sustainable Development (European Statistical System Committee, 2011), as well as those of their own Feasibility Study on Well-being indicators.[6] They are also working on economic indicators as per the recommendations to introduce the household perspective by the Sponsorship Group.

The stock of Beyond GDP indicators (Fig. 9) is a database with descriptors that allows one to select requested indicators. The descriptors denote producers and promoters, timeframe, brief description, domain, type of indicator, level of impact, application to date and rhetoric.

Initiative/Indicator	Promoter(s), Producer(s	Proponent Categor	Year	Description	Domains (soc/eco	Domains (env	Objective / Subjectiv	Composite / Dashboar	Level (of impa
National Accounts of Well-Being (NAWB)	**nef**	NGO	2009	Based on European Social Survey well-being module, a set of around 50 subjective well-being measures brought together into a framework, with a hierarchy of composites, including an overall WB measure. The broadest set of subjective	Overall SWB, Social, Community		Subjective	Index and Dashboard	European
U-Index	Daniel Kahneman & Alan Krueger	Academic	2006	Proportion of a person's time engaged in an activity in which the dominant emotion was negative, averaged over individuals. Involves collecting data in Time Use surveys. Attempts to address some of the non-comparability issues in SWB.	Overall SWB, Time Use		Subjective	Aggregate	N/A

Fig. 9: Stock of Beyond GDP indicators

A mixture of criteria was used to select indicators from the long list for deeper analysis. Two criteria were applied to select the final 17 Beyond GDP initiatives: 1. The indicators portfolio (short list) was to cover all the indicator categories defined in the categorization framework; 2. Appearance in scientific literature, policy documents or public information space (i.e. well-known indicators):

[5] Information and documents related to first meeting available at https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/16392720-849a-42a5-9b35-15a3f6524825

[6] http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/gdp_and_beyond/achievements

- Better Life Index (OECD)
- DEFRA sustainable development indicators
- Domestic Material Consumption
- Ecological Footprint
- Eurostat set of sustainability indicators/ Eurostat set of well-being indicators
- Gallup-Healthway Well-being Index
- Genuine Progress Index/ Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare (ISEW)
- Gross Domestic Product
- Gross National Happiness
- Happy Life Years
- Human Development Index
- Jacksonville Community Indicators
- Measuring National Well-being Programme (UK)
- OECD Guidelines on the measurement of subjective well-being
- Regional Index on Alternative Quality of Life Indicators (QUARS)
- Societal Progress Indicators and Responsibilities for All (SPIRAL)
- UN CSD sustainable development indicators.

This selection resulted in an indicator short list that was then further described and analysed (documented in fact-sheets) to provide a quick but informative picture of the recent developments in Beyond GDP measurements. These main selection criteria were also accompanied by a pragmatic need to get a reasonably limited and manageable group of indicators (10 – 15).

Chapter 5: Results from the media survey

As stated in the methodological part of the Report (see Chapter 2), the media analysis could stand as one of the objective proxies for indicator impact. Politicians perceive the media as a key player on the political field in the sense of possessing the power to influence public opinion. The media have the potential to reach a wide range of people who either do or do not engage in formal politics. That's why politicians are mostly interested in the media attractiveness of an indicator which is or can be used in their political campaigns. Media attractiveness therefore denotes several aspects: (i) *how often* the indicators appear in the media (especially in recent years), (ii) *in what context* (negative or positive), and (iii) *what kind of media* release the information.

In the media analysis, we explored how often the 17 selected indicators appear in the ProQuest databases that cover hundreds of U.S., Canadian and international newspapers, and thousands of dissertations, reports and other expert media from various fields. In addition, we looked at what kinds of media (public, experts) are interested in indicator presentation. We were fully aware that our survey provided just a first approximation of real results. Nevertheless, even this approach brought new insights in terms of the impact of the selected indicator.

The 17 selected indicators were clustered in three categories in order to generalise the results and the possibility of making comparisons.

The first category represents the indicators used on an ***international level***. For this category (relevant for most selected indicators), a media survey was the most appropriate method because the ProQuest databases cover international media written in English or at least media that have English abstracts. We have used English terms like "Ecological Footprint", "Human Development Index" etc. for the search (not any equivalent terms in national languages). Such a methodological approach discriminated against the two other categories – indicators used on a ***national level*** (e.g. DEFRA Sustainable Development Set) or the indicators used on a ***local level*** (e.g. QUARS) to some extent. This is because information about such indicators appears most of all in national and/or local media. Moreover, in non-English speaking countries, names of indicators translated into national languages reinforces this "discrimination" even more. The importance of these two categories for a media coverage survey is therefore just to show whether the index has appeared in some other media than the local ones which might increase the interest of potential users.

For example, the regional initiative QUARS by the Italian organisation Lunaria has penetrated the media monitored by ProQuest even though it´s a local initiative. It might indicate the attractiveness of the QUARS approach for the public and potentially also for politicians because at the present time when they are overwhelmed with both important and pointless information, journalists choose QUARS as an interesting topic for readers. Another example of great indicator success in terms of featuring in public media is the Bhutanese initiative, Gross National Happiness. It seems that a happiness theme has attracted journalists to such an extent that the national indicator – applied in a small remote country with very specific living conditions – has appeared in the media more often than the economic alternative indicator ISEW or the socially-oriented HLY index. Lastly, we can´t leave out the success of the national Gallup-Healthway Index with similar media coverage to the international Genuine Progress Index.

The results of the media survey based on the ProQuest databases search are summarised in the Fig. 10; the figures determine indicator rankings. As we can see, the most popular indicators used on an international level are HDI and EF. Both indicators offer an interesting theme for public media, although the expert media deal extensively with both indicator sets as well. Both indicator sets illustrate the complex reality using a single figure that enables an

easy comparison between countries or regions and/or easy trend monitoring. It also seems that both indicators are easily understandable for journalists and therefore for the general public as well, although the methodology behind them is not so straightforward. We are convinced that the easy way they are interpreted and presented (e.g. the EF calculator and a well-structured HDR report) as well as the interesting information they contain appeal to journalists and consequently the public. The next indicators that are successful in terms of their media coverage are the economic ones – GPI and ISEW. They both modify the GDP measure with further information. Compared with the two indicators above, the media attractiveness of GPI and ISEW are significantly lower. It might be that the economic indicators are in more difficult situation when attempting to compete with well-established GDP. The fast-increasing appearance in the media of a brand new indicator – the OECD´s BLI – may also be judged a success.

As we stated at the beginning, media attractiveness can help to achieve the success of an indicator in terms of its attractiveness to policymakers and politicians via the public. The indicator providers are well aware of media power. This fact arose from the interviews with the indicator providers (e.g. Eurostat) in that they have started looking for innovative ways to shape their information (indicators) to be attractive to the general public. The aim is to educate the public and encourage active communication with policy-makers and politicians. The media are one of the appropriate ways of doing so.

In order to communicate the media analysis results to politicians and policy-makers in a feasible and effective manner, the basic information has been included in the fact sheets. A table in the section “Indicator factors from the public perspective” gives the total number of all results, the ratio of public and expert media coverage and types of public media dealing with the indicator sets (newspapers, magazines, etc.). Based on this information, a decision whether an indicator set has a chance to appeal the public could be made. The figure in the “Indicator factors from the policy perspective ” shows coverage of the indicators over time. It enables an assessment to be made of the currency of the indicator in terms of media attractiveness or links the indicator to a particular political situation (e.g. economic crisis, period of prosperity, etc.). It may assist politicians in choosing the indicator set that effectively helps in discussing a political situation. Finally, the “Indicator factors from the science perspective” section includes a table describing which expert media and to what extent they cover the selected indicators. The politicians can make their own judgement about the methodological soundness of the indicator.

Level of impact	Indicator/ Initiative	Total number of results[7]	Experts media	Public media
International	Better Life Index (OECD)	103	21	82
	Domestic Material Consumption	31	27	4
	Ecological Footprint	8,596	2,598	5,998
	Eurostat set of sustainability indicators	15	13	2
	Genuine Progress Index	527	212	315
	Gross Domestic Product	589,660	120,744	468,916
	Happy Life Years	47	29	18
	Human Development Index	12,997	4,677	8,320
	Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare (ISEW)	221	131	90
	Societal Progress Indicators and Responsibilities for All (SPIRAL)	0	0	0
	UN CSD sustainable development indicators	28	28	0
National	DEFRA sustainable development indicators	4	2	2
	Gallup-Healthway Well-being Index	646	143	503
	Gross National Happiness	2,368	353	2,015
	Measuring National Well-being Programme (UK)	14	0	14
Local	Jacksonville Community Indicators	0	0	0
	Regional Index on Alternative Quality of Life Indicators (QUARS)	31	15	16

Fig. 10: Selected indicators clustered based on level of impact with media coverage results

[7] The figure denotes number of appearances in all media covered by ProQuest during their whole duration (since the first publication in media until present).

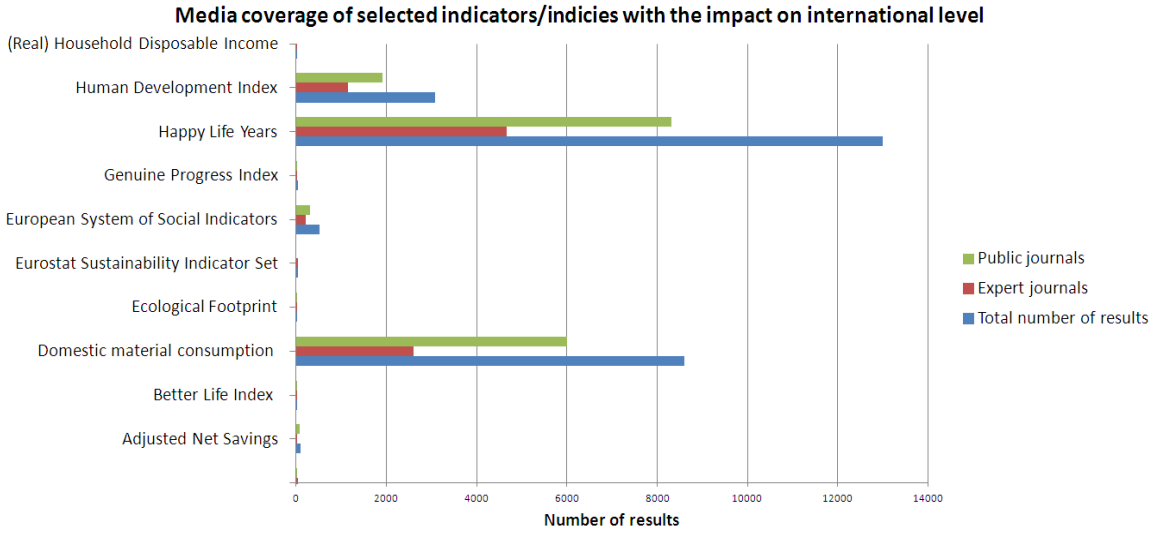

Fig 11: Media coverage of selected indicators with the impact on an international level

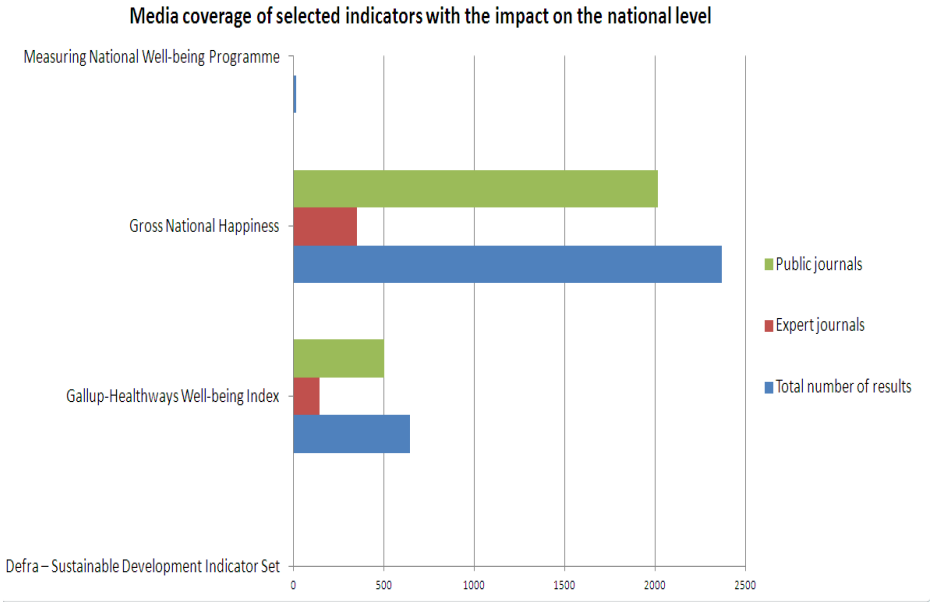

Fig. 12 : Media coverage of selected indicators with the impact on the national level

Chapter 6: Indicator promoter interviews

6.1 Introduction & Summary

This chapter presents the results from the interviews carried out with indicator promoters. It is divided into four main sections; 6.2 presents the **intentions** behind the indicator initiatives; 6.3 discusses the **audiences and the channels** used to reach them; and 6.4 outlines the **influences** they achieved. 6.5 identifies some **common lessons**[i]. Throughout, initiatives are referred to by their codes (which are listed in the table in the Annex), in square brackets, in grey when presented as lists.

As this Chapter is rather lengthy, the remainder of this section (sections 6.1.2 through to 6.1.5) provides an abbreviated summary, including the main findings and conclusions as well as some key quotes. Before that, however, section 6.1.1 provides a brief introduction to the initiatives.

6.1.1 Introduction to initiatives

We chose a range of very different initiatives for this stage of WP1, although with a focus on those that have had more impact. This focus on impactful initiatives meant that we probably included more 'official' initiatives than might be considered representative of the initiative pool we had identified in the long list.

Official initiatives (those lead by governmental or supra-governmental organisations) included those undertaken by the Council of Europe [SPIRAL], the UK Department for the Environment [Defra] and Office of National Statistics [MNW], the East Midlands Development Agency [ISEW], Eurostat [Estat-WB] and [Estat-SD], the OECD [BLI] and [HSWB] and the UN [UN SDI]. Most of the other initiatives were led by NGOs: Global Footprint Network [EF – Ecological Footprint], Lunaria [QUARS], Redefining Progress [GPI] and the Wuppertal Institute [DMC], with the remaining three lead by an academic – Ruut Veenhoven [HLY]; a business – Gallup [Gallup]; or a community group – Jacksonville Community Council Inc. [JCCI].
For a more detailed categorisation of initiatives according to issue, number of indicators and level of use (e.g. national or local), see the categorisation framework in Chapter 4.

6.1.2 Intentions – Summary

We identified nine categories of intentions behind the indicator initiatives explored in this research:

1) achieving organisational goals
2) influencing policy
3) encouraging data collection
4) pursuing democratic goals
5) influencing the public
6) influencing internal processes
7) enhancing knowledge
8) enhancing reputations
9) providing tools for other organisations

By far the most important goal was to influence policy (2). Two 'types' of target policy were evident in the interviews – **macro-policy** and **micro-policy**. Macro-policy refers to the use of alternative indicators to evaluate progress overall or identify priorities:

> *"Indicator of broad macroeconomic policy and where we should be going with it"*

Initiatives intending to influence macro-policy included the Genuine Progress Index (e.g. quote above), the Better Life Initiative, the ONS Measuring National Well-Being Programme and Happy Life Years.

Micro-policy refers to informing specific finer-grained policy decisions based on evidence. Initiatives that focussed on this included the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index and the OECD Handbook of Subjective Well-Being.

Another important distinction we were able to make amongst initiatives was between those initiatives that (at least publicly) present themselves as somehow being neutral providers of **information** to improve policy decisions, and those that have a clear and **explicit goal beyond measurement** that they believe alternative indicators will be able to advance, typically an organisational goal (1). Often NSO initiatives fell into the former category, whilst examples of the latter include the Ecological Footprint (which has environmental goals), SPIRAL (which aims to support the promotion of social cohesion), and QUARS (which aims to stimulate debate and democracy). For example:

> *"We are now in a society where the objective is GDP, it is economic objectives, but this has never been discussed". "There is no democratic discussion"*

Aside from policy, the most common goal for initiatives was **influencing public** thinking (5). In some cases this was framed as being about public debate – and therefore linked to ultimately changing policy (e.g. QUARS, the Ecological Footprint and the Measuring National Well-Being Programme). Also mentioned was the idea of changing the way people make their own personal decisions (e.g. Happy Life Years and SPIRAL).

These kinds of influences can be seen as **conceptual** –whereby it is not necessarily literally the case that an individual or policy-maker needs to be looking at data for the indicator to have an influence. However, most initiatives aimed to have influence **instrumentally**– e.g. for indicators to be used consciously and explicitly. Political use (e.g. to aid lobbying by other organisations (9)) can also be identified, as well as symbolic use, to demonstrate dedication to an issue (8).

The interviews suggested that the name 'Beyond GDP' may be something of an exaggeration when it comes to the aims of indicator promoters. Most initiatives saw their goals as being to complement GDP, rather than presenting an alternative to it. Nevertheless, exceptions to this rule could be found amongst various types of actors, including NGOs, academics, but also supra-governmental organisations. For example, for the OECD Better Life Initiative, well-being (as assessed by that initiative) represents, in a way that GDP doesn't:

> "the *only concept that allows you to assess* all *the links between different policy areas*".

6.1.3 Audiences and channels – Summary

Interviewees were asked about the audiences they targeted with their initiatives and the channels they used to reach them.

Unsurprisingly, the primary audience was often **policy-makers**, and the primary channel direct contact with said policy-makers. The only initiative that aimed to influence policy but which did not achieve much direct contact with policy-makers was the Genuine Progress Index. This is perhaps not surprising given the ambition of the initiative.

It is also interesting to note that the direction of travel between what might be considered the grassroots (including small NGOs and the public) and the policy world (including NSOs and supra-national organisations) is not always 'upwards'. Several official initiatives can also be seen to be reaching 'downwards' and the **public** and **civil society** were regularly mentioned as audiences. In some cases, this may well simply be a matter of statutory duty, but there may also be an element of attempting to draw public support for an agenda which, whilst existing in official bodies, is still not established.

Other audiences mentioned included business, the media, academics, and internal audiences. Considering the audience triangle (Figure 5, Chapter 3) only a few initiatives focussed on the 'bottom' of the triangle, i.e. a **technical** audience.

Other channels, included websites, printed material, events, conferences, the academic world and campaign networks.

6.1.4 Influences – Summary

Most of the indicator initiatives we have covered are less than 10 years old and yet we have filled many pages with a summary of the impacts they believe they have achieved. We noted nine main types of influence:

1) media influences
2) policy influences
3) influences on data collection
4) influences on practitioners
5) influences on internal processes
6) influences on reputation
7) influences on public attitudes
8) 'real world' influences
9) influence on the spread of initiatives around the world

These map directly onto five of the intentions mentioned in section 6.1.1.

Given that policy influence was the most common initiative intention, we focussed on actual policy influences in this part of the interview. Sometimes, rather simple influences were noted, such as evidence that an initiative had been picked up by a politician (**transmission**), or was **referred** to by one.

Use of Beyond GDP indicators in **assessment** represents the next step up from this. Examples of this include:

- The GPI, ISEW and QUARS being integrated into regional and/or local official assessment frameworks in the US, UK and Italy respectively.
- The Ecological Footprint being used to set environmental impact targets in several national governments.

Some interviewees also reported actual **policy changes**, which could be connected to their indicators, including:

- Schemes to improve habitat for farmland birds implemented after inclusion of a farmlands bird index in the UK Defra Sustainable Development Indicator set.
- Change in sentencing guidelines, also in the UK, as a result of the growing interest in subjective well-being (associated with the Measuring National Well-Being programme). This can be seen as an example of a conceptual influence, rather than an instrumental one.

- $15 billion earmarked by UAE government to develop alternative energy sources, and raise awareness about sustainability issues, which has been linked to the countries poor showing in the Ecological Footprint.
- Influence in the delivery of public health projects in the USA, thanks to the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index.

However, the most prolific changes were achieved at the local/state level, specifically by the Jacksonville Community Council Indicators and the Council of Europe SPIRAL project. These include, but are not limited to:

- Policy and action to reduce infant mortality (JCCI)
- Introduction of policy at state level (Florida) in connection to substance use and reoffenders (JCCI).
- Changes of local policy, signing of agreements, and the funding of a new post in relation to sustainability (JCCI).
- Changes to delivery of food relief project in France (SPIRAL)
- Change to approach to homelessness in Belgium (SPIRAL)

Similarly, only two initiatives were able to claim '**real world'** impact, both at a more local or small-scale level. The Jacksonville initiative is believed to have been instrumental in reducing infant mortality rates, recidivism and water pollution in the area. Meanwhile, the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index has been used to change human resources policy in businesses with measurable outcomes in terms of well-being.

Influence on **public attitudes** is even harder to assess, though one initiative (QUARS) felt it could claim this:

> *"We know that we have been part of the debate in Italy and the debate is growing… I'm sure we have some role in it."*

Other influences include:

- Contributing to the increase in the collection of subjective well-being **data** by NSOs (the OECD Guidelines on measurement of subjective well-being).
- Influencing the priorities of philanthropists (Jacksonville).
- Internal influences – for example raising the profile of the well-being agenda within the OECD, fostering internal debate about progress in the East Midlands Development Agency
- Reputation – improving or changing the external reputation of an organisation, highlighting that it not just focussing on economic growth (again, the OECD, and the East Midlands Development Agency)

Another interesting observation is the circularity of impacts – with initiatives impacting upon one another as agendas develop. This highlights the close-knit nature of some of the communities working on Beyond GDP type initiatives, as well as the complex nature of change.

6.1.5 Lessons – Summary

The interviews provided several lessons on how Beyond GDP indicator promoters and producers can achieve their intentions, some of which were corroborated by the questionnaires. We were able to use the categorisation developed in Chapter 3 to structure these lessons, although there was some overlap between categories.

- Indicator factors – salience for policy-makers. Indicators were successful when they could be demonstrated to be applicable to policy or strategy. This included the following lessons:
    - Fitting with an organisational vision or strategy. Typically this worked best when the indicator was produced in-house, though the ISEW was one exception to this rule.
    - Application to action. The indicators need to measure something that policy-makers believe they can influence. This is one of the biggest hurdles to the uptake of subjective well-being indicators, which explains why several initiatives promoting them are also working to build the evidence base on how policy can influence well-being.
    - Low cost implications. In the current climate, indicators that might provide clues for low cost policies, or indeed ones that can help save money are of particular interest to policy-makers.

  Other lessons included the value of demonstrating links between what the indicator purports to measure and other goals which are already embedded in an organisation, and being relevant for multiple audiences.
- Indicator factors – salience for broader audience. Chapter 3 highlighted that what is important to make an indicator successful depends on the audience it is aimed at. A few lessons emerged on how to make an indicator salient for broad audiences, including the public and politicians. A couple are about the indicator itself, but some lessons can be learnt simply about its communication:
    - Simplicity. Initiatives such as the Better Life Initiative and the ISEW were believed to be successful because they presented complex topics in simple terms.
    - Understandability. Initiatives such as the Ecological Footprint and SPIRAL were believed to be successful because they related a meaningful concept to audiences – in the first case one's consumption footprint, in the other their well-being.
    - Communication. Initiatives reported being sensitive to taboo words, and working with communication experts to ensure successful communication.
- Indicator factors – credibility. Aside from a general comment on the importance of quality data, the most interesting discussion here concerned the use of composite indicators with some serious comments on the danger of over-simplification, for example:

  "The world's too complicated to reduce it to a single indicator"

  The Better Life Initiative provides a particularly interesting approach to tackling this problem as it deals with some of the concerns of composites by allowing the user to decide how to weight the components. It is worth noting that creating a composite was not just seen as important for improving communication to broad audience, it was also seen as useful for policy-makers as it allowed trade-offs to be assessed.
- Indicator factors – legitimacy. Three key lessons emerged from interviews related to this indicator factor:
    - Being, or appearing, neutral. Neutrality was seen as the best route to legitimacy. In the words of one interviewee, "advocacy organisations' data are useless". How do different initiatives deal with this? Initiatives lead by NSOs are properly the closest to genuinely being only interested in improving policy and increasing knowledge and therefore being completely neutral. A couple of initiatives, including the Jacksonville Community Council Indicators, and

SPIRAL exist in a framework of seeking to increase democratic participation – neutrality for them is about reflecting the public's they include. Other initiatives, with explicit non-measurement goals, such as the GPI or EF either did not mention this issue or acknowledged that they were perceived as representing a particularly position.

- Institutional power. Another way to ensure legitimacy is by having an institutional power. This was mentioned by the OECD and the Council of Europe.

"What we are doing could not be done by an NGO"

- Nevertheless, whilst this was useful for influencing other official organisations, a separate effort was seen to be needed to convince the public of legitimacy.
- Working with your audience. Initiatives that are developed by or with the users they are intended for, regularly demonstrated more success.

- Relationships/process.
  - Direct contact with audience. Working through networks, allowing direct contact with audiences is useful when it is not possible to work directly with the audience. The interviews revealed that many successes can be linked specifically to personal contacts. The questionnaire results highlighted that most initiatives that had achieved some success in terms of policy had reached policy-makers through direct face-to-face channels.
  - Small is beautiful. Initiatives working in a local context have appeared to have the greatest immediate success, although of course, even these initiatives recognised the need for national action.
  - Partnerships. Working in partnership is often an effective solution to some of the challenges noted during the interviews. More often than not this is about preserving legitimacy and 'expected' roles. For example, policy units can help demonstrate the policy applicability of indicators in ways that statistics units are not expected to. Advocacy organisations can make use of data in ways that would compromise the apparent neutrality of the indicator initiative. Having said that, perceived neutrality may not always be the best way to ensure partners engage – one initiative noted that its values and the narrative it provided helped attract partners.
  - Identifying allies. Several initiatives noted the importance of having allies within the organisations that they are trying to influence. It appears to be valuable to work with them (people who are already converted) and provide tools for them to win others over, rather than attempting to challenge sceptics head-on.

- User factors. The most important user factor identified was academic background, with those with economic and particularly macro-economic backgrounds more suspicious of Beyond GDP indicators, and those with social science backgrounds more welcoming. This runs contradictory to the lesson from indicator use in general, which suggests that people with hard science backgrounds are more interested in using indicators. One approach to dealing with this barrier was to use economic language and techniques to convince sceptics. Age was another factor mentioned, with younger people being more open to Beyond GDP indicators.

- Policy/context factors. Often these wider factors are harder for initiatives to influence, but it is useful to understand them.
  - Political agenda and problem identification. Consistent with Kingdon (2011), interviewees recognised the need for policy innovations such as Beyond GDP initiatives to coincide with both a favourable political agenda and a problem

that the innovation can be seen to solve. The Stiglitz Commission is seen as having provided the former in 2009. The economic crisis was seen by a couple of interviewees as a possibly opportunity in terms of being a problem that can be related to the Beyond GDP agenda, but others saw it as a challenge for Beyond GDP initiatives as it has moved the policy focus.

- Ideology. One strong barrier against Beyond GDP indicator uptake, particularly in relation to subjective well-being and composite indicators, is an ideological one. Attempts to measure progress in new ways are seen to imply greater government 'interference' and have been rejected by libertarian and some other right-wing political positions. Often ideological arguments are not the first to be put forward.
- Vested interests. A few interviewees hinted at potential vested interests against Beyond GDP indicators. In all cases, these were identified as people who currently had a position of expertise or power in relation to decisions that may be bypassed or made redundant by new indicators.
- Public pressure. The importance of public interest in Beyond GDP indicators was noted both by those working from outside government, but also by those working within.

The remainder of this chapter will now go into these results in more detail.

6.2 Intentions[ii]

Nine categories of intentions were discussed with interviewees.

6.2.1 Achieving broader organisational goals

In some cases, intentions behind initiatives were about the broader goals of the organisation or the individual.[8]

For example the Council of Europe's overall goal since the year 2000 has been social cohesion, defined as "the capacity of society to ensure the well-being of all" so one of the purposes of [SPIRAL] is to be an indicator that helps achieve that goal. This also applies to the [BLI] (which fits into the OECD's motto of developing 'better policies for better lives'), the [EF] (which the producers believe will help achieve reductions in environmental impact) and [QUARS] (Lunaria's goals are to create debate, recommendations for policy making, and tools for civil society).

6.2.2 Influencing policy

All 16 initiatives explicitly hoped or expected to have an impact on policy, directly or indirectly.

Two broad categories of intended policy impacts can be identified which we can characterise as 'macro' and 'micro'. By macro, we refer to overall priority-setting and a general assessment of how well a country or locality is doing. By micro, we refer to how indicators might have an influence on detail in specific policy areas. Aside from this distinction, it is also worth highlighting, which we do later, the specific intentions of some initiatives to extend their influence into economic policy.

[8] In other cases, the goals of the organisation in question are limited to measurement (typically the case for NSIs), and therefore, at least institutionally, one cannot talk of goals beyond the intentions directly related to measurement.

Macro-policy

In many cases[9], the intention of the initiative was to provide a different framework for evaluating progress overall or identifying priorities at the macro level:

> *"Indicator of broad macroeconomic policy and where we should be going with it"*

In some cases, this is framed in terms of making comparisons, for example between countries [Estat-SD] [HLY] or regions [ISEW] [QUARS]. In other cases, it's framed in terms of monitoring progress, for example towards sustainable development [Estat-WB], or generally [HLY] [SPIRAL]. In one case [HLY], it was explicitly suggested that these comparisons would allow analysis which might lead to a better understanding of what was important for well-being. Comparing countries in terms of the [HLY], for example, will allow people to identify which features of the state and policy seem to be related to well-being and which are not.

Identifying priorities was linked to the idea that these indicator initiatives measured something that was somehow 'cross-cutting'. The [BLI] and [GPI] are both intended to help people think about priorities and policy foci, by bringing together different issues. The two initiatives do this in different ways though. Whilst the [BLI] puts these issues side-by-side allowing countries to identify (through implicit comparison with other countries) where they are doing well and where they are doing badly, the [GPI] brings the issues into a single indicator which means that their relative impacts on an overall score are quantitatively visible, allowing one to put GDP in the context of social/economic costs.

The introduction of an 'overall score' which will allow direct comparison of the importance of different issues tends to require the proposition of a composite indicator, with all the various issues included. The [HLY] indicator, however, avoids this problem.[10] Measuring how long and happy people live allows one to identify what is good for people without relying on experts to define it, in terms of what they think are necessary determinants such as 'libraries' and 'poetry', nor in terms of what people buy. In this way, one can see what actually determines what the producer sees as well-being and therefore identify priorities.

Not all the interviewees intended or expected their initiatives to influence policy in this priority-setting way. For example, one of the creators of [QUARS] doubted that the indicator would shift politicians' priorities, believing that those who paid attention to the indicator were probably already sympathetic to the priorities it highlights.

> *"He [the politician] does not really decide because you have put that indicator in the list of priorities. I think he still will decide because of his political view, his priorities."*

Another interviewee didn't feel that their initiative on subjective well-being indicators within the OECD *should* radically change policy priorities, saying that it would be a "*stunning indictment of democracy*" if it did. It is important, however, to put this comment in context, as the other OECD initiative we explored, the [BLI], did see shifting priorities as its main goal.

Micro-policy

Some initiatives had the intention of influencing the detail of policy [Gallup] [HSWB].

In the case of the [HSWB], the intention is for subjective well-being data to ultimately impact on decision-making, e.g. by allowing soft outcomes to be measured in cost-benefit analysis. They believed that subjective well-being measurement would lead to 'better policies'. The [GPI] initiative is also intended to be able to assist in cost-benefit analysis, as well as in the assessment of policy, forecasting impacts and legislative analysis.

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[9] [GPI] [MNW] [Estat-WB] [Estat-SD] [BLI] [EF] [HLY] [SPIRAL]

Other interviewees rejected the idea that their initiatives could directly influence detailed policy. For example, on the [QUARS]:

> *"I don't know if specific policies can be based on such a general indicator"*

Experts, it was believed, should already know the data that was included in the indicator. Similarly, policy-makers are not intended to 'draw policy' from the BLI.

> *"When you look at results, you don't know what is the role of policy in all that."*

In this case, the reason was because the initiative is measuring outcomes, and there is a further step to connect outcomes to policies.

Extending impact into economic policy

There was a sense that emerged in a couple of interviews [SPIRAL] [BLI], that it is important not to restrict influence just to social policy, but to influence economic policy as well. Similarly, those behind the [EF] are keen to target Ministries of Finance, rather than just environmental departments.

6.2.3 Encouraging data collection

Only one initiative strongly identified goals around encouraging data collection by NSOs [HSWB]. Two further initiatives did mention this goal on specific questioning [HLY] [BLI]. In the case of [HLY], whilst the intention is more about the prominence of the data in official statistics than data collection itself, they have engaged in some processes with NSOs to "ensure best practice" with relation to data collection. Another interviewee sits on the UK ONS Technical Advisory Group, where he has been lobbying for the use of a particular measure of subjective well-being which Gallup uses in their surveys.

In informal conversation with someone from the Global Footprint Network, it emerged that encouraging official data collection for the [EF] was seen as something that would be nice to have, rather than a priority for the organisation.

6.2.4 Pursuing democratic goals

Some of the intentions behind Beyond GDP indicator initiatives can be understood in relation to the pursuit of democratic goals.

Often, indicator initiatives frame their approach to influencing policy in terms of bringing a neutral evidence-base to decisions [HLY] [BLI]. Another intention is to bring public voice into decision-making [JCCI] [SPIRAL] [QUARS]. In the case of [JCCI], the intention is to influence policy in a way that respects participation and civic democracy. For those behind [SPIRAL], there is need for a democratic discussion around how we define society's objectives:

> *"We are now in a society where the objective is GDP, it is economic objectives, but this has never been discussed". "There is no democratic discussion"*

[SPIRAL] is intended to help provide tools for cities/regions/countries to develop their own measures using a bottom-up approach. [QUARS] achieved some of its impacts (see later sections) because it was seen to be embedded in a notion of participation.

6.2.5 Influencing the public

Associated with the above is the goal of influencing the public itself. Two types of goal fit under this heading.

Firstly, some initiatives were intended to *help people think about their lives and choices* [HLY] [SPIRAL] [MNW]. This could be done in several ways, including the presentation of data [MNW] [HLY], highlighting the importance of an issue [HLY], or having people involved in engagement activities [SPIRAL].

Another goal can be seen in [QUARS], whose aims were predominantly *awareness-raising and influencing ideas* and debate (also true of [EF] [MNW] and perhaps [Defra]).

6.2.6 Influencing internal processes

For some initiatives, goals can be seen as 'internal', i.e. influencing other people within the organisation. This is the case for [SPIRAL], which sits within a large organisation with different departments. [SPIRAL] is intended to encourage other groups in the Council of Europe to use their results and replicate their methodology in their work.

6.2.7 Enhancing knowledge

For some initiatives, intentions can be framed in terms of enhancing knowledge. This was the case for three initiatives, all connected to subjective well-being.

For example, Gallup is keen to gather granular data on well-being which they can use to create benchmarks against which to compare well-being in consultancy projects. The OECD created the [HSWB] with the intention of better understanding subjective well-being and exploring its validity. The interviewee hopes that the data collection it will encourage will enable some of the key questions on well-being to be resolved over the next few years. Similarly, [Estat-WB] began as an attempt to understand the impact of policy on well-being. The current work is not expected to directly lead to policy-recommendations, but rather help in an 'iterative' way, also informing data collection in other surveys.

6.2.8 Enhancing reputation

Reputation-related objectives were seen as important by some. This was the case for two initiatives in particular. The [BLI] was pursued as part of the OECD's rebranding in 2011 ('Better policies for better lives'). For Gallup, the aim was to use the knowledge base they built to enhance their reputation as a 'trusted advisor'.

6.2.9 Providing tools for other organisations

A further set of initiatives can be understood as providing tools for other organisations, including civil society, businesses, and schools. For example, [QUARS] is intended as a tool for local civil society to use for lobbying. The [UN SDI] was intended to help 'grassroots' activities. The [HLY] is also intended for use by organisations such as old age homes and schools to assess themselves.

6.2.10 Discussion: Complementing GDP?

It is important to consider how indicator promoters see their work in relation to GDP. Most saw their work as sitting *alongside* GDP [Gallup] [GPI] [Estat-SD] [UN SDI] [ISEW].

For example, one interviewee said that it would be "a great tactical mistake for advocates to propose these measures as replacements".

Several said their work should help put GDP in context, by helping us understand what the point of economic growth is [HSWB], or by helping us understand the trade-offs involved in pursuing it [QUARS]. The UN interviewee felt that GDP should generally play a much smaller role in policy-making.

Some interviewees were wary of taking a stand on GDP. The [EF] was portrayed as neither pro- nor anti-GDP. The [JCCI] is not put forward as a replacement or even complement to GDP, although the interviewee noted that, when community's priorities are identified, economic growth per se tends not to be high up the list.

> *"The production of stuff is a long way from a measure of progress".*

Three initiatives can be seen as taking a strong 'Beyond GDP' stance. One such (pragmatic) stance was that GDP is unlikely to increase anymore, so we need an alternative measure of progress. The promoter of the [HLY] believes that, although social progress cannot be captured in a single indicator, once you are measuring [HLY], environmental impact and progress in understanding, then GDP is no longer needed as a measure of social progress.

> *"[It] measures how liveable a society is for humans. Which in my view is not the only and ultimate measure because you should also measure environmental effects and you could also look at progress in understanding"*

Another 'strong' position on going beyond GDP as a measure of progress was voiced in the OECD. For the promoter of the [BLI], well-being (as assessed by that initiative) provides "the *only concept that allows you to assess* all *the links between different policy areas*".

> *"Whatever policy objectives you have, you should set them into an integrated policy framework which has as an overarching goal the increase in people's well-being"*

6.2.11 Discussion: Instrumental, conceptual and political use

To what extent do indicator producer intentions map onto the three types of indicator use identified in the literature – instrumental, conceptual and political? All interviewees who were asked talked about their goals in terms of how the indicators could be used *instrumentally*– where their indicators are consciously and explicitly used to inform decisions and make comparisons. However, a few did refer to other desired impacts which can be considered to fit within the other two categories.

Much of what was said about [QUARS] suggests that its main purpose was to stimulate debate about development – a goal of *conceptual use***.** Three other initiatives cited 'awareness-raising' as a goal. [HLY] [SPIRAL] [MNW].

Political uses were not typically cited as goals of the producers themselves. One exception was the [QUARS], whose producers want it to be used by civil society for lobbying. Also, on occasions where the producer sat within a big organisation, then one can see how the organisation overall uses the indicator politically. For example the [BLI] has a symbolic value for the OECD, demonstrating the organisation's dedication to an issue.

6.3 Audiences & Channels

Interviewees were asked about the audiences they targeted with their initiatives and the channels they used to reach them[iii].

6.3.1 Audiences

Unsurprisingly, the most important audience for initiatives was policy-makers, mentioned by [Gallup] [Defra] [Estat-SD] [MNW] [BLI] [UN SDI] [ISEW] [JCCI] [SPIRAL] [EF]. In the case of the [JCCI] and [SPIRAL] the focus was on local policy-makers. The developer of the [HSWB] also mentioned policy-makers, though for them, this is a secondary audience.

Politicians (as distinct from policy-makers) were only mentioned by one initiative [MNW], although local politicians probably also played a role in [QUARS]. In the case of [GPI], they were actually seen as barriers to change.

The general public were perhaps the second-most mentioned audience [Defra] [BLI] [HLY] [QUARS] [MNW] [GPI] [EF]. Many interviewees mentioned the public as an audience, although did not mention having any specific impact on the public as an intention. For some, influencing the public was seen most importantly as a way to get policy change [GPI] [EF]. One initiative noted that they would like to engage more with the general public and were

currently developing approaches to doing so [Estat-SD]. For [Gallup], the public was mentioned, but was not seen as too important.

A third frequently-mentioned audience was civil society [QUARS], with specific mention of NGOs [GPI] [MNW], community activists [JCCI], philanthropists [JCCI] and community leaders [Gallup].

[HSWB] was the only initiative that cited NSOs as their most important audience.

Other audiences mentioned by interviewees included:

- Business [Gallup] [EF] [MNW] [JCCI];
- The media [HLY], including local media [JCCI], and specialist media [Estat-SD];
- Academics & researchers [HLY] [GPI] [Estat-SD]
- Regional stakeholders that organisation engages with [ISEW]
- Sustainable development stakeholders [Estat-WB]
- Internal (executive team, board) [ISEW]
- Developing countries [Gallup]
- Students [Defra]

One point worth noting here is the case of *academics and researchers*, who were seen as the 'rigour police' one needs to convince in order for one's initiative to be taken seriously by policy-makers.

6.3.2 Channels

By far the most common channel cited by the interviewees was direct engagement with the intended audience [Gallup] [Defra] [Estat-SD] [EF] [BLI] [UN SDI] [HLY] [JCCI] [SPIRAL].

This was not the case in the results of the questionnaire. One might speculate that more successful initiatives have tended to be those able to engage directly. It is worth noting that two further initiatives, not listed above, do intend to engage with their audiences further, but this is work-in-progress [MNW] [HSWB]. For example the [HSWB], once completed, will be taken on a roadshow to various NSOs.

This direct engagement takes various forms. [Gallup] frequently do consultancy work for government. They also provide individual briefings to members of parliament, Lords and government departments. The promoter of [HLY] is also invited to present and discuss his work at ministries and with political parties. He described this process as follows: First a policy-maker will read about his work through the media; then they will invite him in for a lecture; then sometimes he will be called upon to provide specific advice.

Other initiatives working at the community-level are also able to secure direct engagement with their audience [JCCI] [SPIRAL].

Other important channels mentioned by interviewees included:

- Websites [Defra] [Gallup] [Estat-SD] [HLY] [SPIRAL] [EF]
- Printed material, including booklets disseminated to schools and colleges [Defra],leaflets distributed in city halls and public places [Defra], the Statistics Explained report [Estat-SD], booklet dissemination in fair trade shops [QUARS] and other publications [ISEW]
- Events and conferences [EF] [UN SDI] [ISEW]; Fairs and festivals [QUARS]
- The academic world [HLY] [UN SDI]
- Campaign network [QUARS]

6.4 Influences

6.4.1 Media influences

Only a few interviewees cited media influence as an important goal[11]. It is perhaps not surprising that those that *did* talk about media influence were unofficial initiatives, either academic or lead by civil society. It is likely that, for these initiatives, media influence was a more important stepping stone to other goals, whilst for other initiatives, it was seen to be less necessary, or a given.

Actual media influence is covered in Chapter 5, based on data from ProQuest. Here we identify a few factors which interviewees believed to be of particular interest to the media:

- Local and regional stories [JCCI] [QUARS]
- Maps [QUARS]
- Happy message ("I got the role in the media of providing the happy news" during the recession) [HLY]
- The negative impact of inequality [GPI]
- Adoption of initiative by local and regional government [QUARS]

6.4.2 Policy influences

Given the intentions of the people interviewed to influence policy, we focussed discussion on policy influence. We have divided this section into four types of policy influence[12]:

- Transmission to policy makers (as assessed by access)
- Reference by policy makers
- Use of indicators in assessment
- Actual change in policy

Transmission to policy makers

Transmission to policy makers was mentioned a lot by supra-national organisations such as the OECD and Council of Europe[iv].

For example, the [HSWB] was providing opportunities to engage with Cabinet-type bodies that have overarching policy remits. Meanwhile, those behind the [BLI] had organised numerous bilateral meetings with member countries on the back of their work. They had received a lot of 'political demand' asking for more information about their countries:

> *"What is driving this? What is the role of policy in all this?"*

At the time of writing, the OECD was in discussion with the Austrian Ministry of Finance to engage in a formal piece of work to identify policy recommendations from the [BLI].

The interviewee at the Council of Europe also noted European Commission interest in using [SPIRAL] to work on policies to reduce poverty.

[11] We had intended to ask more questions about the media, but in the end trimmed this part of the interview in most cases given that few people cited it as an important goal.
[12] This list differs from that presented in Chapter 3 in one way – the inclusion of a separate category related to use of indicators in assessment. Real world impact is discussed later in the chapter.

Reference by policy makers and politicians[13]

One interviewee referred to the way in which politicians were using data from their initiative, reporting how party activists in the US were using his data to make their policy case. Further, the Head of the Israeli Central Bank has been quoted as using the [BLI] to identify priority areas for his country. Another example, not covered in interviews but well established, is the use of the rhetoric of 'one-planet living' associated with the [EF]. This is an example of conceptual use having a broader reach than instrumental use.

Use of indicators in assessment

Several initiatives have had their indicators used in assessment.

Aside from the three official sustainable development indicator sets ([Defra], [Estat-SD] and [UN SDI]), three further initiatives have been incorporated by official bodies (regional or sub-regional) as tools for assessment. The State of Maryland in the USA uses [GPI] in terms of budget analysis and alternative performance assessment. In Italy, [QUARS] has also had regional and local impact in several localities. Lazio and Tuscany both included the indicator in their annual strategic economic planning documents. Several provincial governments also asked the indicator producers to do the same for them (Roma, Trento, Ascoli Piceno, Arezzo) or calculated the [QUARS] themselves (the provinces of Sardinia). [SPIRAL] has generated interest as a tool for assessing and evaluating policies, both at the regional level, like [QUARS] and [ISEW], but also beyond. [SPIRAL] is being used by the regional government of Wallonie, the French-speaking part of Belgium, to help the development of social cohesion policy. The promoters also have arrangements with Portugal and Cyprus, as well as in many cities around Europe. Often these are about evaluating and exploring possible policy improvements.

Going one step beyond assessment to targets, in 2010, the government of Ecuador set itself a concrete target based on the [EF]. Wales and Japan have also adopted national targets in terms of the measure.

Actual change in policy

Several initiatives are able to claim actual changes in policy, not just in rhetoric or targets[v].

[Gallup] has worked with government, businesses and communities in the USA, UK and other countries, and claims to have influenced policy on many occasions. Unfortunately, as their work is mostly based on a consultancy model, they are not able to share details about the impacts, but one example is in the delivery of a public health project in the USA.

In the UK, two official initiatives – [Defra] and [MNW] – are able to claim policy influence. In the case of [Defra], the inclusion of the farmland birds index in the indicator set in 1999, lead to a recognition of there being the need for a policy response to the severe decline in bird populations, and was in part responsible for improvements and financial support for environmental stewardship in farming. A number of the higher-level stewardship schemes are specifically intended to improve habitat or food sources for farmland birds.

[MNW] is still in its early days, but it has also already led to policy impacts. For example, based on the interest in subjective well-being, sentencing guidelines have been changed to take account of the emotional impact of theft rather than just the monetary value of stolen/damaged goods.

Perhaps one of the most dramatic national impacts of any of these indicators can be seen in the United Arab Emirates, where, partly as a result of its poor showing in the [EF], the country earmarked $15 billion into the development of alternative energy sources (more than the U.S.) and is looking to become of one of the world's premier providers of solar

[13] We did not specifically ask for evidence on this, and it is very difficult to assess.

energy.[14] As well as pumping money into research and development, the government also initiated an awareness-raising and sensitization programme in the country on consumption, called “Heroes of the UAE”.[15]

But by far the most numerous actual impacts have taken place at the local level. The [JCCI] is used by Jacksonville City Council to inform their budget priorities (Jacksonville, Florida, where the initiative is based, has a population of around 860,000)[16]. In the current economic climate, this is often about identifying areas where funding needs to be protected. Three concrete impacts were mentioned as a result of this initiative including:

- Introduction of policy by local government to reduce infant mortality rate
- Introduction of policy at State level (Florida) in connection to substance use and reoffenders.
- Changes of local policy, signing of agreements, and the funding of a new post in relation to sustainability.

The other initiative working at the local level, [SPIRAL], has also achieved actually policy change. The first town they worked in, Mulhouse in Eastern France (population 110,000), undertook an analysis of 70 of their ongoing policies and activities in 2007. Using [SPIRAL], they were able to improve a great many of them, without substantial investment. A small example relates to a food relief project for people on low incomes to eat more healthily. The evaluation using [SPIRAL] found that the traditional ways of delivering this had no impacts on social relations and self-confidence, and was focussed too much on food alone. So they organised cooking parties and connected with local producers rather than supermarkets, which lead to social and local economic benefits at no higher cost. In Greece, the use of [SPIRAL] lead to the set-up of community pharmacies run by the local population. Belgian policy towards homelessness was also changed as a result of a [SPIRAL] intervention, which identified needs in terms of self-esteem and social exclusion.

6.4.3 Influences on data collection

Few of the initiatives interviewed set out to influence data collection and statistical programmes[17]. The exception to this is the [HSWB].

The [HSWB] interviewee felt that several NSOs were already looking to the [HSWB] for guidance on how to measure subjective well-being, with one already claiming that they have aligned themselves with the OECD recommendations. The ONS, in the UK, is looking to [HSWB] before making final decisions on measurement.

Meanwhile, some within Eurostat have been convinced that it is worth exploring the importance of the measurement of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being as a result of the [HSWB][18].

The OECD is also having an influence on NSOs through [BLI], with the model for presenting the data likely to be taken on by the UK, Australia, Italy and the Netherlands.

Another example of an initiative having influenced data collection is the [UN SDI] sustainable development indicators, being taken forward by several countries (e.g. Brazil, Korea). Many

[14] www.nytimes.com/2009/01/13/world/middleeast/13greengulf.html?_r=1&scp=9&sq=United%20Arab%20Emirates%20solar%20energy&st=cse

[15] www.heroesoftheuae.ae

[16] A ‘Highlights of Change’ report has been produced regarding [JCCI] where other policy impacts can be found. Also, the measurable impacts on people and the environment of some of these policy changes are discussed later in this section.

[17] The exception being [HSWB], the main output of which has not been published yet.

[18] Interestingly, the impact can be seen heading in both directions here, with Eurostat’s work on measuring well-being having in turn opened some doors for the OECD work.

indicators from [UN SDI] have also been included in the UN Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics, which should further increase data collection efforts.

Lastly, [QUARS] in Italy can be seen to have influenced data collection, in the national initiative to measure progress there – the BES (*Benessere Equo e Sostenibile)* led by ISTAT (the Italian Statistics Office). [QUARS] is one of the earliest alternative indicator initiatives, having emerged in 2004, and has been known to the current Chief Statistician of the ISTAT for many years. The network behind [QUARS], Sbilanciamoci, were involved in the first BES debates and [QUARS] is seen as one starting point for the work of the statistics office[19].

6.4.4 Influences on practitioners

Some of the impacts reported can be categorised as having influenced practitioners (rather than policy)[vi]. Several such impacts were achieved by [JCCI] including:

- Philanthropists aligning their strategic objectives to the [JCCI] reports.
- Philanthropists using [JCCI] data to identify problems to obtain funds from others
- Community activists using data to frame issues and make their cases for lobbying at local, state and even national level

Also within the USA, [Gallup], using data from the Gallup-Healthways survey as a benchmark, have worked with various businesses to improve staff well-being with measurable outcomes.

[SPIRAL] has achieved many local-level impacts in France and other European countries, which will have influenced practitioners. Further, there are other initiatives, included in the long list (such as the Big Lottery Well-Being Programme Evaluation in the UK), that are directly engaging practitioners in the third sector using well-being data.

6.4.5 Influences on internal processes

Influence on internal processes were cited as important in relation to four initiatives.

Within the OECD, the [BLI] is seen to have been an important step in bringing the organisation as a whole a bit closer to the 'well-being agenda'. In 2011, the [BLI] was given centre stage at the OECD's 50th anniversary Forum. Measuring progress and well-being is one of the six priorities for the organisation for 2011-12. And, according to the interviewee, people in the OECD are quite supportive of the initiative's ideas. In a recent Economics Policy Committee meeting, an Economics Director at the OECD said that they should ultimately be producing "*Going for Well-being*" reports rather than their well-established *Going for Growth* reports. This all demonstrates how the producers of the [BLI] have also successfully used the initiative conceptually to get buy-in to a particular agenda. Nevertheless, as discussed in the OECD case study, the OECD is a complex organisation for which the adoption of a single, and quite novel, policy position is not straightforward.

The [HSWB] is also having an influence on internal stakeholders in the OECD – a roundtable on subjective well-being has been set up within the organisation to co-ordinate work involving subjective well-being measurements. There are indeed several activities related to subjective well-being within the organisation, though the interviewee did not feel that his work was responsible for their existence.

At the Council of Europe, [SPIRAL] faces challenges in terms of being adopted by other parts of the organisation. The interviewee had hoped that this would happen faster and believes that an executive decision is needed within the organisation to gain more support.

[19] It is worth noting that one member of staff who had worked on [QUARS], the interviewee, now works in ISTAT on the BES initiative.

Lastly, at the now defunct East Midlands Development Agency (***emda)***, the interviewee felt that the [ISEW] contributed to an internal debate about what progress is – another case of conceptual use. No concrete examples of policy change could be identified, but the inclusion of the [ISEW] as a headline measure sent clear signals and the interviewee believed that the subtle political processes that were emerging were important.

6.4.6 Influences on reputation[vii]

Some interviewees felt that initiatives had led to a change in the image of the organisation.

This was the case with the OECD's [BLI] and previous work on measuring progress, with stakeholders, journalists, and partners talking of the OECD as having "a new face". The interviewee believes that the OECD is now associated more with social and environmental issues than it had been previously. Nevertheless, as noted earlier, others believe that the OECD is continuing with 'business as usual'.

emda was able to achieve a significantly improved reputation amongst environmental NGOs; the [ISEW] made environmental NGOs 'sit up and take note' of the fact that ***emda*** was doing something that was not about 'growth at any cost'. Some ex-critics of the ***emda*** became advocates and even partners on specific projects (e.g. Natural England). The interviewee said that the [ISEW] sent an important message about ***emda***'s vision – that the region's goals were not just about economic growth:

> *"The symbolic significance far outweighed the utility of the measure as a technical measure"*

6.4.7 Influences on public attitudes[20]

Some interviewees felt that their initiatives had had an impact on public attitudes.

[QUARS], which has a central objective raising awareness and creating a debate, does believe that members of the public might have a greater understanding of the multi-dimensionality of development based on seeing their work. As the interviewee put it:

> *"We know that we have been part of the debate in Italy and the debate is growing… I'm sure we have some role in it."*

At the more direct level, the [SPIRAL] interviewee believes their initiative has been successful in encouraging people to think about their life as a whole and not just their problems.

Both of these are clear cases of indicators being used conceptually.

6.4.8 Influences in the 'real world'

Only one initiative was able to pin down precise measurable real-world impacts – the [JCCI].

Having identified a problem with infant mortality, the organisation set up a series of interventions involving hospitals, NGOs, faith communities and the public directly. As a result, infant mortality rates were reduced such that "*50 babies are alive today that wouldn't have been otherwise*". Only one small legislative change was involved – making food assistance cards valid for purchases in farmers' markets.

Two other measurable real-world impacts of the [JCCI] initiative include a reduction in water pollution levels, and connected to the policy changes mentioned earlier, a reduction in reoffending rates by 38% within Jacksonville.

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[20] The goals of some initiatives to influence how people think are notoriously difficult to assess. Even if before and after surveys could be conducted to look for change in attitudes at the population level, it would of course be impossible to be able to attribute any changes to a single initiative.

6.4.9 Spreading initiatives

Another impact of these initiatives is their multiplication around the world.

In the OECD case study, we note the importance of *Measuring Australia's Progress* in inspiring the Statistics Directorate to create a programme a work around measuring progress. [Defra] has been an inspiration for [Estat-WB]. The [BLI] looks set to be replicated in several member states of the OECD and the [UN SDI] sustainable development indicators look set to be replicated in some UN member states. Many countries are looking to the UK's [MNW] for ideas on how to measure national well-being. The [JCCI], which began in 1975, has been an inspiration for hundreds of similar community indicator initiatives in the USA and around the world. The [EF] is now an internationally recognised measure which several organisations work with, sometimes using different methodologies. The [HLY] inspired the Happy Planet Index[21], which has in turn inspired other initiatives – for example being mentioned by current UK Prime Minister David Cameron in 2009 before he took power, and likely to be one of the influences behind his decision to invest in the [MNW] initiative. An adaptation of the [HLY] was also incorporated in the [Estat-WB] measurement framework. The [GPI] initiative, whilst it has run into difficulties in the USA, has inspired many similar initiatives using the same indicator across the world – both in developed countries such as the UK, Belgium, Germany and Italy, and in developing countries such as Thailand (see Pulselli et al., 2008, for a review of different GPI/ISEW initiatives[22]). In the UK, this lead to the [ISEW] which, as we have noted, had impacts in terms of assessment at the regional level. In Germany, the Environment Ministry is working with ISEW expert Hans Dieffenbacher, to make a similar measure for their country.

6.5 Lessons

Interviewees were asked how they achieved the impacts they had, and their responses allow us to draw out some possible lessons for success. These can be understood in relation to the four sets of factors identified in Chapter 3: **indicator** factors (including salience, credibility and legitimacy), **relationship/process** factors, **user** factors and **policy/context** factors. We divide this section according to these categories.

6.5.1 Indicator factors – lessons concerning salience for policy-makers

Significant lessons can be identified concerning the salience of data for policy-makers.

- *Having data is important.* This might seem obvious, but a first step for a successful indicator initiative is to actually have data. In the case of the [BLI], moving from theoretical concepts to the fleshed-out framework with data was an important step in moving forward the progress measurement agenda in the OECD. At the other end of the spectrum, in the context of the [JCCI], having data allows one to move on from asking "is there a problem?" to looking at how to deal with a problem [BW]. Also, data can move people away from a defeatist attitude to one where change is possible [BW].
- *Indicator initiatives should fit with vision or strategy.* A central lesson is the importance of a link between indicator initiatives and a particular vision or strategy; particularly for those initiatives whose goals are around priority-setting or assessing progress (less so for those focusing on detailed policy). This was relevant for the three sustainable development indicator sets [Defra] [Estat-SD] [UN SDI], all of which were born in the context of sustainable development strategies. The [ISEW] was chosen by ***emda*** as it fit the vision outlined in their 2006 Regional Economic Strategy:

[21] www.happyplanetindex.org
[22] Pulselli F et al. (2008) The Road to Sustainability

"...a unique vision which enables us to pursue an agenda of sustainable economic growth, while also ensuring we are not exacerbating these challenges for future generations. Our vision is that by 2020, the East Midlands will be a flourishing region. … The vision will be measured using the ground-breaking 'Regional Index of Sustainable Economic Wellbeing', which we have developed to allow progress towards our twin aims of sustainable economic growth and economic wellbeing to be monitored."[23]

Other examples of indicator initiatives matching organisational strategies include [SPIRAL] matching the Council of Europe's goal of social cohesion, and [BLI] meeting the OECD's motto of *Better Policies for Better Lives*. Also, the [JCCI] ensures that its outcomes meet the priorities of the community it serves by inviting community members in to 'red flag' indicator results that they feel are important for the organisation to explore further.

- *Indicator initiatives should measure things that can be influenced by policy.* The pragmatic flipside to the above point is that it is important to measure things that can actually be influenced by policy. This is perhaps more of a problem for Beyond GDP indicators than any others, given the intention to measure a broad overarching concept such as progress, or well-being[viii].

  Several interviewees mentioned specific work that they have done to demonstrate how policy can influence well-being or happiness. For example, people in the Statistics Directorate of the OECD are producing a paper looking at how employment legislation influences subjective well-being. The forthcoming [HSWB] will include a section specifically on policy implications, and the [BLI] is now at a stage where they are looking to explore policy recommendations that could emerge from the initiative. There was a suggestion that *Going for Well-being* reports could be produced to provide the evidence for links between different policy levers and well-being.

  Meanwhile, in the UK, those involved in the [MNW] are also working with government researchers to develop impact evaluation tools. The Treasury has already produced supplementary guidance to its Green Book on how to monetise well-being data for cost-benefit analyses.

  But in both these cases, in the UK NSO and the Statistics Directorate of the OECD, there was a sense that those officially involved in statistics can only go so far in terms of linking their measurements to policy. The absence of well-being 'departments' does give them some license to operate in this area, but there does appear to be an advantage for indicator initiatives who are able to link up with organisations or departments who are expected to produce policy or policy recommendations.

- *Indicator initiatives should not lead to high costs.* In the current economic climate, it is not surprising that money saving emerged as an important lesson. This is true in terms of data collection, where expensive data collection is either ruled out or seen by the public as wasting money. It's also true of the policy implications. The [JCCI] is currently used more often than not to identify local services where funding needs to be protected. One of the advantages of [SPIRAL], according to the interviewee, is that the proposals that emerge from it often do not require much or any further resources.

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[23] Page 10 of the region's Regional Economic Strategy, available at http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100511081713/http://emda.org.uk/res/docs/RESflourishingFINALA4.pdf

- *Linking with other outcomes is beneficial.* One interviewee remarked on the value of being able to demonstrate the link between their initiative and other outcomes[24], such as reducing obesity, health costs, absenteeism and staff turnover, both for policy-makers and business:

  > *"When you're engaging policy-makers, essentially they're looking for tangible outcomes. The fact that you can link well-being to tangible outcomes is absolutely paramount."*

- *Reaching multiple audiences is beneficial.* In one case, the fact that the indicator had a large range of uses was noted as permitting multiple audiences to be reached. This might ensure that indicators do not sit within particular silos and can achieve cross-cutting outcomes.

- *Perceived need for the initiative is important.* The perception of a need for a new initiative is fundamental. In some cases, particularly where initiatives were about bringing together data rather than creating new measures, this need was seen to be lacking by some people.

6.5.2 Indicator factors – lessons concerning salience for broader audience

Several lessons emerged from the interviews which provide hints for how to make indicators appear salient to a broader audience, including politicians and the public. The first two are lessons about indicator themselves, the second two are about their communication.

- *Simplicity is important.* Initiatives are effective when they allow one to produce a 'simple' and 'attractive' message, such as with the [BLI] or [ISEW].

- *Comprehension is important.* A related issue is that of comprehension. For example, whilst they recognised that well-being was not simple, those involved in [SPIRAL] believed that it was a concept that normal people found easy to understand. A similar point can be made regarding the [EF] which is an understandable, appealing concept, despite involving very complex calculations.

- *Working with communications experts is important.* An interesting lesson emerged from [Estat-SD] which highlighted the importance of working collaboratively and closely with communication experts, rather than simply handing data over to them. Outputs are then developed iteratively to ensure that both communicability and accuracy are maintained.

- *Avoiding taboo words is important.* A couple of taboo words were identified during the interviews. In the UK the word 'happiness' was considered problematic, often being perceived as woolly, frivolous, non-scientific. Meanwhile, in the USA, the [JCCI] have avoided talking about 'climate change' instead referring to 'air quality'.

6.5.3 Indicator factors – lessons concerning credibility

- *Data quality is important.* This was mentioned by several interviewees. In particular, interviewees reported hearing concerns regarding subjective well-being, including questions regarding reliability and the belief that these measures do not change over time.

- *Attention should be given to the use of composite indicators.* Strong resistance to composite indicators was reported by three interviewees. In two of these cases that resistance was felt by the interviewee themselves. This concern can be related to several issues, including methodological concerns, and concerns about how to

[24] For most of the interviewees interviewed, the subject of their initiatives is something which is valuable in and of itself.

weight different components of a composite indicator. For example, one interviewee went as far as saying that creating a single number is 'very dangerous'. Related, to this, one interviewee made the point that his indicator (a composite indicator) is not intended to capture progress in its entirety:

"The world's too complicated to reduce it to a single indicator"

The [BLI] managed to secure acceptance of a composite indicator by focussing efforts on the issue of weighting and allowing users to decide for themselves how to weight the different dimensions of the measure. This technique also gave the [BLI] team an opportunity to explore how people weighted the different dimensions and allowed them to come to the conclusions that a) there was actually general agreement about how to weight dimensions in the broad population and b) it makes little difference how the dimensions are weighted. It's also worth noting recent work in Eurostat, where 'synthetic' indicators are gaining acceptance. Synthetic indicators have been included in the Europe 2020 agenda and bring together several other indicators provided. They have been accepted in Eurostat on the basis that the component indicators are highly inter-correlated.

6.5.4 Indicator factors – lessons concerning legitimacy

- *Remaining, or appearing, neutral is important.* A particularly interesting issue emerged during the interviews regarding neutrality. Are indicator initiatives neutral? As we have already noted, there do appear to be some that work within a framework of simply providing 'neutral' information. But others are clearly connected to particular agendas, such as social cohesion or respecting environmental limits. In any case, it can be argued that no indicator can be entirely neutral. In terms of the left-right political spectrum, some indicator initiatives were seen externally to be left-wing, including [QUARS], [GPI] and, according to one interviewee, *Measuring Australia's Progress*. Meanwhile, one of the indicator promoters interviewed can be clearly identified as right-wing in their beliefs. Other initiatives make a strong attempt to appear neutral [Gallup] [JCCI]. In the case of the [JCCI], they believe there is a perception that "*advocacy organisations' data are useless*". They put in place quite conscious measures to ensure neutrality within the initiative:

  - Monitoring their funding mix to ensure that it seems neutral.
  - Staff can't be involved in political parties
  - The Board of Directors is meant to represent the mix of the community. If someone criticises the organisation, they are typically invited to get involved in its work, allowing their views to be represented next time.

  The interviewee noted that the proportion of people who believe the [JCCI] leans to the left is equal to the proportion that believe it leans to the right – so he feels they are in a good place. This of course does not mean that the [JCCI] is not value driven – for them their core values are around participation and civic democracy, which they hold as more important than any specific campaign they might later connect with.

  Beyond the left-right divide, another organisation which commented on the need to be neutral was the ONS. For them, it was important to highlight that *"We are not defining what we mean by progress".*

- *Institutional power can enhance legitimacy.* Some official organisations recognised the legitimacy they carry, such as the Council of Europe:

  "What we are doing could not be done by an NGO"

and the OECD:

> *"The NSOs are quite strongly conditioned to accept rules from above about what is legitimate and what is not and the OECD counts as one of those issuers of rules" [CS]*

Having said that, whilst the OECD in general has institutional power, the Statistics Directorate was noted as having relatively less influence within the organisation than, for example, the Economics Department .

Governmental and supra-governmental bodies do not have a monopoly on legitimacy through institutional power, though. For example, **emda** specifically decided to engage an external organisation (nef) to develop the [ISEW] for them so as to provide the legitimacy of a third party. Meanwhile, the legitimacy of government bodies comes at the cost of needing to be reactive to public opinion. Perhaps one of the biggest challenges for [MNW] at the moment are the criticisms from the public and the media that it is a waste of money.

A last point worth noting regarding institutional power relates to NSOs. Often seen as simply having to measure what they are told to, we were reminded that often they are able to make decisions as to what to measure by themselves. This was, for example, the case for Eurostat when they decided to instigate a project to measure well-being. Whilst, the [MNW] is often seen as "Mr. Cameron's happiness index", the reality is that it was the ONS that initiated the programme, putting in a bid for money from central government in June 2010. Furthermore, there is now broad consensus that 'measuring progress falls within the legitimate purview of an NSO'.

- *Working with your audience* – See the following section for this.

6.5.5 Relationship and process factors

- *It can be important to engage one's audience from the start.* This was fairly obvious for local initiatives such as [JCCI] and [SPIRAL]. But it was also seen in terms of getting policy-makers involved in large-scale initiatives [Defra] [Estat-SD] [UN SDI] [BLI]. The [BLI] engaged OECD policy committees and the Statistics Committee (which is composed of representatives of the statistics offices of member states) from the start.
- *Direct contact with audiences is important.* Not all initiatives can or want to engage their audience from the start, but it is probably fair to say that all have to directly engage with their audiences at some point. Matching the findings of the questionnaires, we found that all of the most successful initiatives had direct contact with the people they are trying to influence. For large organisations, this is a matter of course. For example [Gallup] regularly provide individual briefings to members of parliament, Lords, and government departments. The ONS's approach has been to engage with policy-makers to understand how the [MNW] can be used by them. Such direct contacts have also been important for civil society organisations. For example, the [EF] builds on a strategy of using personal contacts made in events and conferences to gain access to policy-makers and politicians. [QUARS] found many of its successes emerged when their network had contacts with key local politicians, although this was not always the case. Furthermore, in the case of the [QUARS], relying on individual politicians has on one occasion proved problematic, as sometimes when those politicians lose office the link to their region or province is also lost. Lastly, the [GPI]'s success in the State of Maryland also came through a personal contact.
- *Small is beautiful.* As has already been noted, it is clear that local initiatives have been able to achieve more impact than larger national ones to date, with [JCCI] and

[SPIRAL] being particularly effective. Other initiatives which have been able to operate at multiple levels have also observed this trend. Local bodies are found to be more 'flexible', and media are often keen to pick up regional stories. It is likely that this observation is related to the above lesson – it is easier to build direct relationships at the local level. Of course, this does not mean that national approaches should be abandoned. Even the most local of the initiatives we covered, the [JCCI], recognised the need for many changes to take place at the national level. They felt that their work provided a useful demonstration of how this could happen, though they did not feel it was their role to embark on a national initiative. Interestingly, in the case of the [JCCI] in the US, the feeling was that "*national issues tend to get politicised in a toxic manner much too quickly*". However, whilst national-level change might be harder to achieve, it need only be achieved once in each country, whereas local level change needs to take place many times over.

- *Working in partnership is important.* Working in partnership was found to be an important positive factor. The ONS has allies in the Cabinet Office who are exploring the policy relevance of the [MNW] work. [QUARS] brought together a range of partners which were able to advocate on different issues that the initiative raised. Many of the partners came on board because they identified something of particular interest to them in the broad initiative. The [JCCI] has a similar approach, and most of the campaigning work associated with the findings produced by the initiative is done by other organisations. For example, the reduction in recidivism reported earlier resulted from a partnership with the local police force. That police force then advocated the ideas developed at the State level, and has even gone on to represent the ideas at the national level.

  Aside from allowing a greater network to be reached, and for a greater skill base to be marshalled, perhaps the most important advantage of working in partnership is that it allows different organisations to represent different responsibilities. In this way, initiatives do not get associated with a particular agenda, responding to the concerns about neutrality mentioned earlier. Another interviewee voiced suspicion of the use of data by interest groups. He suggested that they tended to pick and choose the results that fit their agenda. This suggests that collaboration between indicator producers and those working on specific agendas may be a fruitful way to maximise outcomes and ensure indicators are used appropriately. Rather than treating the use of indicators by those with agendas as a problem, it can be seen as an opportunity.

  A contrasting story to such collaboration might be said to have taken place in the sustainable development indicator world, which was described by one interviewee as being 'too closed'.

  How to work in partnership is of course not straightforward, and the interviews provided a couple of clues for doing so. Firstly, a lesson to be drawn from [QUARS] was the importance of *sharing skills*. One province for which the [QUARS] was calculated was later unable to do the calculations themselves because the skill set was not passed from Lunaria to the province. In another example, in Arezzo, the organisation learned from that mistake and ensured local administrative statisticians were trained on the methodology. Another lesson about partnerships revolves around being *pragmatic*. On one occasion, the [JCCI] produced some data that indicated the need for a policy change by a particular organisation in the locality. The organisation agreed to make the policy change, provided that they were not seen to be doing so under pressure from [JCCI]. They would make the change, and then the [JCCI] would complement them for doing so.

  A final lesson around partnership working comes from the [ISEW]. The interviewee commented that partnerships are particularly valuable when they bring people

together who have identified a common problem, but for whom the problem was an issue for different reasons. As we have already commented, numbers are valuable in highlighting a problem, and they can be, or at least appear, to be objective. In this way, one can see how they might be important in bringing together different interest groups that might not always work together.

- *Picking one's audience is important.* Two contrasting strategies were observed here. On the one hand, initiatives worked with potential users who could be identified as 'allies' or people who already had an interest in the issues at hand [Gallup] [Defra] [QUARS]. This was not just a matter of choosing the easy option. Sometimes, allies within other organisations could be useful advocates for an initiative. At the same time, several initiatives highlighted the need to reach those bodies that might be expected to be least sympathetic to their initiatives – particularly ministries of finance, treasuries or economics departments. The two strategies are not entirely mutually exclusive of course. Some initiatives noted the existence of allies or people who have expressed interest within these difficult-to-reach audiences.

6.5.6 Lessons concerning users

- *It is important that indicator users can engage effectively with social and environmental indicators.* Beyond GDP initiatives typically involve a rebalancing towards social and environmental indicators and away from economic ones. This is not just a matter of calculating different things; staff working on economic indicators are unlikely to be the most suitable for working on social and environmental indicators. This simple fact, together with a tendency to value more the evidence of one's own academic discipline, mean that there is an institutional barrier in many large organisations against Beyond GDP indicators, both in terms of data collection and in terms of policy. With regards data collection, for example, our interviewees noted that social statisticians were more open to subjective well-being measures than macro-economic statisticians. For example, the EU-SILC Well-Being Module Task Force, mostly consisting of social statisticians, saw higher support for subjective well-being measures than Task Force 3 of the Sponsorship Group, which was a more mixed group. Whilst none of the interviewees explicitly stated this, it is likely that, at higher levels of management within NSOs, there are more staff members with economics backgrounds than social science backgrounds. With regards to policy, two interviewees noted the fact that it was easier to engage with people in social policy than those in economic policy. One of these two interviewees noted an age effect – believing that younger people were more open to new ideas than older ones. As for solutions, the OECD's approach of using economic techniques with subjective well-being may be a fruitful technique for convincing economists, by using their own language. The interviewee believed that economists would listen to this evidence, but was not sure whether it would be enough to convince them.

6.5.7 Lessons concerning policy/context

The factors listed in this section are all somewhat harder to manipulate, though no less important for consideration by indicator promoters.

- *Attention should be given to political agendas.* Unsurprisingly, the political context is very important for the success of alternative indicators. The SSF Commission is undoubtedly the biggest positive factor in this domain – with several interviewees commenting on the importance of the publication of the Commission's report in 2009 in terms of promoting the agenda:

  > After Stiglitz, it was the "*journalists who came to us*" not the other way around.

"'Radical change'. Secondary project became top priority".

One interviewee responded to the idea that the SSF report might be "old wine in new bottles", by saying it was more like "old wine in new ears" – highlighting that the report reached audiences that other initiatives had not been able to. The SSF report, together with comments previously made by the UK Prime Minister David Cameron, provided the political context which allowed the ONS to successfully bid for money to begin the [MNW] programme.

To the contrary, the financial crisis was seen by three interviewees as hindering Beyond GDP efforts. The crisis, they felt, has lead people to say that well-being is a distraction. But they also felt there was an opportunity to convert it into a case *for* the Beyond GDP agenda, by highlighting the role of the fixation on GDP in causing the crisis. A pragmatic argument in the current context was made by another interviewee – GDP is not going to go up so we need a new way to measure progress. This argument reflects comments made by Italian Chief Statistician Enrico Giovannini, who has said that Beyond GDP measures provide something new that governments can offer their citizens in the face of flat-lining growth.

In some countries, Beyond GDP is far off the political agenda – notably the USA. This has implications for international bodies working in the field, such as the OECD, which has a duty to reflect the interests of its member states.

- *Attention should be given to institutional constraints.* One interviewee highlighted the problem of one NSO which is not able to collect data on subjective well-being, because they are legally prevented from collecting information on people's 'opinions'

- *Attention should be given to the role of ideology as a potential barrier.* It would be naive to deny the importance of ideology as a barrier to Beyond GDP initiatives. The reported critiques of subjective well-being have included the argument that measuring subjective well-being, and by implication suggesting that government can and should do something about it, is somehow utopian or "Brave New World". Some have argued that the role of government should not be to improve well-being, but simply to ensure that the disadvantaged are less disadvantaged. These arguments are particularly strong on the right.

  However, it is sometimes hard to identify ideological arguments. Many interviewees suggested that the first step to dealing with concerns around ideology was to demonstrate robustness and good science. Would critics back down when robustness is demonstrated? One interviewee was not sure:

  "It's very hard to get a sense of what is ideology and what is a lack of science"

- *Attention should be given to potential vested interests* – Related to the issue of ideology is that of vested interests. Might some people see their interests harmed by Beyond GDP and therefore attempt to defuse their power? Three interviewees talked about this tricky subject. One believed that the adoption of subjective well-being measures would lead to a substantial loss of power for politicians and professionals, because it takes away from these 'experts' the argument that they know what's good for people (because people can be asked directly). A similar point that can be made is that subjective well-being measurement represents a 'loss of control' for policy-makers. These power conflicts can be seen at the local level as well, with the [JCCI] finding that people who already have power and voice (without the initiative) tend not to want to allow the voice of the general public to be heard.

- *Public pressure is important.* A couple of interviewees highlighted the public's role in getting policy shifts. For example, the Global Footprint Network has developed an

EF calculator to attract public interest. This can then be deployed to encourage governments and businesses to adopt the tool. Similarly, the interest for subjective well-being data has been bottom-up, coming from the general public.

- *Indicator initiatives take time.* One last sobering lesson is that indicator initiatives take time. That can be seen in the case study on GDP in Chapter 8. It was also highlighted by the [JCCI] interviewee. After 40 years, a generation has now grown up with the existence of the initiative, and it is now sufficiently embedded into the system for people to maximise impact.

Chapter 7: Indicator policy fact sheets

The previous chapters have explained the role of a media coverage survey as an objective proxy measure of the achievement (successful use and a potential impact) of selected indicators, and have shown the links between media coverage and public, policy and scientific relevance. The interviews conducted with the selected indicator producers/promoters have brought additional but very important information about indicator providers, their intentions and impact/success perceptions. All these pieces of information may be of critical importance for potential indicator users (decision makers, policy makers, the public, journalists, other producers/promoters etc.) during the phase of the indicator selection and use.

In order to meet to the goal of the BRAINPOol project – to bring alternative indicators closer to decision and policy makers – we have condensed all the important pieces of information important for potential users (i.e. information about the intentions and impact/success of the indicators etc.) in a well-arranged, practical way for their further use. The results are designed to serve not only as inputs into other BRAINPOoL WPs, but also as a self-contained outcome. In other words, we have tried communicate this information: *what are the producers/promoters approaches and intentions with the indicator, what's the scientific basis (relevance) of the indicator,* and *what´s the impact/success of the indicator* to potential users.

Based on our experience with indicators in general we have developed "indicator policy fact sheets" and filled them in with data and information from all the selected indicators. Such indicator fact sheets – which depict in depth the indicator characteristics (methodological foundation, presentation, frequency of appearance) and some factors related to the policy process (the use of indicators by media, and intentions and perceptions of indicator providers) – may serve as a store of succinct yet comprehensive and accurate information about the indicators and should allow any questions posed by the potential users of Beyond GDP indicators to be answered quickly.

7.1 What is the role of the indicator policy fact sheets in BRAINPOoL and who are the potential users?

The indicator fact sheets could serve a variety of roles. The main purpose of traditional indicator methodological sheets is to enable a replication of assessment of some phenomena using a method that is scientifically based and proven. In other words, it ensures standardization and a unified reporting format. Although the structure of such an indicator fact sheet is not strictly specified, the majority of indicator fact sheets (developed by various international and national organisations) contain, inter alia, the indicator title, definition and the type of indicator; the purpose and usefulness of the indicator for decision-making processes; and the conceptual underpinnings and methodologies associated with the indicator, including the measurement methods and data availability.

Unlike conventional indicator methodological sheets, the purpose of the BRAINPOoL indicator policy fact sheets should be to provide the most important information about the **indicator producers/promoters intentions and indicators´ impact/success to potential users**. Thus, the indicator policy fact sheets are not designed to perform a thorough scientific review of the indicator (e.g. including a description of the methodological constrains) rather to highlight information about the indicator's influencing factors that might be important for indicator users. The indicator policy fact sheets complement the standard (traditional) methodological sheets and point out the indicator factors (in terms of the indicator influence) that are often bypassed in the more traditional methodological sheets.

The content of the indicator policy fact sheets is based on in-depth desk based analysis and interview results. As such the policy fact sheet information struggles with all the constraints

typical for results of sociological research. We envisage three main categories of potential users[25] of the fact sheets:

- Decision and policy makers
- Journalists
- Other indicator producers/promoters or experts.

7.1.1 Decision and policy makers as users

Besides the crucial role of indicators in management and policy making, indicators may also play more political roles, for example when decision-makers try to legitimise a particular political or societal agenda or to paint a positive picture of the current situation to avoid negative repercussions, or vice versa (POINT, 2012). The information provided to decision and policy makers by the policy fact sheets may help them steer decisions. Such decisions would be based on concise but complete information about selected indicators/indices: Thus, the fact sheets could serve as a brokerage tool since they could bring the necessary – and relevant – information closer to policy makers and thus may encourage appropriate use of indicators in decision making.

7.1.2 Journalists as users

Many models of public opinion suggest that presentation of issues in the media plays an important role in shaping the attitudes of the public. Media serve as the primary mechanism by which elite opinion is communicated to the public. According to this perspective, media do not tell the audience what to think but, rather, what to think about. This is accomplished through the sheer amount of attention given by media outlets to various political issues; the more coverage an issue receives, the further up the agenda it supposedly moves. Thus, journalists are an important user group of fact sheets, and the indicator providers and promoters should concentrate on how to attract them. Similar to politicians and policy makers, journalists are overwhelmed by the volume of information. They should be attracted to simple understandable information and the fact sheet is one of the possible ways of doing this.

7.1.3 Other indicator providers/promoters or experts

The role of intermediary organisations in developing and using sustainability indicators has been emphasized in recent times. These organizations are actors that mediate between producers and users at many different levels and through various representative agents (individuals and intermediary organisations of many kinds). They have an important role in the processes of articulating demand. In addition, the fact sheets can simply stimulate/inspire some producers to improve/innovate their practices through the exchange of information.

[25] The fact sheets could serve the lay public as well.

7.2 How are the fact sheets designed?

To provide information usable for policymakers[26], the indicator policy fact sheet should meet the following criteria:

- The information should be brief (ideally the fact sheet shouldn´t exceed 2 pages – if the fact sheet can't be read and understood relatively quickly, it has limited chances for success)
- The information should be comprehensive and correct
- The information should use appropriate language for the intended readership or audience (e.g. not using solely scientific language)
- The information shouldn´t be overwhelming in details: figures, evidence, references etc.
- The information should be self-contained (i.e. it should not only refer to previous sources, scientific literature etc.).

The information we provide in the fact sheets is not easily accessible only for potential users but for other indicator promoters/producers as well. In case the fact sheets find broader acceptance, they might be good communication tools among indicator producers/promoters).

7.2.1 Table item details

The fact sheets comprise information gathered from desk-based analyses, interviews with the indicator providers and media analyses. The factsheets include the following items:

Name of indicator/index: Title/name of the indicator (including acronym)

Organization/author: The indicator provider/developer

Year created/periodicity/last publication: First publication/frequency of appearance/last official publication

Brief description: Conceptual and methodological foundations

Country coverage: Geographical scope (number of countries involved in results)

Style of presentation: The information given needs to be presented in a way that makes important trends easy to see. This can be achieved by using graphs and charts and maps. The trends instantly become clear.

Indicator factors from a public perspective: An indicator with a high public relevance provides information responding to people's concerns – it is accessible and publicly appealing. The total quantitative information quickly answers a pertinent question: How much does the issue appear in the public media (newspapers, magazines and wire feeds). The ratio between public and expert media tells if the issue is communicated more to the lay public or to experts. Figures are accompanied by information about who are the main users of the indicator and how (by what means) does the indicator address its audience.

Indicator factors from a policy perspective: Relevance describes how pertinent, connected, or applicable something is to a given matter. Attributes from the perspective of policy are characterized by the data on overall publishing about the indicator over time (distribution or trend analysis), identification of the main audience and its own legitimacy (a legitimate indicator provider is knowledgeable and impartial, capable of taking account of the interests of all major stakeholders).

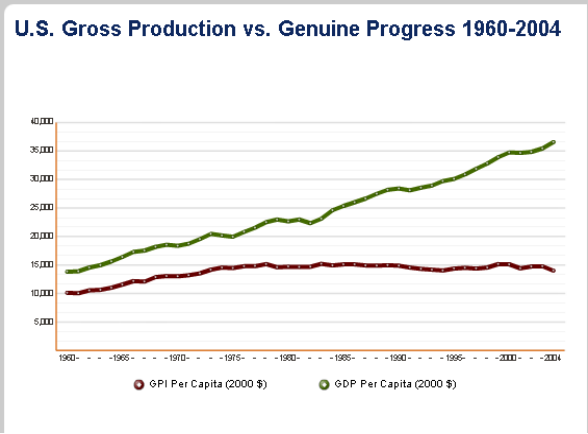
[26] The criteria reflect the general principles of reporting to management

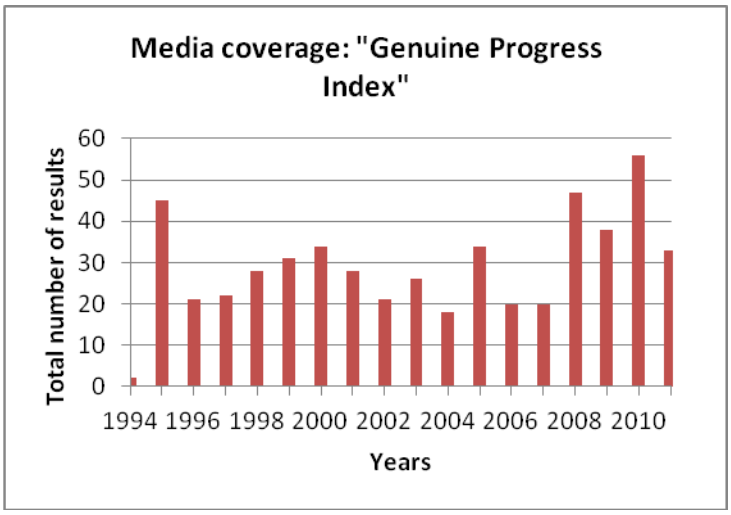
Indicator factors from a science perspective: It speaks about the scientific foundations of the indicator – who developed it and how (new or established methodology and the process of publishing (review, data quality, etc.). The table shows the total amount of expert media coverage (scholarly journals, trade journals, reports, thesis and dissertations, and books).

Media results in the Factsheets: Our analysis has produced three indicative figures – *total number of results*, *amount of public media coverage* and *amount of expert media coverage*. The total number of media coverage results tells us about the impact/success of the indicator in general at present (the figure interpretation is straightforward: the higher the better). The ratio between public and expert media tells us if the issue is communicated more to the lay public or to experts. A chart showing the trend in media coverage since its launch is also a part of each selected indicator factsheet (see Fig. 14). It enables, for example, a connection to be made between the appearance of the indicator in the media and a specific political situation at a chosen time, as well as the tracking indicator appearances over the whole period of time (to get a sense of change over time). Besides providing interesting information about each selected indicator, the figures from the media analysis also enable comparisons between indicators.

Below, we present an example of a factsheet (Genuine Progress Index). The full text covering all indicators from the short list may be found in the Annex.

Fig. 14: Indicator policy fact sheet example (Genuine Progress Index)

Name of indicator/index:	**Genuine Progress Index**
Organization/author:	Redefining Progress
Year created/periodicity/last publication:	1995/n.a (2-time effort)/ 1999, 2004
Brief description	GPI is a metric used to measure the economic growth of a country. It enables policymakers at the national, state, regional, or local level to measure how well their citizens are doing both economically and socially. The GPI indicator takes everything the GDP uses into account, but also adds other figures that represent the cost of the negative effects related to economic activity (such as the cost of crime, cost of ozone depletion and cost of resource depletion, costs of noise pollution, among others). One major sector accounted for by the GPI is unpaid labour. The GPI nets the positive and negative results of economic growth to examine whether or not it has benefited people overall.
Country coverage	Not available
Style of presentation	 http://www.green.maryland.gov/mdgpi/whatisthegpi.asp

Indicator factors from public perspective	Total number of results[27] 527 Ratio public/experts media[28] 315/212 Newspapers 252 Magazines 46 Wire feeds 17 GPI might have a potentially large impact on the public if it replaced the current GDP. The media analysis shows an increased interest from journalists in the last three years in this topic which might indicate the positive trend in the public relevance. The Maryland web[29] page shows an example of how the index can be presented to the public in an easy way. Maryland uses video to explain the link between the index and real life, and provides an interactive calculator showing the public impact of different daily actions on the physical and societal environment.
Indicator factors from policy perspective	 The overall GPI goal is to be reported alongside GDP and to be used to assess policy, to forecast impacts, legislative analysis, and to allow cost/benefit analysis on cross-cutting issues such as climate change. The index might be used, for example, as a tool for budget analysis and alternative economic performance assessment (as in the State of Maryland).

[27] The total number of media coverage results tells us about the impact/success of the indicator in general at present.
[28] The ratio between public and expert media tells us if the issue is communicated more to the lay public or to experts.
[29] http://www.green.maryland.gov/mdgpi/index.asp

Indicator factors from a science perspective	Total number of expert media results	212
	Scholarly journals	168
	Trade journals	34
	Reports	6
	Dissertation/thesis	4
	Books	0
	GPI reveals the relationship between factors conventionally defined as purely economic and those traditionally defined as purely social and/or environmental. The measure of both factors is based on a sound scientific methodology. The GPI measures enable scientists to describe the long-term economic, social and environmental development of a country because of the relatively easy availability of country data and enables a comparative analyses to be made.	

Fig. 14: Indicator policy fact sheet example (Genuine Progress Index)

Chapter 8: Case studies (Ecological Footprint and Measuring National Well-being Programme)

8.1 Introduction

A specific task of WP1 was to work more closely with two key alternative indicator promoters to:

- Better understand the success factors relevant in terms of bringing indicators into policy
- Allow lessons to flow in both directions,
- Test new ideas to promote indicators.

One of these promoters, the OECD, launched a brand new measure – Better Life Index – which provides the overall information about different aspects of OECD countries' quality of life. The other, the Global Footprint Network, is responsible for the Ecological Footprint – although controversial for some actors, perhaps the most used Beyond GDP Indicator existing. These two institutes represent key actors in promoting alternative indicators to policymakers.

8.2 Ecological Footprint – A Case Study

The case study is based on interviews with representatives of the main indicator developer/provider and intermediary organizations: Alessandro Galli – Senior Scientist at Global Footprint Network and Director of the Mediterranean Programme (Sebastian Winkler – Director Europe contributed), David Vačkář – senior researcher at Charles University Environment Center and the Czech national Ecological Footprint expert, and Viktor Třebický – head of TIMUR, a civil society organization promoting Ecological Footprint in the Czech Republic. The case study also includes information from a desk-based analysis (on media coverage).

8.2.1 What is the Ecological Footprint?

The Ecological Footprint is an accounting framework that tracks humanity's competing demands on the biosphere by comparing human demand for the planet's supply of regenerative capacity. It does this by adding together the areas required to provide renewable resources people use, the areas occupied by infrastructure, and the areas required for absorbing waste. Since people consume resources from all over the world, the Ecological Footprint of consumption, adds together these areas regardless of where they are located on the planet. To determine whether human demand for renewable resources and CO_2 uptake can be maintained, the Ecological Footprint is compared to the regenerative capacity (or 'biocapacity') of the planet. Biocapacity is the total regenerative capacity available to serve the demand quantified by the Footprint. Both the Ecological Footprint (which represents demand for resources and ecological services) and biocapacity (which represents the availability of such resources and services) are expressed in units called global hectares (gha)[30]

In the current National Footprint Accounts (an accounting system calculating the Ecological Footprint and biocapacity for more than 200 countries and territories, as well as global totals, over time), the tracked resource inputs include crops and fish for food as well as other uses

[30] 1 gha denotes the productive capacity of 1ha of land at world average productivity.

(e.g., fibres), timber, and grass used to feed livestock. CO_2 is the only waste product currently included. Ecological Footprint is included in many national SDIs sets nowadays (Japan, Switzerland, UAE, Ecuador, Finland, Scotland and Wales have formally adopted it); some international organizations (e.g. Eurostat) have been considering its use in official reporting.

The Ecological Footprint methodology can be applied at various scales aiming at different types of users:

- Ecological Footprint for nations helps countries understand their nation-wide ecological balance sheet, and therefore manage their resources. National governments using the footprint accounts are able to: assess the value of their country's ecological assets, monitor and manage their assets, identify the risks associated with biocapacity deficits, set policies that are informed by ecological reality and makes safeguarding resources a top priority, measure progress toward their goals etc.
- Ecological Footprint for cities allows one to track a city or region's demand on "natural capital", and to compare this demand with the amount of renewable natural capital actually available. The accounts also give one the ability to answer more specific questions about the distribution of these demands within an economy (e.g. the ecological demand associated with residential consumption, production of value-added products, imports, and generation of exports).
- Ecological Footprint for business is a tool for corporations that wish to manage their ecological risks. Ecological Footprint helps corporations improve their market foresight, set strategic direction, manage performance and communicate their strengths. The indicator helps business establish benchmarks, set quantitative targets and evaluate alternatives for future activities.
- Personal Ecological Footprint is the application of the indicator to the consumers level, giving individual people answers to the question on how much land area is needed to support his/her lifestyle. Some part of each person's Ecological Footprint is dependent upon choices they make in their own life, such as how much they drive, recycle and purchase new products, and some of it is their per person share of their societies' infrastructure. The first part can be influenced directly. The second part is equally critical to living within the means of one planet, but must be influenced through more indirect action such as political engagement, green technology and innovation, and other work toward large-scale social change. The Ecological Footprint calculator provides easily available results. It offers an interactive, fun way for people to explore and potentially reduce their Ecological Footprint. The Ecological Footprint calculator promoted, for example, by NGOs helps people discover their biggest areas of resource consumption, and enable them to learn what they can do to tread more lightly on the earth.

Besides the above scale-based typology, there are several other types of indicators using the consumption-based accounting approach. This particular approach is useful by including all driving forces for demands on ecological assets associated with consumption activities. Due to the extensive analytical potential of indicators derived from consumption-based accounting approach (e.g. decoupling analysis, international comparison), they may substantially contribute to formulation of policy frameworks. The other, already established, members of the "footprint family" are carbon and water footprints and few others have recently being introduced in the literature such as the land footprint (Lugschitz, 2011) , and the nitrogen footprint (Leach, 2012). All these footprints are able to complement traditional analyses of human demand on natural resources by coupling producer and consumer perspectives.

Carbon Footprint measures the total amount of greenhouse gases emissions that are directly or indirectly caused by an activity or accumulated over the life stages of a product. This

includes activities of individuals, populations, governments, companies, organizations, processes, industry sectors, etc. All direct and indirect (embodied, upstream and downstream) emissions need to be included in calculation. Despite its name, the carbon footprint is not expressed in terms of area (note: Ecological Footprint translates an amount of CO_2 into an amount of productive land and sea area required to sequester emissions. This tells us the demand on the planet that results from burning fossil fuels. In this way Ecological Footprint shows how carbon emissions compare and interacts with other elements of human demand, such as human´s pressure on food sources, the quantity of living resources required to make the goods we consume, and the amount of land we take out of production when we pave it over to build cities and roads. CO_2 emissions are an inherent part of the Ecological Footprint). Thus, carbon footprint is simply measured in mass units (kg, t of CO_2 of CO_2 equivalents if other GHGs such as for instance CH_4, N_2O, HFC, PFC, and SF_6 are included in the calculation).

Water Footprint is a sustainable water use indicator measuring the total volume of freshwater directly or indirectly used and/or polluted by a population. In other words, the Water Footprint measures the freshwater a population uses. WF can be calculated for a particular product, for any defined group of consumers or producers. It complements the other indicators from the footprint family by capturing information about fresh water flows and showing the hidden links between human consumption and water use and between global and local water resource management.

8.2.2 Who are the users of Ecological Footprint and how does Global Footprint Network attract the actual and intended users?

The applicability of the Ecological Footprint methodology to a broad range of issues and at many levels helps Global Footprint Network (GFN), the methodology provider, to disseminate information about the index. The main target users for the GFN are ***politicians, business managers and policy-makers*** for whom GFN provides a tool for supporting their decision-making processes. The principal channel of action for the GFN is to approach these targeted stakeholders directly; however, internet and media are key instruments which GFN uses as well.

The direct approach is based especially on personal contact between GFN leaders and politicians and policy makers. Such contacts provide an opportunity for GFN to introduce the Ecological Footprint and demonstrate its advantages and disadvantages. Originally, the GFN approached policymakers at the national level and focused especially on Ministries of Environment. Nowadays, GFN is focusing more on Ministries of Finance and Regional Development, because GFN sees its indicator as dealing with a “cross-cutting topic” bringing holistic information. Therefore, GFN has been seeking to reach the above ministries and other inter-sectoral governmental bodies.

GFN has been approaching not only the national level but also whole regions (e.g. the Mediterranean area). It tracks resources flows in the whole regions and quantifies data and information on resource availability and demand in more than one nation. In this case it is in contact especially with the regional bodies providing the contacts to the governments.

The most effective way of making contacts with politicians is through attending major events (workshops, happenings, summits, conferences, etc.).

Although the main intention of GFN is to reach policy makers and politicians at all levels with their initiative, ***the general public*** is encouraged by GFN to think about the issue of the Earth’s biocapacity limits as well. GFN is becoming aware that attracting the general public serves to put pressure on their target audience: politicians and policy-makers. If GFN speaks to the general public in an easy-to-understand way (using e.g. the attractively designed interactive Ecological Footprint calculator – see picture below) it drives their message which is crucial in terms of Ecological Footprint impact. That is why GFN invited corporate,

government and NGO partners to assist with the calculator's worldwide launch and help with customizing it for specific organizations and geographical areas.

GFN is aware of the strong linkages between the public and politicians or policy makers. If the Ecological Footprint makes it easy for the public to understand sustainable development issues, it will be attractive for the main target group – politicians. The easy-to-understand information helps politicians explain their sustainability goals and intentions and discuss their sustainability agendas with an informed population.

The Ecological Footprint is also an interesting indicator for **experts**, especially ***scientists.*** It helps to advance academic discussion about sustainable development, and its measurement. Academics have been involved in developing Ecological Footprint methodology and the scientific community has been concerned with the review process as well. The consultation and review process for improving the Ecological Footprint methodology is pursued regularly within the GFN (by the Standardization and National Footprint Account Review Committees).

Fig. 15 – Ecological Footprint Calculator for Personal Footprint counting[31]

8.2.3 How is the data collected?

GFN uses data from international databases. Data from the International Energy Agency (IEA), UN COMTRADE as well as embodied energy studies are used for calculating the energy component (they called carbon Footprint component) of the Ecological Footprint; calculation of the biomass components (croplands, fishing grounds, forest resources etc.) are based on the data from Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Thus, the Ecological Footprint calculation is mostly done without national statistical office involvement, although official reviews of national Ecological Footprint calculations by government bodies are encouraged by Global Footprint network and have been performed in the past both independently or in collaboration with GFN.

When collaborating with national governments more closely (e.g. in Switzerland, Japan, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, United Arab Emirates), Global Footprint Network double-checks the calculations using national data. In a few cases, complete reviews of the national Ecological Footprint calculation have been performed independently by government bodies or third party organizations nominated by the governments. In both cases, the experience shows that the calculation difference has not been bigger than 3 % for European countries to date.

[31] Calculator available on: http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/calculators/

8.2.4 How does the Ecological Footprint relate to Beyond GDP indicators?

The Footprint approach does not relate itself towards GDP (as pro- or anti-GDP etc.). GDP is an economic indicator used to track the annual added value in the economy. For a more comprehensive understanding of national trends, additional indicators are required: unemployment statistics, longevity figures or ecological asset measures, for example. The Global Footprint Network has sought to get nations to adopt the Ecological Footprint as a complement rather than as an alternative to GDP.

However, GFN recognizes that the current use of GDP needs to be improved. “Beyond GDP indicators” should provide more structured and comprehensive data to decision makers to make informed choices and to compare countries’ performances. They should help to recognize the significance of ecological assets, in addition to financial income, wealth, welfare etc. The Global Footprint Network has engaged in the beyond GDP initiative since the initiative inception (in 1995). Beyond GDP has recently morphed into the Green Economy debate which has mixed chances in that it is perceived by many G-77 members as a neo-colonial agenda. As a consequence of the negative transformation of the Beyond GDP into Green Economy agenda, the whole Beyond GDP initiative may be questioned.

8.2.5 What is the Global Footprint Network and how does it work?

The GFN is an international think-tank working to advance sustainability through use of the Ecological Footprint. With a growing Partner Network, the Global Footprint Network coordinates research, improves methodological standards and provides decision-makers with robust resource accounts to support government innovation, advance human development, strengthen corporate strategy, and move the sustainability agenda forward in a time of increased ecological limits.

The GFN Partner Network comprises over 90 organizations that share the vision of living within the means of one planet. Partners play a necessary role in guiding the research agenda and contributing to the development of Footprint methodology and standards. GFN equips them with (i.e.): access to GFN technical team members, experts in the methodology behind the National Footprint Accounts, and the standards for applying the methodology to a wide-range of Ecological Footprint projects, a basic license for one country´s national accounts, access to Footprint Forum, invitation to conferences and other events, invitation to participate in global campaigns, such as Earth Overshoot Day, an international media campaign for which Global Footprint Network provides comprehensive outreach materials and which partners can customize to their own efforts and events.

The GFN does not currently recruit members actively. Interest from organizations comes spontaneously, typically following meeting members of the GFN or coming across presentations about the Ecological Footprint and is based on personal attendance of GFN representatives at important events (conferences or workshops). The existence of the network itself (current number of the member organizations, its reputation, results, and history) attracts other organizations.

The national expert, member of the Global Footprint Network, commented on the membership experience (based on an interview with Mr. David Vačkář from the Global Change Research Centre, Academy of Sciences, Czech Republic, formerly the Charles University Environment Center. He has been a member of the Global Footprint Network since 2006).

Charles University Environment Center was the first partner of GFN in Central and Eastern Europe. GFN partnership is especially important from the perspective of networking with international experts and institutions dealing with the Ecological Footprint research and applications. The Center has promoted the ”10-in-10 initiative”; however, there have been several barriers starting with inadequate policy support from key national sustainability policy boards and ministries. On the other hand, partnership with GFN leads to inclusion of the Ecological Footprint indicator into national sustainability reports and strategies. Recently, the

partnership with GFN proved to be useful in developing a side event for Rio+20 Conference. Another positive feature of GFN partnership is availability of updated National Footprint and Biocapacity Accounts which can be further used by partners in research and applications at a national level.

8.2.6 What is the visibility of Ecological Footprint in the media?

Global Footprint Network analyses the Ecological Footprint media (at large) attractiveness assessing the number of "Google results". We have used a detailed approach for the media analysis in the BRAINPOoL project. We have analysed data from the ProQuest Central database – the largest aggregated database of periodical content covering more than 160 subjects' areas. ProQuest database includes diversified mix of content including scholarly journals, trade publications, magazines, books, newspapers, reports and videos. We have also used the Dialog tool that enables retrieving data from 800 million unique records of key information accessible via internet or through delivery to enterprise intranets.

The ProQuest-based analysis shows substantial interest of the media in Ecological Footprint. Figure 1 compares Ecological Footprint with some other Beyond GDP indicators. As illustrated in this figure, Ecological Footprint, with 8596 results, occupies second place within the selected sample of Beyond GDP indicators. Table 1 shows the distribution of results among the media types. As the most interesting theme (the highest number of results), the Ecological Footprint is seen by **newspapers**, **on-line newspapers** and **magazines** (more than half of the total results).

Based on a more in depth-analysis (using the Dialog tool), the eleven newspapers, magazines and online-newspapers, where the Ecological Footprint appeared most often were, in order: *Canberra Times (Australia), The Guardian (UK), Calgary Herald (Canada), Vancouver Sun (Canada), Gulf News (United Arab Emirates), Wireless News (USA), Edmonton Journal (Canada), The Independent (UK), Montreal Gazette (Canada) and Irish Times (Ireland)*. Nevertheless, Ecological Footprint is a "hot topic" for experts as well. Based on the ProQuest database analysis, **scholarly journals** occupy the second place in the total number of Ecological Footprint results. Dialog tool identifies the "top ten" of these scholarly journals as: *Ecological Economics, International Journal of Sustainable Development, Ecological Indicators, Journal of Environmental Management, Energy Policy, Bioscience, Shengtai Xuebao: Acta Ecologica Sinica, Environmental Monitoring and Assessment, Journal of Industrial Ecology, Resources, and Conservation and Recycling*.

Various applications of Ecological Footprint (personal, national, etc.) for different uses help the GFN to ensure widespread dissemination of the indicator. It is appealing to both the general and expert media. It shows that the theme, the understandability of the Ecological Footprint and its promotion (through the internet, workshops, etc.) attract journalists providing the information to the lay public as well as scientists and experts exchanging the information with other experts.

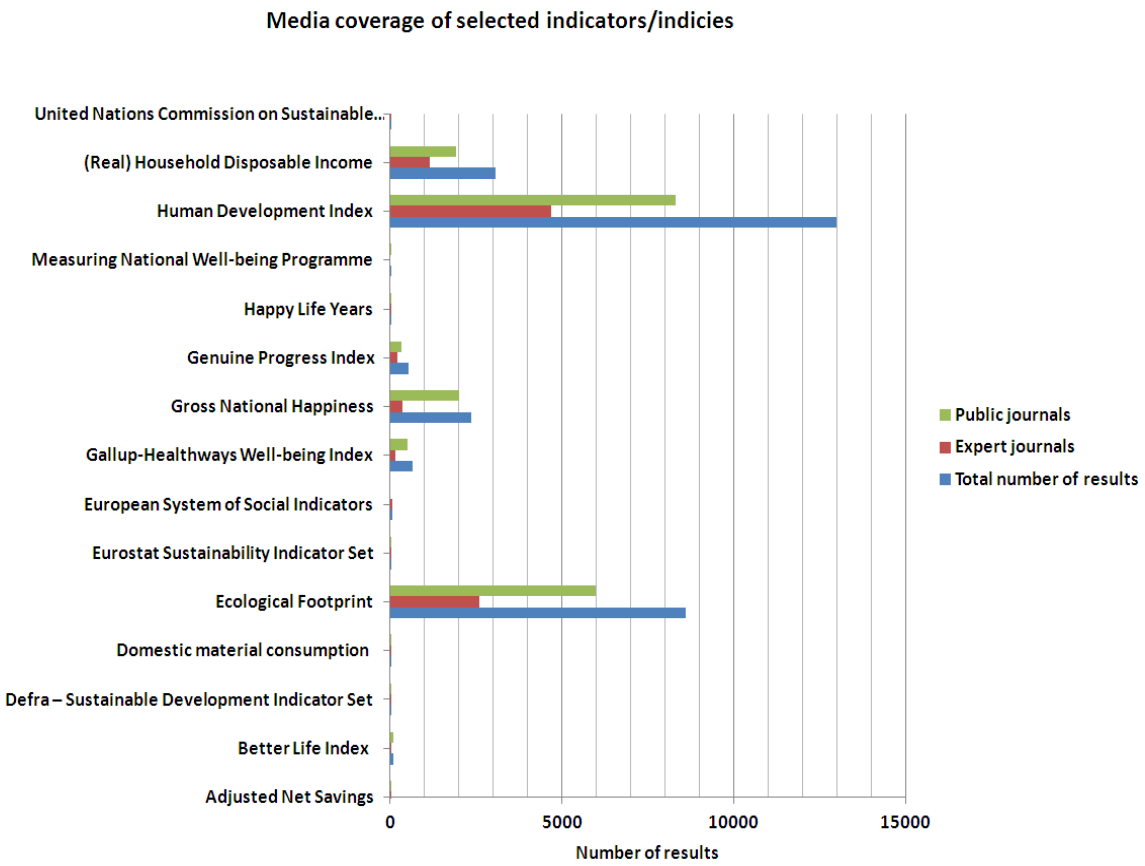


Figure 16 : Ecological Footprint compared with other surveyed Beyond GDP indicators (ProQuest , 1995-2012)

Total number of results	8,596
Ratio public/experts media	5,998/2,598
Newspapers	4,746
Magazines	440
Wire feeds	812
Scholarly journals	1,567
Trade journals	956
Reports	50
Dissertation/thesis	25

Fig. 17: Media coverage of Ecological footprint (ProQuest Database, 1995-2012)

8.2.7 What is the impact of the Ecological Footprint on politicians and policy makers?

One of the many strengths of the Ecological Footprint is its immediate intuitive appeal. Ecological Footprint is a measure of pressure on the planet when it is interpreted as overexploitation of the planet's regenerative capacity, regardless of where that impact occurs. The measure itself simply describes the size of the footprint for a particular

population or activity. Its implication for policy and planning purposes has been recognized, leading to its use by several countries and many municipalities to implement and monitor their sustainable development agendas. The strength of the Ecological Footprint is that it contains elements that are likely to appeal directly to planners. Another important factor is the effective communication of the concept.

An EU-funded project, OPEN:EU[32] is looking into tools that can assist policy-makers in identifying appropriate policy interventions that can help the EU in the transition to a One Plant Economy by 2050. During the project, a software tool called EUREAPA has been developed; this tool combines data from national economic accounts and trade statistics with data from environmental and footprint accounts and can account for the full supply chain impacts associated with various consumption activities. The tool‘s benchmarking, analytical and visualization facilities allow policy-makers to easily access and manipulate this vast amount of information; this enables them to better understand the impacts of consumption activities in the context of lifestyles, to consider national differences in environmental impacts, to identify which goods or services cause the most environmental impact and to help prioritize policy intervention efforts.

In the context of a policy cycle, indicators can help develop and communicate an understanding of the relationship between drivers and impacts. For instance, biodiversity and ecosystem service indicators (such as the footprint) can be useful at different stages of the policy cycle, such as: problem recognition (e.g. endangered habitats and loss of ecosystem services); identification of solutions (e.g. favourable conservation status and necessary management activities); assessing and identifying linkages between policy options (e.g. investment in protected areas, green infrastructure); the implementation process (e.g. reforming subsidies, payment for ecosystem services); and ongoing monitoring and evaluation (e.g. status and trends). The policy cycle approach can therefore help identify at which stage the Footprint indicators and the EUREAPA tool can be particularly useful, and what type of support they can provide to each step of policy development.

Currently there is a big interest in Ecological Footprint measures especially in the Latin America and the United Arab Emirates (when a national level is considered). The rationale for that may be that the interested countries are resource-rich countries. The other reason might be the same as it was in Europe two decades ago; – to manage something effectively it is necessary to be able to measure it. From here the main demand comes in above countries because resource depletion is a growing threat.

Currently there also appears to be an interest in regional bodies in Ecological Footprint measures - and Ecological Footprint may be adequately calculated for the region (supranational level). Such measures could promote constructive policy debate since politicians have to think beyond their national context and place their countries in a regional context. It promotes successful regional cooperation among neighbouring countries and sustainability develops an international meaning.

There is a growing bulk of local studies adopting the Ecological Footprint concept as well. The Ecological Footprint approach is helpful in raising awareness on the linked and often not easily visible issues which societies have faced when seeking to move towards more sustainable patterns (behaviour, consumption, etc.). Politicians and policy makers use the Ecological Footprint as a communication tool providing simple information to the public. People are used to thinking about different aspects of reality in a narrower context than the nation and municipal-level problems are tangible and comprehensible.

[32] Available on: http://www.oneplaneteconomynetwork.org/eureapa.html

8.2.8 What is the impact of Ecological Footprint on the public? (General and in the Czech Republic context)

The coverage of the topic in the media can be considered a proxy for Ecological Footprint public relevance. Public media serve as a primary mechanism by which elite opinion is communicated to the public. This is accomplished through the amount of attention given by media outlets to various issues; the more coverage an issue receives, the further up the agenda it supposedly moves, such is the defining role that media plays in shaping the public attitudes. In this sense the Ecological Footprint plays a very positive role, because the simplified information about Ecological Footprint enables the public to understand the complexity of Earth´s resource capacity.

The public is influenced not only by the media. Various nongovernmental organizations or other types of intermediary organizations play an important role as well. The Czech Republic can serve as a good example: Although the Ecological Footprint has been included in the official Czech Sustainable Development Indicator Set just very recently and is a part of the Report on sustainable development which is by politicians communicated to the public; various Czech civil society organizations have seen the Ecological Footprint as a suitable tool for shifting public opinion. An organization called TIMUR has helped Czech cities calculate their ecological footprint. Then, the cities (and citizens) may compare their own Ecological Footprint with other cities. As TIMUR stated, it stimulates public interest in understanding of the current resource consumption of the city they live in. It increases the public's comprehension of the Earth's limits and people's consumption patterns, and it may shift their attitudes towards care of the natural environment. Sustainable development goals can get public support and thus become realistically achievable. TIMUR has calculated Ecological Footprint for about 20 Czech cities and had rough Ecological Footprint calculations for another 30 cities. The main barrier here is access to local data necessary for the Ecological Footprint calculation. However, the effort has an impact – some cities use Ecological Footprint for setting sustainability goals (e.g. five out of the 20 cities have committed to change their consumption patterns in order not to increase their Ecological Footprint). In all cities the Ecological Footprint results are announced in local media to channel the information to the public. TIMUR is a long term provider of the European Common Indicators for cities and towns and Ecological Footprint was included among ten indicators of the set.

TIMUR also provides an educational program for schools. Schools can – by using this educational program – calculate their Ecological Footprint and their pupils are thus educated on this issue. Another civil society organization called *Zelený kruh* ('Green Circle', the Czech umbrella environmental NGO) provides a personal footprint calculator on their website. The calculator is used in science education in schools mostly, although adults use them as well. Since its introduction a couple of years ago, the calculator has been used by about 20,000 people. It may be assumed that Ecological Footprint, its straightforward interpretation and a handy guide "How to decrease my Ecological Footprint" have influenced a large number of people.

Surprisingly, the Ecological Footprint has thus entered the education system in many Czech grammar schools although it is not a part of the compulsory education standard in the Czech Republic. Without doubt, it is a success of the indicator dissemination and use. No other indicator has achieved such success in Czech schools.

There also exist other activities intended to the students which the GFN provides. In April, Hawai'i Preparatory Academy opened its new Energy Lab, a unique facility designed to educate and inspire students about the concepts of sustainable living. The GFN in partnership with Hawai'i Preparatory Academy has started a new project bringing the new Footprint Futures Curriculum which should provide the students with the analytical tools to explore and answer the question: What is the optimal level of resource use for a given country? This is the example of next initiative of GFN which brings the information about the Ecological Footprint closer to the general public.

8.2.9 What is the impact of Ecological Footprint on experts?

As we have discussed in previous sections, the Ecological Footprint helps to advance the academic discussion about sustainable development, methods of measurement, interpretation, etc. The media coverage of Ecological Footprint in scholarly journals (and different types of them) shows the significant interest in this theme. Expert publications help to promote discussion about the methodology of SD measures and contribute positively to development of the Ecological Footprint methodology.

There are mixed opinions about the Ecological Footprint amongst scientists and experts. On the one hand, there exists a scientific community which uses the Ecological Footprint methodology for description of different aspects of social and natural reality on national and local level, or combines Ecological Footprint with other metrics. It is possible to find tens of articles with relevant information about this issue on the Web of Science. Ecological Footprint is also a part of other indices, for example the Happy Planet Index.

On the other hand there exists a group of experts who question the robustness of the Ecological Footprint methodology (see e.g. N. Fiala, 2008). Economists have also criticized the Ecological Footprint for failing to recognize factors such as consumer preferences or property rights which have a major influence on the allocation and sustainable use of resources.

Although the Ecological Footprint critics might be seen as barriers to its implementation, in fact this kind of discussion about the Ecological Footprint ´s scientific soundness advance the sustainability and its assessment approaches.

Part of the experts´ work – not always popular and often neglected – is also to mediate information about their field of interest (sustainability) to “newborn” experts, scientists and students. Analysing sustainability is a difficult task because of the complexity of SD. Moreover it’s hard to identify optimal limits for human consumption and human development. Experts have begun discussion about how to get this information and how to mediate such information to other experts and politicians/policy makers. For example, the combination of different indices and indicators elucidates relations between human development and environmental sustainability. An interesting analysis arises from the integration of the Ecological Footprint and the UNDP´s Human Development Index (HDI). By plotting HDI against Ecological Footprint (see below Figure), we can get an instant message that “in general, high and very high HDI-positioned countries are destroying the planet and making human development more difficult for other countries in the future”. This should motivate policymakers to improve environmental performance, together with other human development dimensions. This kind of analysis stimulates also a further expert´s debate about what existing indices will be the most suitable for description and analysis of societal and environmental development or what new and better indices are needed. These kinds of discussions advance the entire Beyond GDP process.

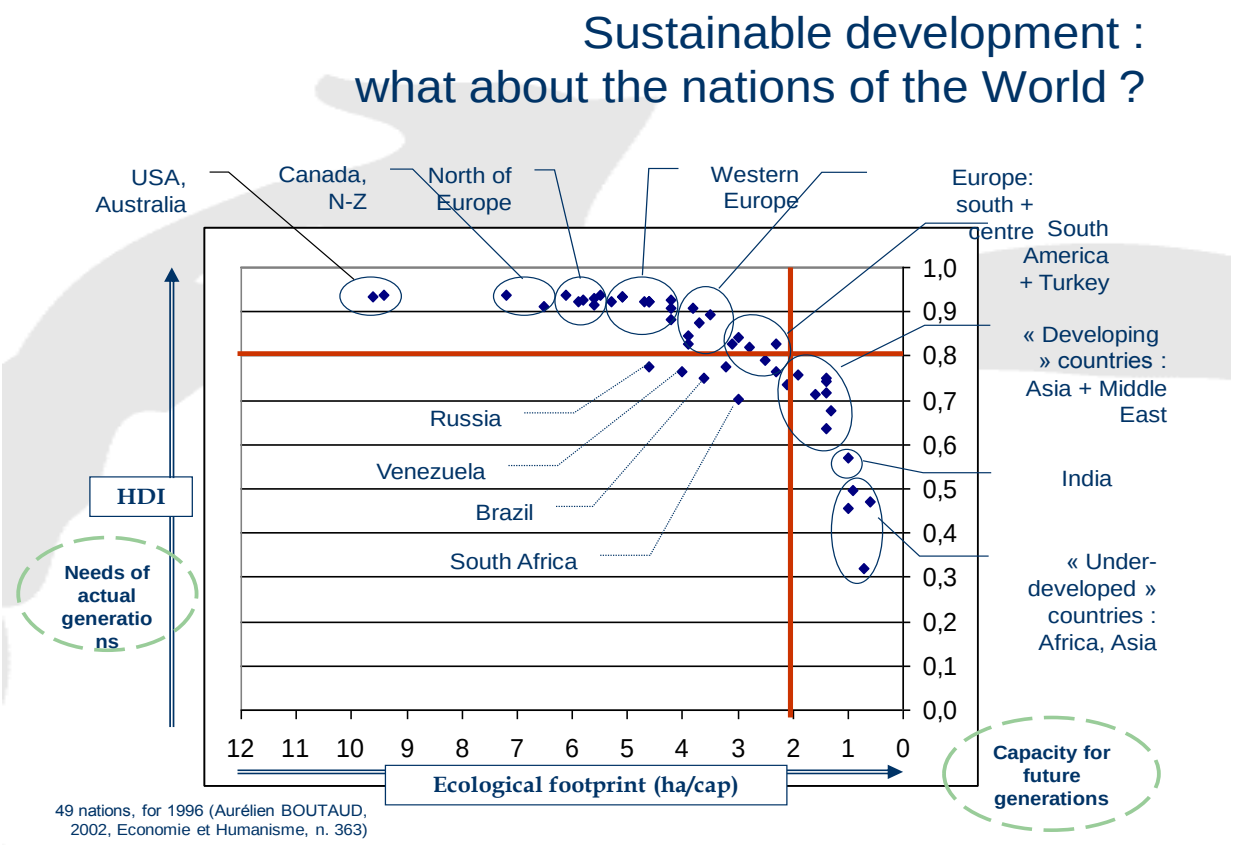


Fig. 18: National position in sustainable development assessment

Key success factors of Ecological Footprint in BRAINPOoL experts´ point of view

Indicator factors leading to the Ecological Footprint success

- The GFN has developed a good communication strategy of Ecological Footprint results towards experts as well as lay public, making the indicator salient to both groups.
- The Ecological Footprint methodology is constantly being improved and there is a regular review process, generating the indicator credibility from the perspective of potential users.

Policy factors leading to the Ecological Footprint success

- The GFN observes permanently the current political situation and based on an analysis of this situation it identifies the most appropriate stakeholders from relevant institutions (ministries, government, etc.) for the Ecological Footprint promotion and potential cooperation.
- Based on the GFN experiences it is beneficial to be in contact with the countries which have not established any indicator system for the social and environmental reality description yet. These countries are therefore more interested in various new/alternative metrics.

User factors leading to the Ecological Footprint success

- The Ecological footprint family, i.e. the diversity of different footprint applications (Ecological Footprint, Carbon Footprint, Water Footprint, Ecological Footprint of cities or individuals, etc.) attracts a wide scale of users. Each group of users unintentionally stimulates the interest of other user groups which have not used this metric yet. It spontaneously disseminates this indicator. For example the Ecological Footprint applied in some Czech cities has stimulated the interest of other cities in the Czech Republic.

Relationship/process factors leading to the Ecological Footprint success

- There is often a personal contact between the indicator providers and policy users on a national level (at least at the beginning of the indicator usage). It enables to precisely describe advantages and disadvantages of the indicator.
- There is a strong, charismatic person behind the GFN. Such person is instrumental in starting and keeping trustworthy relationships between initiative and the user groups.
- The GFN has involved national experts into the Ecological Footprint methodology improvement and other activities. These experts have substantially raised awareness of this measure in a country they come from. They influence – to a different extent – the policy-makers and/or politicians in using this indicators in formal reporting. For example the Czech national expert has pushed through to incorporate the Ecological Footprint into the annual report about sustainability in the Czech Republic.

8.3 The OECD Better Life Initiative – A Case Study

8.3.1 Background of OECD work on Measuring Progress

The Statistics Directorate of the OECD, under then Chief Statistician Enrico Giovannini, began developing an interest in alternative measures of progress in 2004, when it organised the *1st OECD World Forum on Key Indicators* in Palermo, Italy. An interest in different aspects of measurement had emerged at a conference organised by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) of the USA earlier that year. The purpose of the Forum was framed as promoting "*research- and information-sharing among countries, allowing them to compare strategies intended to measure and assess the overall "position" and "progress" of a certain political entity (country, region, etc.) vis-à-vis other similar entities*"[33] The Forum was a big success, and the organisers were surprised by the amount of interest it gathered from round the world. Around 500 people attended, which was more than double what they had expected.

Whilst the Palermo meeting was not specifically on measuring progress, it was towards this field that the OECD's energy went subsequently. Following a workshop organised in Sydney in 2005 around *Measuring Australia's Progress*, Giovannini secured seed funding from the Secretary General of the OECD to begin a programme of work on progress, with two full-time staff members. A small event was organised in the Rockefeller Bellagio Centre in Italy, where the OECD, together with guests such as the Chief Statistician of the OECD, began to shape a picture of how to move forward on measuring progress.

In June 2007, the *2nd OECD World Forum* took place in Istanbul, entitled *Measuring and Fostering the Progress of Societies*. The 2nd Forum differed from the first in the breadth of its attendance – bringing academics and civil society together with high-level policy-makers and statisticians. Whereas the 1st forum could be said to focus on more traditional issues such as economic innovation and governance, the 2nd forum began to explore some newer areas such as measuring happiness.

The forum concluded with the signing of the Istanbul Declaration by the OECD, alongside the European Commission, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank (other signatories followed).[34] The Declaration highlighted the need for "going beyond conventional economic measures such as GDP per capita". The Declaration "encourages communities to consider for themselves what 'progress' means in the 21st century" and called for relevant partners to share best practice, stimulate debate and invest in necessary statistical capacity.

Aside from the Declaration, another outcome of the Forum was the formal establishment in 2008 of the "Global Project on Measuring the Progress of Societies", hosted by the team within the Statistics Directorate that had organised the Forum (lead by Jon Hall, who had previously worked on the pioneering initiative *Measuring Australia's Progress,* and joined the OECD in 2005). Although the project was ostensibly a collaboration between several international partners, including the UNDP, UNICEF, the ILO, The World Bank and the European Commission, the reality was that the OECD carried out most of the activities involved.

Between 2008 and 2009, the Global Project focussed on networking and capacity-building activities, organising events and workshops on measuring progress, and contributing to the emergence of what can be considered a 'Beyond GDP movement'. For example, in July 2009, the OECD organised a Satellite Meeting[35] attached to the Annual Conference of the

[33] OECD Website, www.oecd.org/site/0,3407,en_21571361_31834434_1_1_1_1_1,00.html
[34] Declaration available at www.wikiprogress.org/images//Istanbul_Declaration.pdf
[35] www.oecd.org/dataoecd/2/61/42265474.pdf

International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies which provided an opportunity for academics and experts on subjective indicators to make the case for their use by NSIs. Another output of this period was the report entitled "A Framework to Measure the Progress of Societies", that suggests a conceptual framework for understanding the measurement of progress (although this framework was never endorsed by any OECD committee)

October 2009 marked the 3rd OECD World Forum, this time in Busan, South Korea. Bigger again than the conference in Istanbul, the Forum served to build further momentum, particularly given the recent publication of the report commissioned by the French President Nicolas Sarkozy on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress (hereafter referred to as the SSF).[36]

One outcome of Busan was that the OECD Secretary-General agreed to the OECD "acting as the international focal point to follow-up on the recommendations of the SSF Commission"(the Chief Statistician Giovannini was already an active member of the Commission).[37] The OECD also launched its website *Wikiprogress* (www.wikiprogress.org) which is now an important hub for Beyond GDP initiatives.

In July 2009, Giovannini announced that he would be leaving the OECD and he was replaced as Chief Statistician by Martine Durand. Hall also left at around this time. The change in leadership brought a change in direction for the work in this field.

The OECD continued to organise events, with the Latin American Conference on Measuring Well-Being and Fostering the Progress of Societies held in Mexico City in May 2011 being the first of a series of intended regional conferences.[38] Another regional event will take place in Paris in June 2012 and the next World Forum in New Delhi in October 2012.

However, Durand made the decision to change the focus from capacity-building and networking into producing more concrete outputs. It is one of these more concrete outputs that we will focus on here – the Better Life Initiative. What follows is mainly based on interviews with OECD staff, although some other comments have been brought in where relevant.

8.3.2 Origins of the Better Life Initiative

The idea of the Better Life Initiative emerged in the spring of 2010 from discussions between the Statistics Directorate and the PAC (Public Affairs and Communication) Directorate of OECD. There were three main drivers for beginning this work. Firstly, as has been mentioned, it was perceived within the OECD that the work that they had done on Measuring Progress till then had not lead to concrete enough proposals. The Statistics Directorate felt that producing something concrete, with hard numbers, would be needed to effectively move the statistical and policy agenda on well-being ahead. This type of work would also be more persuasive to other parts of the OECD, as more in line with the traditional evidence-based approach used by the Organisation.

Secondly, it was felt by some at the OECD that the organisation's work in the field had not been acknowledged enough. A visible flagship product such as the Initiative would, it was believed, catalyse attention. It would also be an opportunity to engage with the Statistics Committee and other OECD Committees on measuring progress in a way that had been hitherto lacking.

Thirdly, the Initiative, launched in 2011, coincided with the OECD's 50th anniversary year and provided an opportunity for the organisation to rebrand itself. The Initiative created an appropriate space for the organisation's new motto 'Better policies for better lives'. The 50th Anniversary Forum opened with the presentation of the Initiative.

[36] www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr
[37] From OECD Road Map, produce at end of Busan Forum: www.oecd.org/dataoecd/40/0/44005046.pdf
[38] http://mfps.inegi.org.mx

A fourth reason mentioned by other interviewees (*not* staff at the OECD) was that the new Chief Statistician Durand was keen to present a new flagship initiative in the area so as to make a clear step away from the work that had been led by Giovannini.

8.3.3 What is the Better Life Initiative

The Better Life Initiative (BLI) puts together the various streams of OECD work on measuring well-being and its various components. Rather than building on the approach developed in the previously mentioned framework paper (Hall *et al*., 2010), the Initiative builds on a conceptual framework that is closely linked to that developed by the SSF report and to other international initiatives in this area. This conceptual framework is organised into two domains (material living conditions and quality of life) and eleven dimensions. These dimensions are:

- Housing
- Income
- Jobs
- Community
- Education
- Environment
- Government
- Health
- Life Satisfaction
- Safety
- Work-Life Balance

The main dissemination products of the OECD Better Life Initiative are the Your Better Life Index website and the How's Life Report. The website (http://oecdbetterlifeindex.org/) was launched in May 2011 and presents an assessment of life in the 34 OECD member countries,. The headline results are scores for 11 dimensions:

It is worth highlighting that the Index does not to date measure sustainability, in line with the recommendations of the SSF report. The dimension for 'environment' includes one indicator on air pollution which is relevant more for its impacts on present quality of life than future quality of life. The BLI's stated intention is to include further measures to assess sustainability in the future.[39]

Each dimension consists of one to three indicators. Each indicator is 'normalised' by converting a country's score to a 0 to 1 scale, where 0 is the poorest performing country and 1 is the best performing country.[40] The resulting scores are then averaged to produce a score for the dimension.

The BLI makes a point of not then calculating an overall score for each country. For example, the front page begins with a distinctive flower image for each country, with multi-coloured petals representing each dimension. Larger petals represent better scores, but no overall single measure is presented. Instead, users are invited to calculate a composite score themselves by rating the relative importance of each dimension.

[39] http://oecdbetterlifeindex.org/about/better-life-initiative/#question2

[40] It is worth noting that this is not normalisation in the standard statistical sense, as that involves converting figures using the mean and standard deviation. The result is that one cannot strictly talk about the different indicators within each dimension being weighted equally.

As well as the scores, the website includes plenty of text on each country, describing performance overall and on each indicator. Plenty of resources are also presented to users to find out more information.

The second aspect of the Better Life *Initiative* is the How's Life Report, published in October 2011 and launched at an OECD conference marking the 2nd anniversary of the SSF report. Built on a much wider set of data than the BLI, the report provides more detail and analysis on well-being comparing countries in terms of their performance on the different component measures. Another objective of the How's Life report is to set the statistical agenda ahead for developing better measures of well-being and social progress.

During the interview, we focussed more on the Better Life Index than the How's Life Report.

8.3.4 Intentions of the Better Life Initiative

As has already been noted, the primary intentions of the Initiative could be seen as presentational – rebranding by the OECD, and a need within the Statistics Directorate to begin to produce a high-profile, concrete, internationally comparable set of indicators in this field.

But the Initiative should also be understood in the context of the overall goals of those involved in measuring progress in the OECD. As the mission of the Organisation is help countries designing better policies, the BLI was also created with the objective to inform policy-making. The belief is, of course, that measuring well-being will help achieve this goal (it is worth noting a shift in discourse from 'progress' to 'well-being' and 'better lives').

Generally, the role of the BLI in this context is framed as helping policy-makers identify priorities. Well-being, the IV claimed, is "***the*** *only concept that allows you to assess* ***all*** *the links between different policy areas". "Whatever policy objective you have,"* she continues, "*you should set them in an integrated policy framework which has as an overarching goal the increase in people's well-being"*. In other words, improving well-being is seen as the overall goal of policy, and the aim of the BLI is to transfer this notion to policy-makers, and provide them with initial tools for measurement.

However, it was not believed that policy recommendations could be directly drawn from the results because the measures included in the BLI measure 'outcomes' and not the contribution of government to those outcomes:

> *"When you look at results, you don't know what is the role of policy in all that"*

8.3.5 Channels and Audiences

The primary goal of the BLI is to influence policy-makers. But, the Better Life *Index* website was originally designed with a broader public in mind. The website was intended to get general interest, whilst the *How's Life Reports* were intended to directly stimulate interest amongst policy-makers.
The other key audience was NSIs, that partner with the OECD for developing indicators of well-being. Politicians, on the one hand, and academics on the other were identified as secondary audiences. The OECD has employed many channels to reach these audiences, including the media, scientific and non-scientific conferences and events, direct contact with policy-makers (for example bilateral meetings with interested countries) and others, and, of course the website.

8.3.6 Impacts

During the interview, two types of impact were focussed on – impacts on policy-makers and internal impacts within the OECD. This section will likewise focus on these two areas of impact, but will briefly consider four further areas of impact – impact within NSIs, media impact, academic impact, and reputational impact.

Policy impact

Despite being aimed at the general public, the Better Life Index website attracted a lot of policy interest. Many countries have asked to hold meetings with the OECD regarding the Index. The Index is seen to be valuable for two reasons.

Firstly, in terms of the actual performance of countries in the Index. For example, Stanley Fischer, Head of the Israeli Central Bank, interpreted the Index as highlighting specific priority areas within his country, such as tackling inequality. Following from this, the OECD has been asked to provide commentary on what has driven the relative performances of specific countries, and what the role of policy is in improving people's lives.

The reality is that there is still lot of research needed to respond to these questions. Of course, the OECD works extensively on policy in many of the topics covered in the BLI, such as education, health and employment. What is new to the organisation, are clear recommendations associated with the overarching well-being approach.

The team working on BLI are able to make some suggestions for policy recommendations to this end, being. However, they sit within the Statistics Directorate, and it is not traditionally the role of that directorate to make policy recommendations. The only reason that they have been able to do what they have done to date is that there is no well-being policy unit within the OECD, and so the Statistics Directorate have a legitimate case for filling that vacuum. Nevertheless the divide between statistics and policy is there, and inevitably prevents the Statistics Directorate from going too far in terms of policy recommendations.

The other reason the Index is seen as valuable is because it is seen as allowing policy-makers to get a glimpse of what citizens think are important. For example Germany and Italy have both asked the OECD to share the data on what people who use the BLI website within their country have rated as important. In this way, the BLI is seen as a *"tool to connect policies with people"*.

One of the most valuable impacts that the BLI has had has been an interest from the Austrian Ministry of Finance to use the BLI to inform policy. The intention is to work with both the BLI team and the OECD's Economics Department.

The IV put these successes down to the simplicity and attractiveness of the BLI, which allows one to convey complex messages with relatively simple visuals and words. There has been plenty of debate about the advantages and disadvantages of composite indicators. The BLI has dealt with this by allowing users to create the composite index, ensuring that a simple message can be communicated, but without having to make what is seen as a value-laden decision about weighting.

Whilst the Austrian Ministry of Finance has expressed interest, it has generally been the case that it has been policy-makers involved in other areas such as social affairs which have been more interested in the BLI.

Internal impacts

Separating process and outcome is particularly challenging when looking within an organisation. What should be considered as an activity and what should be considered the outcome of an activity? Nevertheless it is important and valuable to do this in the context of a large organisation such as the OECD, as there is still work to be done to highlight to other departments within the organisation the value of using well-being measures to improve policy. If the team working on the BLI were to achieve that, that would be a huge success in itself (although it is worth noting that that has not been *their* priority – which was to focus on policy-makers in member states).

Another methodological challenge we face here is understanding the motivations of actions or comments which appear to be in support of the BLI. Are the people who carry out these actions or make these comments entirely committed to the ideas in the BLI? Or are actions

and opinions partly a result of other motivations? Does it counts as instrumental, political or conceptual use?

It is first important to note that, whilst the BLI sits within the Statistics Directorate, the organisers have tried to ensure engagement from the whole organisation from the start. Relevant policy directorates were consulted on the internal composition of each dimension. Important decisions at the OECD are made through policy committees, which consist of representatives from member states.[41] These policy committees (for example economic structural policy, regional policy, and health policy) were involved in discussion of the preliminary results of the BLI before their general release.

The BLI has also been given centre stage within the OECD, in public-facing events. As has already been mentioned, the OECD's motto is now "*Better policies for better lives*" and the 50th Anniversary Forum in May 2011 opened with a presentation of the BLI by the Chief Statistician Durand. In 2011-12, measuring progress, well-being and green growth was identified as one of the six priorities for the organisation. The OECD's website, whilst the BLI is listed as the top 'topic' at the bottom of the home page, it is not included in the list of topics in the main menu – an inconsistency which suggests there are different parts of the OECD influencing different parts of the website.

All these outcomes mean that, if nothing else, all the staff of the OECD are aware of the BLI, as well as many of the policy-makers from member states who engage with the organisation. It is plausible to believe that people who identify with the OECD (either because they work there or are heavily engaged with it), aware of this high profile role of the BLI, are likely to internalise its message somewhat.

According to the IV, this has been the case to some extent, with most people within the OECD 'on board'. The BLI has brought the OECD overall a bit closer to the well-being agenda and *"the well-being cause gained a lot of credibility"*. That said a number of issues were raised which might prevent the BLI from being anything more than an interesting diversion for most within the organisation.

The IV noted that a lot of these issues applied particularly to some colleagues within the Economics department, though that was not a hard rule.

Perhaps first and foremost was the reluctance to take seriously something for which policy-relevance has not been demonstrated with 'hard evidence'. The BLI represented a valuable first step in this direction within the context of the OECD, as it was the first time they had published hard numbers for nations. But well-being scores are not enough. The argument against has been as follows: Well-being may well be important, but what can policy-makers do about it, and therefore what can the OECD recommend to policy-makers to do? What might be needed is something like the "Going for Growth" reports which the OECD produces regularly giving guidance on how countries can maximise growth, but with a focus on well-being instead.

Another barrier, which the BLI has probably tackled effectively, is concern regarding composite indicators. Colleagues within the OECD strongly resisted the idea of producing a final composite score for the BLI. The team successfully addressed this problem by not creating a composite score themselves, but allowing users to do so if they wish. In doing so, they have avoided making any normative judgements regarding weighting. The other advantage is that it has allowed them to study what weightings users have used. One lesson from this is that people are generally in agreement about the weightings – a response to the concern that well-being is different for everyone. The other lesson has been that, carrying out sensitivity analyses, using the range of weightings that people give, makes little difference to the overall outcomes – the same countries do well.

[41] See http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,3417,en_36734052_36761791_1_1_1_1_1,00.html for details of the organisation's structure.

A third barrier, which remains to be tackled, is that some within the OECD believe that the work the organisation is doing regarding 'green growth' covers off the problems that the BLI purports to respond to. In other words, the BLI can be considered as unnecessary. It might, in the economic crisis, even be seen as a distraction. The IV feels that this represents a mismatch in the analysis of the crisis and what caused it. She argues that the crisis can partly be blamed on an obsession with GDP growth), and that it has been a "unique opportunity to reshape our economic thinking and model". Ultimately, this difference may be an ideological one, which would make it difficult to resolve.

Another barrier is the dominance of mainstream economists within the organisation. Related to this, is the perception that economists are 'risk-averse' in terms of exploring new techniques, such as well-being measurement.

Of course, none of these barriers can be attributed to everyone working in the OECD – it is a complex organisation. Indeed, one of the challenges facing those wishing to shift OECD thinking is the fact that the organisation is not very centralised. Whilst the Secretary-General does play an important role, decision-making is often done by policy committees, which have to reflect the views of member states. It is not easy for top-down decisions on priorities to determine the OECD's tangible outputs. Rather, priorities emerge from member states. For example, economics policy committees are typically accountable to Ministries of Finance, for which well-being is not a high-priority issue. Likewise, well-being has not entered the agenda in the USA, obviously an important country to the OECD.

One outcome of this decentralisation has been a phenomenon commented on outside the OECD (*not* by the interviewee) whereby the organisation, and particularly its key public figures, has been seen as behaving as 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde'.[42] The view has been raised that in one speech the organisation will talk about the need to go beyond GDP growth, and then in another will talk of the importance of focussing all attention on growth. For example, in November 2011, Gurría declared that "today, even more than two years ago, promoting growth 'as usual' is not an option… We need to … link economic growth with broader societal progress."[43] Then, in March 2012, he made a speech saying: "Europe is stalling. It needs to get out of first gear and make growth the number one priority".[44]

In the context of a decentralised body, where one part makes the policy recommendations and another measures well-being, it is a particular challenge to get the well-being measures taken into consideration.

Having said that, there do appear to be opportunities emerging within the Economics Department. The IV reported that, in a recent Economics Policy Committee meeting, an Economics Director said they should be producing "*Going for Well-being*" reports, rather than *Going for Growth* reports. The IV interpreted this as indicating that some people in that Department do see their ultimate objective as contributing to well-being, not growth.

Secondly, a recent chapter in *Going for Growth* itself, focussed on inequalities and considered policies that could achieve both reduction in inequality and growth, as well as those where there is a tension. The chapter starts off by citing the SSF Commission, suggesting that the Beyond GSP agenda was partly behind its inclusion.

Impacts in NSIs

Impact in NSIs was not discussed in great detail during the interview, but was identified as one of the key objectives of the initiative, and NSIs are seen as the main stakeholder. NSIs have been involved, through the statistics committee, throughout the whole development of the BLI.

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[42] Comment made by someone at the ETUI-EPSU Experts' Workshop *Beyond GDP? Social Progress in the aftermath of the crisis*, on 29th March 2012.
[43] www.oecd.org/document/9/0,3746,en_21571361_44315115_48863817_1_1_1_1,00.html
[44] www.oecd.org/document/62/0,3746,en_21571361_44315115_49986494_1_1_1_1,00&&en-USS_01DBC.html

As within the OECD itself, NSIs appreciated the fact that the OECD did not create a single composite indicator. Indeed, perhaps one of the things that NSIs have been most keen to learn from the BLI is this method of presentation. As a result, NSIs in the UK, Australia, Italy and the Netherlands are all exploring this approach for disseminating well-being and progress statistics.

Impact on Reputation of OECD

Another area discussed was the impact of the well-being and progress work in general on the reputation and external image of the OECD. No statistics have been collated, but the IV clearly felt that the Initiative had had a positive impact on the organisations reputation. Stakeholders, journalists and partners were described as talking of the OECD 'with a new face'. Mike Salvaris, speaking at the end of the Busan World Forum about the OECD's work in this field, said that "the benefits include recognition and praise, including some from unexpected quarters".[45] It is not unreasonable to assume similar benefits can be seen from the BLI.

Having said that, scepticism of the OECD's agenda in this area remains. The IV reported having felt that some people external to the organisation have maintained the perception that the OECD is carrying on with 'business as usual'.

Media impact

The BLI has attracted a lot of attention in the media. TV, radio and print interviews took place with the following, among a wide list of others: Reuters, Bloomberg, France 2, MSNBC, Euronews, BBC Mundo, CNBC, MSNBC, CNN Espanol, BBC Radio 4, Le Monde, El Pais, The Guardian and the Financial Times. The OECD report that they found 200 articles referring to the BLI in Google News on the day of the launch (24th May 2011), and have prepared an extensive list of major news coverage articles.

Academic impact

Given the BLI was only launched a year ago, it is hard to detect much influence in academic circles. A couple of academic articles have been found which cite it (e.g. Coicaud & Zhang, 2011; Anderson & Jané-Ilopis, 2011).

8.3.7 Possible future pathways

During the interview, two potential tactics were identified which might help to increase the influence of the BLI in the future.

Firstly, given the location of the well-being work within the Statistics Directorate, it would be beneficial to have a well-being policy unit operating within the OECD, working closely with the Secretary General. There has already been a suggestion that someone close to the Secretary General write some reports linking policy with measurement, which may be a first step to such a unit.

Secondly, the IV noted the need for more robust evidence on how well-being is amenable to policy. One example of such evidence is a forthcoming paper on how subjective well-being might be influenced by employment protection legislation. Another area that the team intend to work on is education. Further 'modelling' of well-being and its drivers would help win the argument about robustness. But, it might not enough to sway those with ideological differences and, as the IV pointed out, it is hard to tell when criticism of well-being is based on genuine scientific concerns, and when it is a matter of ideology.

[45] Salvaris (2009) 'Commitments and Conclusion Session' Presentation at the *Busan OECD 3rd World Forum,* 30th October 2009. Available at www.oecd.org/dataoecd/41/7/44063988.pdf.

Key success factors of Better Life Initiative in BRAINPOoL experts´ point of view

Indicator factors:

- Composite methodology, allowing the user to assign weighting, allows the initiative to maintain the simplicity that makes it attractive and salient to a wide audience (including the public, politicians and policy-makers), whilst preserving its credibility.
- Provides useful information on how publics rate the importance of different issues.
- Potential to be linked to policy through a process of developing policy recommendations related to the initiative.

Relationship/process factors:

- Member states and different parts of the OECD have been engaged from the beginning.

Policy/context factors:

- Initiative perceived to improve the reputation of the OECD amongst external stakeholders.

Chapter 9: Conclusions

9.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we bring together the findings of the previous five chapters, structured into four sections:

1. Summary of indicator pool
2. Intentions of indicator producers/promoters
3. Influence and impact of Beyond GDP initiatives
4. Lessons for future success

The categorisation of initiatives was one of the main objectives for this WP in the DoW – different approaches to categorisation will be mentioned in the sections of this chapter.

9.2 Definition of Beyond GDP

Our working definition of Beyond GDP indicators and indicator sets are those that have been *proposed as being necessary and central to the measurement of societal progress, in a broad sense*, other than those indicators, such as GDP itself, that are already playing this role. As such, our definition is less about the indicators themselves, and more about how people are using them.

9.3 Summary of indicator pool

We found over 100 indicator initiatives that can be considered as 'Beyond GDP' initiatives, with many more that could have been included if we were trying to make an exhaustive list. How can such a big pool of initiatives be understood?

The Stiglitz Commission adopted a framework for going Beyond GDP which identified three overall domains – economic, quality of life and environmental. This echoes the traditional three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. We have used these three spheres (as shown in Figure 19) to help map out the content of the initiatives. The distinction between subjective and objective social indicators (the latter being referred to as 'quality of life') is one that can be seen clearly in the rhetoric used in describing social indicators, and represents the difference between two measurement traditions – with quality of life indicators being promoted in the 1970s, whilst subjective indicators have only been considered for the measurement of progress in the last 10 years.

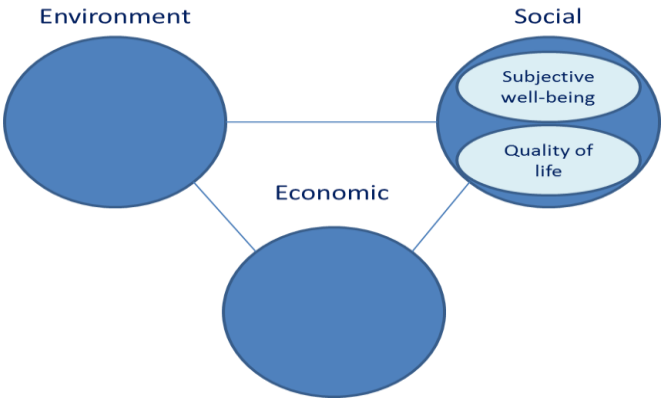

Figure 19: Main domains of measurement

The following 9 main categories of initiative could be seen:

- Subjective well-being initiatives. 15 initiatives were found which focused on subjective measures of well-being. Many of these are presented as at least part of the picture for measuring progress for a nation, although at least three initiatives are aimed at the more local or micro-level (e.g. evaluation or needs assessment). The initiatives are a mix of indices and dashboards. Most of these initiatives are led by academics or NGOs.
- Quality of life initiatives. 12 initiatives attempt to measure the 'social' sphere through predominantly objective indicators. This includes a couple of more official initiatives (such as the New Zealand Social Report and the Human Development Index), and they can be found to have started before the subjective well-being approaches. Like the subjective approaches, there is a mix of dashboards and indices. We have categorised these as 'quality-of-life' initiatives, although some use the rhetoric of 'development' or 'prosperity' instead.
- Combined social approaches. Four initiatives present a roughly equal split between subjective and objective measures, including Happy Life Years (which has one of each), and the Eurostat Well-Being Indicators (which has a few dozen indicators). These approaches use the rhetoric of well-being.
- Environmental indicators. There are of course many environmental indicators. We selected just a few for the long list that attempt to provide an overall picture of environmental impact or condition. These initiatives represent a mix of academic, NGO and government efforts.
- Sustainable development indicator sets. As well as single indices or composites measuring environmental impact, there is of course a large number of sustainable development indicator sets, arising since the Rio conference in 1992. These are typically dashboards or data sets that do little or no aggregation amongst indicators. They are mostly developed by government or supra-governmental organisations. And, whilst they often sit within the environmental policy areas of government, they cover both economic and social issues as well.
- 'Progress' approaches. We found a large number of initiatives (17) that combine social and environmental domains into an overall 'progress' approach. Most of these also brought in some form measurement of the economic domain. Many of these initiatives are official (i.e. government or NSO-led) and can be linked to the Stiglitz Commission. All the official initiatives in this category lead to dashboards, with only three of the unofficial initiatives (the Happy Planet Index, the Progress Index and the Well-Being of Nations) combining the indicators into a composite or an index.
- Adjusted-GDP approaches. Three initiatives attempt the task of combining the three spheres through an adjusted-GDP approach: the Genuine Progress Index (GPI), the Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare (ISEW), and Adjusted Net Savings. By definition, these approaches produce a single figure. In reality there are many attempts to calculate the GPI or ISEW in different countries. Many are academic-led, but a couple have been governmental.
- Community indicator approaches. We have not been able to do justice to the huge number of community indicator initiatives that have emerged, predominantly in the US and Australia. These initiatives, typically started by local civil society, but with support from local government or business, tend to produce arrays of indicators, rather than single indices. As we found in the interviewees, they can be quite effective at achieving change at the local level.
- Children's well-being. It is worth mentioning three initiatives which were found which focussed on children's well-being. The two principal ones (UNICEF's work, and the

Good Childhood Index in the UK) use subjective well-being, and produce both a composite and a dashboard.

It is worth noting that the economic sphere is not represented as much as the other two spheres amongst Beyond GDP initiatives. No initiative exclusively measured the economic sphere. Having said that, the Stiglitz Commission does make recommendations in this area, and since we carried out our survey, both the OECD and Eurostat have begun working on adjusting GDP and introducing the household perspective. Regardless this general gap could be interpreted in different ways: Beyond GDP indicator producers do not consider the economic sphere as important as the others, or that they think that there is sufficient measurement in this area, or they do not have relevant expertise to develop economic indicators. It also suggests that there is a gap in the indicator pool in this field.

9.4 Intentions of indicator producers

Information on the intentions of indicator producers came from three sources – desk-based research for the long list, the questionnaire, and the interviews. The following conclusions can be drawn:

- Policy is the primary goal. Most Beyond GDP initiatives are seeking to influence policy, as one might have expected. This was true of all the interviewees and 36 out of 41 of those who completed the questionnaire. Where other audiences were mentioned (e.g. the public, the media or academics) these were often seen as pathways to influencing policy.
- Measurement as an end in itself, or other goals? A valuable dimension for understanding the intentions of Beyond GDP indicator producers/promoters, is whether they (at least publicly) focus on measurement, knowledge and improving policy-making as goals in themselves, or explicitly refer to some other goal. These other goals observed in interviews and mentioned in questionnaires include:
    - Strengthening democracy / democratic participation
    - Enhancing equality / social cohesion
    - Reducing environmental impact

  These two different approaches to Beyond GDP measurement are not often recognised, and it may be valuable for those engaged in Beyond GDP initiatives to understand how their work sits compared to others along this dimension. This also relates to some of the findings we cover in the success factors section, around the value of appearing neutral, and also of working in partnership.
- Macro- or micro-policy? Another key dimension for initiatives interested in influencing policy, distinguishes between a focus on macro-policy (assessing progress and identifying overall priorities) compared to micro-policy (fine-grained policy decisions). The majority of Beyond GDP initiatives fall within the former of these categories, though there is definitely work going on with regards micro-policy as well. The tools that are developed for these two different goals are, correctly, quite different, with those aiming to influence micro-policy developing data sets rather than single indices.

How the interviewed initiatives fit along these two dimensions is presented in Figure 13 in Chapter 6.

- Encouraging public debate. Aside from policy, the most common goal for initiatives was influencing public thinking. In some cases this was framed as being about public debate – and therefore linked to ultimately changing policy. Other times it was about changing the way people make their own personal decisions. In the

questionnaire, this goal often coincided with the goal of contributing to a 'radical change' in society. This highlights another distinction that can be made amongst indicator initiatives – between those whose producers feel that their vision is similar enough to that of many policy-makers such that they can work directly to influence policy, versus those whose producers feel that a shift in public thinking is required for their indicators to be adopted. Having said that, the goal of encouraging public debate was not restricted to non-official initiatives.

- Data collection. Establishing new or better data collection was often mentioned as an intention in the questionnaire, though not in interviews.
- Non-instrumental intentions. In Chapter 3, we discussed the roles that indicators can have, and how users may not always be using them in an instrumental way, but sometimes for conceptual or political purposes. This was echoed to some extent in the interviews with indicator producers. Intentions related to non-instrumental use included encouraging public debate (as mentioned above), improving the reputation of an organisation (a symbolic use), and internal influence within an organisation. However it was not always easy or useful to distinguish between different types of use categorised in this way.
- Beyond GDP or just alongside GDP? Both the questionnaire and the interviews suggest that the name 'beyond GDP' may be something of an exaggeration. Most initiatives saw their goals as being to complement GDP, rather than presenting an alternative to it. Nevertheless, examples of exceptions to this rule could be found amongst various types of actors, including NGOs, academics, but also supra-governmental organisations. All except one of the initiatives presented as alternatives to GDP (both in the questionnaire and in the interviews) include subjective well-being, and all except two include environmental aspects.

9.5 Influence and impact of Beyond GDP initiatives

We found a range of impacts and influences. For some, 'transmission' to the public or policy-makers, or references to their initiatives could already be seen as successes. Here we focus on some of the more tangible outcomes:

- Assessment. Aside from official sustainable development indicator sets, several initiatives have or had successfully been integrated into some form of assessment framework. This includes (based on interviews and the questionnaire):
    - The GPI, ISEW and QUARS being integrated into regional and/or local official assessment frameworks in the US, UK and Italy respectively.
    - The Ecological Footprint being used to set environmental impact targets in several national governments.
    - A set of quality of life indicators for cities being employed by local councils in New Zealand to set performance targets.
    - An index of psychological well-being developed by academics in the UK being incorporated into the official Public Health Outcomes framework.
    - A set of resource use indicators being adopted by a supermarket in Austria for some of their products.

  8 out of 41 respondents to the questionnaire reported that their initiatives had led to targets being set in some form.
- Policy change. Few initiatives were able to claim policy change as an outcome of their work at this stage. Five concrete examples were given at the national level (from interviewees and questionnaire respondents):

- Schemes to improve habitat for farmland birds implemented after inclusion of a farmlands bird index in the UK Defra Sustainable Development Indicator set.
- Change in sentencing guidelines, also in the UK, as a result of the growing interest in subjective well-being (associated with the Measuring National Well-Being programme). This can be seen as an example of a conceptual influence, rather than an instrumental one.
- $15 billion earmarked by UAE government to develop alternative energy sources, and raise awareness about sustainability issues, which has been linked to the countries poor showing in the Ecological Footprint.
- Influence in the delivery of public health projects in the USA, thanks to the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index.
- Influence in the delivery of health care services, also in the USA, thanks to the American Human Development Index.

More prolific than changes at national level, were those that were achieved at the local/state level, specifically by the Jacksonville Community Council Indicators (JCCI) and the Council of Europe SPIRAL project. These include, but are not limited to:

- Policy and action to reduce infant mortality (JCCI)
- Introduction of policy at state level (Florida) in connection to substance use and reoffenders (JCCI).
- Changes of local policy, signing of agreements, and the funding of a new post in relation to sustainability (JCCI).
- Changes to delivery of food relief project in France (SPIRAL)
- Change to approach to homelessness in Belgium (SPIRAL)

Overall, this suggests that policy change as a result of Beyond GDP indicator initiatives is far more achievable at the local level than the national one.

- Real-world impact. Only two initiative that we interviewed – the JCCI and Gallup– were able at this stage to report real and measurable impact as a result of their work (ten questionnaire respondents ticked the box for 'measurable impact' though they did not provide examples and may or may not have misinterpreted the question). The JCCI interviewee claimed that "50 babies are alive today that wouldn't have been otherwise", as a result of their work on infant mortality. Gallup believe their data was used to improve human resources policy within businesses leading to measurable increases in staff well-being. Of course, other measurable impacts may emerge from the policy changes mentioned earlier, but often attribution is challenging. Whilst it is a useful rhetorical device to be able to claim measurable real-world impact, it may not often be useful as a target for indicator initiatives.
- Media impact. Chapter 2 of this report described how we used an analysis of media coverage as a proxy for public interest. The results of that analysis are covered in the fact sheets in Chapter 7. Media has a potential to reach a wide range of people who do as well as do not engage in formal politics. That's why politicians are mostly interested in media attractiveness of the indicator which is or can be used in their political campaign. The media attractiveness than denotes several aspects: (i) how often the indicators appears in the media (especially in the last years), (ii) in what context (negative or positive), and (iii) what kind of media releases the information.
- The most popular indicators used on an international level are HDI and EF. Both indicators offer an interesting theme for public media although the experts' media

deal extensively with both indicators as well. It seems also that both indicators are easily understandable for journalists and so for the general public, although the methodology behind them is not so straightforward. We are convinced that an easy way of interpretation and presentation (e.g. the calculator of EF, a well-structured HDR report) and the interesting information, which both indicators bring, appeals the journalists and consequently the public. Next indicators successful in terms of their media coverage are the economic ones – GPI and ISEW. They both amend the GDP measure with further information. Comparing with the two above indicators the media attractiveness of GPI and ISEW are significantly lower. It might be that the economic indicators are in more difficult situation competing with well-established GDP.

- Other influences. Several other influences were reported by initiatives including:
  - The public. Although several initiatives expressed the goal of raising awareness in the general public, no initiatives have actively sought to measure their progress towards this goal (aside from media coverage as mentioned above). Nevertheless, a couple of interviewees, and many of the questionnaire respondents, believed that their work has encouraged the public to think differently about an issue, or promoted discussion.
  - Data collection. This has been a particular focus amongst initiatives working on subjective well-being. The rapid increase of official surveys including such measures is testament to their success.
  - Practitioners. A few initiatives claimed impacts in terms of how things are done on the ground, rather than policy. This includes changes in funding activities of philanthropists, local service delivery, and human resources within businesses.
  - Education. Whilst this was not discussed in interviews, Half the questionnaire respondents reported their initiatives being incorporated into some form of teaching material.
  - Internal. Both questionnaire respondents and interviewees referred to achieving internal impacts as being important – i.e. encouraging colleagues in other departments to think about issues differently. The internal politics of large organisations is probably an area which Beyond GDP indicator promoters would do well to understand more about.
  - Reputation. Often, initiatives that have achieved change in thinking within their organisation have also been able to demonstrate an impact in terms of the reputation of the organisation externally.
  - Academic. We did not ask about academic impact in the interviews, though of course several of the initiatives we did interviews in relation to have seen academic articles. Indeed academic articles mentioning an initiative was the second most common impact identified in the questionnaire, with 35 out of 41 respondents ticking this box.
  - Influence within the Beyond GDP world. One outcome which can easily be forgotten is influence *within* the Beyond GDP world. This was mentioned by several questionnaire respondents, despite us omitting to include an option for it in the questionnaire. It was also mentioned by several interviewees. Not all Beyond GDP indicator promoters/producers have the same ideas, and a clear goal for some is to influence other initiatives. A hierarchy of initiatives is evident, with lower profile or less official initiatives trying to influence higher profile, official initiatives such as those led by the OECD or National Statistics Institutes. But even amongst these official initiatives, one can see considerable interaction and attempts to influence one another. This is of

course, positive, as it encourages the development of a coherent shared message, but it is important that too much energy is not spent simply on influencing one another, and that Beyond GDP initiatives look towards the outside world as well.

9.6 Lessons for future success

The interviews provided several lessons on how Beyond GDP indicator promoters and producers can achieve their intentions, some of which were corroborated by the questionnaires. We were able to use the categorisation developed in Chapter 3 to structure these lessons, although there was some overlap between categories.

- Indicator factors – salience for policy-makers. Indicators were successful when they could be demonstrated to be applicable to policy or strategy. This included the following lessons:
  - Fitting with an organisational vision or strategy. Typically this worked best when the indicator was produced in-house, though the ISEW was one exception to this rule.
  - Application to action. The indicators need to measure something that policy-makers believe they can influence. This is one of the biggest hurdles to the uptake of subjective well-being indicators, which explains why several initiatives promoting them are also working to build the evidence base on how policy can influence well-being.
  - Low cost implications. In the current climate, indicators that might provide clues for low cost policies, or indeed ones that can help save money are of particular interest to policy-makers.

  Other lessons included the value of demonstrating links between what the indicator purports to measure and other goals which are already embedded in an organisation, and being relevant for multiple audiences.
- Indicator factors – salience for broader audience. Chapter 3 highlighted that what is important to make an indicator successful depends on the audience it is aimed at. A few lessons emerged on how to make an indicator salient for broad audiences, including the public and politicians. A couple are about the indicator itself, but some lessons can be learnt simply about its communication:
  - Simplicity. Initiatives such as the Better Life Initiative and the ISEW were believed to be successful because they presented complex topics in simple terms.
  - Understandability. Initiatives such as the Ecological Footprint and SPIRAL were believed to be successful because they related a meaningful concept to audiences – in the first case one's consumption footprint, in the other their well-being.
  - Communication. Initiatives reported being sensitive to taboo words, and working with communication experts to ensure successful communication.
- Indicator factors – credibility. Aside from a general comment on the importance of quality data, the most interesting discussion here concerned the use of composite indicators with some serious comments on the danger of over-simplification. The Better Life Initiative provides a particularly interesting approach to tackling this problem as it deals with some of the concerns of composites by allowing the user to decide how to weight the components. It is worth noting that creating a composite was not just seen as important for improving communication to broad audience, it was also seen as useful for policy-makers as it allowed trade-offs to be assessed.

- Indicator factors – legitimacy. Three key lessons emerged from interviews related to this indicator factor:
    - Being, or appearing, neutral. Neutrality was seen as the best route to legitimacy. In the words of one interviewee, “advocacy organisations’ data are useless”. How do different initiatives deal with this? Initiatives lead by NSOs are properly the closest to genuinely being only interested in improving policy and increasing knowledge and therefore being completely neutral. A couple of initiatives, including the Jacksonville Community Council Indicators, and SPIRAL exist in a framework of seeking to increase democratic participation – neutrality for them is about reflecting the public’s they include. Other initiatives, with explicit non-measurement goals, such as the GPI or EF either did not mention this issue or acknowledged that they were perceived as representing a particularly position.
    - Institutional power. Another way to ensure legitimacy is by having an institutional power. This was mentioned by the OECD and the Council of Europe. Nevertheless, whilst this was useful for influencing other official organisations, a separate effort was seen to be needed to convince the public of legitimacy.
    - Working with your audience. Initiatives that are developed by or with the users they are intended for, regularly demonstrated more success.
- Relationships/process.
    - Direct contact with audience. Working through networks, allowing direct contact with audiences is useful when it is not possible to work directly with the audience. The interviews revealed that many successes can be linked specifically to personal contacts. The questionnaire results highlighted that most initiatives that had achieved some success in terms of policy had reached policy-makers through direct face-to-face channels.
    - Small is beautiful. Initiatives working in a local context have appeared to have the greatest immediate success, although of course, even these initiatives recognised the need for national action.
    - Partnerships. Working in partnership is often an effective solution to some of the challenges noted during the interviews. More often than not this is about preserving legitimacy and ‘expected’ roles. For example, policy units can help demonstrate the policy applicability of indicators in ways that statistics units are not expected to. Advocacy organisations can make use of data in ways that would compromise the apparent neutrality of the indicator initiative. Having said that, perceived neutrality may not always be the best way to ensure partners engage – one initiative noted that its values and the narrative it provided helped attract partners.
    - Identifying allies. Several initiatives noted the importance of having allies within the organisations that they are trying to influence. It appears to be valuable to work with them (people who are already converted) and provide tools for them to win others over, rather than attempting to challenge sceptics head-on.
- User factors. The most important user factor identified was academic background, with those with economic and particularly macro-economic backgrounds more suspicious of Beyond GDP indicators, and those with social science backgrounds more welcoming. This runs contradictory to the lesson from indicator use in general, which suggests that people with hard science backgrounds are more interested in using indicators. One approach to dealing with this barrier was to use

economic language and techniques to convince sceptics. Age was another factor mentioned, with younger people being more open to Beyond GDP indicators.

- Policy/context factors. Often these wider factors are harder for initiatives to influence, but it is useful to understand them.
    - Political agenda and problem identification. Consistent with Kingdon (2011), interviewees recognised the need for policy innovations such as Beyond GDP initiatives to coincide with both a favourable political agenda and a problem that the innovation can be seen to solve. The Stiglitz Commission is seen as having provided the former in 2009. The economic crisis was seen by a couple of interviewees as a possibly opportunity in terms of being a problem that can be related to the Beyond GDP agenda, but others saw it as a challenge for Beyond GDP initiatives as it has moved the policy focus.
    - Ideology. One strong barrier against Beyond GDP indicator uptake, particularly in relation to subjective well-being and composite indicators, is an ideological one. Attempts to measure progress in new ways are seen to imply greater government 'interference' and have been rejected by libertarian and some other right-wing political positions. Often ideological arguments are not the first to be put forward.
    - Vested interests. A few interviewees hinted at potential vested interests against Beyond GDP indicators. In all cases, these were identified as people who currently had a position of expertise or power in relation to decisions that may be bypassed or made redundant by new indicators.
    - Public pressure. The importance of public interest in Beyond GDP indicators was noted both by those working from outside government, but also by those working within.

9.7 Going forward

There is a huge opportunity for Beyond GDP initiatives. We have found over 100 initiatives and there are certainly many more working at local and regional level. These initiatives have already achieved tangible impacts in terms, not just of policy shifts, but also improving people's lives. Provided political momentum continues, one can expect further development.

We were not surprised to find influencing policy to be at the centre of the intentions of almost all Beyond GDP initiatives. Sometimes this appeared to be simply a matter of wishing to provide better data to inform policy, but other times, indicator promoters/producers had further goals beyond measurement, including improving democracy, or working towards sustainability. There was also an important distinction between initiatives producing indicators to influence overall policy, and others whose indicators are designed for influencing what we have called micro-policy. Of course, influencing policy was not the only objective, with shaping public debate being an important goal for many initiatives.

Several lessons could be drawn from our findings, the key ones are drawn out here:

- Different factors are important for different types of indicators.
    - For those wishing their indicators to be used to influence macro-policy, then simplicity, understandability and a clear fit with strategy and vision are particularly important. Indicators need to be able to bring together different issues, so as to allow trade-offs to be made and provide an overall holistic picture.
    - For those wishing to influence micro-policy, there needs to be a tight link with action and, in the current climate, ways to save money are of particular interest.

- We would suggest that these two levels need to be tied together to work effectively – the indicators designed to shape micro-policy will take on more morning if they feed into those that shape macro-policy.

- Relationships are key. Indicators cannot be thrust upon potential users. There needs to be on-going engagement. Where the goals of an indicator producer are too distant from those they are trying to influence, then other allies need to be sought, including supporters within the 'target' organisation, other organisations, and the public. Careful partnership work can help in marshalling the required capacities and knowledge, and can allow help the indicators themselves preserve a 'neutral objective' image.
- Building consensus. A single Beyond GDP position is probably not possible or desirable because initiatives do not share a single mission. The analysis we have carried out, however, should help initiatives to situate themselves in the Beyond GDP system and identify the allies that they should be trying to harmonise their work with, so as to ensure that resources can be maximised in terms of achieving influence on the wider world, rather than inward-looking debate. Where goals are not the same, but are compatible, then this too can be the basis of collaboration.
- Small is beautiful. Change has been particularly rapid at the local and regional level.
- Beyond GDP, but still economic. Measurement of the economic sphere is under-represented in the Beyond GDP movement – further development could be useful.
- Identify the problem. The economic crisis has been seen by some as a barrier to the Beyond GDP initiative. Indicator promoters/producers need to articulate a narrative whereby alternative indicators are seen as part of the solution to the economic crisis, rather than a distraction.

List of Key Acronyms

BLI	Better Life Index
DMC	Domestic Material Consumption
DPSIR	Driving forces – Pressures – State – Impact – Responses
EEA	European Environment Agency
EF	Ecological Footprint
EPI	Environmental Performance Index
Estat	Eurostat
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPI	Genuine Progress Index
HDI	Human Development Index
HLY	Healthy Life Years
HPI	Happy Planet Index
GSW	Guidelines on measurement of Subjective Well-being
ISEW	Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare
JCI	Jacksonville Community Indicators
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFA	Material Flow Analysis
MNW	Measuring National Well-being
NAMEA	National Accounting Matrix including Environmental Accounts
NAS	Genuine (Adjusted Net) Savings
NSI	National Statistics Institute
NSO	National Statistics Offices
QUARS	Regional Index on Alternative Quality of Life Indicators
SDIs	sustainable development indicators
SEEA	System of Economic Environmental Accounts
SNA	System of National Accounts
SPIRAL	Societal Progress Indicators and Responsibilities for All
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSD	United Nations Division for Sustainable Development

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[i] After carrying out the interviews, the results were categorised using a bottom-up data-driven approach, rather than imposing any specific theoretical framework. Afterwards, we attempted to see how well the categories identified in the check list at the end of Chapter 3 matched this empirical categorisation. The first three sets – the audience categorisation, the policy influences, and the success factors – were all useful and we refer to them extensively in this chapter. The categorisation of indicator uses (instrumental, conceptual or political), is intended to help understand the intentions of indicator users rather than producers. Nevertheless, it has been possible to speculate on these intentions at some points, particularly when the indicator producer we interviewed was also, in a way, a user.

A table listing the initiatives can be found in the Annex. For the sake of consistency, initiatives are always referred to by the codes listed in that table in square brackets.

[ii] We did not start this WP with a theoretical framework for structuring indicator producer intentions. The distinction made between instrumental, conceptual and political use (which is intended for indicator *users*, rather than producers) was useful at times, but during this section, after presenting the results categorised empirically, we then suggest a more meaningful categorisation for the purpose of Beyond GDP initiatives.

[iii] There is some overlap in information with the previous section, as most of the intentions we identified were framed in terms of particular groups (e.g. policy-makers, or the public). Having said that, immediate audiences were not always necessarily the *ultimate* audience of an initiative. In other words one might seek to reach audience A, in order to have an impact on audience B. There were examples of this. Also, one initiative's audience can be another initiative.

[iv] Worth highlighting as a case where interest is conspicuously *absent* is that of the European Commission with regards to [Estat-WB]. We were told that there was little interest in other DGs for the well-being agenda, even in DG Employment, where one would expect interest. One interviewee explained the importance of this step in policy influence by highlighting how invitations to present at ministries might lead to requests for policy advice.

[v] Not all of the interviewees felt confident taking credit for policy impacts and in some of the above cases, particularly national ones, it may be that other factors were more important in leading to change. An important philosophical issue was raised by one interviewee who doubted that any policies would be implemented as a result of an indicator that weren't already part of the ideology of the decision-makers in question.

[vi] One interviewee spoke of an attempt to have an impact on practitioners that was *not* successful. The intention was for [HLY] to be used as a way to assess the success of old-age homes. But, despite engagement, the homes preferred to measure satisfaction with specific aspects of their service, because this allowed them to directly change something. The interviewee also believed that the decision against using [HLY] reflects a culture where professionals think they know what's best.

[vii] It is perhaps not a coincidence that the two organisations that mentioned reputational impacts were also ones where internal impact was needed. One might speculate that marshalling evidence about the positive impact an initiative has on external reputation is a useful part of convincing internal stakeholders of the benefits of the initiative. Also, it is interesting how the conceptual use of the indicator producers within an organisation couples with the symbolic use of the rest of the organisation.

[viii] The interviewee associated with the [BLI] acknowledged that one cannot read policy recommendations directly from that initiative. Another interviewee noted that the absence of a well-being minister or policy team means it is hard to connect the measurement to action.

"[Policy-makers] have difficulty in applying it [well-being] in everyday politics"

This problem, according to the source of the above quote, is also relevant outside policy and in the realm of old-age homes, where practitioners preferred to measure satisfaction with specific aspects of their service, rather than overall life satisfaction, because this gave them a link to something they felt they could directly change.