



Well-being, Happiness, and Public Policy

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Introduction

Humanity, in our age, is restless. Thanks to technology and economic interchange humanity has never been richer; progress has become ordinary, and each New Year, the shy hopes of many burn bright. And yet our economic system seems inadequate to poor and rich alike: to the poor, for too often overlooking them; to the middle class and rich, for its instability and unpredictability; to all, for draining and dirtying the earth; and, because its success does not finally satisfy. While we can, and millions do, learn to be deeply compassionate, creative, and radiantly happy, doing so often requires great innovation and exertion – like swimming upstream. Many are applying their minds to bring system-wide change, so that our economies sweep us towards, rather than away, from what really matters to flourish as a human being. These include leaders in the new technologies and business communities – including Google and friends¹ – alongside thought entrepreneurs in village communities who are troubled by wisdom discarded. They include public servants who seek to promote human well-being,² ‘buen vivir’,³ and gross national happiness, alongside NGOs and citizens and managers who create verdant gardens of balanced and joyous humanity in a billion domains. Academics, journalists, spiritual leaders, network coordinators, artists and entertainers, teachers, and elders engage deeply – to criticize, to organize and to suggest.

In this time of creative ferment, there are many very wise and important reports and convocations and statements on well-being, many on happiness, many calling for sustainable development, many for ongoing poverty reduction, for social movements, for better measurement, for strengthened governance, for a new economics. Most of these initiatives arise from an authentic and legitimate concern over the current economic paradigm (as well as recognition of its positive aspects). And most have critically important insights – from scientific or empirical findings; political analysis, historical observation, systems theory, or from a consensus among a great number of people. The groundswell of reports,

movements, and initiatives is a symptom both that the problem is real, and that many are raising to the challenge and seriously seeking ways to address it, personally and collectively. Given such a radiant field of human endeavor, what is distinctive about this paper? We humbly seek to add a new voice to this orchestra of ideas by highlighting radical policies whose pursuit distinguishes the well-being and happiness paradigm from social and sustainable development. We do so in three sections. First, drawing on Bhutan’s own experience as well as on the long literature on this topic, we articulate a multi-dimensional concept of happiness and well-being, recognizing it must be specific enough to frame a new paradigm and spur collective action, and wide enough to encompass diverse insights. Second, taking a number of domains in turn, we show how certain aspects of these domains are already being considered in ongoing discussions. We then look beyond these and draw attention to more radical policies and overlooked aspects of each domain that are visionary yet efficient. Taken together, these policies illustrate the implications of focusing squarely on human flourishing as our fundamental objective, rather than social development or climate change or any other single objective of development such as higher GDP per capita. In each section, we convey concrete possibilities, by mentioning feasible and high impact policies which are cost-effective or cost-saving. Such policies are the kinds needed to reframe and reorient our institutions towards well-being and happiness, and their consideration will spark other examples or possibilities in readers’ minds. The third and final section draws attention to the behavior changes needed to undergird this new paradigm, and draws a realistic hope for the future.

Our aim: success, not utopia

In framing a new economic paradigm, we aim pragmatically at success, not utopia – at an organic deepening, not a transcendental leap⁵. The salient difference between utopia and success is this:

Utopia provides an ideal scenario of peace and prosperity, sharing and caring. It is perfection. The problem is that Utopia is inhabited by human beings who agree on some basic principles, which are in sound physical, mental, spiritual,

¹ See www.wisdom2summit.com on an annual conference hosted by Google on wisdom and the new technologies.

² Many government-led well-being projects are underway – in the United Kingdom, Japan, Canada, Netherlands, Australia, and elsewhere. Their definitions of well-being vary as do the nature of their policies. Wikiprogress provides many links to these.

³ Latin American governments, particularly Bolivia and Ecuador, are pioneering an integrated policy to support *buen vivir*.

⁴ www.grossnationalhappiness.com and contains the Gross National Happiness Index documents and other resources.

⁵ This argument draws upon Sen’s idea of Justice, which proposes that those advancing justice should focus on comparative against this second-best world, and not be distracted by the quest for perfection.

and emotional health, and are reasonable and upstanding. Not all of us fit this assumed (though fictitious) state. Success, on the other hand, occurs within a system that is created, run, and inhabited by human beings as we are, with all of our negative and positive potentials, our crooked pasts, our weaknesses, foibles, genius, diversity and mixed desires. Yet that successful system nonetheless maximizes the capability each person has to flourish, to fulfill her or his potential, to enjoy valuable and constructive ‘beings’ and ‘doings’, to be happy⁶.

Our fundamental commitment to realism draws on Bhutan’s national objective of maximizing Gross National Happiness or GNH: “Gross National Happiness (GNH) measures the quality of a country in more holistic way and believes that the beneficial development of human society takes place when material and spiritual development occurs side by side to complement and reinforce each other”(Thinley). The objective is to be ‘more holistic’ than GDP accounts, and to complement material development with development in community, culture, relationship, spirituality, psychological well-being, and harmony with the environment. This is not to say that all Bhutanese are happy, or that families are not facing momentous challenges as their ancient cultures come crashing into the forces of Facebook and entertainment saturation, and resources are drained by fast -growing industrialized corruption.

Yet this national objective to maximize GNH is both resolutely and self-critically held, and consciously shapes programs and policies as well as the GNH Index and the very definition of national success. At the same time, Bhutan has also achieved strong economic growth; alone within South Asia it is on track to attain the millennium development goals; and its forests remain attentively protected. Thus the pursuit of GNH, with its wisdom and with its flaws, has not come at the cost of salutary progress in economic, social, and environmental sectors. Building on Bhutan’s and others’ examples of courageous pragmatism, our aim is to sketch a new paradigm which can be successfully implemented in this breathtaking yet broken world.

⁶ Thedefinitionofcapabilityandof‘beingsand doings’drawsontheprofound ‘capabilityapproach’ofAmartyaSen; and through himon Aristotle,Kant,Smith,Marx, and Mill,amongothers. Senhaslongargued thatwelfareeconomicsshould replace itsfocus on utilitywitha focus on people’s capabilitysets (in their many aspects);its assumptionofself-interestwithanassumptionthat humans have a complex of motivations including altruism and commitment; and its focus on the aggregatesum of utility(orGDP) witha concernfor themanydimensionsofwell-being and theirdistribution, and particularlyfor thepoor.

Well-being and its distinct domains

Happiness and the well-being of all living creatures in the Bhutanese perspective is a multidimensional concept, which encompasses economic, social, political, and spiritual domains, and which fosters solidarity and regard for the other as well as for oneself. The need for policy makers to consider human well-being prior to framing policy has precedents in many cultures, polities, and philosophical streams. For example, Aristotle’s approach to political arrangements begins with an enquiry into human well-being:

A person who is going to make a fitting inquiry into the best political arrangement must first get clear about what the most choice worthy life is – for if this is unclear, the best political arrangement must remain unclear also (Aristotle, *Politics*, 1959, p. 14).

In recent times, philosophical approaches to happiness and well-being have divided, largely, between those who define happiness in terms of one dimension, and those who define human well-being to be multidimensional. Of course, each group has internal diversity. For example, among those taking a unidimensional approach to happiness, some hold this should focus on self-reported happiness or on evaluative life satisfaction or mood or domain satisfaction or positive effect, or meaning⁷. On these issues, we do take a stand, and do so unapologetically, with deep respect for and appreciation of others’ views and contributions. Happiness includes psychological well-being, widely defined to include domain satisfaction, positive and negative emotions, and spirituality and mind-training. Happiness also is constituted by achievements across a number of other domains, each of which may be in some sense co-equal with psychological well-being. There is no magic number, nor terminology for these domains. But in this report we refer to them as: good health, education, living standards, environmental diversity and resilience, good governance, time use, community vitality, and cultural diversity and resilience⁸.

It is time to bring together the wider approaches

⁷ for various perspectives see (Argyle, 1991), (Cummins, 2000),(Diener, Lucas, Schimmack, & Helliwell, 2009),(Helliwell & Wang, 2012), (Layard, 2005), (Kahneman, 2011), (Ricard, 2007), (Seligman, 2011) among others.

⁸ Thesenine domainsofGNHweredeveloped by DashiKarmaDratatospecify thefour pillars ofGNHarticulatedinBhutan’s 10thplan. Theywereused intheinitialpilotofthe GNHindex,fieldedin2006,inthefirstnationalpilotGNHIndexin2008and inthe 2010GNHIndex. For a listofdomainsthat havebeen used in previousphilosophicalandsocial indicatorswork,which emergedfromparticipatoryconsultations, and psychologicalstudies,see (Alkire, Dimensions of human development, 2002a)(Alkire, 2008).

of human development, quality of life studies, and progress with the literature on happiness and subjective well-being. It is time to affirm and understand human well-being to include the momentous achievement of psychological well-being, alongside momentous achievements in other aspects of life. The past decade has seen the brilliant rise of studies on happiness and subjective well-being. In warranted enthusiasm, the thought leaders have less fortunately asserted that the phenomenally interesting topic of subjective well-being alone is the objective of society, supplanting or encompassing all other aims. They also have asserted empirically that measures of happiness provide a single intrinsically valuable endpoint to which all other attainments are but instrumental means or 'correlates'. May the next decade be one in which the different domains of the flourishing human being are held in balance, in which policies are integrated to support the whole person, and become inextricably flexible and multidimensional.

We refer to the multi-domain objective as 'happiness' or well-being. The term well-being is often regarded to be multidimensional (and usually to include subjective and objective elements although definitions vary). However the use of the word 'happiness' may startle or confuse, so an explanation is in order. It would be possible to confine the term 'happiness' to one domain, and deploy a different term for the joint achievements in a human life – a term such as well-being or flourishing. Yet we observe that most of the happiest societies by current subjective well-being measures are those which harm the ecosystems most profoundly [ranking taken from (Helliwell & Wang, 2012)]. So we wonder whether this is indeed true happiness. Or is one single domain an incomplete guide even to happiness itself? We take the latter view, in which happiness and fullness of life are supported by all of the domains, not just one. We use the term psychological well-being to refer to the magnificent set of accomplishments related to reflective life satisfaction, positive affection, spirituality and mind-training.

What is a dimension (domain) of well-being?

It may be useful to clarify what we mean, when we identify dimensions of happiness or well-being, which have also been called domains in Bhutan's GNH index and related policy frameworks⁹. An

increasing number of national and international studies are enquiring as to what these domains might be. For example, in the UK the Office of National statistics undertook nation-wide consultations to arrive at their twelve domains of well-being; other such consultations are going on in places from El Salvador to Italy. But what is a dimension of well-being? Here we propose an account of these. While there is no 'magic number' of dimensions, the account presented here is used to justify the nine dimensions put forward in this report¹⁰.

First of all, we suggest that each dimension has intrinsic value. Perhaps the most succinct method of elaborating this suggestion is to share an excerpt from John Finnis' dense yet masterful treatment, in which he explains with some precision how a domain – in this example knowledge (akin to education) has intrinsic value¹¹:

(i) To think of knowledge [or any other domain] as a value is not to think that every true proposition is equally worth knowing, that every form of learning is equally valuable, that every subject-matter is equally worth investigating... (ii) To think of knowledge as a basic form of good is not to think that knowledge... would be equally valuable for every person. (iii) Nor is it to think that... any particular item of knowledge, has any priority of value even for the reader or writer at the moment; perhaps the reader would be better off busying himself [or herself] with something else, even for the rest of his life... (iv) Just as 'knowledge is good' does not mean that knowledge is to be pursued by everybody, at all times, in all circumstances, so too it does not mean that knowledge is the only general form of good or the supreme form of good. (v) To think of knowledge as a value is not, as such, to think of it as a 'moral value'; 'truth is a good' is not, here, to be understood as a moral proposition, and 'knowledge is to be pursued' is not to be understood, here, as stating a moral obligation, requirement, prescription... In our reflective analysis of practical reasonableness, morality comes later. (vi) At the same time, finally, it is to be recalled that the knowledge we here have in mind as a value is the knowledge that one can call an intrinsic good, i.e. that is considered to be desirable for its own sake and

¹⁰ Because the nine domains were already established, this paper articulates their intrinsic value(s); it does not further claim that they are the smallest possible set of distinct 'basic goods' in the sense Finnis describes.

¹¹ Taken from *ibid.*, which extensively discuss how parts of Finnis' thought – in particular basic goods and principles of practical reasonableness – can provide a useful foundation to a multidimensional approach to well-being such as Sen's capability approach. See also (Alkire & Black, 1997).

⁹ These matters are discussed further in (Alkire, 2002b), on which this section draws extensively.

not merely as something sought after under some such description as 'what will enable me to impress my audience' or 'what will confirm my instinctive beliefs' or 'what will contribute to my survival'. In sum (vii) to say that such knowledge is a value is simply to say that reference to the pursuit of knowledge makes intelligible (though not necessarily reasonable-all-things-considered [nor moral]) any particular instance of human activity and commitment involved in such pure suit (1980, p. 61).

The identification of discrete domains of intrinsic value is a starting point, but it leaves many questions unaddressed. In particular, specification of which particular aspects of each domain are of particular priority in different contexts, and how to protect freedom for personal diversity, will require separate treatment. That specification is largely beyond the scope of this paper. We have elsewhere suggested, drawing on others' work, that further specification entails the use of plural principles – such as equity, efficiency, sustainability, fairness, respect for human rights, and participation. The principles are unlikely to identify a single 'best' option, but are likely to be tremendously powerful in ruling out suboptimal alternatives. The choice between a set of non-suboptimal alternatives is a value judgment – a classic 'free choice' between morally defensible options – which will shape the culture and identity of a person or society in the future. We leave all such discussions to the side in this document, and proceed to elaborate further our specific focus, which is to explain what we mean by domains of well-being and happiness.

Beyond intrinsic value, we claim that the domains are both pertinent to individual's well-being and can also be used to frame the societal goals of well-being. While this point may seem rather obvious, Finnis points out that it must be stated in order to correct for a significant error in economic theories, because these envisage a chasm between individual and societal well-being. For example, at the individual level we may value altruism, sympathy, self-interest and collaboration, but at the societal level traditional economic theory assumes, and provide incentives for self-interest alone. Who says that the domains are of value? Anyone can. We do not establish the nine domains based on any single philosophy, religion, or theory of human good. Rather, their value rests, epistemologically, on practical reason, which means it can be corroborated by anyone who is observant of their own and other's experiences

of fulfillment through direct experience, literature, film, or conversation, and does not have a prior ideological or theoretical framework but is open to experience. Others including Finnis and Sen likewise adopt this view. For example Sen writes that no value, to be considered universal, "must...have the consent of everyone" – because not even motherhood is so universally regarded. "Rather, the claim of a universal value is that people anywhere may have reason to see it as valuable... any claim that something is a universal value involves some counterfactual analysis —in particular, whether people might see some value in a claim that they have not yet considered adequately. All claims to universal value... have this implicit presumption" (Sen, 1999). For this reason, in explaining the intrinsic value of each domain, we often illustrate this 'counterfactual' analysis by explaining the absence of that good.

Other characteristics of these domains are that they are incommensurable, in the sense that all of the appealing qualities of one domain is not fully present in another, and to that extent, they are irreducible (because shortening the list would mean leaving out something of value). Also, as domains of human well-being, they cannot be 'achieved' once-and-for-all. Therefore it is more appropriate to speak of 'pursuing' well-being, or 'realizing' some aspect of a domain, than 'achieving' it. Another key characteristic of the domains is that they are non-hierarchical. This means that at one time any of these domains could be judged to be "most important" by a person or group, and others domains may be legitimately sidelined. This being said, the domains cannot be arranged in any permanent hierarchy either for an individual or for a community or nation. The domains do have in common the feature that positive achievements within each, or the actualization of human potentialities in domains, could contribute in its own unique way to the well-being or flourishing of a human life. Finally, while psychological well-being can be understood to be a separate dimension,¹² happiness is not a domain. Rather happiness is achieved by some participation across domains

¹² Finnis, Boyle and Grisez (1987) identify two domains that are roughly similar to the satisfaction and emotional questions in the GNH Psychological Well-being index, and that of spirituality. The first is self-integration; the second, spirituality.

Self-Integration: feelings can conflict among themselves and be at odds with one's judgments and choices. The harmony opposed to such inner disturbance is inner peace'

Harmony with a greater-than-human source of meaning and value: 'most persons experience tension with the wider reaches of reality. Attempts to gain or improve harmony with some more-than-human source of meaning and value take many forms, depending on people's world views. Thus, another category...is peace with God, or the gods, or some non-theistic but more-than-human source of meaning and value.'

in a balance that is appropriate to that person or society. Finnis writes,

By participating in the dimensions in the way one chooses to, one hopes not only for the pleasure of successfully consummated physical performance and the satisfaction of successfully completed projects, but also for ‘happiness’ in the deeper, less usual sense of that word in which it signifies, roughly, a fullness of life, a certain development as a person, a meaningfulness of one’s existence (1980).

Thus we come full circle from the concern regarding unidimensional conceptions of happiness, to arguing for a multidimensional approach, to tentatively tracing out what a domain of well-being is, to anticipation that the balanced pursuit of these domains will bring forth the happiness that was sought at the start. Furthermore, the account set forth here can easily be used to undergird a new development paradigm. But how? The next section presents Amartya Sen’s criticisms of economic frameworks based on wealth, on unidimensional approaches to happiness, and on consumer demand. In place, he proposes that welfare economics and development assess their success in the space of human well-being and freedom, which he describes in terms of functionings, capabilities, and agency.

Wealth, Unidimensional Happiness, and Consumer Demand

Amartya Sen has helpfully categorized the accounts of human well-being that shaped the current economic system: opulence (wealth), utility (happiness), revealed preference (market demand), and articulated why a multi-faceted and more direct account of human well-being is necessary to guide economic development. This account can be drawn upon to differentiate approaches in Bhutan and elsewhere that view “happiness as being absolutely multi-dimensional” (Ura, A Proposal for GNH Value Education, 2009).

Opulence approaches evaluate well-being on

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the bases of the resources that a person has, such as income, or wealth. Yet, Sen argues, wealth in the form of money or resources is not an accurate measure of well-being. One reason is that people have widely varying abilities to convert money (or food, or other goods) into actualized well-being. A physically impaired person may require significantly greater resources to achieve mobility; a pregnant woman will require additional food in order to be well-nourished. If Miriam, Adam, and Karma each have the same amount of money, but Miriam is pregnant, Adam is an amputee, and Karma is happy go lucky; then the lives they actually could lead might not be equally flourishing, at least in materially-based domains. Resource-based measures such as individual income levels are blind to these differences.

Utility usually refers to a psychological state of happiness that could be defined (with different implications) in terms of life satisfaction, desire fulfillment, emotional balance, mindfulness or mood. Sen notes that, “We could err either through not being fair to the importance of happiness, or through overestimating its importance in judging the well-being of people, or being blind to the limitations of making happiness the main – or only – basis of assessment of social justice or social welfare” (2009, p. 270). But is utility an apt measure for the destitute? Sen has observed that the chronically deprived often become reconciled with their suffering and appreciative of small mercies, thus a utilitarian reading of their psychological state may be inflated.¹³ Further, a society which gives intrinsic value only to life satisfaction (the most powerful definition of utility at present), and values other aspects of human life (health, wisdom, political voice, the environment) only insofar as these prove to be efficient correlates of happiness, could be exceedingly cruel and heartless. For example, human rights advances, or expansions in freedom, might be justified as public policy goals only if they impact life satisfaction. One could imagine a situation in which this would lead to the progressive policy neglect of those with greater mind training (because their happiness does not depend upon external circumstance). Yet seeing this neglect would create stout disincentives for others to embark upon mind training. Further, if life satisfaction scores become supremely powerful as indicators, this could occasionally politicize the response to life satisfaction questions, with those in opposition, or those whose stricken

¹³ See also(Graham, 2010).

circumstances were not actually correlated with unhappiness, providing very low responses in the hopes of gaining policy attention. Finally, as mentioned above, it is troubling to note that the ‘happiest’ countries are rarely those which are kindest to one another and to the earth – or indeed even living remotely sustainable lives upon it. In sort, Sen concludes, “The central issue is not the significance of happiness, but the alleged insignificance of everything else, on which many advocates of the happiness perspective seem to insist” (2009, p. 273). In the revealed preference approach, regnant in market economies, preference is inferred from an observed choice such as aggregate consumer demand or market demand. While choice behavior conveys important information, Sen suggests that the ascription of ‘preference’ here is ‘an elaborate pun’ (1971), because it reveals nothing about peoples true values or reflective preferences. In contrast to economists’ assumptions, people do not always choose what furthers their own well-being; they may choose on the basis of commitment (what furthers their partners’ well-being), or may be indifferent between options but choose anyway (racing to fetch milk for unexpected guests – any brand of milk will do nicely); or may choose something (coal fire) reluctantly because their desired option (clean energy) is not available or affordable. Further, people’s preferences can be manipulated by advertising, misinformation, or peer pressure. Yet in all cases an economist will interpret their actual choices as ‘revealing’ what they value.

Sen has argued since 1979 that instead of relying on measures of wealth, utility, or revealed preferences we should seek to define and pursue well-being directly. He proposes that the objective of economic activities be formulated in the space of capabilities. Capabilities are directly tethered to people’s lives and to value judgments.¹⁴ “The need for identification and valuation of the important functionings¹⁵ cannot be avoided by looking at something else, such as happiness, desire fulfillment, opulence, or command over primary goods.” (Sen, 1985, p. 200). The approach advanced here

is compatible with Sen’s capability approach, as it identifies well-being and happiness in the space of functionings and capabilities. It may be that Sen’s and Finnis’ emphasis on freedom – which is less explicitly verbalized to date in Bhutan’s work on happiness – might enrich the GNH approach as it seeks to find a shape appropriate for many cultures and contexts. Sen’s capability approach is by no means the only multi-dimensional account of well-being, although it remains one of the most prominent and widely-cited. One advantage of drawing upon it is that, by articulating at length the connections and distinctions between traditional economic approaches and a comprehensive and multidimensional approach to welfare economics in the real world, Sen has articulated a potential way forward which is in line with that the GNH approach. Another reason is that the profound implications of his writings for a new development paradigm have been largely overlooked, yet remain particularly pertinent to the work of this Commission, and potentially transformational to the structure of economic thought.¹⁶

Education

Education is a domain of GNH. But what kind of education? Education is not merely schooling, for schools may be ghastly or unsafe; textbooks may inflame prejudice; poor children may be mocked whilst bullies reign; tender emotions may be stifled; and geniuses may merely annoy tired teachers.

Education in the context of well-being is full development of each student’s personality and of their abilities to serve the greater good. This approach to education is already enshrined in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (see Box 1). Similarly, Bhutan’s constitution states that the country “...shall endeavor to provide education for the purpose of improving and increasing knowledge, values and skills of the entire population with education being directed towards the full development of the human personality”.

¹⁴ Capabilities are the real freedoms people enjoy to promote or to achieve valuable functionings. Capability extends the concept of functionings by introducing the concept of opportunity freedom. ‘It represents the various combinations of functionings (beings and doings) that the person can achieve.’ (Sen, 1992, p. 40).

¹⁵ Functionings are beings and doings that people actually value, and also that they have reason to value. They can include quite elementary achievements, such as being well-nourished and literate or quite complex achievements, such as earning a world-class reputation in ice hockey. Sen leaves the judgment of ‘what people have reason to value’ as an open question, which needs to be asked and answered again and again thoughtfully and clearly, in different contexts.

¹⁶ An apt explication of this might be in (Atkinson, 2012).

Box 1. UniversalDeclarationofHumanRights,Article26.

(1) Everyone has the right to education.

Educationshallbefree,atleastintheelementaryandfundamentalstages.

Elementaryeducationshallbecompulsory. Technicalandprofessionaleducationshallbemade generallyavailableandhighereducationshallbeequallyaccessible to allonthebasisofmerit.

(2) Educationshallbedirectedto thefullddevelopmentofthehumanpersonalityandto thestrengtheningof respectforhumanrightsandfundamentalfreedoms. Itshallpromoteunderstanding,toleranceand friendshipamongallnations,racialorreligiousgroups, andshallfurthertheactivitiesoftheUnited

Source: (United Nations, 1948)

But what kind of education might conduce toward this full development? Bhutan's Gross National Happiness index contained four indicators. Two relate to traditional schooling; two others cover practical knowledge (including political, health, cultural and historical aspects), as well as pro-social values like truth-telling (Ura, 2012). Learning is a life-long process, as a person's curiosity delves into different aspects of life in turn. Furthermore, among children and adults alike, education is accomplished with families and communities and independently, as well as in school or formal courses. Yet the education of children and youth is a stage that all domains of well-being play upon in microcosm, hence we focus on it.¹⁷

A holistic approach to education is not a luxury; rather it ensues from a sustained and systematic consideration of the definitions of education from a variety of sources including educational theory, educational policy and the perspectives of educators, voices of the poor, and children themselves. In a masterful synthesis of these many approaches to education, Melanie Walker concludes that education entails the cultivation of the following capabilities:

- Autonomy, Creativity, being able to solve problems, to plan and make choices, to innovate.
- Knowledge, of topics which are intrinsically interesting and/or will be instrumentally useful.
- Social relations, of friendship, collaboration, cooperation, empathy, etc.
- Respect and recognition, of the worth of others and of oneself, compassion, generosity, lack of prejudice, listening to others' views, diversity in language, beliefs, etc.

- Aspiration, motivation to flourish, to contribute to human well-being, to be happy.
- Voice, to be able to speak, write, sing, etc and in so doing to articulate one's insights.
- Bodily integrity and bodily health, to develop physically, to be safe and protected from harsh conditions, to experience exercise and games.
- Emotional integrity and emotions, being able to recognize, understand, and cultivate positive emotions without fear, and healthy self-understanding and self-management of negative emotions. (Walker, 2006)¹⁸

Walker draws on the capability approach to frame her study of education because it "offers a compelling and assertive counterweight to dominant neoliberal human capital interpretations of education as only for economic productivity and employment and asks instead about what education enables us to do and to be." (2006, p. 164). In fact, this approach to education may itself be more productive economically, as we shall see presently.

How does such an education link to a society which advances the well-being and happiness of humanity and of all life forms? First of all, as one component of well-being, education may have intrinsic value.¹⁹ Educated women and men can enjoy poetry and literature; they can move around with more confidence in society than someone who cannot read train schedules or bills or street signs. They can communicate in writing, and can learn new skills or satisfy their curiosity by reading. The social skills of children in school are more developed than children who do not attend school. Mindfulness and the refinement of positive

¹⁷ Ura (2009) goes through each of the nine domains individually, showing the implications of values education for each one.

¹⁸ The descriptions of Walker's capabilities are shortened and adapted to this context; in particular, creativity is added to the autonomy field.

¹⁹ This section draws on (Sen, 1999) as well as on (Dreze & Sen, India: development and participation , 2002).

emotion brings its own reward in terms of inner tranquility and an ability to weather life's storms gracefully, and bears fruit for the community in kindness and willing service.

Education is also instrumental to a number of useful ends. Education usually supports economic growth and productivity, and individually leads to better employment opportunities or a more productive use of land or other assets for women and men. So expanding the reach of education improves economic prospects for individuals, for communities, for nations. Education is fundamental for health practices like hygiene and good nutrition. People, particularly girls, who are informed about good practices in sanitation, immunization, nutrition, family planning, HIV/AIDS prevention and oral rehydration therapy, tend to use this knowledge within their families and communities, with significant and well-known impacts. Women's education and women's employment are two signal influences in reducing fertility rates. Similarly, schools may teach other socially valuable practices, ranging from care of the land to recycling to voting to paying taxes. Educated people also have greater capacity to promote their well-being and that of others - through knowledge, public expression, conflict resolution and democratic debate.

Conversely a lack of knowledge or an inability to speak out can further muffle the political voice of the disadvantaged. Ideally, education fosters values such as tolerance, innovation, and appreciation of culture and traditions. In contrast, an incendiary curriculum, which demeans favorite 'enemy' groups, can inculcate prejudice and prolong political instability. Unchecked negative behaviors by teachers or students may reinforce traditional gender, race or class stereotypes, encourage passivity rather than problem-solving or harm rather than nurture students – physically intellectually or emotionally.

Happily, many aspects of education already have powerful policy advocates, extensive studies, and wide awareness among teachers and educational administrators as well as political leaders. To start with schooling itself, from which millions of children have been regularly excluded, the Millennium Development Goals advanced the goals of universal primary school attendance and gender parity in schooling. Post-2015 conversations articulate the need to consider the quality and safety of that education. Investments in quality education seem productive; for example, many

such as Heyneman argue that the link between education and economic growth only unfolds with power when the education delivered is high quality. (Heyneman, 2004)²⁰

We affirm, alongside many others, the need for universal basic schooling across genders and social groups; for safety at school and on the way to school, particularly for girls; for a quality education which fosters high learning achievements according to students' abilities and interests; for the development of key transferable skills and problem-solving strategies; for sport and athletic endeavors; and for the cultivation of pro-social behaviors and attitudes. These policies are not further mentioned in this section. Building upon these, educational policies may also include attention to emotions, to the practical cultivation of values, to knowledge of culture and traditions; to creativity and pro-active problem-solving, and to mindfulness. We use the term 'values education' as an umbrella concept for these terms. As Dasho Karma Ura wrote, "the simplest idea of value education is about creating the emergence of a set of beliefs and attitudes as a person's character and personality unfold, so that their beliefs will influence their behavior and actions in a positive manner and direction." Values education also makes a more universal compassion an instinctive habit. "What is necessary in value education is a process of expansion of our boundaries of consideration and the caring consciousness of others, beyond us, our friends and relatives" (Ura, 2009) (both quotes). The case studies provide examples of successful cost-effective programs and policies which delivered innovative aspects of education to young people, and which might spark other proposals.

Community Vitality

Relationships to others, whether within families, with colleagues, or in more distant and transitory social interactions, can be points of strength, fulfillment, and mutual enjoyment – or the reverse. The domain of Community Vitality affirms the need for constant attention to, and cultivation of, vital communities characterized by relationships of peace, harmony, trust, respect, belonging, and solidarity. The intellectual roots of community vitality are as wide as the nations that commend it. For example Aristotle and those building on that strand of thought in secular and Christian ethical writings give a prominence to community, to the common

²⁰ See also(Birdsall & Behrman, 1983), and (Keep, Mayhew, & Payne, 2006).

good, and to social life. Yet many others do as well. Here we draw upon a philosophical approach of Ubuntu from South Africa.²¹ The term “ubuntu” is a contraction of the maxim umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu which means roughly, “a person is a person through others,” or “I am because we are.” The maxim signifies that a person’s essential humanity is not in-born, but must be striven for and perfected through the care and love for others. Hence relationships carry moral force: our relationships with others – including our responsibility towards them – motivate us to act.²²

Archbishop Desmond Tutu described a person with Ubuntu as someone who is “open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, based from a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed” (1999). The indicators in Bhutan’s GNH index cover four aspects of community vitality: 1) social support which depicts the civic contributions made by community members 2) community relationship, which refers to trust and a sense of community 3) family relationships, and 4) safety from crime and violence.

As these indicators suggest, this is a broad category. Good relationships are important within families, where intimacy is greatest; they are the key for personal friendships, which enrich life. But they are also important in geographical communities: the local shops, post offices and temples; in work communities – relationships with the colleagues with whom one spends a good deal of time as well; and in communities of interest, such as savings groups, collective marketing associations, athletic associations, and so on. The different aspects of community vitality are of intrinsic value: it is simply valuable to live without a high likelihood of crime and violence, to have family relationships of love, acceptance, intimacy and vulnerability, to live in a community in which one has a (legitimate) sense of trust and fellow-feeling and belonging, and to have a fundamental sense that people care. In addition, vital communities and social connections are instrumentally powerful. People with a strong set of relationships report higher life satisfaction, better physical and mental health, a greater likelihood of being employed, of enjoying leisure, and of succeeding in their chosen activities.

²¹ This section draws freely upon the 2012 mimeo of Nimi Hoffmann, “Ubuntu and capabilities”.

²² For more systematic treatments of Ubuntu see: (Metz, 2010), (Nkondo, 2007)and (Ramosé, 1999).

Furthermore, friends and associates often help in time of serious difficulties such as illness. Vital social networks also help people get ahead in other ways – through introductions, recommendations, sharing information, collective marketing and bargaining, solving common challenges, decreasing search and transaction costs, preventing or resolving conflicts constructively, and so on. Strong social relationships also create benefits in terms of lower costs for contract enforcement, lower policing and prison costs, lower coordination and communication costs, more care for the commons, and so on.

Care for the social fabric of society requires more mindful cultivation in a time of high mobility, family breakdown, in fragile situations of epidemic or conflict, or among people whose history of personal attachments and relationships has left them without healthy relational habits. In such a time, Ubuntu cannot be relied upon as an unconscious instinct: it must consciously nurture or even reinstated. Untold families, neighborhoods and villages already have vibrant relationships. But where these are waning or absent, interventions can foster community appropriately.

Governance

“Good governance” refers to people’s ability to engage, influence, and hold accountable the public institutions that affect their lives, at whatever levels. People are able to demand their rights, to dissent and protest, and to resist corruption without fear. This may occur through many channels including regular elections, consultations, communication with political leaders, political debate including between opposition parties but also in tearooms and living rooms, by proposals for legal and judicial reforms, and by exercising basic freedom of speech and through a relatively free media. In Bhutan’s Gross National Happiness Index, four measures were used for good governance. These include if people knew of their fundamental rights and felt they were protected, if they trusted public institutions, their assessment of the performance of the governmental institutions, for example in service delivery, and political participation – voting, participating in local government meetings, and so on.

In the context of discussions of well-being, some find the term ‘good governance’ to lack the intuitive and compelling force of the other domains. The reason is that ‘good governance’ sounds rather too

large and amorphous to pertain to an individual person. Also, a pouting face with a thought bubble explaining, 'I am unhappy because I am not able to exercise good governance' is difficult to interpret. For in matters political, loyalties and suspicions run high, as readers' own reaction to quotations from Liu Xiaobo and Mao Tse-tung may suggest. Also, even legitimate losses may be fiercely contested and condemned. To add to the complexity, the modifier 'good' sounds like a warning or implicit criticism, leaving the reader to wonder who judges what 'good' is. In the UK Consultation on domains of well-being, in fact, participants suggested renaming this particular domain. The Sarkozy Commission referred to 'political voice and governance'. Alternatively, the focus on political agency in particular could be broadened to include the exercise of agency and empowerment in social and market domains as well.²³ Yet at the level of each person, good governance (whatever it is called) arguably has intrinsic value of at least two kinds. First it embodies a type of freedom, as Sen writes, "acting freely and being able to choose are, in this view, directly conducive to well-being, not just because more freedom makes more alternatives available" (1992). Governance refers to one specific form of agency – people's freedom to engage political processes, express their views and, if consensus is reached, to act on them. As seems clear from movements across the world, from the democratic wave sweeping Latin America to the Arab Spring to India's protests when democracy was temporarily quelled during the 'Emergency', this domain is widely valued.

The second intrinsic value is that by exercising 'good governance' people are able to contribute to the common good in a way that serves each other and brings meaning. Drèze and Sen point this out: "Indeed being able to do something not only for oneself but also for other members of the society is one of the elementary freedoms which people have reason to value. The popular appeal of many social movements in India confirms that this basic capability is highly valued even among people who lead very deprived lives in material terms" (1995).

Good governance is also instrumental to many other aspects of well-being. First and foremost,

it serves to communicate both information about situations and problems, and values. One reason that famines do not occur in functional democracies, Sen argues, is because in democracies, information regarding calamities is spread widely, enabling an appropriate response. Such accurate and timely information was not available, for example, in China's tragic Great Famine, nor in Bengal's. A second reason is that people's concern or even outrage, expressed via the media, through public protest and through communication with representatives, alerts them to the fact that people's values do not tolerate famine deaths. Even if political leaders are not moved by moral attentiveness itself, they are likely to be moved to respond to famines merely by self-interest in their own re-election.

Indeed governments can constructively harness citizen's expressions of good governance as a countervailing power, to prevent corruption for example, as we shall see in the case studies. Furthermore, democratic debate, the give and take of reasons and positions can be constructive in forging a consensus or at least a widespread understanding of why a particular course of action has been chosen, even if one continues to disagree with it. Sen also argues that "the practice of democracy gives citizens an opportunity to learn from one another, and helps society to form its values and priorities... In this sense, democracy has constructive importance." (1999). The public debates at the time of writing around the tragic killing of children may lead to a reform of gun laws in the US; similarly outrage at the death of a gang-raped victim in Delhi may change social norms, behaviors and laws on rape.

Among policy makers, the domain of 'good governance' already enjoys high stature, recognition, and support. This occurs in both developed and developing countries. In a survey of 34 national reports on the 'Millennium Development Goals' found that in all but 3 countries, the topic of 'governance' was stressed as an additional 'pillar', or a 'ninth MDG' or a government priority (Alkire, 2009). As in the other domains, we affirm the existing calls for better governance policies on many levels. Thus a very real question is what 'distinctive' policies might be advocated by a well-being and happiness based paradigm.

This is particularly the case as so many instances of 'good governance' actually mobilize citizens to prevent negative abuses of power, via corruption, a lack of implementation of policies, and so

²³ An alternative might be to change this domain to refer to people's wider ability to plan individually and collectively, and proactively engage and shape different structures that affect their lives, be these political institutions, the market, or social structures. Aristotle referred to this ability as 'practical reason'; Amartya Sen as 'agency'; often it is termed 'empowerment'.

on. Indeed one can wonder whether some governance programs are mainly seeking to recruit free labor from citizens to hold government to account, instead of undertaking fundamental reforms. But is the 'ideal' situation, then, one in which the freedom to exert good governance was present but rarely required, because institutions functioned fairly and well? Could it be said that the ideal 'exercise' of good governance was at a very low level? Perhaps when it comes to curbing excess, but this is not the only role of good governance. In a harmonious and equitable society with low corruption, there are still many political decisions to make, and these decisions create culture, identity, and values. For example, as Finnis points out, there is no right answer as to 'which side of the road' cars should drive on in any given country. But it is vital that this be decided, and there may be some identities – for example with the Commonwealth – could be strengthened by this choice. Other choices are value judgments. The speed limit set (and enforced) in any region reflects the value of life versus the value of swift transit; where this decision is made will shape both risks and characteristics of a society. A society with a speed limit of 20 would have low deaths from traffic accidents; it would also be decentralized as few people would wish to commute long distances to work. The language (or languages) taught in public schools and used in government documents is another example: teaching only the national language or English might assist with international migration and certain employment sectors, but at the cost of marginalized communities' culture and inclusion. Other decisions might provide incentives for young people to remain in rural communities versus migration to urban areas. There is no precise 'right' answer to these judgments (although there may be some wrong ones), but decisions will need to be reviewed from time to time.

Similarly, as societies change, attentiveness to new needs and their constructive redress can often come from below. Thus good governance can play a role in coordinating action, information, or analyses. The governance policies described here may fall within the kinds of policies that are already advocated by others. However we share them as innovative and clear examples of the kinds of governance that will *always* be required, in all societies. We begin with a disaster response mechanisms, which engages 'many eyes' – in this case, a crisis mapping approach which spread from Kenya to Haiti and beyond. Next come public sector information and right to food legislations,

which among other economic and societal benefits create incentives for public servants to focus on policy outcomes, and increase accountability and transparency.

Cultural Diversity and Resilience

The domain of cultural diversity, however complex to understand internationally, clearly provides identity, artistic expression, a sense of history, and meaning to people. The preservation and promotion of culture has been accorded a high priority for many indigenous groups and in many traditional cultures. Culture is often manifest in language, traditional arts and crafts, cuisine, festivals, liturgies, drama, music, dress, customs, and shared values. Less tangibly, culture creates the character and way of living of communities. Culture – even traditional culture – is not static, as we and colleagues said elsewhere, "culture is also dynamic concept, constantly evolving and continuously challenged by external forces and by internal cultural and social change" (Ura, 2012). To assess the strength of various aspects of culture, Bhutan's GNH Index included four indicators: language, a set of 13 artistic and artisan skills, participation in festivals and cultural events, and Driglam Namzha (a form of etiquette broadly translatable as "the Way of Harmony").

Like the other domains, we understand culture to have intrinsic value, simply as aesthetic expression or appreciation. As Sen wrote,

When Julius Caesar said of Cassius, "He hears no music: seldom he smiles," this was not meant to be high praise for Cassius's quality of life. To have a high GNP per head but little music, arts, literature, etc., would not amount to a major developmental success. In one form or another, culture engulfs our lives, our desires, our frustrations, our ambitions, and the freedoms that we seek. The freedom and opportunity for cultural activities are among the basic freedoms the enhancement of which can be seen to be constitutive of development (Sen, 2004a, p. 39).

Culture also has a number of important instrumental connections. First, to the extent that culture links us with a particular community, it can further strengthen and deepen our relationships. Singing and dancing together crafts a richer kind of intimacy than simply talking together; though you do need to know the same dance, or learn rather quickly. Relationships supported by shared

culture may open out other benefits mentioned above in community vitality such as trust, mutual support, and solidarity, and so on. Cultural activities may also support living standards, through tourism, or cultural industries of art, music and craft. It may also support psychological well-being, by providing stable identity on the one hand, or providing support, training, and understanding of how to cultivate positive emotions, resolve conflicts, and build peace. Depending upon the culture, it may support good governance, by sharing traditions of public debate, generating consensus, recognizing legitimate leadership, and so on. It is likely to contribute to education – for example in history, the natural ecosystem, health, agriculture and herding and cooking skills. And culture practices, whether energy work, dietary patterns, traditional medicine, massage, and so on, may support health itself.²⁴

But what does culture mean for the daughter of a Burmese exile living in Thailand? For a child born of Native American Indian mother and a Polish father, living in rural Pennsylvania, USA? For a child raised in Accra Ghana, by parents educated in Germany, who attended the ‘international school’ and loves Bollywood music? For the child of a Mozambique construction worker who has been raised between her village and South Africa and is an elder in the local church? For a child raised by a leading family in the mafia, or in a criminal gang, or a drug cartel, or a harmful cult? For a child raised in Mexico City by parents who are from that city? Situations of dislocation, migration, conversion, mixed family, globalization, negative culture, and urbanization have created billions of people for whom a single culture will never provide a solid foundation for their identity. Do they require ‘culture’ to be happy – and if so much – of what kinds – is enough? On these questions, emphatic agreement across populations seems an unlikely prospect.

Alongside traditional and indigenous cultures, modernity has created plenty of cultural forms. Music, entertainment, and sport are arguably cultural choices, as are fast food and fashion, which billions of people enjoy and find to be meaningful and identity-creating across socio-economic groups. There are cultural conventions and expressions in the use of social media, internet pages and cell phone ringtones. Yet these new forms of mass culture have significant commercial interest and powers behind them, and hardly seem to require investment and cultivation in the same

way as a dying language or traditional knowledge regarding medicinal properties of plants.

One option is to restrict the domain of culture to the discerning preservation of traditional wisdoms, and their adaptation and re-making in the modern context. And to acknowledge, at the same time, that billions of people can attain happiness without the enjoyment of an indigenous or ancient culture at all. It is like the spotted owl and other endangered species: our well-being may not reside not in enjoying them directly ourselves, but in being part of a society that respects and protects cultural diversity (Sen, 2004b). The argument for doing so is not idle. In some sense, it may be that the wisest cultures – those who eschew violence, who are internally content and feel no need of political or economic conquest, who live in harmony with the ecosystem and within their means, who are spiritually mature, at peace with themselves and with death itself – are those most in danger of perishing. The writings from dying cultures, even screening out the rosy afterglow each has of simpler times long ago, seem to suggest this. And yet it is this kind of society precisely which the new economic paradigm is most seeking to strengthen.

A second option is to single out certain creative expressions of beauty and wisdom, whether these are traditional or not. For example, support for artists and for the arts is often offered by public sector or by charities, regardless of what form of art it is: similarly for music, dance, and so on. Alongside this support for fragile or vulnerable cultural forms, this domain would also cultivate tolerance and respect for cultural diversity. These options remain open, and different polities and communities will doubtless choose these and other approaches, depending upon their contexts and values. In all cases what is-to-be-protected requires value judgments, and these may be contested when it comes to issues of taste (modern art and modern music), morality (treatment of women and internal minorities such as same-sex partners; justifications of violence), religion (protection of arguably harmful or false ideologies like the flat earth society or fascist groups), and economic ‘cost’ both to the funders and to the cultural group itself (supporting rare languages in schools, or economically inefficient modes of production). Unlike domains of health, education, living standards, good governance, the environment, and even, increasingly, community, the domain of cultural diversity appears on the face of it, hardly mainstream. And yet most countries have, and fund, ministries of culture. Many

²⁴ This section draws on two articles and the references therein: (Alkire, 2004) and (Sen, 2004a).

countries offer public support for the arts, and have special programs to protect minorities, first nations, and indigenous groups. Thus actually there is more institutional and financial infrastructure for public support of cultural diversity and resilience than may often be recognized.

This being said, mainstream policies vary exceedingly across countries, thus this is an area in which it is most difficult to know what the currently advocated policy options are. Hence in our 'policy' section, we have chosen to highlight policies which may or may not be new in each setting, but do somehow illustrate the principles we have mentioned. This includes vital investments in threatened languages, and intergenerational fora for a transfer of skills and wisdom in urban settings.

Health

Health's intrinsic value is self-evident. It is clearly glimpsed in its absence. The value of being free from pain is known from times of pain; the value of being able to walk, run and maneuver from times one has lost these; the value of being able to see clearly is felt when one loses one's glasses or one's arms become too short; the value of having energy, from times of hunger, fatigue, and strain; the value of mental health, after depression or breakdown; the value of being free of illness or cancer or other disease, from undergoing these or being alongside those who do. Health is achieved insofar as physical bodies and minds can enjoy mobility, energy, sensual awareness, mental health, and freedom from morbidity or pain. Naturally, all persons have health limitations, from short-sightedness to intellectual and physical disabilities to temporary or chronic conditions. But insofar as health conditions are provided support, many can enjoy good health for much of their lives.

Health is also instrumental to nearly every other domain, as severe deprivations in health and nutrition cast a long shadow over most other domains. Exceptions aside, health is ordinarily instrumental to work, as healthy people have fewer sick days, are able to concentrate better and achieve more at work. It is also instrumental to education and ongoing learning, because healthy and well-nourished people have better concentration. Bhutan's indicators of health in the GNH index included the number of healthy days in a month, the presence of a chronic health condition, overall physical health status, and mental health. Health policies are on the

rise. In 1978 at Alma Ata was the first international declaration on the need for investments in primary health care and other policies to generate health for all, and this triggered a powerful response. A new wave of policies was advanced to deal with the tragic onset of HIV/AIDS epidemic and the need for prevention, diagnosis, the procurement of affordable drugs, and the administration of anti-retrovirals. The Millennium Development Goals further advanced health goals, for example related to malnutrition, child mortality, maternal mortality, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and malaria. Immunization campaigns have been increasing. Alongside this, there is renewed interest in, and advocacy for the provision of universal health care in many countries, OECD and developing countries, as well as in social determinants of health, human resources for health, health system reform, research in priority diseases in developing countries, and public health including awareness of good nutrition and the need for physical exercise. Health has become a high-profile policy area in countries across the globe, and attention to exercise and nutrition is a pro-active sphere of activity for many.

Given this prominence and significant advocacy, what is the 'value-added' of a well-being focused paradigm? First of all, it is to stand alongside and support the important health advocacy of so many others. We affirm the need for urgent attention to malnutrition, which throws a long shadow across future life prospects for millions of children and which has been shockingly neglected in comparison with its sister MDG in Goal 1, namely income poverty. We affirm the need for sufficient public expenditure in priority health care needs, or in sufficient affordable primary health care delivery by other means. We affirm the focus in developing countries in preventing infectious diseases, TB, malaria, HIV, and childhood diseases through public health interventions as well as diet and exercise. We affirm the need for access to family planning support for child spacing and to limit family size and reproductive health care for women. Across all societies we affirm the need for universal access to health care, including mental health care. And we call for research into diseases most affecting the poor and marginalized. Finally, we affirm policies addressing health in a holistic fashion, including the social determinants of health, inequality, nutrition, social exclusion, and conflict. Given the tremendous prominence and attention that the domain of health rightly enjoys at present, and the urgent need for this basic health needs to be addressed, what can we add? This

is a legitimate question, as all of the GNH Index indicators could, for example, be met using standard interventions.

Living Standards

The living standards domain contains distinct components. The first component is meaningful and decent work and livelihoods, including caring and household activities. The second aspect is housing that sufficiently shields from the elements: cold and heat, rain snow and sun. The third aspect is some form of currency – money, assets, or other tradable. All three sub-categories of living standards, we value, have an intrinsic value. Decent work – work that is meaningful and safe and appropriate is, simply put, a way in which the person applies and uses their talents, fulfils their potential, creates, expresses and gives. Note that work in this wider sense includes childrearing and caring for other dependents, activities of retired persons, and housework. The value of work may be epitomized in a mother who has chosen to remain fulltime with her child for awhile. Her fulfillment, joy, self-growth, and service simply sing out to onlookers. The value of work is clearly seen in a master sculptor who carves with exquisite attention and affection. But it can also be seen in the farmer, the cleaner, the social organizer, the priest, the shopkeeper, the health worker, the banker and the manager – in any who do their professions with excellence and experience what Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi calls ‘flow’.

Housing, too, has intrinsic value although it is often considered to be a resource. Like that of health, it is easiest to grasp the intrinsic value by imagining its absence: being rain-soaked with no prospect of drying out soon; being intolerably hot or cold, or exposed to animals, or unsure where one will sleep, having no place to store one’s possessions. The intrinsic value comprises both shelter from the elements and security of self and property. What could loosely be called ‘currency’ or general-purpose resources and is often used in the form of money, has a kind of value that could, carefully considered, be considered intrinsic. This will be thought an odd assertion, as following Aristotle, money is rightly valued as a means: “wealth is merely useful, and for the sake of something else” (1980, p. 7). Furthermore, the ‘intrinsic’ value depends to some extent upon context. Yet there is a peculiar and particular aspect of freedom that currency brings – a decentralized form of freedom within exchange economies. General purpose assets including money can be converted into alternative goods and services that

a person cannot self-manufacture. Currency and trade have no intrinsic value, of course (the value of trade can relate to good relationships covered under community vitality). But there is a valid freedom of having abilities that are not self-manufactured – whether it is the ability to visit an aunt by a bus one neither owns nor drives, or to buy a smart phone one neither made nor understands, or to send your child to piano lessons although you do not play, or to buy bricks you did not fire, or rent a tiller or save up for the future. Without money or some form of local currency, tradeables or exchange economy, we would be limited, day by day, to subsistence agriculture and handouts from the state or others, and would be unable to save for the distant future. This would surely prove a severe curtailment of our freedom to enjoy goods and services we did not self-manufacture, and to be interdependent, to help provide for the future, is the intrinsic value of which general purpose resources such as money and assets are but imperfect proxies. The instrumental value of these aspects of living standard in terms of advancing on her domains of happiness and well-being are better known yet worth rehearsing. Some work is associated, naturally, with income, with learning and skills development, with psychological well-being as well as health. Housing too advances health and living standards; currency and general purpose means such as income and savings can be instrumental to all the other domains in some ways.

Policies to advancing living standards seem to dominate policies in almost any other domain. These ranges from policies to increase GDP growth or expand domestic and international trade, to policies to reduce unemployment improve workers skills and productivity. They include policies to promote technology and innovation, those that enforce contracts that introduce roads and establish markets and other institutional structures necessary for ‘doing business’. They include policies to encourage firms and enterprises of different scales, to upgrade housing quality and safety. And naturally they include poverty reduction policies, whether these focus on jobs for the working poor, or on pensions, transfers, or the free access to services so that the scant income of poor families can be applied to other aims. We affirm some, but actually not all, of these policies. We do affirm those policies that address the absolute poor, those deprived in housing and without safe or decent work. We affirm acknowledgment and respect for non-remunerative work, whether child-rearing, volunteering, housework, or responsibilities of care. Yet a key pillar of the new economic

paradigm is sufficiency, a principle which the current paradigm does not respect, particularly in this domain. Rather, many policies both public and corporate seek to maximize wealth and profit, regardless of its opportunity costs on other domains of well-being. Yet in this overall document we wish to imagine other policies that are at the moment less concrete and the least implemented. Many are almost thought experiments, so rather than providing concrete policy cameos, at this stage, we list what those policy cameos, we hope, would convey. Perhaps readers can then propose policy cameos for this section.

The first would be for the creation of **meaningful work** – for jobs that do not alienate or demean – not simply for productivity and remuneration – but which activate the talents and gifts and vocation of the worker, enabling intrinsic value and self-development and service along the career path.

Another is to create a comfortable, determined citizen-wide consensus and understanding that enough is enough: that the chosen goals of **sufficiency** (whatever these may be) are life-giving rather than life-suppressing. The sufficiency economy has been actively advanced in Thailand, and others are actively exploring this topic; further investigation of their policy experience could enrich.

A third is recognition of **unpaid work**, and ways of acknowledging, dignifying, and supporting, incentivizing, and celebrating the huge contributions of good parenting, of the home-based caring work, and, yes, housecleaning, gardening and house repair.

A fourth looks at the **long-term** prospects of people's living standards: it entails transforming working poor people's lives so that they are unlikely to fall into poverty in the future. These are not necessarily radical investments, but land redistribution, vocational skills training, the cultivation of savings habits, and safe temporary outmigration policies, may all contribute.

A last is a **re-valuation of money**, to clearly recognize and affirm the intrinsic value that general-purpose resources such as money up to certain levels do have – the freedoms related to security, diversity, generosity, and sufficiency – and to allow these to prevail over approaches that value money itself, rather than the things it is truly good for.

Environment

The term 'environment' or the 'ecosystem' refers to a heterogeneous portfolio of items from animals to trees to ground water to minerals to atmospheric conditions, with many interconnections, and with elements that are at many levels from molecular to atmospheric. The environment is far larger than any being, and largely beyond human control. Yet it is fundamental to the survival of humanity to a degree that differs from other dimensions. As a result environmental diversity and resilience enter the new economic paradigm in distinctive ways from other domains; indeed an entire working group is focusing on related policies.

Yet like each of the other domains, the study of human happiness adds something new. For harmony with nature has intrinsic value. Natural beauty and natural harmony are core causes of serenity, wonder, friendship and joy. The strength of these values varies, but they can be described. One regularly reported intrinsic value is aesthetic. This takes many possible forms, and appeals to different senses – the beauty of the mountains at sunrise, of vast beaches or snowy plains; the fragrance of jasmine and orange blossom; the view of blue hills and jagged land formations, of a clear starlit sky; the smell of the rain, the feel of rich soil or of a buffalo's back, the crash of waves or the late night birdsong. Another intrinsic value regards the natural processes of co-existence, or of growth and death – a sense of harmony between people, the animals and the earth; the deep respect for the land, reverence for a specific sacred grove; the joy of a baby goat's birth, or of nostalgia in autumn; thanksgiving for a harvest; a feeling of affiliation with nearby cliffs. Also of intrinsic value are relationships with non-human life forms, various animals we live with or alongside. Finally, the sense closeness to oneself or to the sacred, the tranquility and lucidity of being, that sometimes seems more possible in solitary spaces or in nature than in rushed, noisy, dirty urban environs. One only needs to read poetry, novels or prayers (or to notice where people who can take vacations and retreats) to see that these are ways in which nature has been valued across continents and ages. Contrasting with this, environmental degradation can introduce a set of intrinsic disvalues that directly dampen people's flourishing. These might include discomfort from, and regret for pollution and smog, erosion, salination and water logging, the bad smells of rubbish, and the drain of urban noise; and even poignant regret at the destruction

of the earth by commercial farming or resource extraction or by manufacture without safeguards; grief at the destruction of a sacred space, or of the dying off of the harmony and connection of some traditional cultures. Thus like each other domain, the environment itself contributes directly to human happiness or clouds it.

Clearly there are a myriad of ways in which ecosystems and the environment are also instrumental to human flourishing and happiness. These are obvious and often-cited, so hardly need mention.

- Human life depends upon food, water, clean air, and an absence of many toxins.
- The livelihoods of farmers, miners, fishers, herders, poultry farmers, loggers – depend on it.
- Humanly-useful produces depend upon others – clean air depends upon forests; fish depend upon a lack of pollution etc. Chains of interdependence extend backwards in many directions.
- Many goods that enable human flourishing are manufactured from the earth's resources.
- Sufficient goods are needed so that *all* members of the community can flourish.
- Conversely environmental degradation poses instrumental threats to human flourishing through diverse mechanisms.
- Climate change will threaten survival of humanity and other living beings in different places.
- Human health is threatened by pollution, by poor farm factory conditions, etc.
- Human livelihoods are threatened by erosion and resource depletion; by pollution.
- Commodities that save time and enhance human flourishing may rely on scarce resources.
- Shortages may generate human conflicts that directly imperil human flourishing.

There are empirical interlinkages in many different directions, and tracing these, though incompletely, can uncover virtuous cycles which are appropriate for holistic and integrated policies in other domains as well. Given the vast nature of this subject, and the enormous resources that are being poured into its study and into the development of new policies, institutional mechanisms, and the Sustainable Development goals after Rio +20, what can this Commission add?

We affirm the inspiring bevy of policies outlined in the Rio+20 document The Future We Want(2012).

These pertain to this domain and also to many other dimensions of well-being mentioned in this document. They give a rightful and vigorous priority to poverty eradication, and to promoting 'harmony with nature', to the insights of indigenous people, to the need for sustainable transport, and holistic planning of human communities including urban areas.

Yet we observe that The Future We Want does not encompass the full range of policies for a happiness perspective. As regards this domain, it does not include the word beauty; it mentions in passing the conservation of natural heritage; it mentions the need for education in sustainability practices, it does not emphasize the need to change the underlying mindset and mentality of humanity towards material goods, to shift our deepest hopes away from one day becoming millionaires and billionaires and towards enjoying sustained and mature human happiness and well-being, with all of the self-giving that flowers in this condition. In short, it focuses mainly on the instrumental value of the environment, and only on the 'intrinsic' value when it is a particular characteristic of some minority; not a majority view.

For that reason, as in the case of living standards, we seek additional policies, which focus on the change of underlying mindset away from maximization and towards sufficiency. Further, as a support of human agency, we support policies that enable citizen groups to actively shape market forces, for example by creating a market for clean energy. We also share policies that preserve natural spaces for their beauty and not merely for instrumental reasons. And not knowing exactly what 'harmony with nature' means, we support policies that protect it, whether RSPCA, homes for stray animals, protection of cruelty to animals.

Policies: As this domain is the subject of a separate working group who are dedicated to this topic, we respectfully suggest that they might consider and propose radical policy cameos.

Time use

When people enjoy sufficient time, the values people enact and implement can be read off from two aspects of their lives: how they spend their money, and how they spend their time. Among the destitute, the oppression of circumstances is similarly visible to some extent in their time use. Time poverty is evinced by those whose lives are controlled by paid and unpaid work, and those

who cannot sleep enough. Poor time quality is present when people are constantly in too much of a hurry to taste the moments and enjoy those with whom they share them. It is also present in drudgery and uncreative work. The ideal time use, is one in which a person is 'present' to all the activities of the day, in which even less-than-loved activities are completed with mindfulness and well-wishing, in which there is enough time for sleep, in which tasks are done efficiently yet entered into deeply, in which relationships are well-tended. In ideal time use, most activities are meaningful, intentional, and of intrinsic value, whether or not they are also of instrumental value. For example, work is intrinsically valued as a fulfillment of one's talents, a path of service, having some greater purpose. Naturally that same work may also be instrumental to earning an income.

Interestingly, in the domain of time use, the notion of 'sufficiency' is already well-established. One seeks 'enough' sleep - not too little or too much; as well as 'enough' work and 'enough' leisure. This embeddedness of sufficiency norms is interesting, because it also conveys with brilliant clarity the need for concepts of sufficiency to incorporate human diversity. What is 'enough' sleep for one may be four hours; for another, nine. One may wish 30 hours of work per week; another may with gusto, balance, and time for family and recreation, regularly work 50 hour weeks. The quantity and content of time devoted to different activities will differ for a young family from a middle-aged couple to those nearing retirement age. And, naturally, cultural and social patterns may also shape the ideal time balance across life seasons. For the destitute, time poverty is often endemic, as much time spent in often inefficient, poorly paid, time-intensive activities simply to feed, clothe, and house the families. The *Voices of the Poor* study found that "For every target group, to tackle the problems of unemployment, debts and rising cost of life, [poor people] unanimously agreed to work harder, regardless of the workload and time. Some worked until they were sick. — Kaoseng, Thailand" (2000). A Vietnam *Voices of the Poor* report said of a 29-year-old woman supporting a chronically sick husband, a mother-in-law aged 70, and five children, "My life is about managing time." (2000).

For those who are not materially poor, good time balances, to at least as much or a greater extent than the other domains is partly self-made. Habits of overstimulation may hamper it, as may socio-cultural pressures or needs to 'accomplish' or seem

'busy' for self-esteem. Inefficient work habits, stress and procrastination, and unfulfilling leisure or work patterns also contribute to greater-than-necessary time poverty or lack of quality. Sleep deprivation has many causes, among them stress and anxiety, noise, danger, and physical discomforts. What is 'sufficient' time use, or time balance? We can hardly frame this in terms of working and sleeping ours because this ideal varies dramatically across people and for the same person in different seasons of life. Some seek greater diversity in activities and others less. Some need more sleep; some love their work. Some wish to invest more in family; others in art. There is a lot we are learning at present about time use, which will give greater insights as to what kinds of sufficiency threshold(s) there may be. So how do we proceed? First, we affirm the policies that others are articulating to limit time poverty. These include a limitation of working hours to 48 per week by the International Labour Organization, as well as living wages that remunerate workers properly. They include policies of flexibility in working hours and places of work, of holidays and personal leave days, of maternity and sick leave. They include attempts to limit the excesses of shift work, to provide protections for informal workers, and meaningful engagement for retired persons. We also affirm policies in other domains that enable more meaningful time use – such as time-efficient public transport systems, social safety nets, adequate housing, labor-saving devices such as washing machines, noise reduction policies, and social appreciation for unpaid work (cooking, shopping, house cleaning, house repair, washing, ironing, etc). We affirm adequate provision of care services for children, the disabled, and the elderly, as well as support for their careers. And we affirm policies that increase the meaning-content of, and decrease the 'low-value' programming of radio and television, of computer games and children's entertainment, of social networking, and of advertising.

Policies Time Balance and Peak Performance: We recommend that all students and adults have the opportunity to learn good time management and balance skills, and be able to perform at their peak. This knowledge includes yet goes beyond the original 'time management' skills of organization. It also enables citizens to take advantage of new neurological findings, to 'leapfrog' through learning, habits of low-quality time, to analyze their own time use given their deeper values and priorities, within the confines of the human life, and use it in a way they will never regret. A good

understanding of time – including habits like procrastination, work holism, priority-setting, and so on – enables people's effective time resources to increase: they have more time because the time they have, they spend more effectively. In order to do so, we propose:

- Activity-based learning in schools on time balance, time management, priority-setting, flow, and peak performance.
- Short courses available in adult learning centers, civil service, learning institutes in Universities, newspapers, and companies, in religious institutions and others. These might be parts of lifelong learning systems offered to professionals.
- Short courses also available for populations usually overlooked: retired persons, unemployed persons, stay at home mothers and careers, those in gardening and construction, in factories, those working two part-time jobs, working in restaurants, shops and other service industries, residents of hospitals, prisons, military placements, so on. These groups are rarely exposed to activities that improve time balance, yet they often have the lowest-quality leisure (television), and the largest opportunity for improvement.

Related to the above, work places may seek to adopt innovative policies that support high performance in their staff – such as a nap room, or an exercise facility, or a meditation space.

Psychological Well-being

The cultivation of awareness; the development of an genuine thought for others, so that even when taken by surprise one's instinctive response ushers from compassion; the non-judging sifting of emotions; the healing of memories that haunt or wound – are all characteristics of psychological well-being. When one is tormented by worry, anxiety, or excessive thinking; when one is fundamentally self-oriented; when emotions and desires bubble up and overpower in ways that are later deeply regretted or that badly harm others; when the inevitable wounds of childhood and later life remain raw years later; when one's actions are not integrated with one's emotions and deeply held values, there is space for greater psychological well-being. Naturally healthy psychological well-being is able to acknowledge deficiencies and struggle: harmful constraints of physical pain, poverty, discrimination, or cultural alienation can be acknowledged (and

improvements warmly welcomed) even though they may not ruin one's life, and may co-exist with the deeper river of peace.

In the introduction to the World Happiness Report, Jeff Sachs wrote:

We increasingly understand that we need a very different model of humanity, one in which we are a complicated interplay of emotions and rational thought, unconscious and conscious decision-making, "fast" and "slow" thinking. Many of our decisions are led by emotions and instincts, and only later rationalized by conscious thought. Our decisions are easily "primed" by associations, imagery, social context, and advertising. We are inconsistent or "irrational" in sequential choices, failing to meet basic standards of rational consistency. And we are largely unaware of our own mental apparatus, so we easily fall into traps and mistakes. Addicts do not anticipate their future pain; we spend now and suffer the consequences of bankruptcy later; we break our diets now because we aren't thinking clearly about the consequences (2012).

This domain is about enabling people to build up, from within, that different model of humanity. Our approach to psychological well-being frames it partly – even largely – as a skill that can be learned, not only as a dependent state that can be studied with reference to its correlates with other achievements. As a skill, it has a kind of independence and stability, and is not merely a function of external circumstances. Recall that education refers to children's (and adults') exposure to teaching on different subjects, that by education things can be learned and if learned they can be of both intrinsic and instrumental value. In this view, psychological well-being, too, comprises skills that can be learned, and if learned and used regularly, they can be of both intrinsic and instrumental value. Psychological well-being may also include the personal assessment of how satisfied a person is, all things considered, with respect to different domains of their own well-being. In the GNH Index, psychological well-being has three components.²⁵ The first is spirituality – meditation or mindfulness practices, and the consideration of the consequences of one's actions. The second

²⁵ Our use of the term 'psychological well-being' for this dimension departs both from terminology others' use, and also from other definitions of psychological well-being. For example, Ryan and Deci describe three elements of psychological well-being: competence, autonomy and relatedness.

is emotional balance, which is the outcome of emotional intelligence, and the cultivation of positive emotions such as generosity, empathy, and compassion. The third is evaluative satisfaction with respect to different domains of GNH.

Rather unfortunately, it appears to be rather difficult to describe and present the intrinsic and instrumental values of happiness without making some proportion of happiness researchers unhappy. This is because, at a time of rapid development and great enthusiasm for the transformative potential of happiness research, and in the light of intense lived personal experiences of happiness, passions and conflicts between approaches to happiness are not inconsiderable, competition for the dominant understanding is in full swing, and with new research and studies underway in every continent, the field itself is changing rapidly and no single research group has a full overview of the current body of knowledge in all languages and disciplines.

We find this period of intellectual ferment to be a beautiful one in which to advocate the ongoing development of policies related to spirituality, mind-training, emotional intelligence, and so on, alongside approaches of compassion, tolerance, and deep appreciation for others. There is no need to crystallize one or another ideology of happiness into a 'best' option; there is a need to recognize and affirm that there are things to learn, and that authentic improvements can be supported by wise policies. These can bring meaningful incremental advances for most people, regardless of whether we seem at the moment to be imprisoned or free, harried or bored, loved or lonely. Psychological well-being has intrinsic value. Persons who have learned emotional intelligence are able to understand their own emotions and shape them in positive ways; they can also understand others' emotional responses more accurately, which helps in all relationships, whether personal, professional or other. The negative emotions do not have a crippling hold, and the positive ones enrich more freely. Spiritual practices including prayer, mindfulness and meditation – which are interlinked with emotional balance – bring core stability and silence, which neither wealth nor penury can rock. And it is of unquestionable intrinsic value to reflect across the domains of one's life and be satisfied with most of them. Psychological well-being also has tremendous instrumental value, being associated with better health, higher immunity, more stable and satisfying relationships, better performance and upwards progression in work, and much more. Recent literature on this

is particular vast although particular associations depend naturally upon the particular measure(s) of happiness that are being used.²⁶

The contexts for developing psychological well-being range from extended periods in monasteries or convents. These can vary greatly in length – from five years or more of spiritual formation to take life vows as a monk or nun or religious leader, to three-year retreats in Tibetan Buddhism or the Ignatian 40-day spiritual exercises in Christianity or 10-day courses in Vipassana meditation. Skills can be taught in courses – such as mindfulness training, or the Search inside Yourself course, or courses in emotional healing – and can benefit from books and audio, visual or web resources, from religious practice, from highly developed teachers, from support groups, and so on. Mobile apps for telephones include mindfulness bells, daily quotes, an 'examination of consciousness' for the end of the day, and other things. A great range of resources may appear to be available, although these may require connectivity, or may be limited or censored in contexts that permit only a particular set of religious or ideological practices to be taught. However again and again it appears to that human interaction – of a teacher and of peers – can greatly accelerate and ease the development of psychological well-being.

At the same time, it must be noted that public investments in psychological are likely to be controversial in many contexts, particularly if they are not viewed to be an area that is appropriate for public sector activity, and/or if they come at the cost of other policies which primarily fall to the public sector, such as universal health care provision.

²⁶ Some useful findings are presented in (Cummins, 2000), (Diener, Lucas, Schimmack, & Helliwell, 2009), (Helliwell & Wang, 2012), (Layard, 2005), (Kahneman, 2011), (Ricard, 2007), (Seligman, 2011), among others.

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