

Global Agenda

Well-being and Global Success

A report prepared by the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Health & Well-being



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Preface



Worldwide, there is a search for new models of progress. Economic growth has its value, but increasingly people feel that more is needed; what is wanted is well-being. In many countries, such as the US, happiness has not increased despite economic growth. So, we need to know what else can increase the well-being of our societies.

Fortunately, we have a new burgeoning science to help us. The science of well-being draws on psychology, sociology, economics and medicine, among others. And, it has important lessons for all of us, including businesses, individuals and governments.

Governmental organizations have responded strongly to the challenge. In 2004, the OECD began its programme to redefine progress. The European Union followed with its programme “Beyond GDP”. In 2008, Nicolas Sarkozy, President of France, launched the work of the Stiglitz Commission, and in 2010, David Cameron, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, was the first national leader (outside Bhutan) to define well-being as his goal and to commission the statistical service to measure population well-being as a routine national statistic.

Under the leadership of Bhutan, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution in 2011 calling on governments to do more to promote the happiness of their peoples, and mandating a UN conference to explore the implications of this. The conference will be held in April 2012.

Against this background, the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Health & Well-being has prepared this report to coincide with the Forum’s Annual Meeting 2012 in January in Davos-Klosters. In this report, we strongly support the need to measure well-being, but we go beyond that to focus on what determines well-being – what helps and what hinders. We also look at the key contributions that can be made by individuals, governments and employers.

We offer the report in the hope that it can contribute to this important international debate on well-being.

Global Agenda Council on Health & Well-being

Executive Summary

Throughout the world, people are looking for new models of progress. For many decades the dominant model has been economic growth, and that remains important. But, as David Cameron, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, has said, “economic growth is only a means to an end”. The end is well-being.

Today, we have a new body of science that shows just how many other factors are also important for well-being. That is why the OECD has for several years been attempting to redefine progress, and why in July 2011, the UN General Assembly advocated more priority for policies that promote happiness. In April 2012, the UN will hold a conference on this very issue and what it involves.

To increase well-being, new priorities are needed for governments and communities, as well as families and business. We should all care about well-being because it helps produce other good things that we care about – happier workers generate better performance for companies; happier people have more successful families and create more harmonious communities.

In this report, we look in turn at well-being in three key areas of our life that affect each one of us: work, family and community. The report is about people and not abstractions. To underline this point we use the following headings:

- Me and my work
- Me and my family
- Me and my community

Me and My Work

For many people, the single most important issue at work is the relationship they have with their line manager. Recent studies show that, on average, individuals find meeting their line manager the least pleasant moment of the day (Kahneman et al., 2004). Closely related to this is the way in which work is designed. Workers' well-being is greatest when:

- The objective of the job is clear and is understood as part of a wider goal (task significance)
- The worker has reasonable freedom and flexibility in how to do the work (autonomy)
- The worker receives feedback and support for what he or she does (feedback)
- The worker's skill is up to the requirements of the job, but is also fully used (job fit)
- Line managers are chosen who have the talent for personal relationships and technical management (managerial flair)
- There is proper attention to fairness and procedural justice in the way work is organized (fairness)
- There is sensitivity to the mental health problems of employees, with careful management of absence, adjustment of work arrangements and referral for treatment if necessary (mental health awareness)

Companies that pursue good practice in these respects can expect to achieve enhanced profitability. It is therefore advantageous for employers to measure the well-being of their employees, as many do, and to report this in their annual report (an extra bottom line).

Me and My Family

A good family experience is crucial for a person's well-being.

- It provides emotional security:
 - For children, whose ability to love and learn depend crucially on the love and closeness of their parents
 - For parents, who can only be good parents if they have a good work-life balance, and if good parenting programmes are available to help them if they are struggling
 - For older people, who often need more social support than they frequently get
- It provides economic security, which is essential:
 - For healthy eating and physical development
 - For intellectual development and awareness of a wider world
- It provides physical security, provided there are proper policies to prevent domestic violence and to ensure adequate safe space outside the home as well as within

Me and My Community

A good community (being a social, municipal or country unity) and its governance are essential for the well-being of every individual. We depend crucially on our community:

- It provides much of our education, not only in cognitive skills but also in emotional literacy and in how to behave. The neglect of girls' education in many parts of the world is a major source of injustice and inhibits necessary reductions in the birth rate.
- It provides our sense of identity and belonging. In good communities, happiness spreads through contagion, and there is a degree of equality from which all gain, both rich and poor.
- It ensures our physical safety. Opportunities for physical exercise, safe water, proper incentives for healthy food supply and systems for controlling greenhouse gases are crucial for the future of mankind.

Measuring Well-being

If you treasure it, measure it. Well-being can be measured through different indexes and surveys, ranging from an indicator of a country's progress with OECD measures, to single subjective well-being of populations. Measuring well-being in companies, schools and communities allows for better understanding of what resonates with people and provides a new set of priorities to support, whether from our government, corporate or individual roles.

Well-being: The New Concept of Progress

The idea that well-being matters is not new (McMahon, 2006). But recent trends have brought it into new prominence. First, there is popular questioning of whether economic growth is enough to solve our problems, many of which appear more social in character than economic; in the US and many other advanced countries, happiness has failed to rise in spite of economic growth. Second, there is the obvious fact that future economic growth will become more difficult if we are simultaneously to avoid disastrous climate change. Third, is the growth of a new science of happiness, which provides concrete evidence on what new priorities are needed if our societies are to achieve higher levels of well-being (Kahneman et al., 1999).

Governmental organizations have responded strongly to this new challenge. In 2004, the OECD began its programme to redefine progress to develop broader understanding on what drives well-being of people and nations, and what needs to be done to achieve greater progress. The European Union followed with its programme on Beyond GDP. In 2008, Nicolas Sarkozy, President of France, launched the work of the Stiglitz Commission (Stiglitz et al., 2009) and in 2010, David Cameron, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, was the first national leader (outside Bhutan) to define well-being as his goal and to commission the United Kingdom's statistical service to measure population well-being as a national statistic. Under the leadership of Bhutan, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution in 2011 calling on governments to do more to promote the happiness of their people and mandating a UN conference to explore the implications of this. The conference will be held in April 2012.

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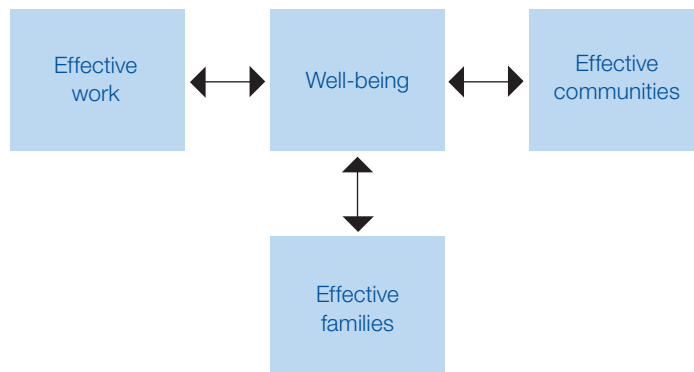
There are three main aspects of life which affect the well-being of each one of us: our work, our family and our community. In this report, we look at the effects of each in turn.

But there is also another way in which well-being matters – its feedback effect. Our well-being enables us to perform better at work and in our family life and our community:

- Well-being increases the productivity of workers and the profitability of the companies they work for
- Individuals with high well-being produce more resilient families and stronger children
- People with high well-being are better members of the community

The diagram (see Figure 1) summarizes this two-way process, providing the framework for our report. Although all are interconnected and none more important than another, we describe in the next sections the role of work, family and community.

Figure 1: Causes and Effects of Well-being



The framework and content of this report go back to Aristotle, with his distinction between a moral life, which is necessary to maintain happiness, and a material life, which is necessary to meet basic needs.

All of us, no matter which sector, disciplinary background, economic predicament or spiritual perspective, share a common interest in promoting well-being. We should all sustain a momentum to make a difference for the 7 billion people who share this planet (Anderson, Jané-Llopis & Cooper, 2011).



Me and My Work

Work has long been recognized as having both positive and negative influences on health and well-being. The ancient Greek physician, Galen, wrote that employment is “nature’s physician, essential to human happiness”, while Ramazzini, the “father of occupational medicine”, described the adverse health effects of work in a range of occupations in the 17th century. In more modern times, worklessness has emerged as an even more potent determinant of both physical and mental health, with discrete but additive effects of reduced income and loss of purpose and social support. There is now general acceptance that the nature of work and the way that it is organized dictates whether it is likely to benefit or harm the health and well-being of workers (Lundberg et al., 2011).

Mental disorders are the most important cause of disability in all regions of the world, accounting for around one-third of years lived, with disability among adults aged 15 years and over. Furthermore, unlike most chronic illnesses, the age distribution is relatively constant with adults of working age being as likely to suffer as those who are older. The economic cost to society is substantial with depression alone estimated as absorbing 1% of Europe’s GDP (Sobocki et al., 2006); mental ill-health alone in the next 20 years is estimated to account for a cumulative US\$ 16 trillion of global output loss (Bloom et al., 2011).

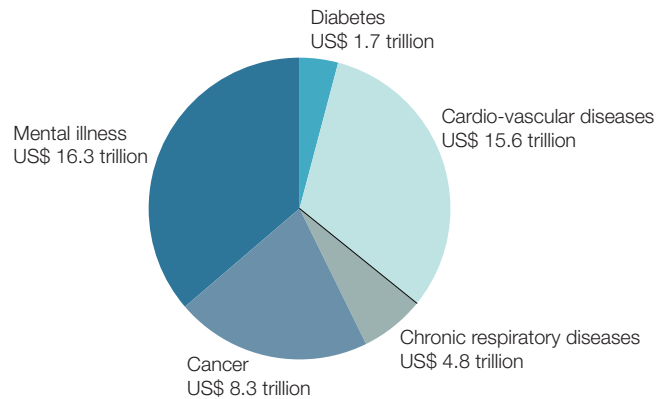
For individual companies, mental health is now often the most common cause of sickness absence in richer countries, accounting for 30% to 50% of all new disability benefit claims in OECD countries (OECD, 2011), and for up to 40% of time lost (Cooper and Dewe, 2008), with presenteeism adding at least 1.5 times to the cost of absenteeism (Parsonage, 2007). Similarly, other non-communicable diseases, especially, cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and respiratory diseases follow suit with an estimated cumulative output loss in the next 20 years of over US\$ 30 trillion (Bloom et al., 2011) due to direct and indirect costs to employers and society as a whole (Figure 2). This is a growing financial strain across countries as young people in many countries increasingly enter the disability benefit system without having spent much time in the workforce. This means the population claiming disability benefits is getting younger in most countries (OECD, 2011).

The cost to individuals is also substantial with impaired health and mental health associated with greater levels of exclusion from the workforce, and exclusion then contributing to impaired mental health. The economic downturn of recent years has had a general adverse impact on well-being, but has disproportionately affected workers at either end of the age spectrum and the disabled (Stuckler et al., 2011), all of whom have experienced higher levels of involuntary unemployment. There is, however, good evidence that simple cost-effective measures in the workplace can improve well-being and militate against the risks of impaired mental health to the benefit of employers, individual workers and society (Cooper et al., 2010).



Figure 2: Cumulative lost output 2011-2030 by disease (Bloom et al., 2011)

Lost output 2011-2030, by disease type



The Management of Work

The way that people are managed at work has a profound influence on their well-being. It is a compelling indictment of some modern management practice that in many countries there is an increase in management-related bullying in the workplace (Einarsen et al., 2011). The time that workers enjoy least in the day is time spent with their line manager (Kahnemman, 2006). However, conversely, it is a consistent finding of employee engagement surveys that the first line manager is the most trusted source of information in the workplace. The reality is that there are good and bad managers but, commonly, people are not selected for those roles on the basis of their people skills and they are often given little or no training in how to handle interpersonal relationships with those reporting to them. Some companies are seeking to redress this shortcoming, and a set of management competencies has been developed by the United Kingdom’s Health & Safety Executive (HSE), in conjunction with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and Investors in People (HSE, 2009), to define the behaviours identified as effective for preventing and reducing stress at work (see Table 1).

Table 1. Effective Behaviours to Prevent and Reduce Stress at Work

Competency	Sub-Competency
Respectful and responsible: Managing emotions and having integrity	Integrity <i>Being respectful and honest to employees</i>
	Managing emotions <i>Behaving consistently and calmly around the team</i>
	Considerate approach <i>Being thoughtful in managing others and delegating</i>
Managing and communicating existing and future work	Proactive work management <i>Monitoring and reviewing existing work, allowing future prioritisation and planning</i>
	Problem-solving <i>Dealing with problems promptly, rationally and responsibly</i>
	Participative/empowering <i>Listening to, meeting and consulting with the team, providing direction, autonomy and development opportunities to individuals</i>
Managing the individual within the team	Personally accessible <i>Available to talk to personally</i>
	Sociable <i>Relaxed approach, such as socializing and using humour</i>
	Empathetic engagement <i>Seeking to understand each individual in the team in terms of their health and satisfaction, motivation, point of view and life outside work</i>

Another key element in promoting well-being at work, particularly during times of organizational change, is to address the issue of perceived justice (Greenberg, 1987). It is a feature of most societies that fairness and equity of treatment are valued highly and that applies in the workplace as much as elsewhere. However, it is the perception of the individual worker rather than any objective measure of reality that determines whether the actions taken by management will benefit or harm that person's sense of well-being. Perceived justice needs to be considered on three levels (Greenberg 1987; Colquitt, 2008):

1. Distributive justice – the fairness associated with decision outcomes or distribution of resources
2. Procedural justice – the fairness of processes in determining outcomes, including consistency, accuracy and lack of bias
3. Interactional justice – the fairness associated with communicating outcomes, ensuring that it is timely, truthful and respectful of sensitivities

Work Design

Some work tasks are inherently unpleasant, physically dangerous or emotionally challenging, but these characteristics need not compromise worker well-being if the activity is structured properly. Work design is critical in determining the psychological reaction people have towards what they are doing and, hence, the satisfaction they derive, their motivation and their performance. One influential framework for addressing this issue is the Job Characteristics Model developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976), which identifies five core job characteristics:

1. Task identity. Being able to identify a recognizable outcome from the task undertaken, either as an individual or part of a group, so that the worker can feel a sense of achievement and pride in what has been done.
2. Task significance. Seeing that the task has a beneficial impact on others, over and above the worker himself, either within or outside the organization.
3. Autonomy. Allowing the worker to exercise a degree of freedom, independence and discretion in the way work is scheduled and the process by which it is carried out.
4. Feedback. Providing information on how effective the worker has been in converting effort into performance (so that mistakes can be learned from) and connecting the worker emotionally with the end user of his or her output.
5. Job fit. Making use of an appropriate variety of skills and talents for a given individual worker, neither too many as to be overwhelming nor too few leading to boredom.

This approach has been used successfully in many countries to improve organizational performance, quality and profitability through paying attention to the feelings, motivation and job satisfaction of workers. Less sophisticated approaches that focus solely on outcome measures such as production levels or profit margins, while neglecting the well-being of the people employed, tend to produce unhappy workplaces where individuals burn out and success cannot be sustained.

The Organization of Work

The global drift of populations to cities, the increasing proportion of women in the workforce and the emergence of a 24/7 culture has disrupted traditional stability in work-life balance and social support mechanisms. The technological revolution has transformed not only what many people do for a living, but also the way that they work. Technology can be used and viewed as a liberating force, enabling workers to juggle increasingly complex demands, or as an oppressive influence that removes discretion and denies the worker any respite from his or her labours. The ways that work is organized and the uses made of technology are therefore critical to the well-being of both individuals and societies.

Practices such as set working hours and a job for life, which became commonplace in many countries during the second half of the 20th century, are now less often found and, arguably, are inappropriate for modern society. Part-time working, temporary contracts and regular career changes are becoming the norm in many countries, but the uncertainty that accompanies such arrangements can be a significant

threat to the well-being of the individuals concerned. Attempts have been made to simultaneously strengthen flexibility and security for the benefit of both parties in an employment relationship by finding a balance between the rights and responsibilities of employers, workers and jobseekers with the authorities. The concept of “flexicurity” has been developed and embodies four components:

- Flexible and reliable contractual arrangements
- Comprehensive lifelong learning strategies
- Effective active labour market policies
- Modern social security systems

Surveys of citizens’ perception of their own well-being consistently show that levels are highest in countries, such as those of northern Europe, where flexicurity is an accepted part of the socioeconomic system (EU, 2008), and the principles have been adopted by the EU as part of its Employment Strategy.

Providing flexibility in the way people work has been shown a positive impact on well-being, so long as the individual has discretion over how the flexibility is applied to improve their work-life balance. Flexibility may relate to hours of work, both duration and timing, or location. In some environments, such as production lines, it may still be necessary to operate rigid shift systems, but in most service industries shift patterns can be much more flexible provided that overall sufficient numbers of people are available to deal with customers.

Rapid advances in information communications technology have ended the requirement for many workers to be tied to a specific location and they can now often fulfil their roles effectively from an alternative workplace, home or while on the move. The resulting benefits to well-being for the worker, not least as a result of reduced commuting, are matched by opportunities for the employer to improve efficiency and to rationalize property requirements. The United Kingdom government Foresight project on Mental Capital and Well-being (Cooper, Field et al, 2010) found that there was a substantial benefit-to-cost ratio for organizations that do this.

The Untapped Opportunity

Organizations can avoid considerable costs by managing their operations in a way that promotes well-being among their workers. However, that is only part of the prize to be gained because happy and healthy employees are more innovative, more productive and relate better to customers. An unsophisticated approach of using just financial reward to incentivize the workforce and punitive procedures to weed out poor performers does not produce sustainable results. Engagement without well-being leads to a burned out workforce where talent retention is poor. Firms that promote the well-being of their workers in ways described above experience enhanced profitability (Towers Watson, 2010).

This phenomenon is increasingly recognized by investors seeking long-term returns, and analysts have largely driven the movement to encourage publicly-listed companies to report on employee well-being. In the United Kingdom, this has resulted in the production of guidelines (BiTC 2010), setting out a framework for public reporting that a number of FTSE 100 companies have helped produce and which they are adopting. Worker well-being is increasingly being seen as a driver for business success and a key feature of corporate responsibility.

Me and My Family



The word “family” covers different meanings that vary in understanding and significance across cultures and time. We talk about a family of peoples, we use the word as an adjective and we combine it with other words. Here, by family, we predominantly mean the group of persons consisting of parents and their children, whether connected by blood or by affinity or whether actually living together or not. Even this understanding of family varies significantly across cultures and time. And, this concept of family is changing dramatically in the present time in terms of who the parents are, who the children are (all with and without blood ties) and where they may be scattered across the globe.

However, whatever or wherever the structure of the family, it can have enormous impact on the lifelong trajectories of our well-being through: the genes given by our parents; the uterine environment in which we form and grow; the many types of environments in which we grow and develop, whether rich or poor, sustainable or not; the interactions between our genes and our many environments; the behaviours and examples our families set; and, very often, the bonding and love that our families give at all ages.

There is no doubt, for good or bad, that our families can impede or enhance our human capital development over the course of our life, from birth to older age, including our health and well-being, our educational and personal development, our social capital and the sustainable management of our personal and material assets. There are three fundamental pre-requisites here: being born into a sustainable environment (see Me and My Community below); gender equality and the rights of women; and the rights of the child and older people.

In this section, we discuss the family as a source of emotional and cognitive assets for life, including parenting and education; the family as a source of material assets for life, including housing and healthy nourishment and lifestyles; and the family as a source of personal security and avoidance and protection from violence.

Family as a Source of Emotional and Cognitive Assets for Life

Life Course Actions to Maintain Well-being

There are crucial times in life where simple actions can promote well-being and enable individuals to maintain a positive well-being trajectory for the next stages of the lives. These include supporting infant-parental bonding, managing adolescence, ensuring a healthy work-life balance and taking care of our elders.

A healthy emotional start in life sets an individual up with a lifelong advantage for well-being, influencing the child’s later functioning in school, with peers, in the family and in broader connections with society (Grantham-McGregor et al., 2007). Inadequate stimulation in their first five years of life is identified as one of four major causes (the others being malnutrition, which leads to stunting, as well as iodine deficiency and iron deficiency) of the millions of children failing to reach their potential in cognitive and socioemotional development (Jolly, 2007).

The single most important factor for building resilience in youth is to enable parents to provide adequate psychosocial stimulation (Patel et al., 2008). Bonding with both mothers and fathers is the key to this process, and there are two very simple and cheap actions that are not only good for well-being, but also for health in general. Immediate skin-to-skin contact between baby and mother straight after delivery is a normal biological process that enhances bonding and leads naturally to immediate suckling; breast feeding being a powerful protective factor for the health of the baby (Kramer & Kakuma, 2002) and long-term educational and cognitive development (Ricahrds et al, 2002). The second is carrying the baby in a pouch, by both mother and father, as is commonly done in many countries, particularly by mothers; such carrying is not only good for bonding, but also promotes cognitive and motor development of the baby (Konner, 2010).

Adolescence is a time of risk taking, increasing risk for the adolescents themselves and stress for the parent. This risk taking is a normal biological action and may even have had evolutionary advantage for human development (Konner, 2010). It also occurs at a time of massive restructuring in the adolescent brain, with many of the brain cells having their myelin coat added. Schools (discussed in the next section) are important settings for promoting emotional literacy among adolescents, as well as preventing and resolving internalized impairments to well-being such as depression and anxiety, and externalized impairments such as bullying and violence (Weare & Nind, 2011). Comprehensive school approaches not only enhance the direct subjective well-being element, but also improve educational attainment, personal security and employment prospects.

Workplace and well-being is discussed in the previous section, but it is important to emphasize that an individual’s ability to satisfactorily combine work, family commitments and personal life is important not only for the well-being of the person, but also for that of the whole household (Jané-Llopis et al., 2011). In particular, the well-being of children is strongly affected by the capacity of parents to both work and spend an adequate amount of time with them. Parental nurturing is crucial for child development, especially in the early years, and prime age adults, often women, also play a critical role for the care of their older parents. A balanced allocation of time between work and personal life is also important at a society-wide level, as it ensures that people have sufficient time to socialize and participate in the life of the community.

All of us are living longer, and there are many more of us who are older. Being healthy and older brings many joys, but being older can also be associated with increased loneliness and isolation and impaired mental health, particularly depression and cognitive decline. An individual’s social network and perceived sense of social support and trust are important factors in preserving well-being and cognitive ability into older age (Forsman et al., 2011). Simple interventions like promoting continued reading and writing, and supported engagement in social activities have been shown to improve mental well-being and cognitive ability among older people.

Helping Parents and Children in Distress

Many life course events and external factors lead to distress among parents and children, with impairment on the child's well-being trajectory. But, a wide range of cost-effective interventions can make a difference. Parenting support programmes in infancy and early years with a focus on enhancing caregiver sensitivity and attunement, parenting programmes with a focus on children's behaviour, and parenting support for those in the highest risk group can all alleviate suffering and promote well-being (Stewart-Brown & Schrader-McMillan, 2011). A wide range of schools-based personal interventions are effective in helping children in difficulty, with the impact for those being in more difficulty, even greater than for those in less difficulty (Weare & Nind, 2011).

Family as a Source of Material and Personal Assets for Life

Family Role Modelling

Lifelong health and well-being are fostered by social networks and connectivity, the ability to talk and listen, and engagement in health promoting behaviours. These behaviours include not smoking, drinking only a little alcohol, eating diets rich in fruit and vegetables with reduced salt intake, and engaging in physical activity. There are many factors that influence these behaviours, but family role modelling is fundamental. Although promoting lifelong health and well-being are core family responsibilities, there are many external factors that impede this process. Commercial communications of unhealthy foods and beverages through traditional and social media, which are always appealing to children – even if not obviously child directed – is one major impediment (Martin-Moreno et al., 2011). That is why there have been many calls, for example, to have no marketing of unhealthy food or alcohol directed at children and to have no commercial communications of unhealthy food or alcohol that appeal to children.



Family as Asset Source

Families need to have sufficient assets to be effective to provide housing and the essential material resources for family and child well-being. Access to microfinances and mortgages enable access to assets. The provision of affordable health and well-being promotion, as well as energy and resource efficient technologies and mobile communication devices, can increase asset acquisition and more efficient resources use (Sachs, 2005; Aker & Mbiti, 2010).

Family and the Personal Development of Children

Families and parents, supported by communities and social networks, have a prime responsibility to invest in the education and personal development of their children. Social structures should support a climate of equal educational opportunities for all, particularly for girls and young women. Education for life needs to foster a desire for lifelong learning and personal development, an understanding of what it means to be human and happy, knowledge about the unconscious and conscious processes made in decision-making, respect for the wide variety of human communities, and a common understanding of shared and global responses to global issues and stressors, including climate change.

Family as a Source of Personal Security

Supporting Family Safety

The design of our living and community environments in terms of urban planning, management of informally created neighbourhoods, transport policy that separates motor vehicles and people, availability of green spaces, monitoring and observation programmes, restrictions on alcohol outlets (densities and times of sale) can all support family safety and security (Sternberg, 2009). Communities with high social capital and living environments with recreational spaces that separate children from motor vehicles are critical.

Reducing Risk Factors for Family Violence

Unfortunately, the family is a frequent source of personal violence, both mental and physical. On the other hand, the family can be a protective factor for such violence. There are many risk factors for violence that vary across time and cultures. But, a predominantly common one, and often responsible for as much as 50% of family violence and one that is readily remedial, is heavy drinking of alcohol (Anderson et al., 2011). Heavy drinking and dependence on alcohol can lead to bullying, verbal, physical and sexual assaults, and mental and physical violence to children, spouses and other family relatives. Normally, this is from men to other family members, simply because men drink more and at any given level of consumption are more prone to violence than women, but women can also impact alcohol-related violence on other family members. Keys to reducing the risk are effective alcohol policies that lead to reductions in the volume of alcohol consumed, particularly on a drinking occasion, and advice and treatment programmes for people with heavy drinking and alcohol dependence.

Helping Recipients of Violence

There are many ways of providing help to families and family members of all ages who are in receipt of mental and physical violence, ranging from counselling and personal support to relocating family members and those who give violence one from the other (Kapoor, 2000).

The Untapped Opportunity

Better Incentives for Better Families

To make sure that families utilize their best opportunities to invest in the well-being and personal development of their children, societies, communities and employers need to provide the right incentives (Anderson, Harrison et al., 2011). Mothers and fathers need to be fully engaged in the birth process, and enabled to ensure skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth. Work-life balance policies need to ensure adequate post-natal time for parents to spend with their babies and carry them in slings or pouches. Parents should be incentivized to be actively engaged in the learning process, also learning themselves. In less well-resourced countries, safe places and working toilets need to be provided for girls in schools so adolescent girls do not feel frightened or embarrassed and stop going to school, as commonly happens in very low-income countries. Throughout all their purchasing and resource use decisions, real time information needs to be available for parents to help them make well-being and health enhancing purchases. Counteracting incentives such as commercial communications for unhealthy food and beverages need to be curtailed.

Investing for the Future

Investing in full individual human capital development that enhances well-being and active productivity throughout life from conception to death is a vital investment for us all. It can strengthen sustainability not only of human capital, but also social and economic capital, and the capital of our natural environment which is vital, not only for our appreciation of life, but also for the sustainability of food and water resources.

Families as Source of Resilience

Families are a resource for common resilience and well-being for the seven billion people that inhabit the earth. Bridging the nuclear family to the entire human family, promoting a family of humans, can help sustain the long downward trend in civil conflicts and personal violence, and help us all work better together to live long and prosper.



Me and My Community



As with the word family, the word “community” covers different meanings that vary in understanding and significance across cultures and time. In this document, by community, we predominantly mean a body of people living in the same locality or place, sometimes organized into a social or municipal unity. Even this understanding of community varies significantly across cultures and time. It is also changing dramatically in the current time in terms of the age structure and ethnic variety of communities, community connectedness (within communities themselves and with other communities and types of communities), and the mobility and scattering of community members across the globe.

However, whatever or wherever the structure of the community and its governance, it can have a significant impact on our lifelong well-being through: the environment or place where our communities are located; the social connections and networks our communities provide; the civic engagement and structures our communities proffer; the material assets that are available in our communities; the education, health and employment opportunities our communities create; and the environmental sustainability provided.

There is no doubt, for good or bad, that our communities can impede or enhance our human capital development over our lives, including our health and well-being, our educational and personal development, our social capital, and the sustainable management of our personal and material assets. There are three fundamental pre-requisites here: community sustainability, good governance, and equality and rights of community members.

In this section, we discuss communities as sources for lifelong learning and personal development, communities as sources of social engagement and identity, and communities as sources of food and water security, and long-term environmental and economic sustainability.

Communities as Sources of Lifelong Learning and Personal Development

Lifelong Learning

Our personal development and opportunities to engage in a social, community-based and productive life are dependent on lifelong learning. Communities are sources of lifelong learning, formally through the schools and universities that they provide, and informally through the conversations that they raise and steer through political dialogue and debate; communities of print and electronic media outputs, and communication-based communities accessed through the Internet from a range of personal mobile communication devices. Lifelong learning is not only about the accessibility and opportunities that our communities can provide, but it is also about the skills that we need to acquire so that we can sift through and appraise the enormous and sometimes conflicting wealth of information available to us; a core task of the formal education that we receive is to learn the skills to manage and interpret such information.

Ensuring Education for All

Lifelong learning is only possible if education is available to all, regardless of place, governance structures, income, age or gender. Remarkably, geography and place of living can still impede information access. Also, too often, in many less well resourced parts of the world, girls and young women are not given opportunities to take care of themselves or to partake fully in available education.

Building Well-being Literacy

Formal and informal education provided by our community institutions and conversations through print and electronic media needs to focus on improving well-being literacy for us all. What is the state of well-being? What determines our happiness and life satisfaction? What does it mean to fulfil our human potential? How does all of humanity relate one to the other? What does it take to promote our own and others' well-being? What determines our decision-making processes? How do we make better and perhaps more rational decisions? Improving well-being literacy enables us all to make better well-being choices, which not only would improve our own life satisfaction, but would mean we are more likely to engage in productive and sustainable communities.

Investing in Education of Girls and Women

There are many parts of the world where girls and young women do not have educational opportunities. There are many different reasons for this, but, whatever the reason, the consequences for the family's emotional and cognitively well-being can be detrimental. There is considerable evidence that investing in the education of girls and young women pays dividends not only in terms of the girls' own life chances and well-being trajectory, but also the family's through, for example, easier management of family size (United Nations Population Fund, 2011).

Communities as Sources of Social Engagement and Identity

Benefiting from Social Networks

Humans are social beings, and thus it is no surprise that we both influence and are influenced by our social networks. In this sense, happiness and social cooperation can be infectious. A wealth of studies undertaken as part of the Framingham Heart Study found that people who are surrounded by many happy people and those who are central in social networks are more likely to become happy in the future (Fowler & Chistakis, 2008). It seems that clusters of happiness result from the spread of happiness and not just a tendency for people to associate with similar individuals. A friend who lives within 1.6 km and who becomes happy increases the probability that a person is happy by 25%. In addition, positive social cooperation also cascades through social networks sustainable over a range of connections and time. Fowler & Chistakis (2009) showed that in an ordinary public goods game, focal individuals are influenced by fellow group members' contribution behaviour in future interactions with other individuals who were not a party to the initial interaction. Furthermore, this influence persists for multiple periods and spreads up to three degrees of separation (from person to person, to person to person). The results suggested that each additional contribution a subject makes to the public good in the first period is tripled over the course of the experiment by other subjects who are directly or indirectly influenced to contribute more as a consequence. Thus, communities can facilitate engagement in social networks and benefit from the positive well-being assets that social networks can provide including happiness and social cooperation.

Supporting a Range of Identities

Sen [2007] eloquently argued the importance of identify in causing and impeding conflict and violence. Involvement in a wide range of identities that a wide range of communities can offer (and not just identifying oneself by skin colour, accent, citizenship or football club) can help break down stereotypes, racism or other sources of prejudice to the good of all. This means expanding our understanding of community beyond just the community in which we live, but also the community identified by our work, the community identified by our hobbies and interests, and the communities identified by our aspirations.

Reducing Inequalities

One of the biggest determinants of our well-being is inequalities, whether measured by income, assets or educational level, and stigma and social exclusion. In any given society, individuals, families and communities with less financial and educational resources are worse off in terms of health and well-being than those with better financial and educational resources (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). Even when risks for poor health are equal, people with poorer resources have poorer health and well-being than people with more resources. For example, at any given level of alcohol consumption, people who are worse off financially, or who live in poorer communities, even if they as individuals are not so badly off financially, have poorer health than those who are better off financially or who live in better off areas (Anderson et al., 2011). Impoverished and socially disorganized neighbourhoods have a powerful adverse effect on mental health (Desjarlais et al., 1997). Jurisdictions that are more equal do better in terms of health and well-being, as well as in terms of productivity (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009).

Communities as Sources of Physical Well-being, Water Security and Long-term Environmental and Economic Sustainability

Designing Well-being Communities

Where we live impacts on our stress and well-being. Hippocrates knew this 2,500 years ago when he advised anyone coming to a new city to enquire whether it was likely to be a healthy or unhealthy place to live, depending on its geography and the behaviour of its inhabitants (for example, "whether they are fond of excessive drinking") (Hippocrates, translated by Lloyd 1978). He continued: "As a general rule, the constitutions and the habits of a people follow the nature of the land where they live". A recent study in Germany, using functional magnetic resonance imaging, confirmed this; it found that urban upbringing and city living had independent and negative impacts on processing of social evaluative stress (Lederbogen et al., 2011).

Much can be done to counteract the impact of the living environment on well-being, including utilizing social networks as mentioned above to promote happiness, and to ensure that the design of the living environment is such so as to promote well-being (Cooper et al., 2011). For example, there are many strategies to promote physical activity in urban environments, a key protective factor for well-being. Strategies to promote cycling include combinations of infrastructure, community design, pricing and enforcement of traffic regulations (Yang et al., 2010). Interventions to promote walking tailored to people's needs – targeted at the most sedentary or at those most motivated to change and delivered either at the level of the individual (brief advice, supported use of pedometers, telecommunications) or household (individualized marketing) or through groups – encourage people to walk more (Ogilvie et al., 2007). Employers also have a role to play. Subsidizing employees who choose not to commute to work by car has been found to increase the proportion of employees that walk or cycle to work, as well as reducing carbon dioxide emissions (Shoup, 1997). In addition, increased active travel with less use of motor vehicles in London and New Delhi have been modelled to improve health by increasing physical activity (thus increasing disability adjusted life years) at the same time as reducing CO2 emissions (Woodcock et al., 2009).

Ensuring Water Security

Since water is not an easily transferable commodity, water security is essentially a local and community issue. Preserving water security is not only essential for community survival, but can also enhance natural capital and individual well-being. Watersheds are a crucial area in which good management and preservation not only secures water in a sustainable manner, but also saves money and provides ecological services, as well as enhances human health, resilience and well-being (Bunch et al., 2011). For example, in the 1980s, natural purification systems in the watershed from where New York's water comes from were sufficient to cleanse the water to required standards. But, during the 1990s, sewage, fertilizer and pesticides in the soil reduced the efficacy of the process to the point where the water quality no longer met the required standards. The city was faced with the choice of restoring the integrity of the watershed at a cost of US\$ 1-1.5 billion or building a new filtration plant at the cost of US\$ 6-8 billion. It was clearly a cheaper investment to buy land in and around the watershed so that its use could be restricted and the construction of better sewage treatment plants subsidized than building a new plant. Not only was health protected, but money was saved and an ecosystem preserved (Chichilnisky & Heal, 1998).

Sustaining Well-being Communities

One way to help drive change for better well-being at the community level and to sustain it is to broaden the measurement tools that communities can use to monitor progress. For example, the OECD Better Life Initiative includes measures of housing, income and wealth, jobs and earnings, social connections, education and skills, environmental quality, civic engagement and governance, health status, subjective well-being, personal security and work-life balance in its assessment of progress and well-being (OECD, 2011). The framework distinguishes between current material living conditions and quality of life and the conditions required to ensure their sustainability over time. Material living conditions (or economic well-being) determine people's consumption possibilities and their command over resources. While this is shaped by GDP, the latter also includes activities that do not contribute to people's well-being (e.g. activities aimed at offsetting some of the negative consequences – regrettables – of economic development) while it excludes non-market activities that expand people's consumption possibilities. Quality of life, defined as the set of non-monetary attributes of individuals, shapes their opportunities and life chances, and has intrinsic value under different cultures and contexts. And, sustainability of the socioeconomic and natural systems where people live and work is critical for well-being to last over time. Sustainability depends on how current human activities impact on the stocks of different types of capital (natural, economic, human and social).



The Untapped Opportunity

Better Incentives for Better Communities

Communities are in a position to manage incentives for better well-being. One option is to promote health insurance-based programmes, which can offer membership of well-being programmes; members can accumulate points that can be redeemable as discounts on a range of store purchases and services. In South African, those who were highly engaged in a well-being programme had meaningful and significantly reduced hospital costs per patient compared to those not registered or only partially engaged in the programme, with dose response relationships between physical activity and lower rates for hospital admissions (Patel et al., 2011).

Another option is to provide environmental support for healthier food access. In addition to its salt reduction initiatives, New York City, for example, has taken action to incentivize restaurants to restrict the use of artificial trans fats for frying, baking or cooking (Angell et al., 2009). The New York City Department of Health first undertook a voluntary campaign, but this effort did not decrease the proportion of restaurants that used artificial trans fats. In December 2006, the New York Board of Health required that artificial trans fat be phased out of restaurant food. To support implementation, the Health Department provided technical assistance to restaurants. By November 2008, the restriction was in full effect in all New York City restaurants and estimated restaurant use of artificial trans fat for frying, baking or cooking or in spreads had decreased from 50% to less than 2%. Preliminary analyses suggested that replacement of artificial trans fat resulted in products with more healthful fatty acid profiles. For example, in major restaurant chains, total saturated fat plus trans fat in French fries decreased by more than 50%. Such public health efforts that change food content to make default choices healthier enable consumers to more successfully meet dietary recommendations and reduce their cardiovascular risk.

Another option is to encourage businesses to develop health niche opportunities, which (similarly to green business) could include: for the retail sector, opening up new product lines and becoming known for a "healthy focus"; for the food and beverage sector, launching new product ranges and establishing brands, piggy-backing on cross-industry movement towards healthier living; for the healthcare sector, forming partnerships across industry boundaries to launch new preventive products and services; for the insurance sector, as mentioned above, providing discounts/rewards for healthy choices and reducing the cost of non-communicable diseases; for the media, creating powerful communication while also branching into new products (e.g. healthy living videos); and, for travel and tourism,

establishing “healthy tourism” that caters for the new behaviour of individuals as a unique selling point.

As the global “war for talent” intensifies, companies and communities may begin to position distinctive health impacts as a source of competitiveness. Businesses can utilize new technologies and social entrepreneurship to improve health and well-being literacy and develop metrics and gauges for individual use that give real-time feedback on purchasing decisions and daily actions that promote health and well-being. For example, a universal system of symbols backed by rigorous metrics to inform shoppers about the health impact of products on the shelves and an intelligent shopping basket that monitors the health impact of shopping purchases could be designed to help push people in the direction of healthier choices and to improve an individual’s health.

Investing for the Future

The mental capital and well-being project of the Foresight Programme of the United Kingdom government’s office for science defined mental capital as “the totality of an individual’s cognitive and emotional resources, including their cognitive capability, flexibility and efficiency of learning, emotional intelligence (e.g. empathy and social cognition) and resilience in the face of stress. The extent of an individual’s resources reflects his or her basic endowment (genes and early biological programming), and experiences and education, which take place throughout the life course”. It therefore captures those elements that serve to establish how well an individual is able to contribute effectively to society and also to experience a high personal quality of life. Well-being alters throughout life and can be considered as a trajectory. Since most people in today’s communities will complete the full path of their life course, long-term community investment in optimizing the trajectory across all age groups will ultimately benefit everyone equally. However, for this to happen, communities will need to adjust their governance structures to manage two issues: the rewards from many actions will be long-term and the benefits will only be fully gained in the future, whereas the costs are incurred in the present when there may be reluctance to invest; and many actions require investment within one given domain (for example a specific community government department), but produce benefits that are gained by other domains (for example, other community government departments).

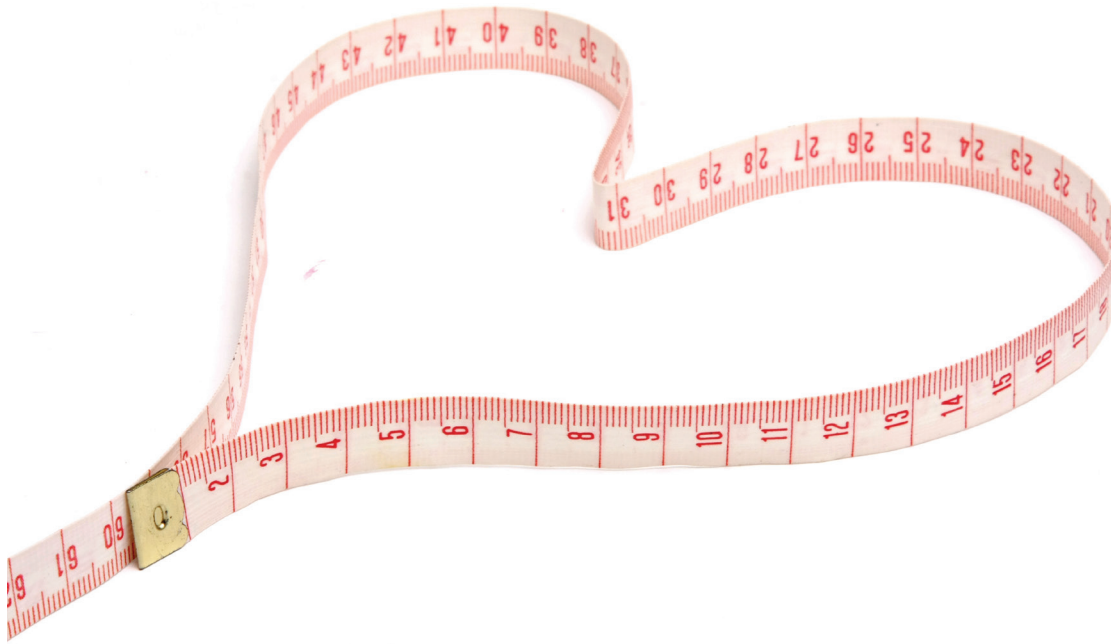
Communities as Resources for Sustainable Well-being

Each year, the World Economic Forum publishes its report on global risks perception. The 2011 report places climate change, which is, arguably, the greatest threat humankind currently faces (King, 2011) at the top of the global risks landscape, along with other human-made crises: fiscal, chronic diseases, and global governance failures (World Economic Forum, 2011). On the one hand, climate change is very likely to impact on health and well-being (Doherty & Clayson, 2011) and there are co-benefits of climate mitigation and health policies (Haines et al., 2009). But, on the other hand, mental health capital, well-being and resilience at the individual and community levels are needed to adapt to the stressors imposed by climate change and to prevent the social and community impacts of climate change. These are likely to involve violence and intergroup conflict subsequent to displacement and relocation, socioeconomic disparities and decreased access to supportive and thriving ecosystems (Reser & Swim, 2011).



Much is now known about the neuroscience of emotional processing and resilience, and factors that can moderate competence and resilience in individual’s personal development to avoid environmentally triggered impaired mental health capital and violence. Although genotypes can predispose to increased risk of impaired mental health and violence, environmental interventions can reduce risk and promote mental health and well-being. For example, having a supportive relationship with an adult protects maltreated children from developing depression, even among genetically at-risk children (Kaufman et al., 2006). This suggests that interventions can be done to strengthen mental health capital, mitigating stress due to climate change and hopefully helping to prevent the negative social and community responses to climate change.

The New Paradigm: Towards Metrics that Matter



Measuring Well-being

Increasing concerns have been raised about the adequacy of macroeconomic statistics, which currently measure economic performance such as GDP figures, as they do not adequately reflect what people perceive as their own socioeconomic conditions. Moreover, there are broader concerns about the relevance of these figures as measures of economic, environmental and social sustainability.

On this basis, the OECD over the last 10 years has gathered and analyzed indicators on the well-being of individuals and households, recently published in its *How's Life?* report. The OECD's *Your Better Life Index*, based on indicators contained in the report, allows us to visualize well-being outcomes and rank countries according to the various components of well-being (<http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/>) (See Table 2).

Subjective well-being can be measured through questionnaires that convey information, which has been found to correlate well with different measurements of electrical activity in the relevant brain areas, as well as with the factors that might affect well-being (Layard, 2010).

Some governments have started to include well-being measures in regular statistics. The regular collection and measurement of well-being in the population by governments provides in-depth information and allows for monitoring of trends, identification of problem groups in the population, and analysis of why some people are happy and others are not. When we speak of government, we speak not only of central government but of local areas and municipalities, so that it becomes highly desirable that any national survey has enough numbers in the sample to provide statistics that are valuable at local level.

Recently, some leading companies have also started to place well-being at the core of their organizations and engaged in measuring it. The interest is not simply in measuring the average, but particularly in identifying those groups in society or branches of a company where things are good and also not so good, and trend development over time. In business, experience shows the huge value of systematic measurement of well-being to identify problems (Robertson & Cooper,

Table 2. OECD framework to measure well-Being

The OECD measures progress in relation to improvements in the well-being of people and households. It requires looking not only at the functioning of the economic system, but also at the diverse experiences and living conditions of people. The OECD framework for measuring well-being and progress, based on the recommendations made by the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission, can be categorized into three distinct areas: material living conditions, quality of life and sustainability.

Material living conditions	Measuring people's material living conditions (i.e. their command over commodities) involves looking not only at their income, but also at their assets and consumption expenditures, and how these are distributed among different population groups. It also involves taking account of goods and services produced by households for their own use that are never bought or sold, and which do not appear in traditional economic measures.
Quality of life	Economic resources, while important, are not all that matters for people's well-being. Health, human contact, education, environmental quality, civic engagement and governance, security, and free time are all fundamental to our quality of life, as is people's subjective experience of life. Measuring quality of life involves looking at all of these elements as a whole: economic and non-economic, subjective and objective, and disparities across population groups.
Sustainability	Sustainability of well-being over time can be assessed by looking at the set of key economic, social and environmental assets transmitted from current to future generations, and whether these assets will allow people and their children to meet their needs in the future.

2011). If companies published their well-being results in their annual report, this could be extremely effective in establishing well-being as an extra bottom line in the company's objectives. Some companies have started in this direction already.

Similarly, when it comes to schools, the well-being of pupils is central to cognitive development and many different questionnaires have been used for measuring well-being (Goodman, 2001). Many of these could be suitable for the dual purpose of identifying children in need of help and monitoring the overall success of the school in raising pupil well-being.

For well-being to influence the public debate, an important aspect is that the measures used are comparable across countries – a large part of the reason for the attention received by macroeconomic statistics such as GDP is that there is an international standard ensuring that they are collected and calculated in the same way across countries. Over the last 20 years, an increasing body of knowledge has accumulated regarding the best way to measure subjective well-being (See Table 3). However, the collection of such measures represents a new area for many national statistical agencies. Because of this, the OECD is currently developing *Guidelines on the Measurement of Subjective Well-being* to support national statistical agencies and other producers and users of subjective well-being data in improving the quality of these measures. The guidelines may represent the first step towards an eventual international standard on measuring subjective well-being.

A Shift in Values: Towards Metrics that Matter

We are seeing the beginning of a new paradigm in which the economy serves individuals, not individuals serving the economy. In this context, the stability of the economy and employment becomes more important relative to the aim of accelerating economic growth (Dolan et al., 2011). We respect the basic human need for security and safety, and we use new technology where it increases well-being, but monitor it closely where it does not. We understand the basic need of every person for a clear identity and community and balance this against the claims of economic growth. Never again do we idolize GDP.

“

The gross national product does not allow for the health of our children, the quality of their education or the joy of their play. It does not include the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages, the intelligence of our public debate or the integrity of our public officials. It measures neither our wit nor our courage, neither our wisdom nor our learning, neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country, it measures everything in short, except that which makes life worthwhile.

”

Robert F. Kennedy
(In a speech at the University of Kansas on 18 March 1968)

Table 3. Examples of questions asked in sample surveys over decades

Common measures	<p>Most commonly used measures of subjective well-being include overarching questions to capture a person's evaluation of life. Answers on a scale of 0 (not at all satisfied) to 10 (extremely satisfied):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Overall, how satisfied are you with your life these days? – Overall, how happy are you these days?
Specific measures: Satisfaction	<p>More detailed questions about satisfaction with different aspects of life. Answers on a scale 0 (not at all satisfied) to 10 (extremely satisfied), e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How satisfied are you with your standard of living? – How satisfied are you with your personal relationships? – How satisfied are you with your mental well-being? – How satisfied are you with the area where you live? – How satisfied are you with the time you have to do things you like doing? – How satisfied are you with the wellbeing of your children (if you have any)?
Specific measures: Psychological well-being	<p>More detailed questions about a specific period of time or wider aspects of psychological well-being (Cummins, 2003):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How much time during the past week have you felt anxious? – How much time during the past week have you felt calm and peaceful? – Do you generally feel that what you do in life is valuable and worthwhile? – Do you feel free to decide for myself how to live your life?

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