Chapter 8: Developing a national well-being measurement framework

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Introduction

This chapter on "Developing a national well-being measurement framework" addresses two primary functions a national statistics institute will need to consider in developing a national well-being measurement framework. Namely, the practical steps to develop a robust conceptual measurement framework, and advice to support including incorporating user and stakeholder engagement to deliver buy-in, support and longevity for the final outputs.

This chapter is structured in three broad sections:

- A brief reminder of the common themes and considerations needed when establishing a well-being framework.
- A model process of development and engagement to ensure successful delivery, both in terms of efficiency but also take-up and use.
- Recommendations for initiating and maintaining a national well-being framework.

As with the rest of this Handbook, this chapter focuses on current well-being in the here and now. This is just one of the three Brundtland domains of: here and now, later and elsewhere. Although, these guidelines focus on current well-being, the importance of inclusivity and sustainability will be discussed throughout this chapter. Particularly among indigenous populations, where current well-being is inextricably linked to past and future well-being.

8.1 National Processes for establishing a well-being framework

8.1.1 Introduction

This section provides a summary of the approach to measure well-being in a country context, drawn from the experience of countries who have developed their own well-being frameworks. Many of the frameworks have followed similar processes and share common components, however differences do exist between frameworks primarily derived from the particular domestic needs and priorities of policymakers. The attempt to balance international comparability with domestic user need is common between this and many other areas of statistical measurement, however it is perhaps compounded in this area by the breadth and spread of potential data types and topics which could be utilised to measure a nation's well-being.

8.1.2 Common dimensions and themes in frameworks

8.1.2.1 Introduction

This guidance document thus far has highlighted that countries have been developing their own national well-being frameworks for decades and even with differing motivations and country contexts a number of common dimensions and themes exist across them. This in part is due to the common consideration's countries must account for in their framework's development.

At the heart of these commonalities is the recognition that well-being is a multi-faceted concept which requires multi-disciplinary expertise across a spread of statistical domains and data types.

These common considerations at their simplest include:

- **Desire for international comparison –** do you let this determine what you include in your framework?
- **Balance of domains** – how you balance and trade-off between economic, environmental or social drivers of well-being.
- **Objective versus subjective** – are you interested in both, for example, the level of household income in your country (objective) and whether households report whether they are finding it difficult to get by financially (subjective)?
- **Stock or flow measures –** are you interested in the levels of specific measures at a point in time or how they change, with (or without) an end goal, over time. For certain measures you may need to consider how you account for depletion, depreciation and degradation.
- **Unit of interest** – are you interested in the individual, the community, the region or the nation, or all four? This is important both for the outcomes of interest (individual life satisfaction or community integration for example) or if you want the data to be disaggregated by communities or regions for example.
- **Distributions** – do you have interest in the headline metric or how that is distributed by geography, social class, income, sex or age for example?
- **Human centricity** – should humanity be at the heart of a well-being framework and its definition, or should it cover a wider canvas, of which humanity is an essential part, but just one part? Issues such as climate change need to be considered in your decision making. Different societies (and groups within society) may perceive the answer to this question in markedly different ways. For example, many indigenous cultures put the environment at the heart of well-being.
- **Culture** – following on from whether your framework should consider humans at its heart is the important consideration of culture. Should your countries culture and norms be accounted for through how you define well-being or your framework's population of interest? Or through the development of several frameworks to represent different sections of society? Or through indicators on engagement with historical and cultural sites or language?

- **Outcome versus drivers** – are you interested in presenting outcomes or the conditions which deliver these outcomes. If you are interested in the outcomes, it is still essential you also understand the drivers to know how you may move them.
- **Well-being now and in the future –** although this guidance focuses on current well-being in the here and now, when establishing a well-being framework, you shouldn't only consider current well-being. It is essential to also consider sustainability and future well-being.

Chapter 4 highlights the most frequently used domains and indicators selected as a consequence of these common considerations and Annex A outlines common measures.

8.1.2 Overview of establishing a national process

Having now outlined the key considerations for the development of a national well-being framework, is it important to outline the common steps taken in their practical development.

Throughout this process the United Kingdom will be used as an example for illustrative purposes.

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SCOPE SETTING AND RESEARCH

i. **Framework commissioned**
    i. This may be commissioned by a prime minister/ minister or other.
    ii. It is essential you understand the scope of the commission (including time to delivery, funds available, who the framework is to cover for example and roughly the expected end product) from the outset and how negotiable it is as this will dictate a number of parameters throughout the project.

ii. **Outline how you plan to ground your definition of well-being**
    i. It is key from the outset that you define/ outline what well-being means in your country context. Also, whether you are going to base your framework on an existing definition, or if not, what research you want to carry out to get to this definition. This will aid your decisions on how you structure your framework and the research that you may want to carry out to decide the measures required.

    ii. An example definition from the UK,
        i. How we are doing as individuals, as a community and as a nation and how sustainable that is for the future.

    iii. It is important when you are preparing your definition to consider who/ what is at the heart of your definition – is it humans, is it the entire ecosystem where humans are only one part? Additionally, consider that if it is humans, are you considering all within the country? You may implicitly not be if your data sources only cover household populations for example or people aged over 15.

iv. There is no one way to look at well-being. People view well-being differently depending on their values, beliefs, and social norms. In New Zealand, Māori have a distinctive view of well-being. It is informed by te ao Māori (a Māori world view) where, for example, whenua (land) is not seen just for its economic potential, but through familial and spiritual connections defined by cultural concepts such as whakapapa (genealogy) and kaitiakitanga (stewardship).

v. There are three key users you should consider in the development of your definition and framework. These are:
    i. Public opinion – the process of engaging with the public to understand what aspects of their lives they consider important to their well-being. This can consider a lived experience approach.
    ii. User perceptions – the process of consulting users on the issues of most importance to them and which they wish to see included.
    iii. Expert opinion – the process of relying on expert insights to structure an offering to users.

Gathering public opinion helps identify the nuances of the well-being drivers in your country setting, and variation across population groups. Gathering user perceptions helps to develop a tool that will actually be used and meet needs. Expert opinion allows you to build a conceptually robust framework and fit for purpose indicators, with a clear understanding of the drivers and interconnections between suggested measures.

iii. Set expectations with your commissioner and outline to the research team

i. Number of measures
    i. Is your framework expected to include a smaller or larger set of indicators, or multiple frameworks whether you have both a large comprehensive set and a summary set?
    ii. Are you expected to have a dashboard or a single index?
    iii. You may not know this from the outset but always check whether your commissioner has a predefined idea. Knowing this from the start allows you to develop your work programme accordingly. Keep in mind you may need to challenge the predefined idea with a recommended alternative based on your research findings.

ii. Purpose
    i. Is the purpose of the framework to track change, or support policy makers, or again both?

iii. Inclusion of children
    i. Children are a very important consideration for a well-being framework, both from the perspective of current and future well-being.
    ii. You should be aiming to represent all in your society, but you should decide whether this is through the inclusion in the main framework or the establishment of a secondary, more specific framework.
    iii. When making these decisions you should bear in mind the availability of data for subsets of the population. Data on children is often relatively sparse.
    iv. The UK has a separate framework for both children (0 to 15 year olds) and young people (16 to 24 year olds).

iv. Are you interested in a suite of measures, disseminated for example through a dashboard, or an index.
    i. This well help you set the scope of your literature review. Are you exploring domains and indicators, or weighting factors also.
    ii. Having an idea of this from the beginning ensures you bring the right colleagues with you, for example data visualisation colleagues for the establishment of a dashboard.
    iii. In the UK, from their inception in 2011 their well-being measures have always been presented as a suite. This was initially presented as a static and interactive wheel but for inclusivity reasons has developed to an interactive dashboard.

iv. Set scope

It is essential you know the time and funding you have to develop the framework, carry out research and build the communication tools so you can work within realistic constraints.

i. Time
    i. If you are running to a short time frame, you may not have time to carry out your own research, and you may be more reliant on lessons learnt from others.
    ii. If you have a little more time, it would be recommended that you explore what well-being means in your country setting. This can be done through national debates or qualitative research.
    iii. In the UK, when originally establishing their framework they held a national debate. This included events, focus groups and a survey, which generated 34,000 responses. When reviewing their existing measures in 2022 and 2023, they undertook a

consultation survey which included asking respondents, via an open question, what they consider important to national well-being. They also added questions to one of their social surveys gathering over 2,000 responses to the questions, what is important to your own, and community well-being. Lastly, this was complemented with focus groups with selected groups who generally report low personal well-being in the UK. This approach was taken to balance funds and coverage against timeliness.

ii. Funding

    i. Knowing funding up front lets you know the resources you have for research, your ability to commission research, your ability to commission a new dissemination tool and hold engagement events, including a potential launch of your consultation, findings or dissemination tools.

v. Establish technical advisory/ topic expert group

i. Given the breadth of topic areas and data sources necessary to compile a well-being framework, establishing a technical advisory group helps you efficiently gather advice and feedback across many domains.

Consideration should be given to including both policy makers and data providers within these groups:

i. Government departments
ii. Internal topic experts (for example national accounts, labour market and health leads)
iii. Third sector or charity experts
iv. Academic experts

vi. Develop your communication strategy

It is essential to develop a communication strategy which outlines which stakeholders you wish to engage with, and how and when you want to engage with them throughout the framework's development. When establishing this strategy, ensure you bring your communications teams with you.

i. Outline your stakeholders, for example,

i. Public
ii. Academia
iii. Other government departments
iv. Third sector – note, it is especially important to engage with your third sector if you aren't able to carry out direct research with all

sections of your society as they will provide advocacy and valuable insights.

v. International - it is helpful to learn from others' experiences. At a national level, a country generally only sets up a national framework once, therefore its essential to look internationally for guidance and insights.

vi. Local government colleagues

ii. Plan your engagement activities

iii. Agree what the purpose of engaging with each stakeholder is. For example,
    i. Promote the framework's development
    ii. Ask them to engage with research
    iii. Promote the findings

iv. Outline options you have available to utilise. Here, you can think outside of the norm. Consider:
    i. Social media – tweets, LinkedIn posts, eBulletins
        a. This is a fantastic way to promote the development of the framework, publications or events, and generate engagement, including with consultation activities.
        b. In the UK, many social media platforms were utilised to promote their consultation launch, associated surveys and research being carried out, as well as the findings and events to launch both the consultation and findings and new tools. They also utilised relevant stakeholder e-newsletters across a breadth of well-being topic areas including health and labour market.

    ii. Formal consultation or National debate
        a. As a National Statistical Institute you may have legal requirements for how you must engage when developing new outputs.
        b. In the UK they carried out an informal consultation to gather feedback on their current framework and tool. [Review of the Measures of National Well-being - Office for National Statistics - Citizen Space (ons.gov.uk)]

    iii. Public engagement and speaking events, online or in person

a. Organise launch events. This may be launching your consultation or your final product.

b. Piggyback on existing planned organisation events to reach a diversity of stakeholder and topic experts. Well-being dashboards cover a diversity of disciplines and topics; therefore it is essential to get input and bring all along with you.

vii. Plan your research

Once you know your scope, definition (or an idea of) and aspirations for your well-being framework you can plan your research. You should consider if you have time to carry out primary research or will you focus purely on policy needs and established research.

It would be best practice to carry out some primary research on what matters to well-being within your own country context and culture to ensure your framework is representative and you are aware of nuances in subsets of your population.

Here are examples of primary research that has been carried out previously:

i. Focus groups - Review of the UK Measures of National Well-being, October 2022 to March 2023 - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
ii. Develop a new survey
iii. Add questions to an existing survey - Individual and community well-being, Great Britain - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
iv. Consultation survey - Review of the Measures of National Well-being - Office for National Statistics - Citizen Space (ons.gov.uk)
v. National debate - (include a link to the New Zealand consultation linking to post cards etc) - https://www.stats.govt.nz/reports/indicators-aotearoa-new-zealand-nga-tutohu-aotearoa-key-findings-from-consultation-and-engagement
vi. Qualitative and Quantitative Research on a National Quality of Life Framework (Canada)

viii. Literature review and desk research

Your framework should be established on a sound foundation. Much of this will be from research and established practices. These guidelines should provide you with a solid start but do also review the recommended readings outlined below as well as exploring our own domestic research.

Chapter 2 provides a timeline and citations to recommended key reports for the measurement of well-being.

ix. **Assess what exists in other frameworks**

As previously stated, it is recommended we learn from our peers in other countries when establishing a framework. This includes evaluating what measures are commonly used and from what sources.

Annex A and Chapter 5 provides information on commonly used sources and indicators.

x. Data review

It is essential to understand what data exists, and doesn't exist, in your country. This will help you understand how ambitious you can be, for example:

a. is it necessary, and possible, to set up a new data collection?
b. are you prepared to have a framework with gaps and present an aspirational framework?
c. are you able to provide updates as frequent as your stakeholders request, for example monthly or quarterly?

Additionally, alongside evaluating how frequently each measure updates, this information will help you decide how often you will update the data in your framework/ dashboard/ index. Will you update 'live' as and when the new data is available, or for example, will you update quarterly and update the data published/ collected in the previous quarter at one point in time. A dashboard becomes less useful as the data becomes more out of date.

Do remember you don't have develop a new data collection to create a well-being framework and can populate it based on data that already exists in your country.

FINALISE YOUR DEFINITION AND DEVELOP YOUR DOMAINS AND MEASURES

When you develop 'the bones' of your framework you have two options:

1. Build from scratch based on themes from your research, or
2. Use an already developed framework, such as OECD's Better Life Index and use your research to adapt it.

Essential for both of these is to:

xi. Collate all your feedback into themes

i. Once you have collected all your primary and secondary research, it is now time to identify the themes that have begun to emerge.

ii. It may be useful to group these into economic, environmental and social at this stage if you haven't pre-defined your domains and/ or framework.

iii. Once you have collated all the research it is useful to hold an internal workshop to review evidence and establish your domain structure and indicators.

It may be useful to structure the day into sessions, based on the themes you have collated all your evidence into. You are then able to discuss how best you want to capture that concept in your framework.

xii. Domain structure

From your themes, decide what you would like your framework structure to be. As outlined in chapter 2, the Brundtland report recommended the dimensions of ‘here and now, ‘later’ and ‘elsewhere’. Within these you can consider your domains.

It is recommend ensuring that you have a balance across the three pillars of economy, environment and society.

International examples include:

i. Canada – Prosperity, Health, Society, Environment and Good Governance
ii. UK – Personal well-being, Our relationships, Health, Where we live, What we do, Personal finance, Education and skills, Economy, Governance and Environment
iii. OECD Better Life Index – Housing, Income, Jobs, Community, Education, Environment, Civic engagement, Health, Life Satisfaction, Safety and Work-Life Balance

xiii. Finalise your definition

i. If you have used an already established definition, it is useful to evaluate its appropriateness and whether any adaption is needed based on the research you have now carried out.

ii. If you wanted to develop a definition from scratch again use your research to agree and finalise your definition based on what you had outlined at the early stages of the project.

xiv. Develop proposed indicators and measures

To establish your proposed measures and indicators you should:

i. Set your inclusion criteria, which could include the necessity of:

    i. Having a baseline established (or the ability to establish a baseline)
    ii. Ability to measure over time
    iii. Covering your required level of geography
    iv. Covering your required population groups
    v. A timeliness criteria, for example publishing data on Q2 of a year by Q4

vi. A quality criteria, for example does the measure cover the concept it is meant to
vii. Ability to see and understand change in the measure, are able to influence change in the measure through policy levers.
viii. International comparability

ii. Select the number of domains, measure and indicators

As outlined in Chapter 3 these guidelines define a

- Dimension – is a thematic area of well-being measurement, for example Here, now, elsewhere and the future.
- Domain – is a conceptual component or topic area of well-being measurement.
- Indicator – sits within a domain, and captures an important outcome or driver of well-being for example life satisfaction
- Measure – how you present your indicator. For example % of people who report their life satisfaction as low.

Throughout this process you should be considering:

i. Your scope, the need and level of understanding of your audience
ii. Whether you are planning an index or a dashboard and how that impacts your number of measures and indicator definitions. For more information on composites please see chapter 6.
iii. Your balance of metrics representing inequality and your ability to disaggregate your measures to show distribution across society.
iv. Counts versus representation measures. For example, is it helpful in your context to count the number of people with a disability or to ensure you can disaggregate other measures by whether the respondent has a disability. The second of this would allow you to understand whether someone with a disability has a lower income than those who do not, experience more relative poverty and are more or less satisfied with their lives. You may also consider to combining your count data into a contextual indicator set as has been done in New Zealand.
v. The balance throughout your framework of subjective versus objective measures.
vi. Decide for each measure are you only presenting the headline measure or will you provide more in data tables. For example, if your measure is those reporting high life satisfaction, will you also report the number of those with low life satisfaction in the data tables. Additionally, will you include the time series for everything or just the headline measure?
vii. Will you report measures at the headline level only or provide breakdowns by various characteristics such as age and sex? If so, how frequently will you update this information? Will this only be available in your data tables or can you build this into a data explorer or your dashboard?

xv. **Decide on your presentation mode**

    i. Now you know if you are having one or several sets of indicators and what those indicators are it is time to decide how you are going to present these measures

    ii. Options include:
        i. Visuals, for example charts, either static or interactive
        ii. Dashboards
        iii. Written summaries
        iv. Explorer tools

    It is important remember it has to be useable and needs to balance overwhelm with oversimplification.

Once you have your first iteration of your framework, indicators, presentation and delivery plan:

xvi. **Review with,**

    i. Expert advisory panel,
    ii. Directors,
    iii. Ministers,
    iv. Communications and data visualisation colleagues

xvii. **Refine**

    i. Take on board comments and tweak as needed

xviii. **Agree and sign off your approach**

    i. Through your organisation's sign-off procedure

xix. **Delivery and launch**

This will certainly vary from organisation to organisation but the following steps will usually exist.

    i. Analyse
        i. Develop questions and surveys as may be needed or access to admin data.
        ii. Request published data, at the required granularity, as needed.
        iii. Request access to micro data and analyse to your specifications.

    ii. Visualise (for more information see chapter 6 on composites and chapter 7 on communication)

    iii. Publish and promote
        i. Following your organisation's procedures
        ii. It may be useful to include a reference or citation for your framework or product

iv. Launch event
    i. As part of your communication strategy you should decide how you would like to promote the development and publication of your framework.
    ii. This may be through written publications or online or in person events for example.

xx. Evaluate

Evaluation should take place a number of times after delivery.

i. A reflection exercise is useful after initial delivery, to outline lessons learnt through the process.

ii. It may be worth carrying out an additional exercise a year or more after delivery to explore whether your framework is actually delivering what you had originally outlined and whether you need to start adapting to updated needs and requests. Examples include,
    i. If you are not planning an aspirational framework, have you managed to access data for every measure?
    ii. Have you received any feedback, on terminology used that would benefit from tweaking?
        a. In the UK, feedback was received within the first year on the terms used for the labelling of change in their newly launched dashboard as such they updated them from ‘Improvement’ and ‘Decline’ to ‘Positive change’ and ‘Negative change’.

8.1.5 Country examples of well-being framework development

Not every country has carried out each of the steps listed above, nor in the same order or to extent.

Here is an example from New Zealand, of how complementary well-being frameworks have been established and are used in decision making.

Background of Well-being in New Zealand

Successive Aotearoa New Zealand Governments have applied elements of well-being approaches (New Zealand Productivity Commission, 2023).

The 1999 to 2009 Government introduced “whole of government” goals and outcomes, as part of its Reducing Inequalities policy, and the 2017 to 2023 government embedded well-being into the Public Finance Act. This Act now requires governments to set well-being objectives to frame each Budget and requires the Treasury to prepare an independent report on well-being in New Zealand every four years. The government introduced its first Well-being Budget in 2019, where agencies were expected to identify the impacts of proposed budget initiatives using well-being frameworks.

Against this background, The Treasury has been iteratively developing its Living Standards Framework (LSF) since 2011 and in 2018 released the (LSF) Dashboard to support strategic policy advice. Stats NZ - Tatauranga Aotearoa (New Zealand's National Statistics Office) produced Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa in 2019 to support the monitoring of well-being more generally. There was a lot of collaboration between the two agencies and the choice of indicators for Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa influenced the indicators chosen for the LSF Dashboard.

Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa is a national indicator framework for well-being that can be used as a base in developing customised well-being monitoring frameworks. It shows a wide range of well-being outcomes and, where possible, how they vary over time, between population groups, and across New Zealand. Establishing a comprehensive suite of indicators that show how New Zealand is progressing was needed for several reasons:

- To improve decision-making by providing a wider view of progress.
- To enable government investment to be more effectively directed towards improving the overall well-being of New Zealanders, alongside economic growth.
- To enable the public to monitor New Zealand's well-being progress and sustainable development.
- To empower non-government organisations and community groups to make informed decisions and help them advocate for the well-being of specific groups and communities.
- To support New Zealand's contribution to international reporting requirements, such as the UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and UN Human Rights Reporting.

Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa is being used as a reference in the development of several bespoke well-being frameworks including by the Ministry for Ethnic Communities and Ministry of Disabled People. In addition, many people use Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa as a one stop shop to find well-being information across a wide range of topics.

Engagement throughout development

Stats NZ consulted with New Zealanders on what well-being means to them and what aspects of well-being matter most to them. A range of different channels (for example, postcards, community meetings, online submissions, an online poll, emails, and public forums) were used to capture the diversity of views held by New Zealanders. This included the views of children and older people, minority groups, Māori and iwi, and hard-to-reach and vulnerable populations.

Consultation was important to ensure that Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa reflects what is important to New Zealanders, and not just to the government. It is, and was at the time, also important to ensure that people will see themselves in the data.

Any comprehensive framework for well-being in Aotearoa, New Zealand needs to consider both the well-being of Māori and Māori conceptions of well-being. The development of Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa was co-designed with Māori. This reflects the status of Māori as the indigenous population of New Zealand and the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Partnership with Māori was recognised as crucial for Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa and initiatives included establishing a Māori Advisory Panel to advise on te ao Māori values for well-being and conducting an expert review to consider the framework and indicators from a te ao Māori perspective.

During the development of Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa it was decided to produce a set of te ao Māori well-being indicators alongside Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa. The analogy was of a twin-hulled waka (canoe) being paddled in the same direction.

After much consideration, it was decided that the Treasury (2018a) work on He Ara Waiora was the best way forward. The term 'waiora' speaks to a broad conception of human well-being, ground in wai (water) as the source of ora (life). He Ara Waiora presents a holistic, intergenerational approach to well-being and deepens Treasury's understanding of living standards. Its principles are derived from mātauranga Māori (Māori understanding) but many of its elements are relevant to lifting the intergenerational well-being of all New Zealanders. Consideration of te ao Māori perspectives of well-being were also incorporated throughout the development of the Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa indicator framework.

Following the public consultation, Stats NZ held technical workshops and consultations to bring together subject-matter and technical experts to propose indicators. The indicators were selected through a collaborative process involving a wide range of stakeholders, including central and local government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and topic experts, such as te ao Māori experts, academics, and technical advisory groups. The results were used to inform the rest of the indicator selection process.

Each indicator proposed at the technical workshops was evaluated against how well it related to the relevant topic definitions and if it met indicator selection criteria. Preliminary findings from the public consultation were also presented and available for technical experts to use while evaluating indicators. This evaluation was presented at an indicator selection event in December 2018. The indicators agreed at this event were reviewed against findings from the public consultation and written submissions provided during and after the event.

A review of the indicators was conducted in three ways. Firstly, by local and international experts on well-being. Secondly, from the perspective of other nations with an indigenous population (for example Canadian and Australian experts). Finally, a panel of te ao Māori subject matter experts reviewed the indicators from a te ao Māori perspective.

Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa seeks to understand the most important aspects of well-being for New Zealanders and where possible indicators were chosen with distributional data about how different population groups (for example, by sex, ethnicity, region) are faring. The selection of indicators was not driven by the availability of data however. The initial set of indicators included gaps in data, ranging from a complete absence of data to limitations on the ability to break information down to useful and meaningful levels for different communities. Stats NZ is working with stakeholders to prioritise understanding data gaps and how they can be addressed. This approach highlighted areas for future investment in data and statistics and was fed back to Government for consideration through an all-of-government Data Investment Plan (New Zealand Government, 2022).

Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa is a broad and deep source of well-being data, which supports a range of reporting requirements including under the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. The Treasury uses Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa to help inform the Living Standards Framework Dashboard, and as a key user, the Treasury's development of the LSF feeds into development of the indicator suite.

Well-being in Decision making

The Living Standards Framework is a high-level framework for measuring and analysing intergenerational well-being.

The LSF Dashboard provides the indicators that the Treasury believes are most important to track to understand progress in well-being in New Zealand and to inform the Treasury's strategic policy advice on cross-government well-being priorities. The Dashboard does not aim to be a comprehensive database of well-being indicators and is also not intended to provide the level of indicator granularity needed for agency or sector policy analysis. Agencies, local government and non-government interest groups are encouraged to develop their own well-being datasets, with a range of well-being data and evidence to suit their own needs. The Treasury used a wider range of indicators and research to inform their statutory Well-being Report in 2022.

The LSF Dashboard draws from Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa and the Treasury seeks to align the two indicator suites where it can, but the Treasury also uses other datasets that support its policy analysis. To support these policy needs, The Treasury has made the pragmatic choice to include the 'best data available', rather than leave data gaps as Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa has done.

The Treasury aims to use He Ara Waiora, the LSF and other complementary frameworks alongside each other to better understand the distinctive nature of well-being in different communities in New Zealand. This approach, combined with ongoing engagement with these communities, is likely to be more effective than trying to incorporate all perspectives into one generic framework where the distinctive aspects of Māori and Pacific well-being would inevitably be lost (The Treasury, 2021).

Summary

New Zealand has implemented two significant well-being measurement frameworks.

- The Treasury's Living Standards Framework, complemented by He Ara Waiora, to support their strategic policy advice; and

- Stats NZ's Ngā Tūtohu Aotearoa in 2019 to support the monitoring of well-being more generally.

These measurement frameworks can be used as the basis for monitoring more tailored well-being strategies, such as:

- The Child and Youth Well-being Strategy,
- All-of-Government Pacific Well-being Strategy,
- Bespoke well-being frameworks by the Ministry for Ethnic Communities and Ministry of Disabled People.

8.2 Recommendations for initiating and maintaining a national process

8.2.1 Introduction

Having now outlined the conceptual considerations and steps that are commonly taken (in part or in full) in establishing a national well-being framework, this section will outline the hints and tips to support you along the way.

8.2.2 Who to bring with you

Establishing and maintaining a well-being framework is at its core also a stakeholder engagement exercise. Some of these are obvious but others may not be.

i. Policy teams and Ministers
   a. To ensure you create a product that meets their content and dissemination needs.

ii. Organisational directors and leaders
   a. As a multi-topic area remember to bring additional directors and leaders from your organisation with you, not just your own, as they have the authority to help you along the way.
   b. This may for example include a fortnightly update email on the work you are doing and how it is progressing.

iii. Data providers and survey teams
   a. To ensure you will have data to track your measures. This may involve additional data collections, increasing frequency of what is available or just understanding what is already collected and feasible to what time scales.

iv. Community groups and NGOs
   a. It is important when building a national framework that it represents all in your society. It is not always easy to collect representative voices from minority groups therefore it is essential you get support and buy in from organisations who represent them to ensure they are given due consideration.

v. Analysts in departments – cross departmental sharing forums
    a. Analysts in departments not only need to provide the data their department holds for certain measures, but you will also need to get their buy in on your approach to measuring well-being so they are your departmental advocates.

vi. Advisory groups
    a. It is important to both share your research with established topic area advisory groups, but also to establish an advisory group of both public sector and non-public sector organisations to advise you through the process.

vii. Data visualisation
    a. No matter your end goal, be it a suite of measures, a dashboard or an index, bring your data visualisation teams in early. When consulting users on what measures they want included it is important to ask how they want it disseminated and how often. Your data visualisation colleagues will be able to support you in outlining the information they need to know to best develop a tool for dissemination, be that static images and graphics, branding or interactive explorer tools.

viii. Communications teams
    a. They are essential to support you with reaching out to external organisations, utilising established mailing lists and channels of communication. For example, promoting your new tool on social media, or encouraging participation in an online consultation on LinkedIn. Often communications departments have established routine catch ups and advisory boards. You can utilise these to share information, gain buy in and get input. They can support you in drafting a communication strategy to best meet your needs once you know the scope and size of engagements you are able to carry out.

ix. Media team (if separate to your communications team)
    a. Your media team will be able to advise both in publicising your product specifically to the media once it is developed but also through the development process to make sure it is easy to understand and disseminate. Media teams are great at translating your research for the general public, an important stakeholder for well-being frameworks.

x. Sceptics – anticipate what they may criticise
    a. It is important to listen to and engage with sceptics of your well-being framework. They can help you identify issues to be addressed. By engaging with them and considering their opinions you also have the ability to change them into an advocate of your research and product.

8.2.3 Understand your constraints

It is important to set realistic expectations in developing the work programme to establish your framework. To help with this, the below should be considered.

i. Timing
    a. How long do you have to develop the framework?

ii. Timeliness
    a. How timely do you want the measures to be?

iii. Punctuality
    a. What is the time lag you can accept from data collection to reporting?

iv. Geographic coverage
    a. Is it essential for every measure to cover all of your territory?

v. Local data availability
    a. Do all measures have to be available at a local level, or is national level reporting sufficient?

vi. Aspirational versus reality dataset
    a. Do you want a framework to only include measures where data is available or are you happy for your framework to be conceptually comprehensive but with data gaps?

vii. Do you want subset frameworks?
    a. For example, how are you going to include children in your framework as a population group who are not commonly captured in routine data collection and who will likely have different well-being drivers? Do you include them in your main set or create a separate well-being framework?

viii. Resources – funding and staff
    a. This is a key question to understand how comprehensive you can be in establishing your framework. This will impact the time you have to create your framework, your ability to carry out primary research and development of dissemination tool, and your ability to update your tool with the latest data and frequently review it to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

8.2.4 Longevity

i. How do you transition the work programme from being a priority to business as usual or in scope for reduction
    a. Expect it to happen and have a plan!

ii. Adapt

a. Being able to adapt is essential to survival. Adaption may be the addition or removal of measures, or provision of extra breakdowns of statistics or creation of a new explorer tool.
b. These changes may be the request of a policy maker or due to changes in the definition or source of a measure. Given the breadth of topics for inclusion in well-being frameworks, you can't be expected to foresee every issue you may come up with which may require an adaptation.
c. If removing and adding measures to your framework, make sure you are doing so with an established criteria so this process is transparent to users.
d. In the UK Measures of National Well-being, changes to measures are outlined each quarter in their data tables. They highlight both the change and the reason for the change.

iii. Who will be responsible for delivering it over time?
    a. Ensure you have a plan in place for who and how you will deliver the framework once it has been established. A theory of change document would be useful.

iv. Create a sense of shared ownership as with multiple topics gaps can easily happen
    a. With measures across multiple sources, maintain effective engagement across all source owners and instil in them a shared ownership of the framework. Show them what they are contributing to and what impact it is having.
    b. If you have set up an expert advisory panel for the establishment of the framework, consider keeping it on with less frequent meetings or with purely email updates. It is beneficial to continue to have their input and advice. This group will be able to act as the frameworks advocate across departments and sectors.

v. Timely media presence
    a. Work with your media team to continue to promote the framework and its findings at each data update.
    b. This will ensure it is maintained in people's minds.

vi. Comparability over time
    a. Change, and how you measure it, is a very important element of well-being frameworks. To ensure you are able to measure it, do your best to maintain comparability of measures over time.

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