

The UN Network of Economic Statisticians: Beyond GDP

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UN Network of Economic Statisticians

Why do we need a new approach to Beyond GDP?

- **Different users have different needs** – the current SNA process demonstrates how difficult it is to try and reach a compromise between those who desire a pure ‘economic GDP’ for use in fiscal and monetary policy and those who seek a wider perspective.
- UN SG’s ‘Our Common Agenda’ recognises **the need for a wider-ranging set of complements to GDP and the traditional economic measurements**, including reaching out beyond the economic statistics domains.
- The answer for all questions should not and cannot always be changing the core SNA accounts. We need to build on SNA, SEEA and other manuals.
- The UN has delivered a [report](#) taking this agenda forward, and is likely to identify key metrics it will encourage all countries to use on their dashboards.

Key findings (1): How far ‘Beyond GDP?’

Does ‘Beyond GDP’ mean:

- Beyond National Accounts data?
- Beyond economic statistics?
- Beyond socio-economic or economic-environmental statistics?
- Beyond statistics?

“Beyond GDP” explicitly requires us to break down barriers to better understand trade-offs through integrating across environmental, economic and social perspectives.

“The interesting thing about the sprints is realising that I am part of what you call the ‘Beyond GDP’ community. I just didn’t see the connection before.”

A Capital Perspective



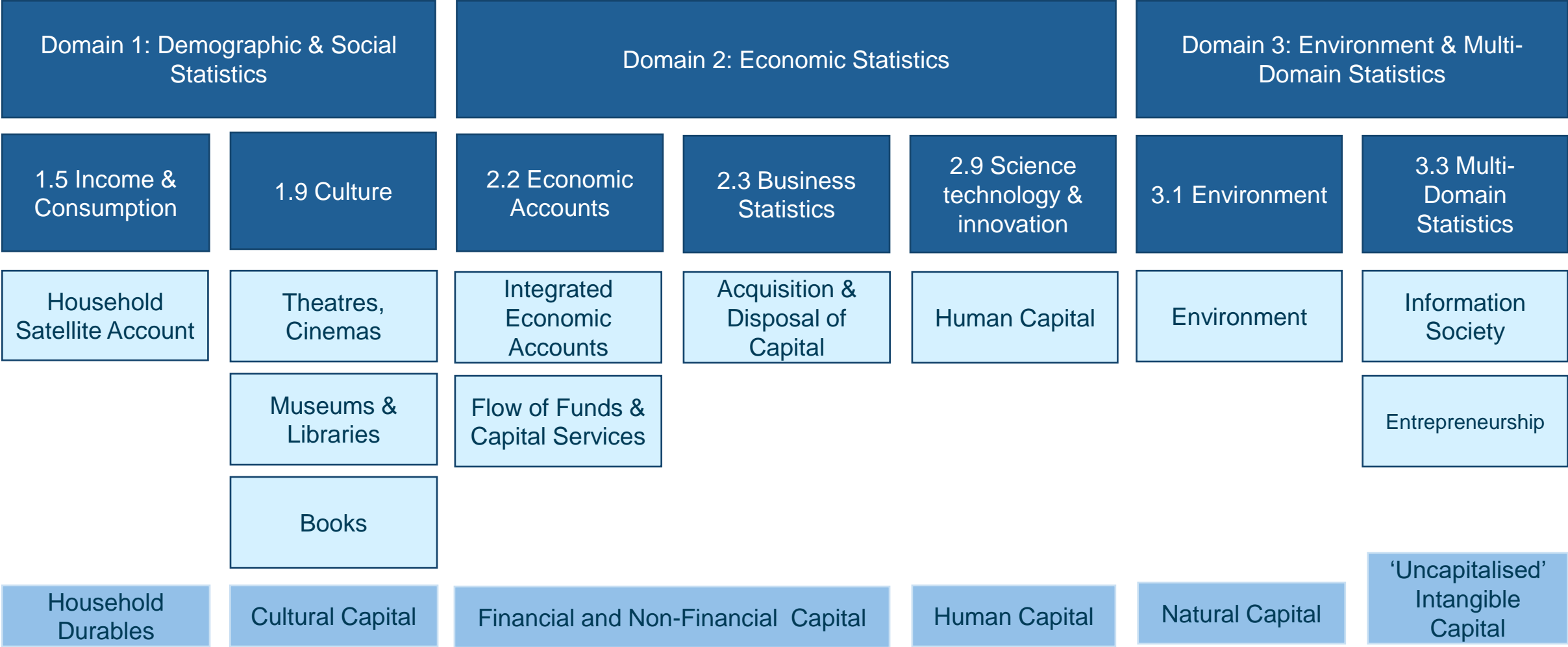
London, 1948: Birthplace of the SNA

- *Produced capital – 1000's of properties and factories destroyed*
- *Natural capital – 'Smog', Thames chemically dead*
- *Human Capital – <5% of population university educated*

UK, 2020, £million, nominal prices	2020 nominal values (£million)	of which National Accounts	of which Natural Capital Accounts	of which Human Capital Accounts
Produced capital				
stock	£4,866,083	£4,866,083	£-	£-
Non-produced 'ecosystem' assets	£1,464,614	£-	£1,464,614	£-
Non-produced 'other environmental' assets	£6,606,659	£6,334,792	£271,867	£-
Non-produced 'other' assets	£23,763,667	£3,667	£-	£23,760,000
<i>Inclusive non- financial assets</i>	<i>£36,701,023</i>	<i>£11,204,542</i>	<i>£1,736,481</i>	<i>£23,760,000</i>
Financial assets	£35,848,372	£35,848,372	£-	£-
<i>Inclusive assets</i>	<i>£72,549,395</i>	<i>£47,052,914</i>	<i>£1,736,481</i>	<i>£23,760,000</i>
Financial liabilities	£36,333,160	£36,333,160	£-	£-
Environmental liabilities	£-	£-	£-	£-
<i>Inclusive net worth</i>	<i>£36,216,235</i>	<i>£10,719,754</i>	<i>£1,736,481</i>	<i>£23,760,000</i>

Source: Office for National Statistics

The Capital landscape



Key findings (2): ‘Beyond GDP’ has not been let down by any lack of trying

Users find the current landscape of hundred of metrics overly complex and hard to navigate:

- *Composite indices* – OECD WISE, ONS, GPI
- *Distributional accounts and Disaggregation accounts* – NTA, NTTA, DINA, Democratic weighted models
- *Capabilities Models* - Human Development Index
- *Multi-dimensional frameworks* – SDGs, vulnerability indices, wellbeing indices,
- *Wealth-based measures* – Comprehensive and Inclusive Wealth
- *Satellite Accounts and Time-Use* methods

Key requirements:

- *Map existing landscape*
- *Identify (and fill) gaps*
- *Identify methods to signpost users to the best metric for their needs*

Key Finding (3): History didn't begin with Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi

“What we measure affects what we do. If we have the wrong metrics, we will strive for the wrong things.”

(Stiglitz, Fitoussi & Sen 2010)

1948 -1968:
Development of System of National Accounts (SNA)

1968-1974:
Development of System of Demographic and Social Statistics (SDSS), and acceptance by UNSC, comprising ten 'domains'

1987:
Brundtland Report defines 'sustainable development' and highlights the three dimensions of wellbeing – 'here and now', 'in the future' and 'elsewhere'

1993 - 2008:
SNA (partially) incorporates six of the ten SDSS domains as 'satellite accounts'

1974-1990s:
Attempts to deliver SDSS stall due to data challenges. Evolution of indicators drawn from system.

2010:
Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi report highlights need for extended indicator sets, multi-dimensional dashboards and re-invigorates debate, without being prescriptive in terms of approaches.

Building on Strong Foundations

Enhanced Accounts whose proposed SNA 2025 form meets both social and economic needs	Enhanced Accounts whose proposed SNA 2025 form meets economic needs but require augmentation to meet social requirements	Domains for which there is no SNA 2025 Enhanced Account
C. Earning activities and the Employment Services	B. Learning and the Educational Services	A. Population
	D. Distribution of Income, Consumption and Wealth	E. Social security and welfare services
	F. Health and health services	H. Public order and safety
	G. Housing	J. Social stratification and mobility
	I. The allocation of time and leisure	

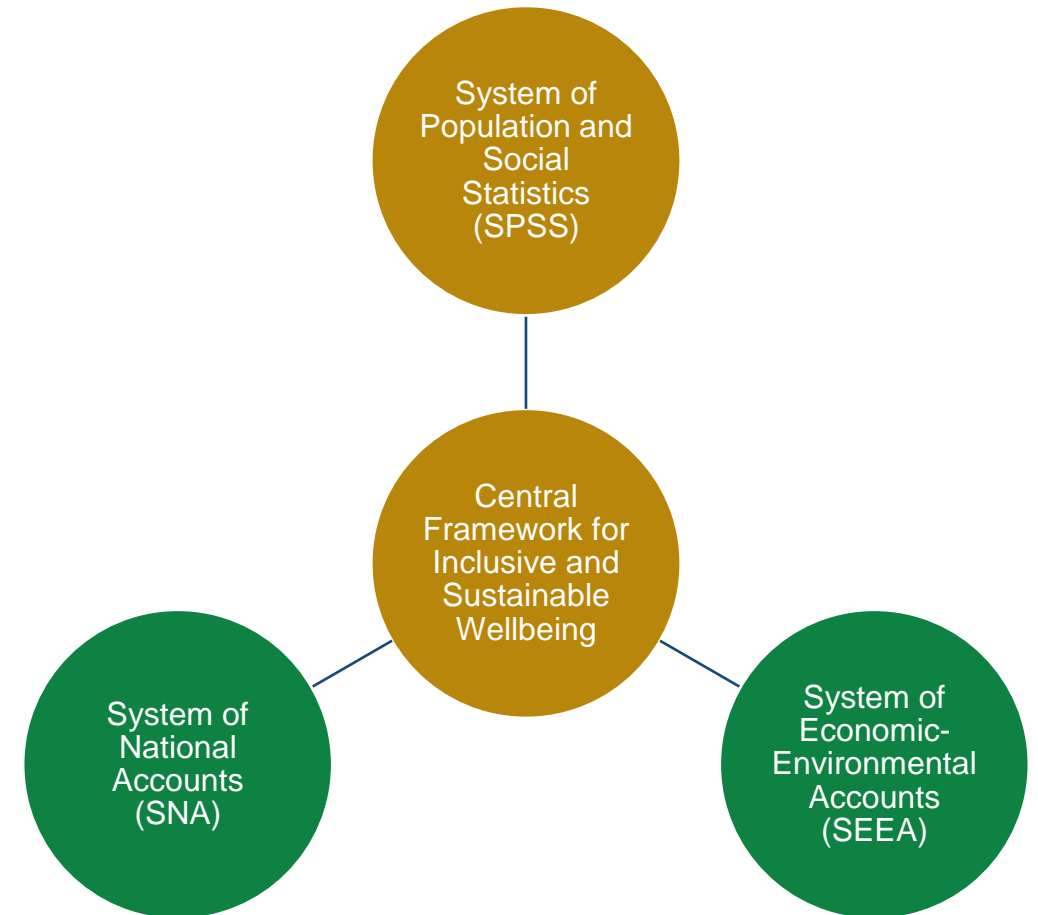
* Need to consider new domains – governance, rights, identity, and links with environment.

Proposed Way forward

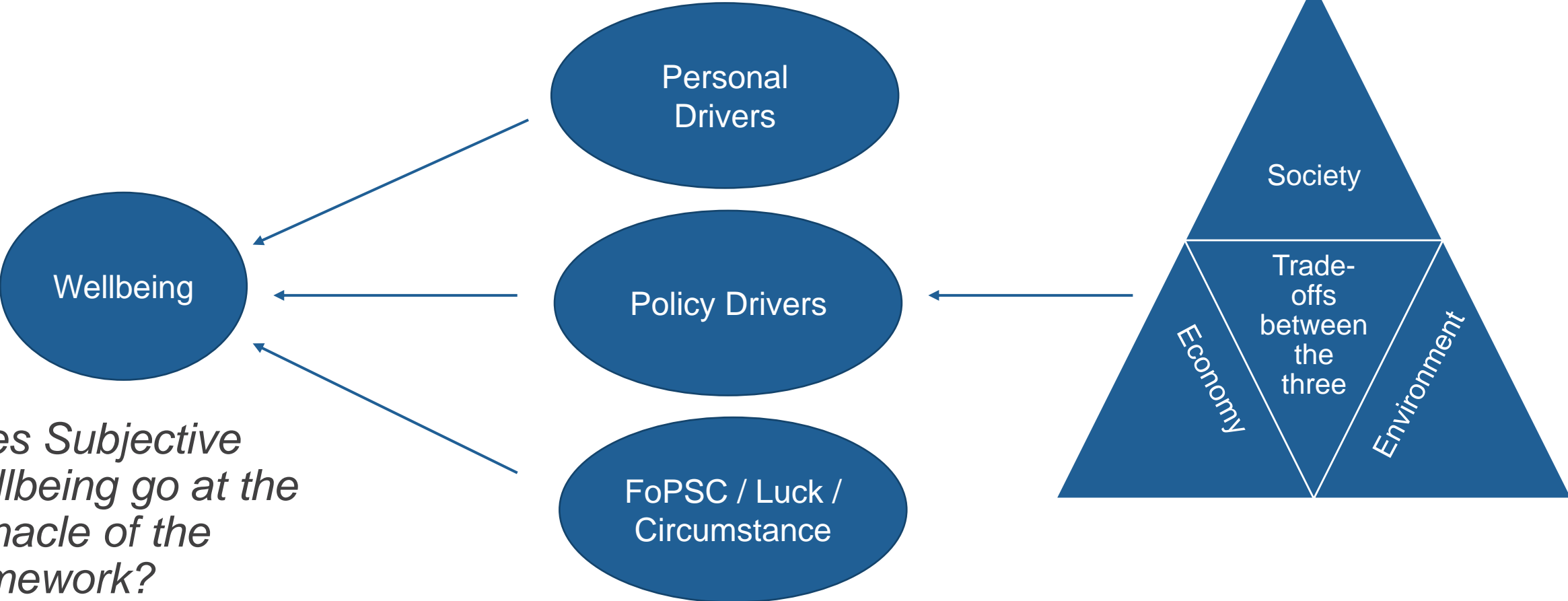
An integrated statistical system which clarifies how the range of statistical standards and outputs can give a comprehensive picture of the modern world and deliver a coherent framework within which users can use different data in varied ways to meet complex policy questions.

The objective is to develop a framework to integrate across the economic, environmental and social spheres:

- Highlighting consistent methods and outputs to aide bringing together a clearer picture of wellbeing in a cross-disciplinary way.
- Extending existing methods where efforts to integrate *within* a domain may have constrained these.
- Mapping and filling gaps between existing Standards / Manuals
- Re-using statistical materials wherever this is efficient.
- Providing the underlying framework for Beyond GDP metrics to be selected from, within a standardised dashboard, linked to the SDGs, of core wellbeing indicators and potentially new composite indices, distributional breakdowns of aggregated and disaggregated accounting and wellbeing indicators, and measures of flows and stocks considering a wider landscape of capitals, with a focus on consistency of measurement

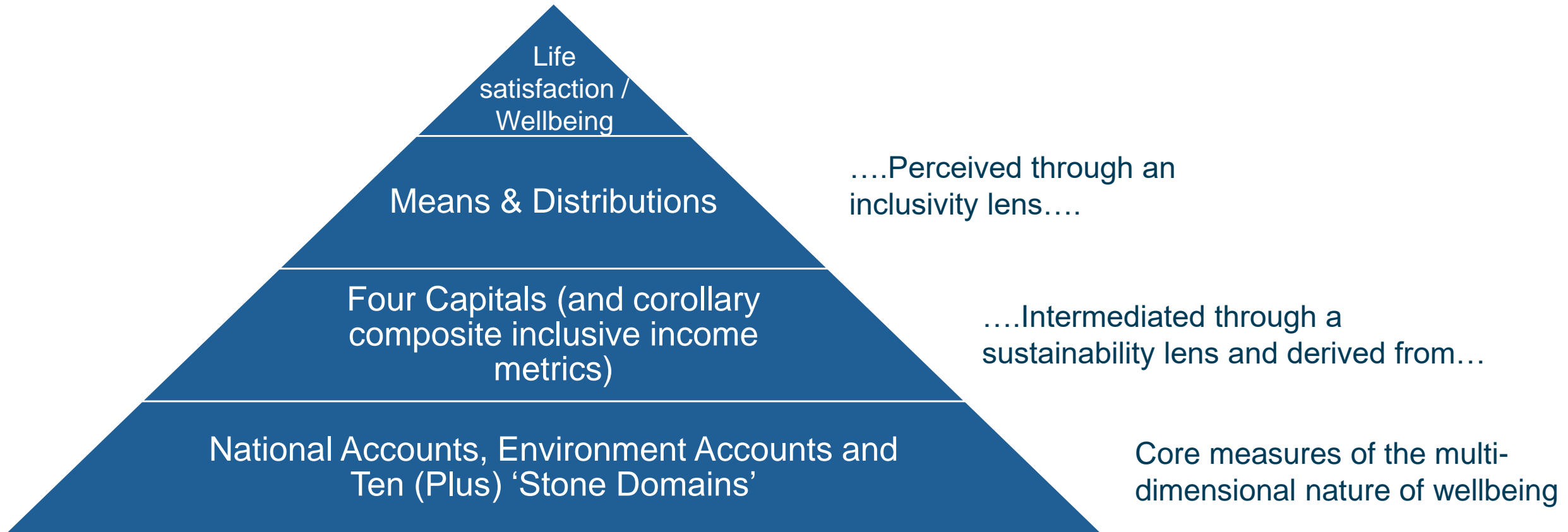


The Central Framework – bringing it all together



Does Subjective Wellbeing go at the pinnacle of the framework?

The Central Framework – understanding the policy drivers (The Rees Hierarchy)



Sprints through this year

News Flash! Registered participants: 474

Sprint	Speaker 1	Speaker 2	Speaker 3	Speaker 4	Speaker 5	Speaker 6
One – Updating social perspectives of wellbeing and the relevance of UN work for today – June 1st	Francesca Grum – The evolution of social and demographic statistics 1948-2030 and Beyond	Ivo Havinga – The potential scope of the SPSS	Catherine van Rompaey & Jorrit Zwijnenburg – The ‘SNA’ Domains – what is the proposal for 2025 SNA	Steven MacFeely – Health – stretching beyond the economic dimension	Rafael Díez de Medina (ILO) – Labour and Social Security since the 1970s	Oliver Chinganya – Observations on the session
Two - Consulting Users on wellbeing themes – June 15th	Anu Peltola (UNCTAD) ‘Valuing What Counts’	Rutger Hoekstra (Leiden University) – Synthesis of Beyond-GDP Metrics	Jonathan Barth - Zoe Institute – GDP lock-in and the European Dimension	Gerard Eding – The importance of Here & Now, the future and elsewhere	Clíodhna Taylor – Understanding capitals	Graciela Marquez – (President of INEGI) – Using existing measures of wellbeing measures
Three - What is the role of ESG data within ‘Beyond GDP’? – June 22nd	Richard Barker - ISSB – ESG Indicators	Vincent Siegerink (OECD)	Helen Slinger (A4S) – Data needs for ESG	Jan-Emmanuel De Neve (Oxford University) – The World wellbeing movement	Sammy Trabelski - Brock University	Sonia Raizenne – the potentials for using ESG data
Four - Mapping domestic wellbeing dashboards and their concepts and contents – September 7th	Eleanor Rees – Domestic Dashboards – differences and similarities	Amit Yagur-Kroll (UNECE) A recent survey of dashboards	Carrie Exton (OECD) - reflections on Living Well dashboards and metrics	Country Presenter (tbc)	Diane Ramsay / Julie Carter (Statistics NZ) The New Zealand experience	Kari Wolanski (Statistics Canada) – The Wellbeing Government Commitment
Five – Mapping distributional frameworks -September 14th	Tim Miller – Comparing and contrasting different models of distributional accounts	Jorrit Zwijnenburg – OECD) - The EG-DNA model (tbc)	Matthew Fisher-Post or Ignacio Flores - The DINA Model (Eurostat) (tbc)	Ronald Lee or Andrew Mason - The NTA Model (tbc)	Pedro Conceição (UNDP) - Use of AI and Geospatial data in disaggregating HDI at local levels	Panel Discussion
Six – A conversation about Composite Measures September 21st	Richard Heys – The vexed question of composites and how to create them.	Khalid Abu Ismail (ESCWA) New composite metrics	Martin Weale (KCL) – Methods to weight subjective and objective data	William Muhwava – UNECA – multi-dimensional indices of poverty (tbc)	Amit Kapoor – India – The Social Progress Index	Clíodhna Taylor – UK Gross and Net Inclusive Income
Seven - Reporting back on progress over the sprint – October 5th	Francesca Grum – The SPSS/S	Catherine van Rompaey – The ‘SNA Domains’	Sonia Raizenne – the potential of ESG data	Rutger Hoekstra – Developing typologies for users	Eleanor Rees – The global dashboards landscape	Stefan Schweinfest – Reflections on the sprint

Any Questions?