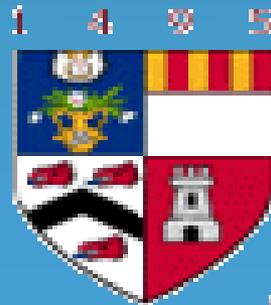


Towards a Decent Society.

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Why society?

- Focus of research has mostly been on happiness, satisfaction or wellbeing of individuals
- But individuals live in societies so we need to understand the context of wellbeing
- Governments need to control that context and to make it possible for people to fulfil their capabilities

Why decent?

- Should be ‘good enough’ rather than ‘good’ – any society is a work in progress
- Not only a league table
- Different routes to the same level of “decency”
- Has a balance of different elements, balanced scorecard to achieve what we call decency

What is a decent society?

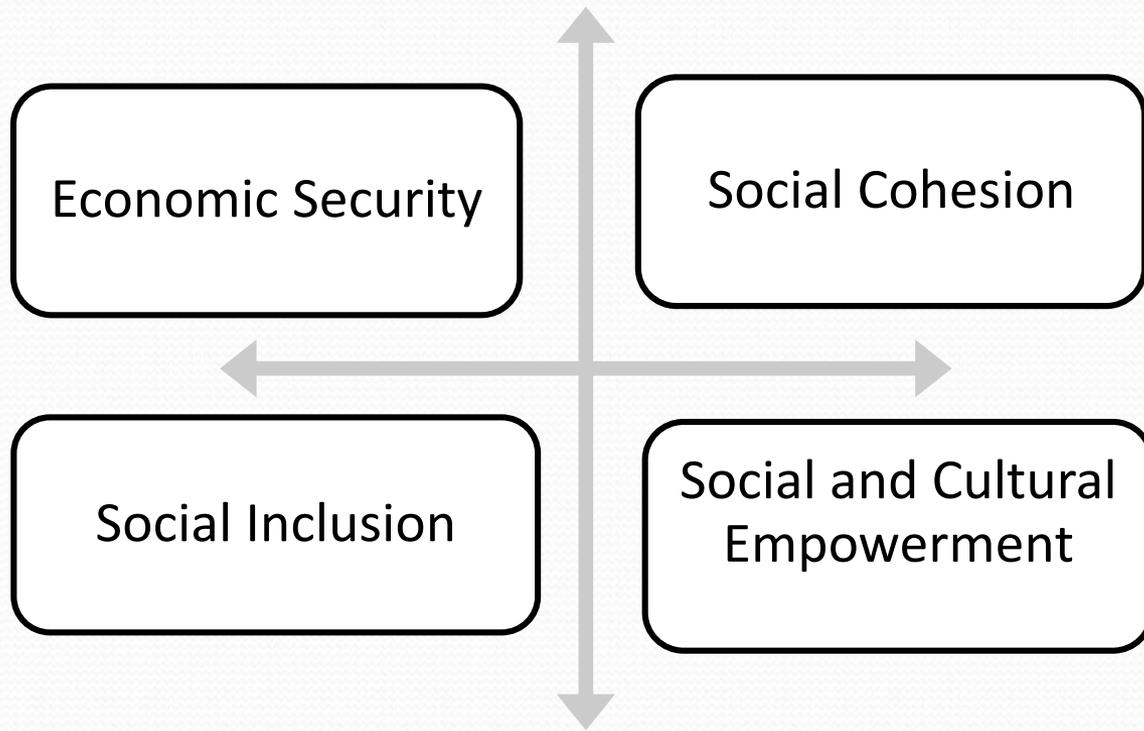
- Where basic needs are covered across the life course for everyone
- Where people are enabled to live their social lives in safety and peace
- Where people are empowered to lead the lives that they want to lead (if not in the conditions of their choosing)
- Where human rights of all are respected
- Where there is parity of recognition, representation and resources

How is a Decent Society model different from other models?

- Based on the social quality model developed in Europe
Emphasises governance issues (internationally and nationally)
- World wide relevance including developing societies and societies recovering from economic/political collapse
- Not concerned with measuring outcomes (as in other models) but rather with providing the conditions

Why is governance important?

- Legal and policy framework necessary
- Policies need to be implemented
- People need to know their rights
- People need to be able to claim their rights
- People need to be able to exercise their rights



Sources

- Objective sources: UNDP-HDI, World Bank Development, Governance and Education Indicators, UN Statistics Division, Global Food Security Index, United Nations Treaty Conventions, International Social Security Agency, Freedom House, Fragile States Index, ILO, WHO
- Subjective sources: Gallup World Poll supplemented by World Values Survey, Regional Barometers, Mo Ibrahim Index for Africa

Conditions preferred but outcomes sometimes used.

In some domains the condition is the outcome - e.g. trust

Economic Security

- Sufficient resources for individuals and households to take part in the activities expected in the society
- Across the life course.
- Sufficient national resources to fund this

Economic Security domains

- National Economy
- Food Security
- Social Wage - education, health, social security

Social Cohesion

- Agreement on the rules of the game – agreement on how people and groups should behave and what can reasonably be expected of them. Faith in dispute resolution mechanisms
- Solidarity and group harmony
- Trust – the ability to trust other people to ‘act in role’ rather than pursuing individual advantage,
- Faith that organisations will fulfil the functions assigned to them, and trust in government and in financial institutions. (e.g. low corruption)
- Faith that society, institutions, groups and individuals will deal fairly with us

Social Cohesion domains

- Good governance
- Trust in people
- Trust in institutions
- Economic equality
- Group harmony
- Acceptance of immigration

Social Inclusion

- The extent to which all inhabitants are full members of the society in terms of the ability to exercise their capacities and to make a contribution.
- Three levels: being part of your society, part of your community, part of social networks and families
- Human Rights for all are accepted and implemented
- Economic inclusion
- Gender is another aspect – are women citizens, or do they have ‘second-class rights’?
- Recognition - identity rights respected (gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexuality etc) and the intersectionality of these identities

Social Inclusion domains

- Human rights
- Absence of poverty
- Financial inclusion
- Work inclusion
- Active involvement
- Feeling of safety
- Gender inclusion
- Friends and family

Empowerment

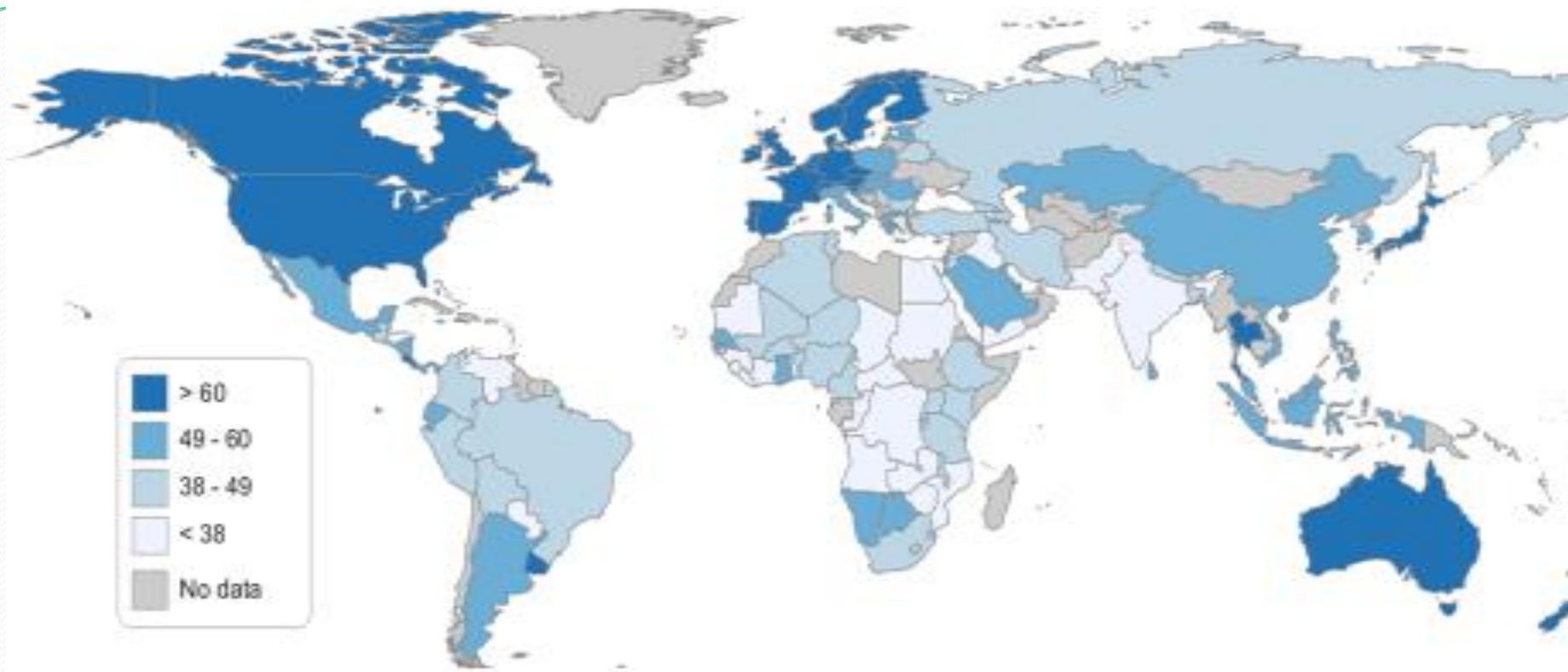
- Enabling the people to acquire the capability to participate fully in the society
- Putting in place the physical and social infrastructure to enable empowerment
- Includes such things as Education, Health and the infrastructure of communication,
- Political freedoms and the opportunity to contribute to political debate
- Socio-psychological inclusion - the extent to which people are aware of having any freedom of choice, and the extent to which they think things can be changed by their own efforts.

Empowerment domains

- Political empowerment
- Conditions of health
- Education
- Communications infrastructure
- Availability of work
- Awareness of choice
- Belief in efficacy of work

Calculation of quadrants, domains and indicators

- Individual indicators averaged when they covered the same content then standardised
- Indicators with different measurement scales: standardised and then averaged
- **Domains:** averages of primary indicators, restandardised
- **Quadrants:** averages of domain scores, restandardised
- **DSI Score:** average of quadrant scores, restandardised



Headline results

- The Scandinavian countries are at the top, along with the UK, most of Western Europe (most of the rest falling in the second category), North America, Australia and New Zealand.
- The second category contains Eastern Europe, Italy, Greece, Turkey, China and some other countries in Asia. South America is mostly divided between the second and third categories, and Central America falls mostly in the second.
- The third category also contains Russia, Moldova, Georgia, Iran, Bangladesh and most of the East African Community.
- Sub-Saharan Africa is mostly in the bottom two categories, with the exception of the three southernmost countries, four in West Africa, and Rwanda in the centre (but not the rest of the East African Community).
- In addition to African countries the bottom category holds India and Pakistan, Venezuela, Paraguay, Honduras and the Dominican Republic.

Conclusions

- Way of measuring conditions for a decent society rather than the outcomes
- Need to understand that all quadrants are equally important– how different factors are balanced
- They interact and contribute to one another
- Way of pointing out what can be done
- Way of showing what has been done elsewhere as examples (some societies low or high on one quadrant)
- Understanding way in which societies can be built and rebuilt