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EVIDENCE IN POLICY-MAKING: CONCEPTS AND PRACTICE

SNSPA International Conference

Measuring Development in Turbulent Times

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RSCAS/EUI

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*Why is measuring
important for assessing
development?*





Data and Development

By measuring we use **data to evaluate development**, because they...

- ...are key instruments to **quantify, qualify & compare** complex processes, structures and situations.
- ...are used to evaluate many aspects of **abstract concepts & realities** of development (poverty, human well-being, corruption, state performance).
- ...not only measure, but **create reality & impact** on behaviour and hence have potential to change paradigms, ideas, and relationships between actors.



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*Why does measuring create
evidence?
...and what for?*

Potential & Problems





From Measuring to Evidence

Measuring creates evidence, because it...

*...increases **insight & knowledge,***

*...informs **monitoring of progress,***

*...supports **evaluation & assessment,***

*...creates **independent sources of information,***

*...hence, **provides evidence for policy-making.***



Potential & Problems

- Support strategic planning in multilevel political structures;
- Definition of common goals for progress & development (*Europe 2020; MDGs; Paris Accord*);
- (Multi-dimensional) performance assessment;
- Decision-making processes & policy instruments can become more transparent for political actors & public;
- Innovation (*policy instruments & approaches; activation of actors; citizens-centred perspective*);
- Multiple use (*instrumental, conceptual, tactical, symbolic and political*).



Potential & Problems

- Normative character & implications;
- ‘Rhetoric-Reality Gap’ & ‘Means-Ends Dilemma’;
- Difficulty of common understandings / Oversimplification of complexity / Life-cycles of paradigms / Contestation of evidence;
- Tendency of epistemic community-building (*Islands of knowledge issues*);
- Multiple use (*instrumental, conceptual, tactical, symbolic and political*);
 - Strategic/value-based use to support interests & aims.



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*Who creates evidence
through measuring?
...and what for?*

Examples from the ground





International Institutional Activities

Creation of global policy paradigms to steer policy development at lower governance levels and across civil society; facilitation of policy change and convergence; support development through measurable priorities.

- UN Sustainable/Millennium Development Goals & Indicators
- UN Human Development Index
- World Bank World Development Indicators
- OECD How's Life / Better Life Index
- OECD Economic Globalisation Indicators
- OECD Government At A Glance
- European Commission's Fiscal Sustainability Indicators
- European Core Health Indicators
- EU Fundamental Rights Indicators
- *Biodiversity Indicators Partnership*
-



(Sub-)National Institutional Approaches

National implementation of evidence-based processes offers more tailor-made national policy solutions & transparency, if flexibility is inbuilt.

- Australia National Quality Use of Medicines Indicators
- Bhutan Gross National Happiness
- Germany Gut leben in Deutschland
- National and local SDG indicators
 - Ghana Sustainability and Functionality Indicators
- Nigerian Oil price-based Fiscal Rule (2004)
- Scotland National Performance Framework
- USA National Tuberculosis Indicators Project
- Various (Sub)National Indicator Programmes (France, USA, Scotland)
-



Civil Society Engagement

Offer scrutiny instruments & access points for democratic participation of civil society (providing & creating evidence).

- Bertelsmann Sustainable Governance Indicators, EU Social Justice Index
- *Biodiversity Indicators Partnership*
- Forest Stewardship Council Indicators
- Global Integrity Governance Indicators
- ‘I paid a bribe’ initiative India
- New Economics Foundation Happy Planet Index
- Sustainable Society Foundation Sustainable Society Index
- Transparency International (Corruption Perception Index; Global Corruption Barometer)
- World Justice Project’s Rule of Law Index
-



Academic Activities

Produce data & evidence: make data more visible in public domain; increase clarity & speed of data access; promote independent information sources & their use; increase data literacy.

Data production:

- CSGR WARWICK- CSGR Globalisation Index
- ETH Zurich KOF Globalization Index
- EUI GlobalCit
- NASA data portal
- VoteWatchEurope
- WWF – ZSL Living Planet Index
-

Data gateways:

- Gapminder
- Max Roser Our World in Data
- **GLOBALSTAT**



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GLOBALSTAT

GLOBALSTAT ...

- ...takes up the need for **intuitively** & **publicly accessible data**.
- ...accounts for the **multi-dimensional nature** of globalisation, sustainable development & human well-being.

GLOBALSTAT DATA IS...

- ...complemented by a broad set of **metadata**.

GLOBALSTAT OFFERS DATA...

- ...starting **from 1960** until present day.
- ...gathered from **80+ internat. sources**.

GLOBALSTAT ALLOWS TO...

- ...**export** data according to your choice or for all countries.
- ...**download** meta-data.
- ...**extract** graphs as images.



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GLOBALSTAT

12 thematic
+
3 horizontal areas

193 Nation States
5 Continents
12 Integration Communities/
International Organisations

DEMOGRAPHICS (Status quo & Challenges)	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TRADE (Diversity & Catch Up)	ENERGY (Finite Resources & Renewables)	ENVIRONMENT (Conditions & Threats)
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES & STRUCTURE (Texture & Relations)	FOOD, AGRICULTURE & FISHERIES (Patterns & Challenges)	FREEDOM, CONFLICTS & RISKS (Crisis & Perils)	GOVERNANCE (Institutions & Structures)
HEALTH & LIVING CONDITIONS (Well-being & its Fundaments)	HUMAN & SOCIETAL DEVELOPMENT (Quality & Features)	HUMAN MOBILITY (Migration & its Background)	TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT (Participation & Progress)
GLOBAL TRENDS (Prospects in Key Areas)			
SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD (Sustainable Development in the Light of Human Activities)			
PROSPERITY OF NATIONS & HUMAN WELL-BEING (Beyond GDP – Indices' scores)			

CALCULATION OF DYNAMIC AGGREGATES



GLOBALSTAT 2.0



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GLOBALSTAT

Provides...

- ...Citizens: Easy and **intuitive introduction** to data.
- ...Public Officials: Variety of themes & **international resources**.
- ...Journalists: Reliant, **independent source** of information.
- ...Students: **Attractive tool** to understand & use data.
- ...Teachers: Structured instrument to **deepen knowledge**.
- ...Researchers: Source & **starting point** for data collection.

Multiple Target Groups
Approach





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What do we need to discuss when measuring?

Take-aways for discussion over the next
two conference days





More reflection needed on...

- Openness to **public scrutiny & contestation** (*What narratives & power structures emerge from the use of evidence?*)
- Relation to development of **participatory structures** in political systems (*Evidence as opportunity structure; Framing potential?*)
- Institutional **capacity** to select, evaluate & process evidence (*Evidence is part of knowledge production process; Substitution of discourse & deliberation through evidence-based processes?*)
- Institutional requirements to guarantee **neutrality** of / **access** to evidence (*Who defines what at which stage; Responsiveness evidence creation – policy context?*)
- Instrumental **limits** (*What sort of evidence – input/output/outcome/ impact/anecdotal; ‘Ecology of indicators’; One-size-fits-all vs national adaptation; ‘Post-factual’ trends; Politicisation; Alternatives?*)



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Thank you very much...

...and enjoy the conference!

