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STUDIES

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.

12 thematic
+
3 horizontal areas

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)			

193 Nation States
5 Continents
12 Integration Communities/
International Organisations

**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*)?

Thank you very much...

...and enjoy the conference!

