

Humankind Index

Prioritising Scotland's resources
and sustainability, as determined
by the Scottish people.

www.oxfam.org.uk/humankindindex

Be Humankind  **Oxfam**

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Humankind Index: Upcoming event

The Humankind Index: Scotland's True Measure of Wealth

This project will construct an Index to assess Scotland's prosperity, not just in terms of the economy, but in terms of resilience, assets and sustainability. Current measures of prosperity focus on economic growth and wealth creation, and rely on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as the means of evaluation. This, in turn, determines resource allocation and prioritises policy areas that maximise economic growth.

This proposal is unique in that public participation in determining the composition of the Index will be central to the process.

We aim to:

- Generate a more holistic set of measures which capture the range of impacts on people's lives and weight them accordingly;
- Use those measures to highlight the breadth of meaning in the term 'prosperity';
- Influence the allocation of resources to enhance the holistic aspects of people's livelihoods rather than continued prioritisation of economic factors;
- Move public perceptions away from consumption as the key measure of individual success/worth, and reduce anxiety over status;
- Counter prevailing messages about poor people which stigmatise and marginalise them.

Humankind Index: Scotland's True Measure of Wealth

Why do we need the Humankind Index?

Ask most people what makes a good life and they'll name a few things: security, friends, health, a sense of belonging. Everyone needs enough money to buy life's basics, but on its own, cash is hardly enough. That's why Oxfam Scotland wants to create a new way of measuring what makes a good life, recognising that it takes more than just economic growth to make a prosperous nation.

How is it being constructed?

Public participation in creation of the Humankind Index is absolutely central. The Oxfam Humankind Index is about valuing the things that really matter to the people of Scotland. This might include their social relations, their health and skills, their physical environment and natural context, and their financial assets.

What will it do?

The Index will enable government to focus on what really matters and take more informed decisions about where society wants to go. Policy makers will be able to make policies that serve the real prosperity of Scotland, and not simply policies that try to advance economic growth, regardless of the cost on communities or our environment. It is about remembering that the economy should serve the people, not the other way around.

In the longer term, Oxfam also wants a change in the way we judge ourselves as individuals, moving away perhaps from seeing the 'stuff' we have as sign of how well we are doing to a wider sense of what makes us feel OK in our lives. You could say that the Oxfam Humankind Index is about creating a context not where people sacrifice their relationships and environment to keep up with the Jones's....but where they celebrate and nurture their relationships with the Jones's and the environment impacting on them!

How do I take part?

Your views are crucial in constructing the Humankind Index. Details of meetings and other ways to take part can be found here: www.oxfam.org.uk/humankindindex