Co-creating sustainable wealth -- what principles and values do we need to develop?

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Wealth

Abundance of valuable resources

Property/produce/people

Ownership

Profit

Control

Competition
Production and Consumption

Access and distribution

Social positioning

Maintaining balances in Nature, society and the universe
Mammon

➢ Gluttony
➢ Miserliness
➢ Exploitation
Accounting: GDP (Gross National Product Index)
Projected wealth in the year 2015

China seems set to come full circle from 2,000 years ago. If estimates are correct, by 2015 China will be producing 27 per cent of the world's wealth, up from just five per cent in 1960.
Catastrophic impact on our physical and social environment
An Essential Shift

Based on the realization that ideational cultures are stronger and more resilient and possibly more sustainable than sensate cultures,

there is a revived interest in redefining “wealth” in terms other than purely material/monetary ones.

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Human perspective

Technical perspective

Systems perspective
Human perspective:

“People are the real wealth of nations”
Genuine progress indicators = welfare economics

Marilyn Waring reviewed weaknesses in GDP and other existing monitoring indicators

Manfred Max-Neef when macroeconomic systems expand beyond a certain size, the additional benefits of growth are exceeded by the attendant costs. (Max-Neef 1995.)

Income versus human/social capital depletion
HDI (Human development Index)

Miles (1992) Amartya Sen, Mahbub ul Haq (UNDP)

**Indicators of:**
- social empowerment (civic participation)
- security (freedom to chose and have an opinion)
- economic growth

**Focuses on:**
- human capital
- social capital

**Annual reports** Continual adjustment of indicators and formula
Millenium Development Goals (MDG’s)

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development
Technical perspective:  

“Inclusive” wealth is the sum of  

- natural assets (land, forests, minerals)  
- human assets (education and skills)  
- physical (manufactured) assets
Sustainability Assessment Indicators:

(Living conditions, Social Inclusion, Ecological footprints, CO2 impact)

**Resource efficiency:**
- water
- soil
- air
- forests
- biodiversity
- etc.

**Product Life-cycle analysis**
ISO-26000 Social Responsibility

› organizational ethics

› ethical consumerism

› stakeholder involvement

› accountability

› transparency
Systems perspective:

Wealth in relation to systems

Social Life cycle assessment indicators:
(Procurement and building)
The evolution and shift of value-focus

Values express our understanding of the underlying principles of existence.

* Lifestyles are values made concrete through the choices and decisions we make.

* Meanings attributed to values have varied amongst individuals and societies and over time.
Centre for Bhutan Studies, under the leadership of Karma Ura, measured the population's general level of well-being.

**Psychological Indicators:**
- Frequency of prayer recitation
- Frequency of meditation
- Taking account of karma in daily life
- Frequency of feeling of selfishness
- Frequency of feeling of jealousy
- Frequency of feeling of calmness
- Frequency of feeling of compassion
- Frequency of feeling of generosity
- Frequency of feeling of frustration
- Occurrence of suicidal thoughts

**GNH (Gross National Happiness Index)**
Spiritual perspective:

Social justice: wealth distribution, equity, collective trusteeship, generosity

Imbuing material actions with a sense of spiritual purpose

True wealth is the acquisition of spiritual qualities
Wealth is the condition of growth and change which allows everyone the opportunity to fulfill their potential, to contribute to peace and unity and to care wisely for themselves and nature.
Integrating inner and outer reality.

“Alone, practicality becomes dangerous; spirituality, alone, becomes feeble and pointless.

Alone, either becomes dull. Each is the other’s discipline, in a sense, and in good work, the two are joined”

(Wendell Berry, 1987: 145) in Karen Litfin’s: Ecovillages
The essential merit of spiritual principle is that it not only presents a perspective which harmonizes with that which is immanent in human nature, it also *induces an attitude, a dynamic, a will, an aspiration, which facilitate the discovery and implementation of practical measures.*

(Universal House of Justice, *The Promise of World Peace*, p.13)
Basic principles upon which values that direct change are based:

- Connectivity and cohesion
- Transference and transmutation
- Finiteness
Value-base for co-creation of sustainable wealth

Connectivity and cohesion:
- *Empathy* as a source of global cohesion

Transference and transmutation:
- *Adaptation*: Collective social learning

Finiteness:
- *Moderation and sharing* as means of managing resources
Empathy as a source of global cohesion

- collective identification
- quest for universal belonging
- a composite of concern, compassion and commitment

The intimacy of globalization and modern telecommunications has expanded the threshold of our awareness of how others exist and our role in their conditions.
“Empathy becomes the thread that weaves an increasingly differentiated and individualized population into an integrated social tapestry, allowing the social organism to function as a whole.”

(Jeremy Rifkin, 2009)
AdaptaGon:

CollecGve social learning

The “augmentative power of growth” occurs when learning provides insights and alternatives.

Collective social learning refers to frank, open consultation where intellectual rigor and creativity are valued but where the voice of experience and indigenous knowledge are also heard, appreciated and taken into consideration. (Garry Jacobs, 1999)
Moderation and sharing as means of managing resources

- Reflective consumption
- Collaborative consumption
- Sufficient consumption
Accumulating “true wealth” involves:

- Stimulating a transformation of both our inner life and external conditions.
- Becoming more fully human and achieving a dynamic coherence between material and non-material requirements of life.
Cooperating

➤ Developing trust and compassion and
➤ inspiring the capacity for service
Learning flexibility

- Recognizing that our understanding changes and grows.
- What we once thought was right may not always be so.
Fostering a vibrant community life in neighborhoods and villages, characterized by such a keen sense of purpose.
Thank you