

A concept that refers to a good physical, mental, and social condition as well as the assurance of individual rights and freedom of self-actualization. Well-being was referenced in the 1946 constitution of the World Health Organization (WHO) and more recently in Japan's laws related to "work-style reform."

Use in the post-war WHO constitution

Nowadays, many facets of health are discussed. Goal 3 of the SDGs*1 includes the aim to "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages," and in this age when people can live up to 100, prolonging a healthy life span is an important theme. Even in employment and educational policies, health has become an indispensable keyword.

In such a time, we hear the word "well-being" more than ever. The word "well-being" is closely related to health, and that relationship is referenced in the constitution of the World Health Organization (WHO).*2 According to the document, which was adopted in 1946 at an International Health Conference held in New York, "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." The WHO Constitution, signed by Japan in 1951, was proclaimed as Japan's first agreement.

In the WHO constitution, well-being indicates a satisfied condition, but more recently it has come to incorporate the ideas of being "in good condition," "happy," and "in good health."

Establishment of indexes and evaluation systems to improve conditions

Feelings about "what is good" or "happiness" depend on history, culture, climate, nature, race, and country, among other factors. For example, images of the words "good" or "happiness" differ between regions rich in water resources and those suffering from a shortage of water, or between countries suffering from a food

shortage and those where many people enjoy abundant amounts of food. Indexes and evaluation systems have been created to aim for better conditions for society, built around common measures that as many people can share as possible, even though people's senses and values differ.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)*3 has adopted the concept of well-being instead of gross domestic product (GDP) as its new index for evaluating people's wealth and happiness. It established the Better Life Index (BLI), which consists of 11 topics, and is conducting surveys and analyzing the results for each topic.

Also, in the evaluation of architectural space, the WELL Building Standard® created by the International WELL Building Institute (IWBI), a nonprofit foundation in the U.S., is well-known. This is an international evaluation system based on research about the effects of the indoor spaces of buildings on people. A space that satisfies a certain standard for air, water, light, etc., can be certified by a third-party organization. The certificate must be renewed every three years, and maintaining the level of building operation at the time of certification is required.

Studying the health and comfort of indoor spaces, where we spend more than 80% of the day

Version 1 of the WELL certification began in 2014 and was upgraded to version 2 in 2020. Version 2, the latest version, consists of 10 basic categories: air, water, nourishment, light, fitness, thermal comfort, sound, material, mind, and community.

Recently, due to the spread of infectious diseases, interest in ventilation and clean air are increasing, and these concerns are of course mainly evaluated in the "air" category. Air purity must be promoted inside buildings to minimize the exposure of occupants to contaminated substances and to reduce the risks to health.

Also, conditions related to occupants' thermal sensations (hot/

cold) such as temperature, humidity, and air flow, are evaluated under "thermal comfort." Not only basic HVAC control performance such as temperature control, but also air-conditioning space design and air-conditioning technology that considers individual differences in feelings is required, since some may feel hot and others cold in the same thermal environment. Moreover, sensing of the environment, or collecting questionnaires from residents, is required in order to enhance occupants' satisfaction with the thermal environment and promote their health, comfort, and productivity.

In the "water" category, requirements include sufficient water supply for residents and good water quality with little risk for health and sanitation. For "nourishment," there should be encouragement to eat more fruit and vegetables, and displays with information on calories and the like and recommendations so that residents are better able to choose healthy food. For "community," efforts such as emergency evacuation preparedness, AED availability, universal design, and reserving space for breastfeeding can be considered. With such a system, various aspects of indoor spaces are evaluated.

These are just examples related to WELL certification, but for architectural spaces in Japan there is a certification called CASEBEE® wellness office (CASEBEE-WO) which focuses on office worker environment.

There is data to the effect that people spend 80% of their day indoors, so to foster well-being, such a system for evaluation of architectural space plays an important role.

*1 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
International goals adopted at a United Nations summit in 2015 for the period from 2016 to 2030. Seventeen goals and 169 targets were established in order to achieve a sustainable, diverse, and inclusive society where no one will be left behind.

*2 World Health Organization (WHO)
Established in 1948 as a special United Nations organization. It regards human health as a fundamental right. The group's purpose is the "attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health."

*3 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
An international organization that discusses with and works with governments concerning the world economy, aid for developing countries, and expansion of multilateral free trade.



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