

THE SCOTTISH DOUGHNUT

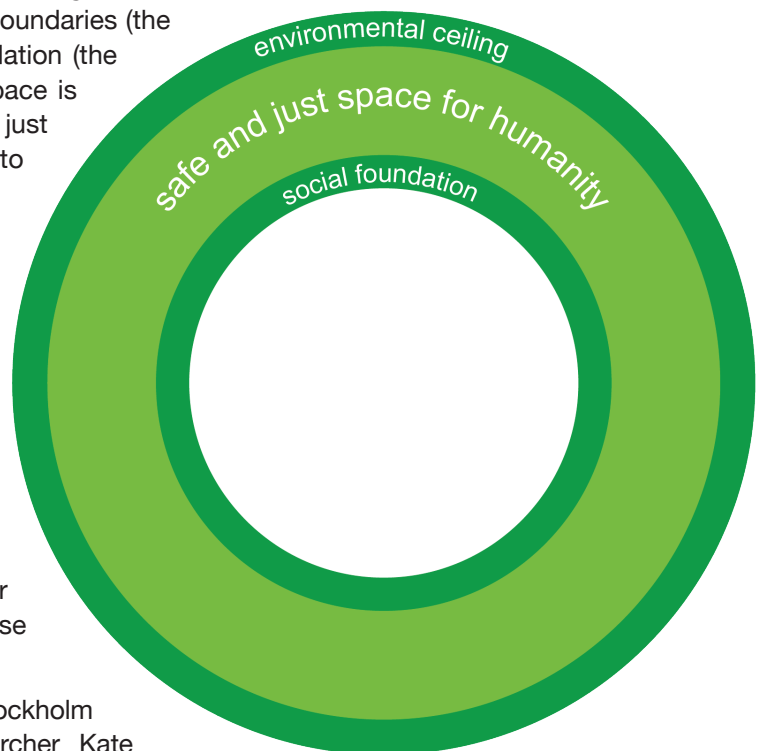
A safe and just operating space for Scotland

WHAT IS THE DOUGHNUT?

Oxfam believes the world faces twin challenges: delivering a decent standard of living for everyone while living within our environmental limits. These two interwoven concerns are depicted by the Oxfam Doughnut. It allows people to visualise a space between planetary boundaries (the outer edge of the Doughnut) and a social foundation (the inner edge of the Doughnut). We believe this space is where it is environmentally and socially safe and just for humanity to exist. It is where we must aim to reach.

Scotland and the UK face multiple and interlocking social challenges, developed over decades: deep inequalities in wealth and power; rising levels of in-work poverty; and growing stigmatisation of people living in poverty. At the same time we face a global environmental challenge across many fronts, including climate change. As such, we need to develop a model of sustainable economic development that tackles inequalities in the distribution of resources, while respecting our environment. The Doughnut helps us visualise these twin challenges.

Building on work undertaken by both the Stockholm Resilience Centre and Oxfam's Senior Researcher Kate Raworth, the Scottish Doughnut suggests domains – or areas of life – that might constitute a social foundation below which, we argue, no one in Scotland should fall. It also begins the process of identifying which planetary boundaries might be useful for incorporation into a national Scottish analysis.



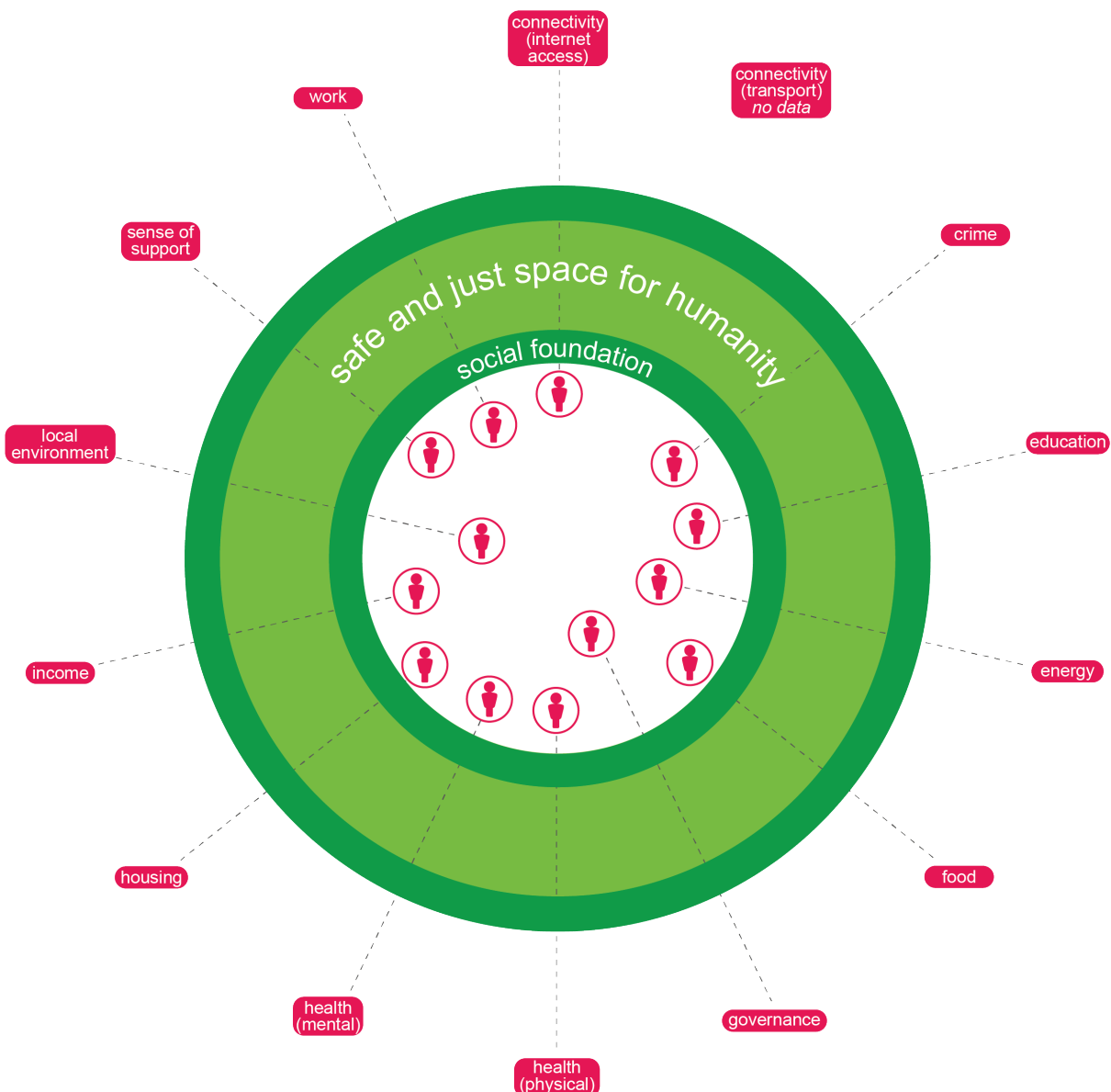
HOW HAS THE SCOTTISH DOUGHNUT BEEN PRODUCED?

In suggesting the domains that might form the social foundation, the paper draws on existing research regarding what people in Scotland and the UK deem to be important factors to realise an acceptable standard of living in today's society. The Doughnut also begins the process of identifying which of the planetary boundaries suggested by the Stockholm Resilience Centre might be useful for inclusion in a national Scottish analysis. A variety of sources, including many covering consensus-based notions of minimum standards, along with discussions with subject experts, have been used to identify these domains. We have therefore selected domains that we think fit the Scottish context, but these are open for debate and revision – indeed we would welcome this discussion.

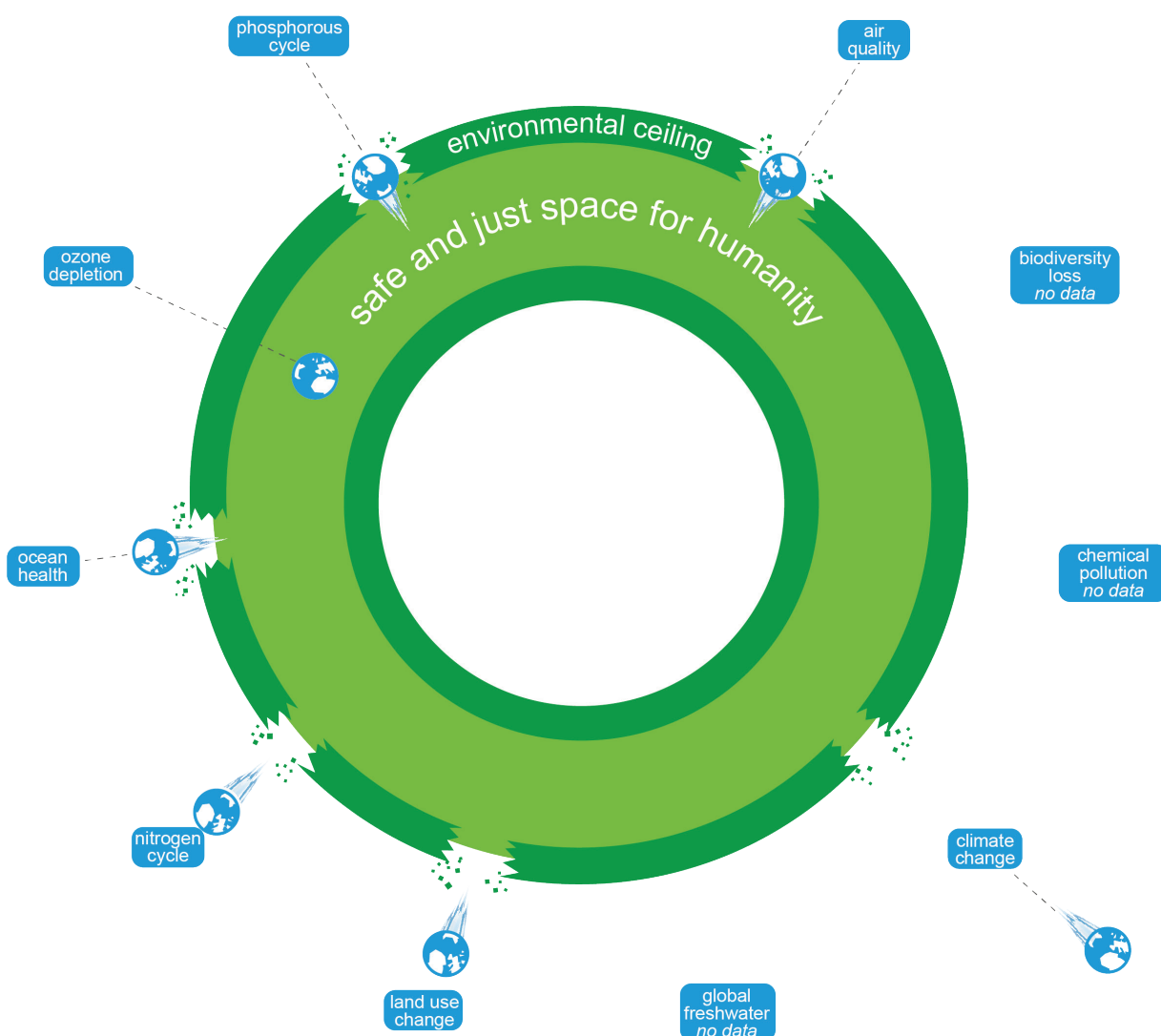
WHAT DOES THE SCOTTISH DOUGHNUT TELL US?

The picture painted is stark.

Almost one-fifth of households in Scotland are living in relative poverty, with close to half of households unable to heat their homes adequately. Too many people go hungry, live in overcrowded housing, experience poor health, anxiety and depression, and have little access to social support networks. All of these societal failures are intricately linked to the long term and systemic issue of poverty – they create it, sustain it and flow from it.



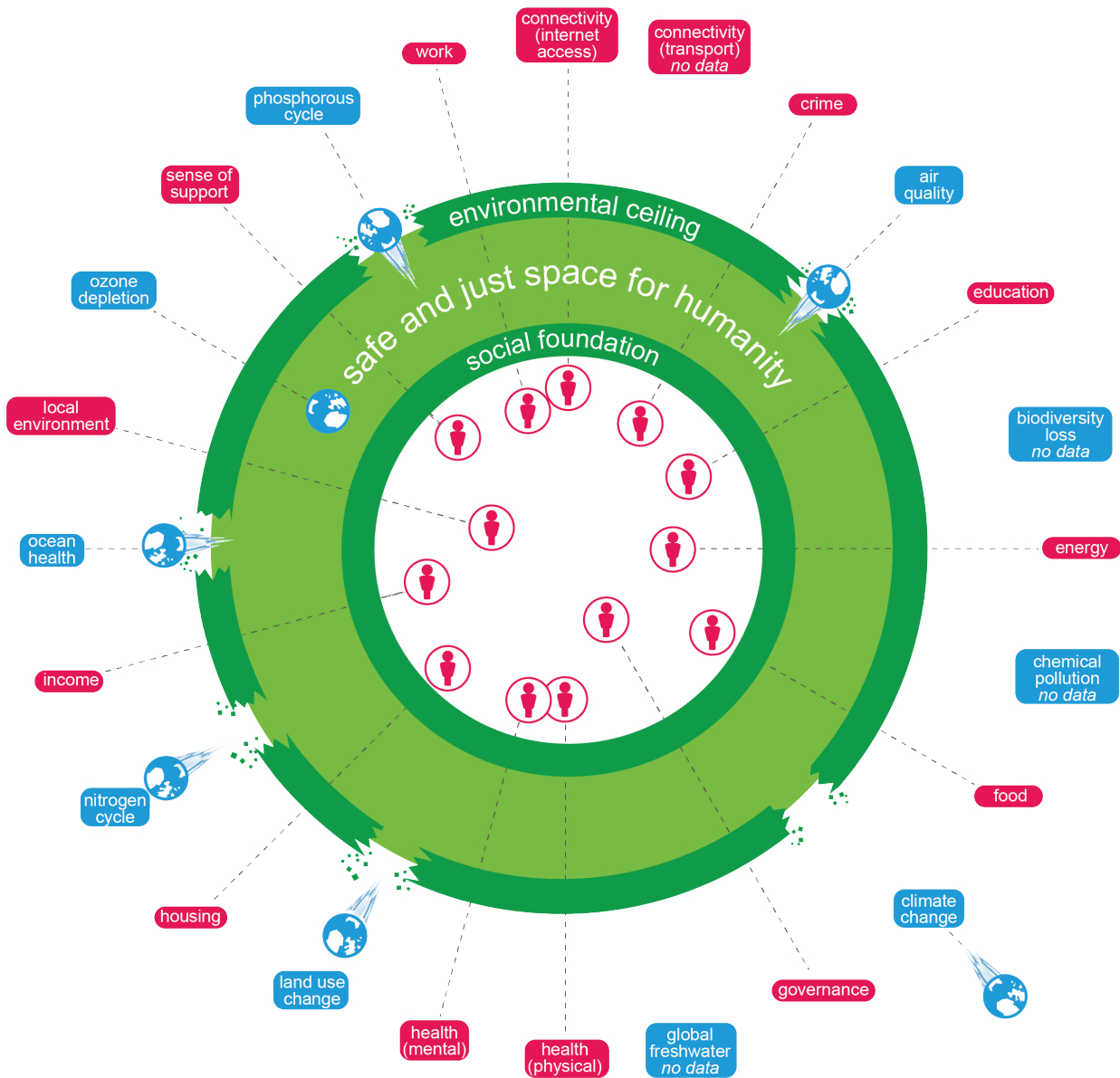
Not only does the Doughnut highlight the degradation of people's life experiences, but it also shines a light upon the degradation of our local and global ecosystems.



Scotland fails to stay within safe limits for all but one of the environmental indicators used. In the planetary boundaries that can be downscaled to a Scottish or UK level – climate change, nitrogen use and land-use change (UK) – we not only fail, but fail spectacularly. While carbon emissions have been moving in the right direction we still see recommended safe limits breached by over 470%. When it comes to land-use change and nitrogen cycles we see breaches of more than 250%. The remaining domains also breach the environmental ceiling, for example, air quality levels breached in 12% of road testing sites, and over half of our fish stocks being unsustainably harvested.

HOW CAN WE LIVE 'IN' THE DOUGHNUT?

Oxfam's Scottish Doughnut demonstrates that our current economic model is, in many ways, both environmentally unsafe and socially unjust. However, the environmental and social realities outlined in the Doughnut are not set in stone. We can change them.



Choices can be made to develop a more sustainable future. Debates surrounding potential solutions are ongoing and are focussed on changes to industrial and agricultural production, consumption patterns and broader mechanisms to tackle resource demand. We now require the political will to implement policies designed to shape such decisions and tackle the detrimental impacts created by our production and consumption patterns.

Nor are the social failures described inevitable. The failures we highlight are the result of the way we currently organise our society. They are the result of successive Governments' policy choices surrounding how we use the tax system and public spending, as well as how we regulate and deliver services and provide support for our citizens. A more equal distribution of the wealth created could deliver a social foundation where all citizens could enjoy what we define as a minimum acceptable standard for all.

We make no claim to have uncovered the definitive safe and just operating space for our society. However, the Doughnut does provide an aim, or set of objectives, which – if delivered – would make for a much more sustainable society, organised in a way that delivers a quality of life for all, without compromising the ability of others either here or abroad, now or in the future, to an equally acceptable quality of life.

In doing so we hope the Scottish Doughnut can help to develop the political will required to create paths to a more sustainable and just society.

Find out more and read the full report here: <http://oxf.am/e9k>