

# **2009 | WORLD DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS**

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Saved:

62 trees

43 million Btu of total energy

5,452 pounds of net greenhouse gases

22,631 gallons of waste water

2,906 pounds of solid waste



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# PREFACE

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*World Development Indicators 2009* arrives at a moment of great uncertainty for the global economy. The crisis that began more than a year ago in the U.S. housing market spread to the global financial system and is now taking its toll on real output and incomes. As a consequence, an additional 50 million people will be left in extreme poverty. And if the crisis deepens and widens or is prolonged, other development indicators—school enrollments, women’s employment, child mortality—will be affected, jeopardizing progress toward the Millennium Development Goals.

Statistics help us understand the events that triggered the crisis and measure its impact. Along with this year’s 91 data tables, each section of the *World Development Indicators 2009* has an introduction that shows statistics in action, describing the history of the current crisis, its effect on developing economies, and the challenges they face.

*World view* reviews the housing bubble and other asset bubbles that preceded it, the global macroeconomic imbalances that fed the bubbles, and the role of financial innovation. *Economy* looks at the record growth of developing economies preceding the crisis. *Environment* reviews the increasing impact of developing economies on the global environment. *Global links* discusses the transmission of the global crisis through the avenues of global integration: trade, finance, migration, and remittances. *States and markets* reminds us that as information and communication technologies change the way we work, they will be part of the solution to the current crisis. *People* contains most of the statistics for measuring progress toward the Millennium Development Goals. Its introduction, prepared by our partners at the International Labour Organization, examines new measures of decent work and productive employment now included in the Millennium Development Goals.

High quality, timely, and publicly available data will be central to managing the response to the crisis. We need high frequency—quarterly or monthly—data on labor markets to better track the impacts of macroeconomic events on people. We also need to know more about the characteristics of households and their response to economic conditions. While income distribution data are improving, they are weak at both ends of the spectrum, missing the very rich and the very poor. We know little about household assets in most developing economies. There is little information on housing markets, and financial data need to be enriched with more information on nonbank financial institutions (such as insurance companies, pension funds, investment banks, and hedge funds) in many countries.

Official statistical agencies need to take a long range view of their public role—to think broadly about data needs and build strategic partnerships with academia and the private sector. In a time of crisis the careful, systematic accumulation of statistical information may seem a luxury. It is not. We need better data now to guide our responses to the current crisis and to plot our course in the future.

The World Bank stands ready to support countries with their statistical capacity-building efforts. We will also continue to maintain the *World Development Indicators* as a rich source of development information, bringing to you new and critical data areas as availability and quality improve. And as always, we welcome your comments and suggestions for making *World Development Indicators* more useful to you.

Shaida Badiee  
Director  
Development Data Group



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The choice of indicators and the contents of the explanatory text was shaped through close consultation with and substantial contributions from staff in the world Bank's four thematic networks—Sustainable Development, Human Development, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management, and Financial and Private Sector Development—and staff of the International Finance Corporation and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency. Most important, the team received substantial help, guidance, and data from external partners. For individual acknowledgments of contributions to the book's contents, please see *Credits*. For a listing of key partners, see *Partners*.

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