

Note on statistics in the Human Development Report

This Report's primary purpose is to assess the state of human development across the globe and provide a critical analysis of a specific theme each year. It combines thematic policy analysis with detailed country data that focus on human well-being, not just economic trends.

The indicators in the Report reflect the rich body of information available internationally. As a user of data, the Report presents statistical information that has been built up through the collective effort of many people and organizations. The Human Development Report Office gratefully acknowledges the collaboration of the many agencies that made publication of the latest data on human development possible (box 1).

To allow comparisons across countries and over time, where possible the indicator tables in the Report are based on internationally standardized data, collected and processed by sister agencies in the international system or, in a few cases, by other bodies. These organizations, whether collecting data from national sources or through their own surveys, harmonize definitions and collection methods to make their data as internationally comparable as possible. The data produced by these agencies may sometimes differ from those produced by national sources, often because of adjustments to harmonize data. In a few cases where data are not available from international organizations—particularly for the human development indices—other sources have been used. These sources are clearly referenced in the tables.

The text of the Report draws on a much wider variety of sources—commissioned papers, government documents, national human development reports, reports of international organizations, reports of non-governmental organizations and journal articles and other scholarly publications. Where infor-

mation from such sources is used in boxes or tables in the text, the source is shown and the full citation is given in the references. In addition, for each chapter a summary note outlines the major sources for the chapter, and end-notes specify the sources of statistical information not drawn from the Report's indicator tables.

CHANGES TO THE INDICATOR TABLES

The indicator tables in this year's Report reflect the continual efforts over the years to publish the best available data and to improve their presentation and transparency. While the structure of the indicator tables has been maintained, the tables have been streamlined to focus on indicators that are most reliable, meaningful and comparable across countries. This process has reduced the number of indicator tables—removing some tables altogether and consolidating others. In the important areas of health and education, however, additional space has been used to allow fuller analysis of the wealth of data on these issues.

This year's Report also makes more systematic use of purchasing power parity (PPP) rates of exchange, both in the indicator tables and in the text. For cross-country comparisons of real values where price differences matter, PPP data are more appropriate than data based on conventional exchange rates (box 2).

Improvements in this year's Report reflect the recent progress in measuring human development. One example is in the measurement of crime. In previous years the Report relied on data based on crimes reported to the police, information that depended heavily on a country's law enforcement and reporting system. Increasingly, however, data based directly on individuals' experiences with crime are available (box 3).