

United Nations Development Programme



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Fact Sheet

Human Development Indices

Human Development Report 2019

'Beyond Income, Beyond Averages, Beyond Today: Inequalities in Human Development in the 21st Century'

- **Impressive progress has been made in the Human Development Index (HDI) since 1990;** with significant human development gains in all regions and major progress among least developed countries. Since 1990, the global Human Development Index (HDI) value has increased by 22.4 percent, equivalent to an average annual growth of 0.72 percent. Globally, the steepest growth happened between 2000 and 2010 (at an average of 0.84 percent annually), but it slowed down considerably after 2010 to an average 0.6 percent annually.
- **Many countries have moved up through the human development categories:** between 1990 and 2018 the number of countries classified as having very high human development rose from 12 to 62 while those classified as having low human development fell from 62 to 36. Meanwhile Palau, Seychelles and Turkey have risen to the ranks of Very High Human Development, while Philippines, South Africa, Indonesia and Bolivia reached the group of High Human Development countries.
- **The top five countries in the global HDI rankings are:** Norway (0.954), Switzerland (0.946), Ireland (0.942), Germany (0.939) and Hong Kong (0.939).
- **The bottom five countries are:** Burundi (0.423), South Sudan (0.413), Chad (0.401), Central African Republic (0.381) and Niger (0.377).
- **Unequal distribution of human development gains in education, health and living standards within countries remains a challenge to achieving human development for all.** The Inequality adjusted HDI (IHDI) shows that globally, 20 percent of human development progress was lost in 2018, when taking into account inequalities in HDI indicators.
- **Losses to inequality are highest in Sub-Saharan Africa.** By region, Sub-Saharan Africa had the highest regional loss in the HDI because of inequality (30.5 percent), followed by South Asia (25.9 percent), the Arab States (24.5 percent), Latin America and Caribbean (22.3 percent) and East Asia and the Pacific (16.6 percent). Europe and Central Asia remains the region with the lowest overall losses in HDI from inequality at 11.7 percent.

- **Women are more likely than men to be in low human development.** These gender gaps tend to be larger in countries with lower HDI scores. Worldwide, the average HDI for women is 6 percent lower than for men. At the global level the gap in HDI between women and men is due to women's lower income and educational attainment in many countries.
- **The gender gaps in HDI are larger in the low human development group** of countries where the HDI for women is 14.2 percent lower than the HDI for men. At the other end, countries in the very high HD group have, on average, a gender gap in HDI of 2.1 percent. [Table 4 GDI]
- **The empowerment gap between women and men, as measured by the Gender Inequality Index, is reducing but at a very slow pace.** There are small gains in parliamentary representation (24.1 percent of seats held by women) and in reduction of adolescent birth rate (42.9 births per 1000 women of adolescent age), but the gap in economic empowerment persists (the labour force participation rate of women is still 27 percentage points lower than of men).

MEDIA CONTACTS

New York

Adam Cathro; adam.cathro@undp.org; +1 212 906 5326 / Anna Ortubia; anna.ortubia@undp.org; +1 212 906 5964

Geneva

Sarah Bel; sarah.bel@undp.org; +41 799 341 117.

Brussels

Ludmila Tiganu, ludmila.tiganu@undp.org, +32 221 38296

Bogota

Carmen Morales, Carmen.morales@undp.org +5714889000

ABOUT THIS REPORT: Human development is about expanding the richness of human life, rather than simply the richness of the economy in which human beings live. This idea focuses on people and their choices and opportunities. The Human Development Reports use this approach to analyse some of the most pressing challenges facing humanity to achieve sustainable progress. More information at <http://hdr.undp.org>