

Dear colleague,

Welcome to the October issue of the 'Indices of Social Development' newsletter. Your feedback is always welcome.

- **Taking Stock: Measuring Social Development.** We have received 20 abstracts for the ISD-research conference 14 and 15 December. We have selected and notified the presenters. At the conference, you will see approximately 15 presentations about promising research using the Indices of Social Development.

Key note speaker will be Stephan Klasen (Professor of Development Economics, University of Göttingen). He will deliver his talk on Thursday the 15th.

Should you not present a paper on the conference, but wish to attend anyway? Please send an email to [Ekaterina Evdokimova](mailto:Ekaterina.Evdokimova). More information (directions/program, etc.) can be also be found on the [conference website](#).

- **The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs** has asked us to write a report on measuring the effect of development aid on civil society development and development outcomes. We will finish the report early 2012.
- **ISD Working Paper Series:** In August, we started the ISD Working Paper Series. We now have 3 papers using ISD data. These papers illustrate how the data can be used for cross-country analysis.

1. [Social Institutions as a Form of Intangible Capital](#) by Hari Bansha Dulal and Roberto Foa.

In this paper the five indices – measuring intergroup cohesion, gender equity, the strength of local community, the extent of crime and interpersonal trust, and levels of civic engagement – are combined into one composite measure and used to explain variance in the intangible capital residual, the proportion of national income that is left over after physical and natural capital have been accounted for. This shows that social institutions are one of the main components of national wealth and a major productive asset for societies and their constituent communities around the world.

2. [To Measure is to Know. A Comparative Analysis of Gender Indices](#) by Irene van Staveren.

This paper compares five cross country composite gender indices (including ISD). The differences are explained in two ways: methodologically and theoretically. Finally, the paper also presents a set of three decision trees which enables an informed choice between the indices.

3. [The last mile in analysing well-being and poverty: Indices of Social Development](#) by Arjan de Haan, together with Irene van Staveren, Ellen Webbink and Roberto Foa.

This paper presents the ISD-database, highlights the differences, similarities and complementarities with other measures of well-being, including around income poverty, multi-dimensional poverty, and human development, and illustrates the potential of this database in tracking social development trends, as well as their correlations with economic and political indicators.

- **Structures of Peace.** In this latest report of Vision of Humanity, a new conceptual framework for understanding and describing the factors that create a peaceful society is provided. Over 300 country data sets (including ISD-data) were used to define the key economic, political and cultural determinants that foster the creation of a more peaceful society. You can download the report [here](#).
- ISD would like to know your opinion about the Indices. You can send comments or (working) papers to isd@iss.nl

Best wishes,

The Indices of Social Development Team.

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