About the American Human Development Project

The American Human Development Project provides easy-to-use yet methodologically sound tools for understanding well-being and opportunity in America and stimulates fact-based dialogue about issues we all care about: health, education, and living standards.

The hallmark of this work is the American Human Development Index, a supplement to GDP and other money metrics that tells the story of how ordinary Americans are faring. The American Human Development Index uses official government data in health, education, and income and allows for well-being rankings of the 50 states, 435 congressional districts, county groups within states, women and men, and racial and ethnic groups. This Index can empower communities with a tool to track progress over time.

Through national and state reports, thematic briefs, and the project’s interactive website, the American Human Development Project aims to breathe life into numbers, using data to create compelling narratives that foster greater understanding of our shared challenges and greater support for people-centered policies.

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A PORTRAIT OF CALIFORNIA: California Human Development Report 2011 was commissioned by a consortium of eight donors. The report introduces the Five Californias to represent the wildly varying realities facing Californias today, from “Silicon Valley Shangri-La” to the bottom-ranked “Forsaken Five Percent.”

A PORTRAIT OF LOUISIANA: Louisiana Human Development Report 2009 was commissioned by Oxfam America, the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation, and the Foundation for the Mid South. It calls for action to address the acute human vulnerability that persists four years after Hurricane Katrina. Available online.

A PORTRAIT OF MISSISSIPPI: Mississippi Human Development Report 2009 was commissioned by the Mississippi State Conference NAACP and Oxfam America to examine well-being levels in the state by county, gender, and race and to stimulate action to address Mississippi’s disparities. Available online.