

David Ettinger

# International economic development

## Principal Internet resources

From attempts to uplift millions of peoples from the throes of abject poverty and starvation to global assistance programs to benefit developing countries' transition into viable civil societies, international economic development issues dominate the international agenda.

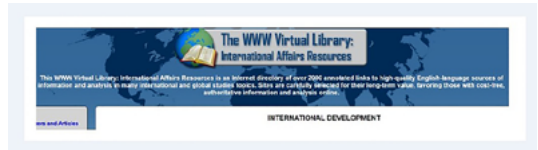
A plethora of institutions, public and private, are involved in development efforts, ranging from the U.S. government to transnational actors such as the United Nations Development program. The *Yearbook of International Organizations* lists more than 100 nongovernmental organizations concerned with the subject.

Given the dizzying array of material emanating from these institutions, it is no wonder that researchers in this area are often overwhelmed. To be sure, it is sometimes difficult to separate the wheat from the chaff. This article highlights some of the major online primary and secondary sources on international economic development by both state and nonstate actors. Highly selective, it provides a sampling of the rich variety of resources freely available, focusing on those of particular interest to academic faculty and students. The intent is to serve as a stepping stone for anyone doing general research on this broad-ranging subject by identifying core resources.

### Omnibus sites

- **WWW Virtual Library: International Development.** A testament to the far-reaching scope of international development, the WWW Virtual Library: International Affairs

Resources section on International Development lists some of the most significant online resources including “Principal Blogs, Portals, Directories, Networks, and Search Engines.” There is also an extensive list of “Other Sources.” This site, many of whose links this article highlights, provides an excellent overview of the wealth of information available. *Access:* <https://www.internationalaffairsresources.com/intldev.html#2>.



### Statistics and data compilations

- **AidData.** Based at the College of William & Mary's Institute for the Theory and Practice of International Relations, AidData provides granular statistics on the developmental finance activities of close to 100 worldwide donor agencies. Drawing mostly on data from the Organization for European Cooperation and Development, it is a veritable treasure trove dating back to 1945. An advanced search on its dashboard allows one to filter results by parameters, including donor, recipient, sector, and financial outlay. The richness of the data distinguishes this site

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as one of the most thorough devoted to this subject. Access: <http://aiddata.org>.



- **World Bank Open Data.** Browsable by country or indicator, as a comprehensive compilation of global development data, this site is sine qua non for researchers in the development field. Users can tap into its vast reservoir of exportable time series data to generate customized reports, view tables, charts, maps, and metadata, as well as download data on a variety of topics. A useful tutorial helps researchers navigate the site. Access: <https://data.worldbank.org>.

- **World Development Indicators.** Part of the World Bank Databank, this site packs in an incredible amount of information, providing authoritative statistical data on hundreds of development indicators. After users select from a list of variables, including country name, indicators, and time series, the site generates an exportable report encompassing the chosen parameters. This is an excellent database, useful not only for gathering information on specific countries, but also as a comparative tool. Access: <https://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators>.

### **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)**

As the site of the premier government institution administering U.S. foreign assistance, USAID is jammed pack with valuable information. Highlights include:

- **Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC).** The site contains documentation of all USAID projects. Access: <https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/home/Default.aspx>.

- **Foreign Aid Explorer.** A visual, interactive website providing a multidimensional picture of U.S. foreign assistance around the world. Access: <https://explorer.usaid.gov>.

- **U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants.** Also referred to as the *Greenbook*, this

annual publication furnishes summary data of U.S. foreign assistance since 1945. Access: [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/pbaad400.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pbaad400.pdf).

### **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**

Among its objectives, IMF, sister institution to the World Bank, seeks to promote sustainable economic growth and reduce worldwide poverty. Its website provides links to myriad relevant resources, a few of which are highlighted below.

- **IMF Data.** Time series data on IMF lending, exchange rates, and other economic and financial indicators. Access: <https://www.imf.org/en/Data>.

- **World Economic Outlook.** Published twice a year, the “World Economic Outlook” report includes assessments of developing countries and those in transition to market economies. It is complemented by a database containing selected macroeconomic information. Access: <http://www.imf.org/en/publications/weo>.

### **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**

The 35-member intergovernmental organization, comprised of developed countries committed to assisting developing countries, provides several useful resources.

- **The Development Assistance Committee (DAC).** DAC is the entity within OECD that represents the international donor community. It deals with all matters related to foreign assistance and monitors and coordinates bilateral foreign aid provided by individual member countries. Access: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/developmentassistancecommittee.htm>.

- **Development Co-operation Reports.** The annual publications of DAC, which provide “detailed statistics on foreign aid flows and related policy developments,” can be found here. Access: [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/development-co-operation-report\\_20747721](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/development-co-operation-report_20747721).

- **United Nations Development Program (UNDP).** As the principal UN agency

devoted to international development, UNDP spearheads the organization's global efforts in the areas of sustainability, democratic governance, peacebuilding, poverty reduction, and climate and disaster relief. Operating in 170 countries, it produces numerous publications. Capping the list is its annual "Human Development Report." The site features an interactive map that provides details about its worldwide projects. This is an indispensable resource. *Access:* <http://undp.org>.

## World Bank

World Bank, the principal international organization responsible for administering international development, together with its sister institution, the IMF, produces a vast array of freely available resources, which include the following:

- **Projects and Operations.** A comprehensive directory of World Bank, this site projects worldwide and is searchable by country/area, economic sector, and objectives with links to project documentation. *Access:* <http://projects.worldbank.org>.

- **Global Reach.** A complement to the above, this site is a data visualization tool providing detailed statistical information on the World Bank's global initiatives. *Access:* <http://maps.worldbank.org/p2e/mcmap/index.html>.

- **Topics.** This site affords convenient access to World Bank projects categorized by subject. *Access:* <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic>.

- **World Development Report.** Published annually since 1978 and arguably World Bank's most important publication, the "World Development Report" provides in-depth analysis and policy recommendations on specific aspects of economic development across the globe. *Access:* <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/2124>.

## Nongovernmental organizations and think tanks

- **Center for Global Development (CDG).** CDG is a scholarly institute devoted to research on develop-



ment issues whose focus is policy-oriented recommendations. In addition to offering an extensive ar-

ray of publications, it maintains several blogs that are written by experts. This is one of the leading U.S. nongovernmental organizations in the field. *Access:* <https://www.cgdev.org>.

- **Electronic Development and Environment Information System.** Maintained by the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, this is one of the foremost websites devoted to international development, aiming to "share the best knowledge on development, policy, practice and research." It provides free access to current research in the field with links to full-text documents from more than 8,000 publishers. The Key Issues Guides offer brief introductions to key development issues, while its blog offers commentary from invited contributors and partners. This is a truly outstanding repository of information. *Access:* <http://www.eldis.org/>.

- **Institute of Development Studies (IDS).** Based at the University of Sussex in the United Kingdom, IDS is a well-recognized global institution devoted to development research, which, like the Center for Global Development, is policy-oriented. A self-described hybrid of a university organization and think tank, IDS tackles "complex development challenges" to promote "practical, positive change." *Access:* <http://www.ids.ac.uk>.

- **Overseas Development Institute.** Another highly regarded UK-based think tank, which aspires to bridge the "gap between research and policy." The contents are searchable by date, topic, and location, as well as type of program and publication. *Access:* <https://www.odi.org/>. *RL*

