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978-1-107-08622-7 — The World of Indicators: The Making of Governmental Knowledge through Quantification

Edited by R. Rottenburg, S. E. Merry, S.-J. Park, J. Mugler

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## THE WORLD OF INDICATORS

The twenty-first century has seen a further dramatic increase in the use of quantitative knowledge for governing social life after its explosion in the 1980s. Indicators and rankings play an increasing role in the way governmental and non-governmental organizations distribute attention, make decisions and allocate scarce resources. Quantitative knowledge promises to be more objective and straightforward as well as more transparent and open for public debate than qualitative knowledge, thus producing more democratic decision-making. However, we know little about the social processes through which this knowledge is constituted nor its effects. Understanding how such numeric knowledge is produced and used is increasingly important as proliferating technologies of quantification alter modes of knowing in subtle and often unrecognized ways. This book explores the implications of the global multiplication of indicators as a specific technology of numeric knowledge production used in governance.

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# THE WORLD OF INDICATORS

## The Making of Governmental Knowledge through Quantification

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*Sally E. Merry,*

*Sung-Joon Park*

*and*

*Johanna Mugler*



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## ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Asset-Backed Security
ALMA	African Leaders Malaria Alliance
CCVI	climate change vulnerability indicator
CDS	Credit Default Swap
CHMT	Council Health Management Team
CIF	Climate Investment Funds
DEB	double-entry book-keeping
DLA	Department of Land Affairs (South Africa)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFATM	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
HDI	Human Development Index
HIS	health information system
ICT	information and communication technology
IIF	Institute of International Finance
IMD	International Institute for Management Development
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPSA	Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (UK)
ITN	insecticide-treated net
LIC	low-income country
LOLF	Loi organique relative aux lois de finances (Constitutional Bylaw on Budget Acts)
LVI	Livelihood Vulnerability Index
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MBS	Mortgage-Backed Security
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEP	Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (Tanzania)
MERG	Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group
MFI	microfinance institution
MIV	microfinance investment vehicle
MIX	Microfinance Information Exchange
MoH	Ministry of Health
NDPP	National Director of Public Prosecution (South Africa)
NGO	non-governmental organization
NMCP	National Malaria Control Programme

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NPA	National Prosecuting Authority (South Africa)
NPM	New Public Management
NSI	national statistical institute
OMC	Open Method of Coordination
ONS	Office for National Statistics (UK)
PAT	Positive Accounting Theory
PEPFAR	US President’s Emergency Program for AIDS Relief
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act 1999 (South Africa)
PMI	Presidential Malaria Initiative (Tanzania)
PPCR	Pilot Program for Climate Resilience
RBM	Roll Back Malaria
RDT	rapid diagnostic test
SPTF	Social Performance Task Force
TA	Transparency Agenda
TASO	The AIDS Support Organization
USN	US News and World Report
WEF	World Economic Forum

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