

WORLD BANK ECONOMISTS' FORUM

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Preface

This volume collects nine outstanding papers presented at the first World Bank Economists' Forum, held May 3-4, 1999. Initiated by then-Chief Economist Joseph Stiglitz, the Forum was designed to showcase recent research carried out by economists throughout the Bank, especially those in operations. As this volume indicates, the Forum highlighted papers that combined analytical rigor with potential policy impact.

The inaugural Forum covered the landscape of modern development economics. This volume surveys much of that same territory: fiscal policy, capital flows, trade, decentralization, labor markets, infrastructure, health, and worker training are the main themes. The authors represent both the operational and the research sides of the Bank. The papers were selected from among the best Forum entries, which in turn had been selected for presentation at the Forum from 140 submitted abstracts. We are very grateful to those Bank staff who lent their expertise to this effort: the committee members who helped select papers for the Forum, the session chairs and discussants whose comments improved them, and the reviewers who refereed the papers nominated for inclusion here. Their names are listed on the next page.

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