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# POPE FRANCIS SPEAKS IN SUPPORT OF FINANCIAL INCLUSION

19 Apr 2018

*"The World Bank Spring Meetings will take place next Saturday in Washington. I encourage efforts that seek to promote the lives of the poorest through financial inclusion, fostering genuine integral development that respects human dignity."*

—Pope Francis, 18 April 2018

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"Encouraging efforts to foster "genuine integral development that respects human dignity," His Holiness Pope Francis highlighted the importance of financial inclusion to improve the lives of the poorest during his weekly public audience at the Vatican, in reference to the Spring Meetings of the World Bank.

"I am very thankful for this strong message of His Holiness the Pope," said Queen Máxima, the UN Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development. "His support for financial inclusion as a powerful tool to address social and economic inequality and to provide people with the means to develop themselves, is very important and greatly encouraging. I see this as an inspiration to keep on working together with many leaders on financial inclusion."

The Spring Meetings, taking place this week in Washington D.C., are expected to include a strong focus on the importance of access to financial services for human development. Significant new data on financial inclusion, the [Global Findex](#), will be released by the World Bank. The Findex database charts global progress on efforts to create a financial system that works for all, including the poorest.

Progress on financial inclusion has been significant, with the Global Findex showing an increase of 18 percentage points between 2011 and 2018. This data showed that 51 percent of the world's adults had access to formal financial services in 2011, a figure that is now 69 percent.

The Findex database is central to global and national work to expand financial inclusion, which is widely acknowledged as a powerful tool to address social and economic inequality.

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*Global Findex data was released to the public Thursday and its implications for action will be discussed in a [live broadcast on Friday](#) by Queen Máxima and Dr. Jim Kim, President of the World Bank.*

[Read the Global Findex report.](#)