Cover image: Population growth will have a critical impact on education, housing, transportation, agriculture, water use and the environment by 2050. The experts writing in this volume conclude that slowing population growth is essential for reducing poverty and creating a biologically sustainable economy.

Central image: Earth from space, © NASA, Visible Earth, see http://visibleearth.nasa.gov. Outer images, from left clockwise: students in Bukazi Primary in Uganda, photograph taken by Eden Quayle, Aiding Conservation through Education (ACE), see www.ace-charity.org.uk; slum in Nairobi, © Martien Van Asseldonk, see www.dreamstime.com; heavy traffic, © Steve Lovegrove, see www.dreamstime.com; terraced barley fields, © Tersina, see www.dreamstime.com; drought, © Ben Heyns, see www.dreamstime.com; population by age, sex and education attainment, Republic of Korea, © 36clicks, see www.dreamstime.com.