

**EVALUATION
REPORT**

GLOBAL EVALUATION OF DEVINFO

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Global Evaluation of DevInfo

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Preface

This evaluation of DevInfo, a database system for monitoring human development, was commissioned by UNICEF senior management with endorsement from the DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee under the United Nations Development Group (UNDG). The UNICEF Evaluation Office was responsible for its coordination and implementation.

The evaluation aimed to assess relevance and effectiveness of the DevInfo initiative since its inception in 2004, analyse its efficiency in terms of oversight and management, and explore options for its institutional sustainability and possible expansion.

The evaluation was conducted by external consultants Mary Black and Nader Metwalli under the leadership of Lucien Back, Senior Evaluation Specialist in the UNICEF Evaluation Office, with support from Natascha Gomes, Evaluation Officer. The report was edited by Margo Alderton. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the evaluation team and the editor for conducting this challenging task with methodological rigour and in a very professional manner.

Thanks are also due to all partners in countries and at regional and global levels who contributed to the evaluation through individual and collective interviews, participation in meetings and workshops, responses to the global user survey, and written comments on the draft report.

The support provided by Nicolas Pron, the Global Administrator of DevInfo, Kris Oswalt of the DevInfo Support Group and Astrid Marschatz of the Development Operations Coordination Office of the UNDG proved to be invaluable throughout the exercise.

It is hoped that this evaluation will guide UNICEF senior management as well as the UNDG in making strategic decisions about a way forward regarding DevInfo. A key recommendation of the evaluation is to situate DevInfo in the wider context of monitoring and evaluation capacity development in developing countries.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CD	Compact Disc
CSF	Community Systems Foundation
DevInfo	Development Information System
DDI	Data Documentation Initiative
DOCO	Development Operations Coordination Office (of the United Nations)
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DIAAC	DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee
DSG	DevInfo Support Group
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Geographic Information System
IDSC	Information and Decision Support Centre
LISGIS	Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services
MASEDA	Malawi Socio-economic Database
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
NSO	National Statistics/Statistical Office
SDMX	Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange Initiative
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Aid
USD	United States Dollar
WFP	World Food Programme

Executive summary

Background

1. The Development Information System (DevInfo) is a database system for monitoring human development. It is a tool for organizing, storing and presenting data in a uniform way to facilitate data sharing at the country, regional and global levels across government departments, United Nations (UN) organizations, civil society organizations and development partners. DevInfo has features that produce tables, graphs and maps for inclusion in reports, presentations and advocacy materials. The software supports both standard indicators, including indicators for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and user-defined indicators. DevInfo can operate both as a desktop and a web-based application.
2. DevInfo originated in ChildInfo, a database system for monitoring child survival, growth and development managed by UNICEF. In 2004, the Executive Director of UNICEF offered to share UNICEF's experiences with using ChildInfo to collect data and report on indicators with other UN organizations.¹ DevInfo is currently a global programme funded by eight UN organizations² and managed by the DevInfo Global Administrator, who is a staff member of UNICEF. The main oversight body is the DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee,³ which reports to the Working Group on Programming Issues within the United Nations Development Group (UNDG). The implementing partner for DevInfo support is the Community Systems Foundation, a not-for-profit foundation. Some support is also provided by the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO) and through regional support structures.
3. The objectives of the DevInfo initiative are: to anchor DevInfo implementation in a wider national effort to collect, analyse and disseminate information on human development to ensure long-term sustainability and usage of the database system; to strengthen the capacity of governments to adapt DevInfo to their national monitoring strategies and thereby effectively use DevInfo technology to monitor progress in human development; and to strengthen the capacity of UN country teams and national partners to effectively use DevInfo in monitoring progress on national and international priorities, such as the MDGs.

Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

4. The purpose of the evaluation⁴ is "to inform UNICEF senior management in their decision making and the DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee concerning the way forward for the initiative, notably as far as the future management and implementation structure of the initiative and its sustainability and possible expansion are concerned." This evaluation is expected to help senior management explore ways in which DevInfo might develop and possibly scale up and accelerate the distribution and use of DevInfo.
5. The evaluation addresses three objectives: Objective 1—Assess relevance, effectiveness and impact of DevInfo at national and sub-national levels by governments and other partners in programme countries as well as by the UN system; Objective 2—Assess efficiency in terms of oversight, management and implementation of DevInfo; and Objective 3—Explore options for institutional sustainability and possible opportunities for expansion of DevInfo.

¹ UNICEF, 'Letter from UNICEF Executive Director to UN Secretary-General', 2002.

² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Settlement Programme (UN-HABITAT), UNICEF, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

³ Convened on 24 November 2004 as the DevInfo Inter-agency Steering Committee, the name was changed shortly after.

⁴ UNICEF, 'DevInfo Evaluation—Terms of Reference', Evaluation Office, New York, 13 November 2008.

6. The timing of this evaluation was prompted by: the need to take stock and plan ahead at the end of DevInfo's first five-year cycle (2004-2009); a request by UNICEF Headquarters' Contracts Review Committee to assess the impact of DevInfo prior to the next contract reviews with the Community Systems Foundation in early 2009; and planning for the UNICEF biennium 2010-2011. The evaluation starting point was taken as the launch of DevInfo in 2004.⁵

Methodology

7. The overall approach for this evaluation was to adopt a broad strategic view of DevInfo and then focus on critical factors affecting its performance and perceived usefulness. Five research methods were used: desk review of key documents; interviews with stakeholders; six country case studies (of Egypt, India, Liberia, Malawi, Serbia and Thailand); UNICEF regional office visits and consultations (with Bangkok, Thailand and Panama City, Panama) and telephone interviews (with Amman, Jordan; Dakar, Senegal; and Geneva, Switzerland); and an online global user survey using a sample frame from the DevInfo Support Group trainee database. Information obtained was triangulated.

8. The evaluation faced a number of limitations. Only six countries could be visited by the team, but an effort was made to have a reasonable geographical spread, although French and Spanish speaking countries were not visited.⁶ The user survey had to use a limited sampling frame, which meant that the findings of the online user survey were not representative. Restriction to scalable closed questions reduced qualitative review, and restriction of the survey to English, French and Spanish may have limited the access for some respondents. The DevInfo website is in the process of redesign and so was not reviewed, nor was the latest version of the software, DevInfo 6.0.

9. A general assessment was made of developing industry trends in data presentation and display, but the evaluation did not explore in depth how such tools might evolve in the next three to five years and what this might mean for DevInfo.

Key findings and conclusions

10. **Relevance.** There has been growing demand during the past decade from policy and decision makers around the world for sound and accessible statistical data, notably data related to national development goals and the agendas of Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the MDGs. DevInfo is a relevant initiative that contributes to the standardization of statistical data that are indispensable for sound policy and decision making related to human development within and among countries. Its value is anchored in the normative and analytical mandates of the UN system, and this represents its comparative advantage in an environment of rapidly evolving and competitive innovations in information technology.

11. Display functionalities of DevInfo have proven to be effective tools for raising interest of policy and decision makers in statistical evidence. The relevance of DevInfo adaptations will depend on both their additionality and complementarity to existing and nascent systems as well as on their quality and timeliness of data.

12. **Effectiveness.** The three key performance monitoring indicators for the DevInfo initiative were set out in 2004: number of countries using DevInfo; number of adaptations of DevInfo; and number of trained users. As of March 2009, more than 100 developing countries were using DevInfo, more than 140 versions had been adapted, and more than 12,500 people had reportedly been trained on the system. These three indicators address effectiveness mostly in terms of outputs and, to a limited extent, address

⁵ On 2 April 2004, the members of UNDG endorsed this initiative and requested an inter-agency team to prepare for further implementation of MDG tracking and monitoring tools.

⁶ A workshop with national and UN DevInfo users in Latin America and the Caribbean was organized in Panama on 16-17 April 2009.

outcomes and impact. There is evidence that national DevInfo databases are being used to improve the capacity of results-based planning and monitoring of national development priorities. In the user survey, 83 percent of respondents indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that DevInfo had been used for presenting statistical data to decision makers.

13. This evaluation sought to assess the actual use of DevInfo within the UN system and, more importantly, by national partners. However, evidence concerning results at the outcome and impact level was limited, as there is no systematic system for monitoring and reporting on such developments. Such evidence would depict institutional or behavioural changes that could be attributed to or associated with DevInfo. While the current approach of training a large number of people on DevInfo (a reported 12,500 since 2004), many of whom will not actually use it, and providing support to users upon request has produced some results at the outcome and impact levels, it has major limitations and does not allow DevInfo to be used to its full potential.

14. The proprietary software and closed development model currently used by DevInfo is challenged by the open source model, which is defined as computer software for which the source code and certain other rights normally reserved for copyright holders are provided under a software license that meets the Open Source Definition or is in the public domain. User needs and demands have required periodic adjustments and three updated releases of DevInfo since 2004.

15. DevInfo's use to improve the capacity of results-based planning and monitoring national development priorities is due, in part, to the general DevInfo template, which comes preset for global MDG indicators. National adaptations of DevInfo are structured around the global and, in some cases, nationally adapted MDG indicators. In some countries, MDG reports are prepared using data from national adaptations, and some national reports use the mapping and presentation features of DevInfo to produce graphics and presentation materials. However, the use of DevInfo data for MDG reporting is not universal. While the MDG networks advocate use for reporting, agencies do not systematically support it. Thus the full potential of DevInfo for MDG reporting is not reached.

16. **Oversight and management.** The DevInfo initiative is a global programme managed by UNICEF with support from other UN organizations and DOCO. The main oversight body is the DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee, which is organizationally located within the UNDG Working Group on Programming Issues. The group aims to contribute to UN reform by striving for greater coherence and harmonization of approaches within the UN system.

17. The oversight and management structure has its limitations and may not be appropriate if DevInfo is to evolve to its full potential. It is questionable whether the DevInfo Global Administrator should chair the DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee, which could result in a potential conflict of interest. Membership in the Advisory Committee is mostly at a technical level and does not involve senior levels of management. The link between the mandate of the DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee and the overall policy framework of the UNDG Working Group on Programming Issues is relatively weak. The present oversight and management structure does not allow DevInfo to respond to the expectation that it support the linkage between monitoring of country-level national development results and monitoring of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. The DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee is currently not capable of proposing a strategy to achieve these objectives.

18. At global, regional and country levels, DevInfo is still strongly perceived to be a programme sponsored, managed and implemented by UNICEF. For support to member countries, UNICEF depends to a large extent on a single service provider—the Community Systems Foundation, a non-profit organization based in the United States, with the development work being carried out by Avalon Information Systems Pvt. Ltd., a company based in India. While the commitment and high quality of services provided by the Community Systems Foundation are acknowledged, this evaluation endorses the recent observations of the UNICEF Office of Internal Audit that drew attention to the risks involved in the contractual relationship with a single service provider. However, the risks should be considered in the inter-agency context of the UNDG. Any exploration of alternative arrangements should also take into

account the possibility of certain services being provided by regional centres. The experience of the Latin America and Caribbean region is instructive in this regard.⁷

19. **Funding.** DevInfo coordination and support has so far relied exclusively on financial resources from within the UN system, with UNICEF covering a major share, which is, however, decreasing in relative terms. While there are no indications that UNICEF or other participating UN organizations would withdraw or decrease their support to DevInfo, there is currently no institutional framework or organizational set-up to guarantee sustainability of the programme funding beyond 2009.

20. **Overall conclusion.** The DevInfo business model has streamlined its procedures as it has evolved. It has also been successful in terms of mobilization of internal resources and more equitable burden-sharing within the UN system. However, it is still unnecessarily burdensome for both UNICEF and the Community Systems Foundation. Most important, it has not been conducive to developing a medium- and long-term vision in response to the challenges related to a more systemic and comprehensive strengthening of monitoring and evaluation capacities in developing countries.

Recommendations

21. **DevInfo as part of monitoring and evaluation capacity development.** DevInfo should be more strategically embedded in monitoring and evaluation capacity development activities by the UN system at the country level. Specifically, this should involve developing statistical capacities to monitor human development indicators (including MDGs) of national statistical offices and other institutions involved in data processing and dissemination. Database and display functionalities of DevInfo allow it to make a major contribution to such efforts. DevInfo needs to demonstrate its added value and comparative advantage in relation to other tools for MDG monitoring and measurement of development effectiveness. This needs to happen globally and at the country level.

22. More systematic UN support to monitoring and evaluation capacity development at the country level will require an explicit demand from national partners to ensure national ownership and leadership in the process and a high degree of responsiveness from the Resident Coordinator and the UN country team. Such capacity development should ideally be part of the Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework process and possibly be articulated as a joint programme of the UN system at the country level. Given its monitoring and evaluation capacity in country offices, UNICEF could assume the role of lead agency or administrative agent. Such a demand-based and integrated approach should be piloted in a limited number of countries that show interest and commitment.

23. If monitoring and evaluation capacity development is recognized as an important part of the role and contribution of the UN development system at the country level, this may require a substantive revision of the Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework guidance issued by the UNDG Working Group on Programming Issues with DOCO support. A renewed commitment by UNDG may entail strengthening the role of DOCO in the administration of DevInfo.

24. For DevInfo to become a truly joint programme of the UN development system at the global level, there is a need for senior management of the UN system, specifically UNDG, to renew their commitment to the system. The Global Administrator, in consultation with the DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee, should prepare a strategy document that would outline a renewed vision and objectives for DevInfo in the coming 5 to 10 years. The document should be submitted for approval by the Working Group on Programming Issues or the UNDG senior management meeting.

25. A consultative process with member countries and UN country teams on the draft strategy document will be required to ensure that DevInfo remains, to the greatest possible extent, demand-driven

⁷ See Section E, paragraph 135 for more details.

and responsive to needs and priorities at the country level. Such consultations could be ensured, for example, through the UN Statistical Commission of the General Assembly (which recently launched CensusInfo) and possibly the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Another consultative process should be launched with Resident Coordinators and UN country teams, especially in countries that have mature national adaptations of DevInfo.

26. **DevInfo software development and technical support.** There are an increasing number of applications being built using open source technologies. However, the important debate is not about open source versus proprietary software but about how to increase interoperability and to work within open standards. The development of DevInfo started with proprietary software development tools, but it has been increasingly using open software development tools. The DevInfo initiative has made a significant contribution to interoperability through its leadership role in the implementation of emerging international standards for socio-economic data (including SDMX, DDI and the UN Geographic Information Working Group).⁸ DevInfo could now shift to allow DevInfo technology to be available to software developers who could then take the currently available DevInfo 6.0 Software Development Toolkit even further.

27. Such an approach would be highly compatible with principles of national ownership and leadership in development and the specific role of the UN system in capacity development, including facilitating exchanges of innovations among countries and reducing dependence on commercial service providers whenever feasible and advantageous. DevInfo is also not at risk of losing its unique role and contribution, which is related to data dissemination and visualization, as the DevInfo database technology is not limited to one software development model or another, as long as the DevInfo database model is compliant with the agreed international standards. Aware of the growing interest in open software development platforms, DevInfo management has decided to commission an open source solution for DevInfo in 2009 in addition to the current platform. This open source version will provide developers with the source code, technical documentation and a governance mechanism for software change management procedures for the official reference version. This will also include strengthening technical oversight and support as part of the governing and guidance structure, with the intent that DevInfo technical innovations will emerge from an exchange among developers in different countries facilitated by the DevInfo Support Group and other DevInfo support structures.

28. **Funding and sustainability.** The inter-agency funding mode of DevInfo should be pursued and equitable burden-sharing among UN organizations should be ensured. Given donors' and other funders' interest in quality data in developing countries, there is a chance that they may be willing to invest in systems that are conducive to improvements and national capacity development in this regard. The establishment of a UN Trust Fund, with funds pooled by major stakeholders, is a model that has worked for other initiatives.

29. **Conditions for a possible expansion of DevInfo.** DevInfo has been a relevant and potentially effective tool to generate and disseminate statistical evidence related to human development in support of policy and decision making. With a presence in more than 100 countries and a proliferation of adaptations and themes, the question is whether DevInfo should expand further or consolidate and become more coherent and focused.

30. The current business model is still rather dependent on individual 'champions' both at the global level and in regions and countries. In addition, a longer term vision and possible expansion of DevInfo is limited by the facts that fund-raising is limited to internal sources within UNICEF and the UN system and that work planning and contractual agreements are with a single service provider on an annual basis.

31. Possible expansion would have to be considered in the context of broader UNDG engagement in a comprehensive and multi-year capacity development programme concerning monitoring and evaluation,

⁸ SDMX refers to the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange initiative, sponsored by seven international and regional institutions including the United Nations. It creates and promotes the use of open standards in the realm of statistical data and metadata. DDI refers to the Data Documentation Initiative, an international effort to establish a standard for technical documentation describing social science data.

in which DevInfo could play a major role. Placing DevInfo in such a broader framework would entail major changes in fund-raising modalities (including the establishment of trust funds) and institutional arrangements (including a strengthened role for DOCO), and considering changes in the DevInfo support role in an environment evolving to open source models.

Résumé

Informations de base

1. DevInfo (Development Information System) est un système de bases de données pour le suivi du développement humain. Il s'agit d'un outil permettant de classer, de stocker et de présenter des données de manière uniforme afin d'en faciliter le partage aux niveaux du pays, de la région et du monde entre les administrations, les institutions des Nations Unies, les organisations de la société civile et les partenaires pour le développement. Les caractéristiques de DevInfo lui permettent de fournir des tableaux, des graphiques et des cartes à intégrer dans des rapports, des présentations et du matériel pour les campagnes de mobilisation. Le logiciel permet le suivi d'indicateurs standard, y compris ceux relatifs aux Objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement (OMD) et ceux conçus pour l'utilisateur. DevInfo peut être utilisé comme une application de bureau ou disponible sur Internet.

2. DevInfo est une adaptation de ChildInfo, un système de bases de données géré par l'UNICEF pour suivre la survie, la croissance et le développement de l'enfant. En 2004, la Directrice générale de l'UNICEF a proposé de partager avec d'autres institutions des Nations Unies l'expérience acquise par l'UNICEF dans l'utilisation de ChildInfo en matière de collecte des données et de diffusion des indicateurs⁹. DevInfo est actuellement un programme mondial financé par huit institutions des Nations Unies¹⁰ et géré par l'Administrateur mondial de DevInfo, qui est un employé de l'UNICEF. Le principal organe de contrôle est le Comité consultatif interorganisations DevInfo¹¹, qui rend compte au Groupe de travail sur la programmation au sein du Groupe des Nations Unies pour le développement (GNUD). Le partenaire opérationnel apportant son aide à DevInfo est la Community Systems Foundation, une fondation à but non lucratif. Le Bureau de la coordination des activités de développement (DOCO) et des structures d'appui régionales apportent également une aide.

3. Les objectifs de l'initiative DevInfo sont les suivants : ancrer les opérations de DevInfo dans le cadre d'un effort national plus large de collecte, d'analyse et de diffusion de l'information sur le développement humain, le but étant de faire utiliser le système de bases de données maintenant et à long terme; renforcer la capacité des gouvernements d'adapter DevInfo à leurs stratégies de suivi national et ainsi utiliser efficacement la technologie de DevInfo pour suivre les progrès réalisés dans le développement humain ; et renforcer la capacité des équipes de pays des Nations Unies et des partenaires nationaux d'utiliser efficacement DevInfo pour suivre les progrès effectués au niveau des priorités nationales et internationales, telles que les OMD.

L'objet et les objectifs de l'évaluation

4. L'évaluation a pour objet¹² « de donner des éléments d'information à l'équipe dirigeante de l'UNICEF pour ses prises de décision et au Comité consultatif interorganisations DevInfo au sujet de l'orientation de l'initiative, en particulier en ce qui concerne la structure de la direction et les principaux éléments de mise en œuvre de l'initiative dans l'avenir, ainsi que ses possibilités d'être durable et de se développer. » On attend de cette évaluation qu'elle aide l'équipe dirigeante à explorer les voies qui pourraient permettre un développement de DevInfo, et qu'elle l'aide éventuellement à faire passer DevInfo à plus grande échelle et à accélérer sa diffusion et son utilisation.

⁹ UNICEF, « Lettre de la Directrice générale de l'UNICEF au Secrétaire général des Nations Unies », 2002.

¹⁰ Le Bureau de la coordination des affaires humanitaires (OCHA), le Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement (PNUD), le Fonds des Nations Unies pour la population (UNFPA), le Programme des Nations Unies pour les établissements humains (ONU-HABITAT), l'UNICEF, le Fonds de développement des Nations Unies pour la femme (UNIFEM), le Département des affaires économiques et sociales des Nations Unies (UN-DESA) et l'Organisation mondiale de la santé (OMS)

¹¹ Réuni le 24 novembre 2004 en tant que Comité directeur interorganisations DevInfo, sa dénomination a été modifiée peu après.

¹² UNICEF, « Évaluation de DevInfo – Termes de référence », Bureau d'évaluation, New York, 13 novembre 2008.

5. L'évaluation a trois objectifs. 1^{er} objectif : apprécier la pertinence, l'efficacité et l'impact de DevInfo aux niveaux national et sous-national, du point de vue des gouvernements et d'autres partenaires dans les pays de programmes et du point de vue du système des Nations Unies. 2^{ème} objectif : apprécier l'efficacité en termes de contrôle, gestion et mise en œuvre de DevInfo. 3^{ème} objectif : rechercher les options pour assurer une durabilité institutionnelle de DevInfo et les éventuelles possibilités d'expansion de l'initiative.

6. On a décidé de procéder à cette évaluation pour les raisons suivantes : besoin de faire le point et d'organiser les années à venir, à la fin du premier cycle de cinq ans de DevInfo (2004-2009) ; demande du Comité de contrôle des marchés, relevant du siège de l'UNICEF, d'évaluer l'impact de DevInfo avant les prochains contrôles de marché effectués par la Community Systems Foundation début 2009 ; et de la planification de l'exercice biennal 2010-2011 de l'UNICEF. La période d'évaluation commence lors du lancement de DevInfo, en 2004¹³.

Méthodologie

7. Pour cette évaluation, on a adopté comme approche globale une large analyse stratégique de DevInfo puis une analyse approfondie des facteurs essentiels de sa performance et son utilité, telle qu'elle est perçue. Cinq méthodes de recherche ont été employées : l'examen « au bureau » des documents clés ; des entretiens avec des parties prenantes ; six études de cas de pays (l'Égypte, l'Inde, le Libéria, le Malawi, la Serbie et la Thaïlande) ; des déplacements dans les bureaux régionaux de l'UNICEF et des consultations de ces bureaux (Bangkok, Thaïlande, et Panama City, Panama) et des entretiens téléphoniques (avec Amman, Jordanie ; Dakar, Sénégal ; et Genève, Suisse) ; et une enquête mondiale en ligne, menée auprès des utilisateurs en utilisant une base d'échantillonnage provenant de la base de données concernant les personnes formées par le Groupe de soutien de DevInfo. L'information obtenue a été triangulée.

8. L'évaluation s'est heurtée à plusieurs limites. L'équipe n'a pu visiter que six pays, mais une répartition géographique équilibrée a été recherchée, même en l'absence de mission dans des pays francophones et hispanophones¹⁴. L'enquête auprès des utilisateurs a dû recourir à une base d'échantillonnage limitée, ce qui a fait que les résultats de l'enquête en ligne n'ont pas été représentatifs. Les restrictions relatives aux questions fermées et à choix multiples ont limité l'enquête qualitative, et l'utilisation de trois langues seulement (l'anglais, le français et l'espagnol) a pu exclure certaines personnes sondées. Le site Internet de DevInfo est actuellement en train d'être reconçu et n'a pu être examiné, de même que la dernière version de son logiciel, DevInfo 6.0.

9. Une évaluation générale des tendances du secteur qui se développent au niveau de la présentation et la visualisation des données a été effectuée, mais cette évaluation n'a pas approfondi la façon dont ces outils pourraient évoluer au cours des trois à cinq ans à venir ainsi que l'impact possible sur DevInfo.

Principaux résultats et conclusions

10. **Pertinence.** Depuis dix ans, les responsables politiques et décideurs du monde entier tiennent de plus à disposer de données statistiques fiables et accessibles. Ceci concerne notamment les données relatives aux objectifs de développement nationaux et le calendrier des objectifs de développement adoptés au niveau international, y compris les OMD. DevInfo constitue une initiative pertinente qui contribue à la normalisation des données statistiques, indispensables à une politique et à une prise de décision fiables, liées au développement humain dans les pays et entre les pays. Son utilité est liée aux

¹³ Le 2 avril 2004, les membres du GNUD ont donné leur aval à cette initiative et demandé qu'une équipe interinstitutions prépare la poursuite de la mise en œuvre des outils de surveillance et de suivi des OMD.

¹⁴ Un atelier, réunissant des utilisateurs nationaux et des Nations Unies de DevInfo en Amérique latine et dans les Caraïbes, a été organisé au Panama les 16 et 17 avril 2009.

mandats normatifs et analytiques du système des Nations Unies, ce qui constitue son avantage comparatif dans un environnement où la technologie de l'information évolue rapidement et où la concurrence est forte entre les innovations.

11. Les fonctionnalités de visualisation de DevInfo se sont avérées des outils efficaces, permettant de sensibiliser les responsables politiques et les décideurs aux preuves statistiques. La pertinence des versions de DevInfo va dépendre du supplément et du complément que ces adaptations apporteront aux systèmes existants et nouveaux. Elle va dépendre également de leur qualité et la régularité dans l'obtention des données.

12. **Efficacité.** Les trois principaux indicateurs de suivi des performances, concernant l'initiative DevInfo, ont été définis en 2004 : le nombre de pays utilisant DevInfo ; le nombre de versions adaptées de DevInfo ; et le nombre d'utilisateurs formés. En mars 2009, plus de 100 pays en développement utilisaient DevInfo, plus de 140 versions avaient été adaptées, et plus de 12 500 personnes avaient été formées à l'utilisation de ce système, d'après les informations obtenues. Ces trois indicateurs déterminent l'efficacité essentiellement en termes de produits et dans une moindre mesure au niveau des effets directs et de l'impact obtenus. Tout indique que les bases de données nationales DevInfo sont utilisées afin d'améliorer les capacités de planification et de suivi, fondés sur les résultats, des priorités nationales de développement. Dans l'enquête menée auprès des utilisateurs, 83 pour cent des personnes ayant répondu indiquaient qu'elles étaient d'accord ou tout à fait d'accord sur le fait que DevInfo avait été utilisé pour fournir des statistiques aux décideurs.

13. Dans cette évaluation, on a cherché à déterminer l'utilisation effective de DevInfo dans le système des Nations Unies et, ce qui est plus important, l'utilisation par des partenaires nationaux. Toutefois, les preuves des effets directs et des impacts sont insuffisantes, car il n'existe pas de mécanisme employé systématiquement pour le suivi et les comptes rendus de l'évolution dans ces domaines. Des preuves permettraient d'identifier des modifications institutionnelles ou comportementales qui pourraient être attribuées à DevInfo ou auxquelles l'initiative pourrait être associée. Certes la démarche actuelle, qui assure un grand nombre de formations (12 500 personnes auraient été formées à l'utilisation de DevInfo depuis 2004 mais nombre d'entre elles ne s'en servent pas) et fournit un soutien aux utilisateurs à la demande a généré certains progrès aux niveaux des résultats et des impacts, mais cette démarche reste confrontée à de sévères limites et ne permet pas à DevInfo d'être utilisé au maximum de son potentiel.

14. Le logiciel propriétaire et le modèle de développement fermé actuellement utilisés par DevInfo sont concurrencés par le modèle libre (*open source*), défini comme étant un logiciel pour lequel le code source et certains autres droits, normalement réservés aux détenteurs du droit d'auteur, sont fournis dans le cadre d'une licence de logiciel répondant à la définition de l'Open Source ou se situant dans le domaine public. Les besoins et les demandes des utilisateurs ont nécessité des ajustements périodiques et la diffusion de trois versions de DevInfo depuis 2004.

15. L'utilisation de DevInfo pour l'amélioration des capacités de planification et de suivi – en fonction des résultats – des priorités de développement nationales est due en partie au modèle général de DevInfo. Ce modèle général est préétabli pour les indicateurs mondiaux des OMD. Les versions adaptées à l'échelle nationale de DevInfo sont axées sur des indicateurs adaptés aux OMD au niveau mondial et parfois au niveau national. Dans certains pays, les rapports sur les OMD sont préparés à partir de données issues des versions au niveau national, et certains rapports nationaux font appel aux caractéristiques d'information cartographique et à la présentation de DevInfo afin d'obtenir du matériel de présentation, en particulier graphique. Cependant, les données DevInfo ne sont pas utilisées partout pour les rapports sur les OMD. Alors que les réseaux des OMD préconisent cette utilisation pour les rapports, les institutions de développement ne favorisent pas systématiquement cette démarche, de telle sorte que DevInfo reste sous-utilisé pour rédiger les rapports sur les OMD.

16. **Contrôle et gestion.** L'initiative DevInfo est un programme mondial géré par l'UNICEF avec le soutien d'autres organisations des Nations Unies et du Bureau de la coordination des activités de développement (DOCO). L'organisme principal en matière de contrôle est le Comité consultatif interorganisations DevInfo, qui se situe sur le plan organisationnel au sein du Groupe de travail sur la

programmation du GNUD. Le groupe a pour objectif de contribuer à la réforme des Nations Unies en augmentant la cohérence et l'harmonisation des approches au sein du système des Nations Unies.

17. La structure de contrôle et de gestion a ses propres limites et peut ne pas convenir si DevInfo réalise tout son potentiel. On peut se demander si l'Administrateur mondial de DevInfo doit présider le Comité consultatif interorganisations DevInfo, ce qui est susceptible d'entraîner un conflit d'intérêt. Les membres du Comité consultatif sont en général des techniciens et n'occupent pas de postes de direction de haut niveau. Le lien est relativement ténu entre le mandat du Comité consultatif interorganisations DevInfo et le cadre de politique global du Groupe de travail sur la programmation du GNUD. La structure actuelle de contrôle et de gestion ne permet pas à DevInfo de répondre aux attentes, à savoir de renforcer les rapports entre le suivi du développement national au niveau du pays et le suivi du Plan-cadre des Nations Unies pour l'aide au développement. Le Comité consultatif interorganisations DevInfo n'est pas actuellement capable de proposer une stratégie en mesure d'atteindre ces objectifs.

18. Aux niveaux mondial, régional et national, DevInfo reste clairement perçu comme un programme parrainé, géré et mis en œuvre par l'UNICEF. Pour soutenir les pays membres, l'UNICEF dépend dans une large mesure d'un seul fournisseur de services — la Community Systems Foundation, un organisme à but non lucratif basé aux États-Unis, et le travail de développement est effectué par Avalon Information Systems Pvt. Ltd., une société dont le siège est en Inde. Alors que l'engagement de la Community Systems Foundation ainsi que la grande qualité de ses services sont reconnus, la présente évaluation fait sienne les récentes observations du Bureau de la vérification interne des comptes de l'UNICEF, qui a attiré l'attention sur les risques d'une relation contractuelle avec un fournisseur de services unique. Toutefois, les risques devraient être mesurés dans le contexte interorganisationnel du GNUD. Toute recherche de solution alternative devrait en outre tenir compte de la possibilité de faire appel aux centres régionaux pour la fourniture de certains services. L'expérience acquise dans la région Amérique latine et Caraïbes est pleine d'enseignement à cet égard¹⁵.

19. **Financement.** La coordination et le soutien de DevInfo ont dépendu exclusivement, jusqu'à présent, de ressources financières en provenance du système des Nations Unies, l'UNICEF apportant une part essentielle, qui cependant diminue en termes relatifs. Il n'existe pas de signe indiquant que l'UNICEF ou d'autres organisations concernées des Nations Unies souhaitent se retirer ou diminuer leur soutien à DevInfo. Toutefois, aucun cadre institutionnel ou structure organisationnelle ne garantit actuellement la pérennité du financement du programme au-delà de 2009.

20. **Conclusion générale.** Le modèle d'entreprise de DevInfo a amélioré ses procédures au fur et à mesure que DevInfo évoluait. Il a en outre réussi à mobiliser des ressources internes et il est parvenu à un partage plus équitable de la charge au sein du système des Nations Unies. Mais il constitue encore un fardeau trop lourd pour l'UNICEF et la Community Systems Foundation. Surtout, il n'a pas favorisé le développement d'une vision axée sur le moyen et le long terme, permettant de relever les défis liés à un renforcement plus général et plus global des capacités de suivi et d'évaluation dans les pays en développement.

Recommandations

21. **DevInfo en tant qu'élément du suivi et de l'évaluation du développement des capacités.** Le système des Nations Unies devrait davantage impliquer DevInfo, de manière stratégique, dans les activités de suivi et d'évaluation du développement des capacités, au niveau du pays. Ceci vise en particulier le développement des capacités statistiques des bureaux nationaux de statistiques et autres organismes intervenant dans le traitement des données et leur diffusion, pour le suivi des indicateurs de développement humain (notamment les OMD). La base de données et les fonctionnalités de représentation de DevInfo lui permettent de grandement contribuer à ces efforts. DevInfo doit faire la

¹⁵ Voir la Section E, paragraphe 133 pour davantage de détails.

preuve de sa valeur ajoutée et de ses avantages comparatifs par rapport à d'autres outils de suivi des OMD et de mesure de l'efficacité du développement, ceci à l'échelle mondiale et nationale.

22. Un soutien plus systématique de la part des Nations Unies au développement des capacités en matière de suivi et de l'évaluation au niveau du pays va nécessiter une demande explicite émanant des partenaires nationaux afin de garantir que le pays s'approprie le programme et qu'il le prenne en main. Cela va également nécessiter une grande ouverture d'esprit du Coordonnateur résident et de l'équipe des Nations Unies dans le pays. Il serait très souhaitable que ce développement des capacités s'intègre au processus des Bilans communs de pays et du Plan-cadre des Nations Unies pour l'aide au développement et qu'il constitue éventuellement un programme conjoint du système des Nations Unies au niveau du pays. En raison des capacités de suivi et d'évaluation de ses bureaux de pays, l'UNICEF pourrait tenir le rôle d'institution chef de file ou d'agent administratif. Cette démarche reposant sur la demande et intégrée devrait être mise à l'essai dans un nombre limité de pays qui manifestent leur intérêt et leur engagement.

23. Si l'on reconnaît que le développement des capacités en matière de suivi et d'évaluation constitue un élément important dans le rôle et la contribution du système de développement des Nations Unies au niveau du pays, cela peut rendre nécessaire de modifier de façon substantielle les directives relatives aux Bilans communs de pays et au Plan-cadre des Nations Unies pour l'aide au développement (ces directives ont été émises par le Groupe de travail sur la programmation du GNUD, qui a bénéficié de l'aide du DOCO). Un engagement renouvelé du GNUD pourrait nécessiter le renforcement du rôle du DOCO dans l'administration de DevInfo.

24. Pour que DevInfo devienne un programme véritablement commun du système de développement des Nations Unies au niveau mondial, il faut que l'équipe dirigeante du système des Nations Unies, notamment le GNUD, renouvelle son engagement vis-à-vis de l'initiative. L'Administrateur mondial, en prenant avis du Comité consultatif interorganisations DevInfo, devrait préparer un document stratégique qui donnerait, pour les 5 à 10 ans à venir, les grandes lignes d'une nouvelle vision et de nouveaux objectifs pour DevInfo. Ce document devrait être soumis à l'approbation du Groupe de travail sur la programmation ou à l'approbation des cadres dirigeants du GNUD lors de leur réunion.

25. Un processus de consultation des pays membres et des équipes de pays des Nations Unies sur le projet de document stratégique sera nécessaire afin de garantir que DevInfo reste, dans toute la mesure du possible, axé sur la demande et soucieux des besoins et des priorités au niveau du pays. Ces consultations pourraient être menées, par exemple, dans le cadre de la Commission de statistique de l'Assemblée générale (qui a récemment lancé CensusInfo) et éventuellement au sein du Conseil économique et social (ECOSOC). Une autre procédure de consultation devrait être lancée auprès des Coordonnateurs résidents et des équipes de pays des Nations Unies, en particulier dans les pays qui disposent d'une version améliorée nationale de DevInfo.

26. **Développement du logiciel DevInfo et support technique.** Il existe de plus d'applications réalisées en ayant recours à des technologies libres. Toutefois, l'important n'est pas d'opposer le logiciel libre au logiciel propriétaire mais de savoir comment accroître l'interopérabilité et de travailler avec des normes libres. Le développement de DevInfo a commencé avec des outils de développement de logiciel propriétaire, mais on utilise de plus en plus des outils de développement de logiciel libre (open source). En raison de son rôle pilote dans la mise en œuvre de normes internationales en train d'émerger pour les données socio-économiques (notamment les initiatives SDMX, DDI et le Groupe de travail des Nations Unies sur l'information géographique), l'initiative DevInfo a contribué de façon significative à l'interopérabilité¹⁶. DevInfo pourrait maintenant en venir à mettre sa technologie à la disposition des développeurs de logiciels, qui seraient alors en mesure de faire encore progresser le DevInfo 6.0 Software Development Toolkit actuellement disponible.

¹⁶ SDMX (Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange – Échanges de données et métadonnées statistiques) est une initiative parrainée par sept institutions internationales et régionales, dont les Nations Unies. Elle vise à promouvoir l'usage de normes libres dans le domaine des données et métadonnées statistiques. DDI (Data Documentation Initiative – Initiative de documentation des données) s'efforce de créer au niveau international une norme pour la documentation relative aux données de sciences sociales.

27. Une telle démarche serait tout à fait conforme aux principes d'appropriation et de pilotage du développement par le pays et au rôle spécifique du système des Nations Unies dans le développement des capacités, notamment en facilitant les échanges d'innovations entre pays et en réduisant leur dépendance vis-à-vis des fournisseurs de services commerciaux lorsque c'est possible et avantageux. Par ailleurs, DevInfo ne s'expose pas à perdre son rôle et sa contribution uniques, liés à la diffusion et à la présentation de données. En effet, sa technologie dans les bases de données ne se limite pas à tel ou tel modèle de développement de logiciel, tant que le modèle de bases de données DevInfo observe les normes internationales ayant fait l'objet d'un accord. Consciente de l'intérêt croissant que suscitent les plateformes de développement de logiciel libre, la direction de DevInfo a décidé qu'une solution libre de DevInfo serait créée en 2009, venant s'ajouter à la plateforme actuelle. Cette version libre va fournir aux développeurs le code source, la documentation technique et une procédure de gouvernance pour la gestion des changements de logiciel de la version de référence officielle. Ceci va s'accompagner d'un renforcement du contrôle et du soutien technique venant s'intégrer dans le cadre de gouvernance et de directives, avec pour objectif que des innovations techniques de DevInfo émergent d'un échange entre les développeurs dans divers pays, facilité par le DevInfo Support Group et d'autres structures d'appui de DevInfo.

28. **Financement et durabilité.** Le mode de financement interorganisationnel de DevInfo devrait être maintenu et il faudrait s'assurer que le partage du fardeau entre les organisations des Nations Unies soit équitable. Les donateurs et autres bailleurs de fonds, étant donné leur souci de disposer de données de qualité en provenance des pays en développement, seront peut-être disposés à investir dans des systèmes qui favorisent des améliorations et un développement des capacités nationales dans ce domaine. La création d'un fonds d'affectation spéciale des Nations Unies, regroupant des fonds des principales parties prenantes, constitue un modèle qui a fonctionné pour d'autres initiatives.

32. **Conditions requises pour une expansion éventuelle de DevInfo.** DevInfo est un outil pertinent et potentiellement efficace pour l'élaboration et la diffusion de données statistiques, relatives au développement humain, pour l'appui d'une politique et la prise de décision. DevInfo est présent dans plus de 100 pays, ses versions et ses thèmes prolifèrent. La question qui se pose maintenant est de savoir si DevInfo doit poursuivre son expansion ou plutôt se consolider afin de devenir plus cohérent et ciblé.

33. Le modèle d'entreprise actuel reste encore assez dépendant de « champions » individuels tant au niveau mondial qu'au niveau des régions et des pays. En outre, une vision à plus long terme et l'expansion éventuelle de DevInfo sont rendues difficiles pour deux raisons : d'une part, le financement provient exclusivement de sources internes de l'UNICEF et du système des Nations Unies ; d'autre part, la planification et les accords contractuels se font avec un seul fournisseur de services, sur une base annuelle.

34. L'expansion éventuelle devrait être examinée dans le contexte d'un engagement accru du GNUM sur un programme global et pluriannuel de développement des capacités, dans le domaine du suivi et de l'évaluation, un programme dans lequel DevInfo pourrait jouer un rôle très important. Le fait de placer DevInfo dans ce cadre plus large entraînerait des changements substantiels dans les modalités de financement (notamment la création d'un fonds d'affectation spéciale) et dans le dispositif institutionnel (en particulier un renforcement du rôle du DOCO), et des changements à prévoir dans le rôle de soutien de DevInfo, compte tenu d'un environnement évoluant vers des modèles libres.

Resumen ejecutivo

Antecedentes

1. El Sistema de Información del Desarrollo (DevInfo) es un sistema de base de datos para supervisar el desarrollo humano. Es una herramienta para organizar, almacenar y presentar datos de manera uniforme con el fin de facilitar el uso compartido de datos en los planos nacional, regional y mundial con los departamentos gubernamentales, los organismos de las Naciones Unidas, las organizaciones de la sociedad civil y los asociados para el desarrollo. DevInfo tiene características que permiten producir cuadros, gráficos y mapas para su inclusión en informes, presentaciones y material de promoción. El programa informático es compatible tanto con los indicadores estandarizados, incluidos los indicadores de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio (ODM), como con los indicadores definidos por el usuario. DevInfo puede funcionar como un programa incorporado en la computadora individual o como una aplicación basada en la web.

2. DevInfo se originó a partir de ChildInfo, un sistema de base de datos para el seguimiento de la supervivencia infantil, el crecimiento y el desarrollo, gestionado por UNICEF. En 2004, la Directora Ejecutiva de UNICEF ofreció compartir con otras organizaciones de las Naciones Unidas las experiencias de UNICEF en el uso de ChildInfo para reunir datos e informar sobre los indicadores¹⁷. DevInfo es actualmente un programa mundial financiado por ocho organizaciones de las Naciones Unidas¹⁸ y gestionado por el Administrador Mundial de DevInfo, que es miembro del personal del UNICEF. El principal órgano de supervisión es el Comité Asesor Interinstitucional de DevInfo¹⁹, que depende del Grupo de Trabajo para Asuntos de Programación del Grupo de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (GNUD). El asociado en la ejecución de apoyo a DevInfo es la Community Systems Foundation, una fundación sin fines de lucro. La Oficina para la Coordinación de Operaciones de Desarrollo de las Naciones Unidas (DOCO) y las estructuras de apoyo regional colaboran también con el sistema.

3. Los objetivos de la iniciativa DevInfo son los siguientes: incorporar la aplicación de DevInfo a un esfuerzo nacional más amplio para reunir, analizar y difundir información sobre el desarrollo humano a fin de garantizar la sostenibilidad y el uso de la base de datos del sistema a largo plazo, fortalecer la capacidad de los gobiernos para adaptar el sistema DevInfo a sus estrategias nacionales de seguimiento y, por tanto, utilizar eficazmente la tecnología de DevInfo para supervisar los progresos en el desarrollo humano; y fortalecer la capacidad del equipo de Naciones Unidas en el país y de los asociados nacionales para utilizar eficazmente el sistema DevInfo en el seguimiento de los progresos en las prioridades nacionales e internacionales, tales como los ODM.

Fines y objetivos de la evaluación

4. El objetivo de la evaluación²⁰ es “prestar apoyo informativo a los directivos superiores de UNICEF y al Comité Asesor Interinstitucional de DevInfo en la toma de decisiones sobre el camino a seguir en el marco de la iniciativa, en particular en lo que respecta a la futura gestión y estructura de ejecución de la iniciativa y su posible ampliación y sostenibilidad”. Se espera que esta evaluación ayude a los directivos superiores a explorar modalidades para desarrollar el sistema DevInfo y, posiblemente, para ampliar y acelerar la distribución y el uso de DevInfo.

¹⁷ UNICEF, 'Carta de la Directora Ejecutiva del UNICEF al Secretario General de Naciones Unidas', 2002.

¹⁸ Oficina de Coordinación de Asuntos Humanitarios (OCAH), Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (PNUD), Fondo de Población de las Naciones Unidas (FNUAP), Programa de las Naciones Unidas para los Asentamientos Humanos (ONU-Hábitat), UNICEF, Fondo de Desarrollo de las Naciones Unidas para la Mujer (UNIFEM), Departamento de Asuntos Económicos y Sociales de las Naciones Unidas (ONU-DAES) y la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS)

¹⁹ Convocado el 24 de noviembre de 2004 como Comité Directivo Interinstitucional de DevInfo, el nombre fue cambiado poco después.

²⁰ UNICEF, 'DevInfo Evaluation—Terms of Reference', Oficina de Evaluación, Nueva York, 13 de noviembre de 2008.

5. La evaluación aborda tres objetivos: Objetivo 1 – Evaluar la pertinencia, la eficacia y las repercusiones en el uso de DevInfo a nivel nacional y subnacional por parte de los gobiernos y otros asociados en los países donde se ejecutan programas, así como por el sistema de las Naciones Unidas; Objetivo 2 – Evaluar la eficiencia en lo que se refiere a la supervisión, la gestión y la aplicación de DevInfo; y Objetivo 3 – Explorar opciones para la sostenibilidad institucional y las posibilidades de ampliación de DevInfo.

6. La oportunidad de esta evaluación está motivada por la necesidad de hacer balance y planificar el futuro antes de que termine el primer ciclo de cinco años de DevInfo (2004-2009); por una solicitud del Comité de Examen de Contratos de la sede de UNICEF para evaluar las repercusiones de DevInfo antes del próximo examen del contrato con la Community Systems Foundation a principios de 2009; y por la planificación para el bienio 2010-2011 de UNICEF. El punto de partida la evaluación se adoptó cuando se puso en marcha DevInfo en 2004²¹.

Metodología

7. El enfoque general de esta evaluación era la de adoptar una amplia visión estratégica de DevInfo y, a continuación, centrarse en los factores críticos que afectan el rendimiento y la percepción de su utilidad. Se utilizaron cinco métodos de investigación: revisión de documentos clave; entrevistas con las partes interesadas; seis estudios de caso de país (de Egipto, India, Liberia, Malawi, Serbia y Tailandia); visitas y consultas en oficinas regionales de UNICEF (en Bangkok, Tailandia y Ciudad de Panamá, Panamá) y entrevistas telefónicas (con Ammán, Jordania; Dakar, Senegal; y Ginebra, Suiza); y una encuesta mundial de usuarios en línea utilizando un marco de muestreo de la base de datos de empleados capacitados del Grupo de Apoyo de DevInfo. La información obtenida fue triangulada.

8. La evaluación tuvo que enfrentarse a una serie de limitaciones. El equipo sólo pudo visitar seis países, pero se hizo un esfuerzo para obtener una razonable distribución geográfica, aunque no se visitaron los países de habla española o francesa²². La encuesta a los usuarios tuvo que emplear un marco limitado de muestreo, lo que significa que los resultados de la encuesta a los usuarios de Internet no son representativos. Las restricciones a las preguntas cerradas de escala ampliable redujeron el examen cualitativo participantes. El sitio web de DevInfo está en proceso de rediseño y no fue examinado, ni tampoco la última versión del programa informático, el sistema DevInfo 6.0.

9. Se realizó una evaluación general de las tendencias de la industria del desarrollo en la presentación y exposición de los datos, pero la evaluación no estudió a fondo cómo esos instrumentos podrían evolucionar en los próximos tres a cinco años y lo que esto podría significar para DevInfo.

Principales hallazgos y conclusiones

10. **Pertinencia.** Durante el último decenio ha habido una demanda cada vez mayor por parte de los encargados de formular políticas y adoptar decisiones de todo el mundo de datos estadísticos sólidos y de fácil acceso, en particular los datos relativos a los objetivos nacionales de desarrollo y los programas de los objetivos de desarrollo acordados internacionalmente, incluidos los ODM. DevInfo es una importante iniciativa que contribuye a la estandarización de datos estadísticos indispensables para la elaboración de políticas y la toma de decisiones relacionadas con el desarrollo humano dentro de los países y entre ellos. Su valor se basa en los mandatos normativo y analítico del sistema de las Naciones Unidas, y esto representa su ventaja comparativa en un entorno competitivo en el que las innovaciones en tecnología de la información evolucionan rápidamente.

²¹ El 2 de abril de 2004, los miembros del GNUD aprobaron esta iniciativa y pidieron la creación de un equipo interinstitucional para preparar una aplicación en mayor profundidad de los instrumentos de supervisión y el seguimiento de los ODM.

²² Los días 16-17 de abril de 2009 se celebró en Panamá un taller de usuarios de DevInfo en América Latina y el Caribe a nivel nacional y de las Naciones Unidas.

11. Las capacidades expositivas de DevInfo han demostrado ser instrumentos eficaces para aumentar el interés de los encargados de formular políticas y adoptar decisiones en materia de datos estadísticos. La pertinencia de las adaptaciones de DevInfo dependerá de su capacidad de sumarse a los sistemas existentes y nuevos y su complementariedad con ellos, así como de la calidad y oportunidad de los datos.

12. **Eficacia.** Los tres indicadores principales para la supervisión del rendimiento de la iniciativa DevInfo se establecieron en 2004: número de países que utilizan el sistema DevInfo; número de adaptaciones de DevInfo; y número de usuarios capacitados. Hasta marzo de 2009, más de 100 países en desarrollo estaban utilizando DevInfo, se habían adaptado más de 140 versiones, y más de 12.500 personas habían recibido capacitación en el sistema. Estos tres indicadores abordan la eficacia sobre todo en términos de resultados y, en menor medida, abordan los efectos directos e impactos. Hay pruebas de que las bases de datos nacionales de DevInfo se utilizan para mejorar la capacidad de planificación basada en los resultados y el seguimiento de las prioridades nacionales de desarrollo. En la encuesta de usuarios, el 83% de los encuestados indicaron que estaban de acuerdo o totalmente de acuerdo en que el sistema DevInfo se ha utilizado para la presentación de datos estadísticos a los encargados de la toma de decisiones.

13. Esta evaluación trató de evaluar el uso real de DevInfo en el sistema de las Naciones Unidas y, más importante aún, por parte de los asociados nacionales. Sin embargo, las pruebas sobre los resultados a nivel de resultados y efectos han sido limitadas, ya que no hay un sistema sistemático de seguimiento y presentación de informes sobre este tipo de actividades. Estas pruebas podrían describir cambios institucionales o de comportamiento que podrían atribuirse o asociarse con DevInfo. Si bien el enfoque actual sobre la capacitación de un gran número de personas en el sistema DevInfo (12.500 desde 2004, según los informes), muchos de los cuales en realidad no lo utilizan, y la prestación de apoyo a los usuarios que lo soliciten ha generado algunos resultados a los niveles de resultados y efectos, presenta importantes limitaciones y no permite que el sistema DevInfo sea utilizado en su pleno potencial.

14. El programa informático de propiedad y el modelo de desarrollo cerrado utilizado actualmente por el sistema DevInfo ha sido puesto en tela de juicio por el modelo de código abierto, que se define como un programa informático en el que el código fuente y otros derechos normalmente reservados para los titulares de los derechos de autor se ofrecen mediante una licencia que cumple con la Definición de Fuente Abierta o está en el dominio público. Las necesidades y exigencias de los usuarios han requerido ajustes periódicos y tres versiones de DevInfo desde 2004.

15. El uso de DevInfo para mejorar la capacidad de planificación y seguimiento de las prioridades nacionales de desarrollo basada en los resultados se debe, en parte, a la plantilla general de DevInfo, que está ajustada para los indicadores de los ODM a nivel mundial y, en algunos casos, para los indicadores de los ODM adaptados nacionalmente. En algunos países se preparan informes sobre los ODM a partir de datos de las adaptaciones nacionales, y algunos informes nacionales utilizan los mapas y los mecanismos de presentación de DevInfo para producir gráficos y materiales de presentación. Sin embargo, el uso de datos de DevInfo para la presentación de informes sobre los ODM no es universal. Si bien las redes de los ODM promueven su uso para la presentación de informes, los organismos no lo apoyan sistemáticamente. De este modo no se logra el pleno potencial de DevInfo para la presentación de informes sobre los ODM.

16. **Supervisión y gestión.** La iniciativa DevInfo es un programa mundial administrado por UNICEF con el apoyo de otras organizaciones de las Naciones Unidas y de la DOCO. El principal órgano de supervisión es el Comité Asesor Interinstitucional de DevInfo, que dentro de la organización se encuentra en la esfera del Grupo de Trabajo para Asuntos de Programación. El grupo tiene como objetivo contribuir a la reforma de la ONU tratando de lograr una mayor coherencia y armonización de los enfoques en el sistema de las Naciones Unidas.

17. La estructura de la supervisión y la gestión tiene sus limitaciones y puede que no sea apropiada si DevInfo se desarrolla en todo su potencial. Es discutible si el Administrador Mundial de DevInfo debe

presidir el Comité Asesor Interinstitucional de DevInfo, ya que esto podría suponer un posible conflicto de intereses. La composición del Comité Asesor se basa principalmente en un nivel técnico y no implica altos niveles de gestión. El vínculo entre el mandato del Comité Asesor Interinstitucional de DevInfo y el marco general de políticas del Grupo de Trabajo para Asuntos de Programación del GNUD no es demasiado sólido. La actual estructura de supervisión y gestión no permite que el sistema DevInfo responda a la expectativa de que se preste apoyo a la vinculación entre la supervisión de los resultados nacionales en materia de desarrollo a nivel nacional y la supervisión del Marco de Asistencia de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo. El Comité Asesor Interinstitucional de DevInfo no tiene actualmente la capacidad de proponer una estrategia para lograr estos objetivos.

18. A nivel mundial, regional y nacional, la percepción de DevInfo es que es un programa patrocinado, gestionado y ejecutado por UNICEF. En su apoyo a los países miembros, UNICEF depende en gran medida de un solo proveedor de servicios, la Community Systems Foundation, una organización sin fines de lucro con sede en los Estados Unidos, y el trabajo de desarrollo lo lleva a cabo Avalon Information Systems Pvt. Ltd., una empresa con sede en la India. Si bien se reconocen el compromiso y la alta calidad de los servicios prestados por la Community Systems Foundation, esta evaluación apoya las recientes observaciones de la Oficina de Auditoría Interna que destacaron los riesgos involucrados en la relación contractual con un solo proveedor de servicios. Sin embargo, los riesgos deben considerarse en el contexto interinstitucional del GNUD. Cualquier exploración de otros arreglos debería tener también en cuenta la posibilidad de que los centros regionales presten determinados servicios. La experiencia de la región de América Latina y el Caribe es instructiva a este respecto²³.

19. **Financiación.** La coordinación y el apoyo a DevInfo hasta la fecha ha dependido exclusivamente de los recursos financieros del sistema de las Naciones Unidas, y UNICEF es el organismo que financia una parte importante, que, sin embargo, está disminuyendo en términos relativos. Si bien no hay indicios de que UNICEF u otras organizaciones de las Naciones Unidas que participan vayan a retirar o disminuir su apoyo a DevInfo, actualmente no existe ningún marco institucional o de organización establecido para garantizar la sostenibilidad de la financiación de los programas más allá de 2009.

20. **Conclusión general.** El modelo institucional de DevInfo ha simplificado sus procedimientos a lo largo de su evolución. También ha tenido éxito en términos de movilización de recursos internos y en lograr una distribución más equitativa de la carga dentro del sistema de las Naciones Unidas. Sin embargo, sigue siendo innecesariamente gravoso para UNICEF y la Community Systems Foundation. Lo que es más importante, no ha sido propicio para establecer una visión a mediano y largo plazo en respuesta a los desafíos relacionados con un fortalecimiento más sistémico y amplio de las capacidades de seguimiento y evaluación en los países en desarrollo.

Recomendaciones

21. **DevInfo como parte del desarrollo de la capacidad en materia de seguimiento y evaluación.** DevInfo debería integrarse más estratégicamente en el desarrollo de la capacidad de las actividades de seguimiento y evaluación del sistema de Naciones Unidas a nivel de país. Concretamente, esto debería implicar el desarrollo de la capacidad estadística para supervisar los indicadores de desarrollo humano (incluidos los ODM) de las oficinas nacionales de estadística y de otras instituciones que participan en la tramitación y difusión de datos. La capacidad como base de datos y de exposición de DevInfo le permiten ofrecer una importante contribución a esos esfuerzos. DevInfo tiene que demostrar su valor añadido y su ventaja comparativa en relación a otros instrumentos de seguimiento de los ODM y de medición de la eficacia del desarrollo. Esto debe producirse a nivel mundial y en el plano nacional.

22. Un apoyo más sistemático de las Naciones Unidas al desarrollo de la capacidad del seguimiento y la evaluación a nivel de los países requerirá una petición explícita de los asociados nacionales para

²³ Véase la sección E, párrafo 133, para más detalles.

asegurar la propiedad y el liderazgo nacionales en el proceso, y un alto grado de receptividad del Coordinador Residente y el equipo de las Naciones Unidas en el país. Este desarrollo de la capacidad debería formar parte en teoría del proceso de la Evaluación común de las Naciones Unidas para los países/Marco de Asistencia de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo y, posiblemente, debería articularse como un programa conjunto del sistema de Naciones Unidas a nivel de país. Dada su capacidad de seguimiento y evaluación en las oficinas de país, UNICEF podría asumir la función de organismo responsable o agente administrativo. Un enfoque de este tipo, basado en la demanda e integrado, debería ponerse a prueba en un número limitado de países que muestren interés y compromiso.

23. Si se reconoce que el desarrollo de la capacidad del seguimiento y la evaluación forma una parte importante de la función y la contribución del sistema de Naciones Unidas para el desarrollo a nivel de país, esto podría requerir una revisión importante de las directrices de la Evaluación común de las Naciones Unidas para los países/Marco de Asistencia de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo emitidas por Grupo de Trabajo para Asuntos de Programación del GNUM, con apoyo de la DOCO. Una renovación del compromiso por el GNUM puede implicar el fortalecimiento del papel de la DOCO en la administración de DevInfo.

24. Para que DevInfo se convierta en un verdadero programa conjunto del sistema de las Naciones Unidas para el desarrollo a nivel mundial se necesita que los directivos superiores del sistema de Naciones Unidas, específicamente del GNUM, renueven su compromiso con el sistema. El Administrador Mundial, en consulta con el Comité Asesor Interinstitucional de DevInfo, debería preparar un documento de estrategia que esboce una nueva visión y los objetivos de DevInfo para los próximos 5 a 10 años. El Grupo de Trabajo para Asuntos de Programación o la reunión de los directivos superiores del GNUM deberían presentar el documento para su aprobación.

25. Será necesario iniciar un proceso de consultas con los países miembros de Naciones Unidas y los equipos de país sobre el proyecto de documento de estrategia para garantizar que DevInfo sigue dependiendo de la demanda, en la mayor medida posible, y responde a las necesidades y prioridades a nivel de país. Esas consultas podrían asegurarse, por ejemplo, por medio de la Comisión de Estadística de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas (que ha iniciado recientemente CensusInfo) y, posiblemente, por medio del Consejo Económico y Social. También se debe poner en marcha otro proceso de consulta con los Coordinadores Residentes y los equipos en los países de las Naciones Unidas, especialmente en los países donde las adaptaciones nacionales de DevInfo hayan alcanzado un cierto grado de sofisticación.

26. **Desarrollo del programa DevInfo y apoyo técnico.** Hay un número cada vez mayor de aplicaciones que se programan usando tecnologías de código abierto. Sin embargo, el debate importante no es el que se refiere al código abierto frente al programa informático de propiedad, sino a la manera de aumentar la compatibilidad y trabajar con normas abiertas. El desarrollo de DevInfo comenzó con herramientas de desarrollo de un programa informático de propiedad, pero cada vez más se han utilizado herramientas de desarrollo de programa informático abierto. DevInfo ha realizado una contribución significativa a la compatibilidad debido a su capacidad de liderazgo en la aplicación de las nuevas normas internacionales para datos socioeconómicos (incluidos SDMX, DDI y el Grupo de Trabajo de Información Geográfica las Naciones Unidas²⁴). DevInfo podría transformar su enfoque y permitir que su tecnología se encuentre a la disposición de los programadores informáticos que podrían mejorar aún más las herramientas de desarrollo del programa informático DevInfo 6.0 actualmente disponibles.

27. Un enfoque de este tipo sería muy compatible con los principios de la propiedad y el liderazgo nacionales en el desarrollo y la función específica del sistema de Naciones Unidas en materia de fomento de la capacidad, facilitando incluso el intercambio de innovaciones entre los países y reduciendo

²⁴ SDMX se refiere a la iniciativa Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange, patrocinada por siete instituciones internacionales y regionales, incluidas las Naciones Unidas. Establece y promueve el uso de normas abiertas en el ámbito de los datos y metadatos estadísticos. DDI se refiere a la Data Documentation Initiative, un esfuerzo internacional por establecer un estándar para la documentación técnica que describe datos relativos a las ciencias sociales.

la dependencia en los proveedores de servicios comerciales cada vez que sea posible y ventajoso. DevInfo no corre tampoco el riesgo de perder su función y contribución únicas, que están relacionadas con la difusión y visualización de datos, ya que la tecnología de la base de datos DevInfo no se limita a un modelo de desarrollo de programa informático o a otro, siempre que el modelo la base de datos DevInfo sea compatible con las normas internacionales acordadas. Conscientes del creciente interés en el desarrollo de plataformas de programas informáticos abiertos, los gestores de DevInfo han decidido encargar una solución de fuente abierta para el sistema DevInfo en 2009, además de la plataforma actual. Esta versión de fuente abierta proporcionará a los programadores el código fuente, la documentación técnica y un mecanismo de administración del programa informático para los procedimientos destinados a gestionar el cambio en la versión oficial de referencia. Esto también incluirá el fortalecimiento de la supervisión y el apoyo técnicos como parte de la estructura de gobierno y de orientación, con la intención de que las innovaciones técnicas de DevInfo surjan de un intercambio entre los programadores de diferentes países, coordinado por el Grupo de Apoyo de DevInfo y otras estructuras de apoyo de DevInfo.

28. **Financiación y sostenibilidad.** La modalidad de financiación interinstitucional de DevInfo debe mantenerse y es preciso garantizar una distribución equitativa de la carga entre diversas organizaciones de las Naciones Unidas. Habida cuenta del interés de los donantes y otras instituciones financieras en obtener datos de calidad de los países en desarrollo, existe la posibilidad de que puedan estar dispuestos a invertir en sistemas que generen mejoras y en el fomento de la capacidad nacional. El establecimiento de un Fondo Fiduciario de las Naciones Unidas, con fondos aportados por los principales interesados, es un modelo que ha dado resultados en el caso de otras iniciativas.

29. **Condiciones para una posible ampliación de DevInfo.** DevInfo ha sido una herramienta pertinente y potencialmente eficaz para generar y difundir datos estadísticos relacionados con el desarrollo humano en apoyo a la formulación de políticas y la toma de decisiones. Con una presencia en más de 100 países y una proliferación de adaptaciones y temas, la cuestión es saber si el sistema DevInfo debería ampliarse aún más o consolidarse y convertirse en un programa más coherente y centrado.

30. El actual modelo de explotación es todavía demasiado dependiente de los “promotores”, tanto en el plano mundial como en el regional y nacional. Además, una visión a largo plazo y una posible ampliación de DevInfo está limitada por el hecho de que la recaudación de fondos se limita a fuentes internas dentro de UNICEF y del sistema de las Naciones Unidas, y que la planificación del trabajo y los acuerdos contractuales son con un solo proveedor de servicios por períodos anuales.

31. Una posible ampliación tendría que considerarse en el contexto de una participación más amplia del GNUD en un programa de desarrollo de la capacidad global y plurianual en materia de seguimiento y evaluación, en el que DevInfo podría desempeñar un papel importante. Situar a DevInfo en ese marco más amplio implicaría cambios importantes en las modalidades de recaudación de fondos (incluida la creación de fondos fiduciarios) y los acuerdos institucionales (incluido el fortalecimiento del papel de la DOCO), y tener en cuenta la necesidad de introducir cambios en la función de apoyo de DevInfo en un entorno que evoluciona hacia modelos de código abierto.

A. Introduction

Purpose and scope of the evaluation

1. This evaluation of the Development Information System (DevInfo) was commissioned by UNICEF senior management with the endorsement of the DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee (DIAAC). It was coordinated by the UNICEF Evaluation Office between 1 December 2008 and 30 April 2009. The purpose of the evaluation is “to inform the DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee and UNICEF senior management in their decision making concerning the way forward for the initiative, notably as far as the future management and implementation structure of the initiative and its sustainability and possible expansion are concerned.”²⁵ This evaluation is intended to help in looking forward, scaling up and accelerating the distribution and use of DevInfo and in exploring ways in which DevInfo might develop and grow. The full terms of reference are given in Annex I.

2. The timing of this evaluation was prompted by: the need to take stock and plan ahead at the end of DevInfo’s first five-year cycle (2004-2009); a request by UNICEF Headquarters’ Contracts Review Committee to assess the impact of DevInfo prior to the next contract reviews in early 2009 within the UNICEF partnership framework with Community Systems Foundation (CSF)²⁶; and planning for the UNICEF biennium 2010-2011. The evaluation starting point was taken as the launch of DevInfo in 2004.²⁷ The evaluation addresses three objectives, given in Box 1.²⁸

Box 1. Objectives of the evaluation

Objective 1: Assess relevance, effectiveness and impact of DevInfo at national and sub-national levels by governments and other partners in programme countries as well as by the UN system.

Objective 2: Assess efficiency in terms of oversight, management and implementation of DevInfo.

Objective 3: Explore options for institutional sustainability and possible opportunities for expansion of DevInfo.

3. The evaluation uses evaluation criteria and standards from the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the UN Evaluation Group.²⁹ The current business model of DevInfo, comprising oversight by the United Nations (UN) system with software development, technical support and training provided by the DevInfo Support Group (DSG), was not analysed in this evaluation, nor were other business models considered. The evaluation did not go into depth on the contractual arrangements between UNICEF and CSF. However, it did refer to a risk assessment in April 2009 of the DevInfo initiative by the UNICEF Office of Internal Audit.³⁰

Main features of DevInfo

4. DevInfo is a database system for monitoring human development. It is a tool for organizing, storing and presenting data in a uniform way to facilitate data sharing at the country, regional and global levels

²⁵ UNICEF, ‘DevInfo Evaluation—Terms of Reference’, Evaluation Office, New York, 13 November 2008.

²⁶ UNICEF, ‘Minutes of Meeting 13 February 2009’, Headquarters Contract Review Committee, New York, 2008.

²⁷ On 2 April 2004, the members of UNDG endorsed this initiative and requested an inter-agency team to prepare for further implementation of MDG tracking and monitoring tools.

²⁸ UNICEF, ‘DevInfo Evaluation—Terms of Reference’, Evaluation Office, New York, 13 November 2008.

²⁹ OECD, ‘Evaluation and Effectiveness: Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management’, available at www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf, accessed 10 January 2009.

³⁰ UNICEF, ‘Risk Assessment: Contracting and Managing the DevInfo Service Contract’, Office of Internal Audit, New York, April 2009.

across government departments, UN organizations, civil society organizations and development partners. DevInfo has features that produce tables, graphs and maps for the inclusion in reports, presentations and advocacy materials. The software supports both standard indicators, including indicators for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and user-defined indicators. DevInfo is compliant with key international statistical standards to support open access and widespread data exchange and can operate both as a desktop application as well as on the world wide web.

5. The overall intention of the DevInfo initiative was as follows: “The vision that DevInfo supports is a day when member states use common database standards for tracking national human development indicators, containing high-quality data with adequate coverage and depth to sustain good governance around the agenda of achieving the MDGs. DevInfo can enable the UN system in realizing this vision as a general purpose database system designed for the accumulation, dissemination, presentation and advocacy of human development indicators. DevInfo technology has been specifically designed to support governments in MDG monitoring. By serving as a common database, DevInfo can be used to add value to national statistics systems by complementing existing databases and bridging data dissemination gaps. DevInfo can also be used as an advocacy platform by UN agencies to engage both government and civil society in policy choices for human development.”³¹ The objectives of the DevInfo initiative are stated in Box 2.

Box 2. Objectives of DevInfo

Objective 1: To anchor DevInfo implementation in a wider national effort to collect, analyse and disseminate information on human development to ensure long-term sustainability and usage of the database system.

Objective 2: To strengthen the capacity of governments to adapt DevInfo to their national monitoring strategies and thereby effectively utilize DevInfo technology to monitor progress in human development.

Objective 3: To strengthen the capacity of UN country teams and national partners to effectively utilize DevInfo in monitoring progress on national and international priorities, like the MDGs.

6. A number of software tools are currently in use in the UN system and among national counterparts to help improve data processing, analysis and application for evidence-based policy development. A wide range of well-established UN and non-UN initiatives exist in this regard at the global, regional and country levels, including specific initiatives for monitoring individual goals or topics. DevInfo is not an attempt to supplant or replace such efforts.

External environment

7. Increased global commitment to harmonization, transparency and accountability in human development programmes, has led to a growing demand for evidence-based decision making. This demand has encouraged governments to strengthen their national statistical offices (NSOs) to provide information for national and sub-national policy, planning and monitoring processes for the MDGs and national initiatives such as poverty reduction strategies and local development agendas. There has also been a growing demand for data on human development from civil society and the private sector.

8. Policy processes ideally involve different stages—agenda setting, formulation, implementation and evaluation—and different types of evidence are often needed for each stage. The development of intuitive, accessible tools to analyse, display and disseminate spatial data can provide a basis for sound

³¹ DSG, ‘DevInfo Technical Guidelines and Standards for Implementation’, published in 2004 with periodic updates.

policy and resource allocation decisions.³² Agencies, such as NSOs, that are responsible for the collection and collation of data for monitoring are usually not directly involved in policy development or decision making. This involves different groups of stakeholders, including line ministries and local authorities.

9. With increasing traffic and exchange of data, metadata standards³³ become increasingly important as they can help achieve efficiency and transparency in data sharing and allow for data exchange among applications on a broad spectrum of platforms.³⁴ There are three key emerging standards in relation to DevInfo: SDMX (ISO 17369:2005) provides standards for the database structure, *indicator metadata* and registry-based architecture to implement these standards and to exchange data between systems; DDI/Dublin Core are widely used international standards for metadata on *data sources* (data sets, publications); and the UN Geographic Information Working Group recommends compliance with ISO 19115:2003 for metadata on *digital maps*.³⁵

10. Software innovations in the visualization of data now allow the remarkable transformation of complex data. Geographic information systems integrate hardware, software and data for capturing, managing, analysing and displaying all forms of geographically referenced information. Mapping technology is now in its fourth generation, characterized by applications that strive for greater realism in representations of the world through the use of 3-D globes and immersive environments. DevInfo database technology uses three types of data visualization: tables, graphs and maps. The soon to be released third version, DevInfo 6.0, incorporates the fourth generation pioneer, Google Earth.

11. In line with overall policies of the UN system, DevInfo uses a proprietary software platform provided by Microsoft. There is debate about the choice of software platforms. Software can be proprietary, where development occurs within one company and programmers write code, hide it behind binaries,³⁶ and then charge customers for technical support to fix the software when it breaks. Proprietary ownership can increase when software becomes tied to a company's architecture, like Microsoft, protocols, and file formats. With open source software, the code is available and free to the general public to use and modify. This development method harnesses the power of transparency and peer review. Proprietary software can offer more security options and quality assurance, but lock an organization into one vendor. Open source is more affordable and flexible, but may not have experienced the same rigorous testing for glitches and security. The issue is relevant for DevInfo since an increasing number of national partners of DevInfo use open source software.

12. This evaluation raises the notion that DevInfo can potentially be viewed as a public good. Global public goods are goods that could, in principle, benefit and be consumed by the governments and peoples of all states. Examples include mechanisms for ensuring financial stability, the scientific knowledge involved in the discovery of a vaccine, and international regulations for civil aviation and telecommunications. Once such global standards and systems are established, they are available to all states, and consumption of the goods by one state or its people in no way reduces their availability to others.³⁷ In a globalized world, problems and solutions reach across national borders, resulting in a growing need for international collective action.³⁸ Everyone depends on public goods; neither markets nor the wealthiest person can do without them.³⁹ This is discussed further in Chapter E.

³² Sutcliffe S, Court J, 'A Toolkit for Progressive Policymakers in Developing Countries', Overseas Development Institute, London, January 2006.

³³ A metadata standard is a common set of terms and definitions that are presented in a structured format.

³⁴ DSG, 'DevInfo and International Standards'.

³⁵ SDMX refers to the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange initiative, sponsored by seven international and regional institutions including the United Nations. It creates and promotes the use of open standards in the realm of statistical data and metadata. DDI refers to the Data Documentation Initiative, an international effort to establish a standard for technical documentation describing social science data. Dublin Core describes a core set of 15 elements intended to facilitate discovery of electronic resources. ISO numbers refers to International Organization for Standardization published standards.

³⁶ This refers to a completely functional programme without any installer.

³⁷ International Task Force on Global Public Goods, *Meeting Global Challenges: International Cooperation in the National Interest—Final Report*, ISBN: 0-9788790-0-7, Stockholm, Sweden, 2006.

³⁸ Kaul I, Stern M, Grunberg I, *Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the 21st Century*, Oxford University Press, ISBN-13: 9780195130522, June 1999.

³⁹ Global Policy Forum, 'Global Public Goods', available at www.globalpolicy.org/soecon/gpg/index.htm, accessed 17 March 2009.

Internal environment: the UN system

13. DevInfo is a global joint UN programme. In the past five years, UN joint programming and joint programme approaches have developed further as part of UN reform and efforts for greater coherence and harmonization of approaches within the UN system. The role and structure of the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO), the Secretariat of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), has evolved. It has issued guidance on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) concerning the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) approach.⁴⁰

14. The United Nations and development partners have addressed data harmonization and dissemination for decision making. For example, the UN Statistics Division sponsors SDMX data standards. The UN Inter-agency and Expert Group on MDGs provides guidance and reports on MDG monitoring. The PARIS21 Partnership promotes a culture of evidence-based policy making in developing countries.⁴¹ Global working groups include the Inter-agency Working Group on Child Mortality Estimates.⁴² Wider partnerships at the global and regional level include the Beyond GDP Conference and Initiative.⁴³ The UN Geographic Information Working Group has made progress towards a comprehensive UN spatial data infrastructure for implementation in 2009-2010.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, UN organization human development monitoring systems still demonstrate a wide range of agency-specific software, databases, and issue-specific tools.

15. The UNICEF approach to data has evolved to become more up-stream, including the development of knowledge frameworks and support to national M&E systems. UNICEF has been closely involved in the harmonization of indicators related to children at the global level, which has developed in parallel with DevInfo and complements it. UNICEF also implements the global Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS),^{45,46} a major source of primary data for MDG and national monitoring in developing countries and for DevInfo databases and adaptations.⁴⁷

Methodology

16. The overall approach for this evaluation was to start from a broad, strategic view of DevInfo and then focus on critical factors affecting its performance and perceived usefulness. Five research methods and multiple sources were used to generate information, which was then triangulated to ensure the findings of the evaluation were both consistent and evidence based. A desk review of documents, websites and other sources relevant to DevInfo was made. Key documents and other materials were reviewed and the main sources are cited in the bibliography (Annex IV). Analysis included the identification of adaptations of DevInfo from the main website (www.devinf.org), document review, interviews and a Google search, as well as analysis of UN Resident Coordinator reports for 2006, 2007 and 2008.

17. A global user online survey was designed to measure and identify what ways DevInfo users are using DevInfo and their satisfaction with it. Of an estimated 12,500 people trained since 2004, a little more than 2,000 could be contacted as only their e-mail addresses were available through the DSG database. A commercial online survey software tool (Zoomerang) was employed with questionnaires in English, French and Spanish. The response rate was 18 percent (n=379). The analysis used standard

⁴⁰ UNDG, '2009 CCA/UNDAF Guidelines', February 2009, available at www.undg.org/?P=226.

⁴¹ PARIS21 was founded in 1999 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the World Bank, the European Commission, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations.

⁴² A partnership of UNICEF, the World Health Organization, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme.

⁴³ European Commission, DG Environment and DG Eurostat, 'Beyond GDP: Measuring Progress, True Wealth and the Well-being of Nations', International Conference and Initiative, available at www.beyond-gdp.eu, accessed 14 April 2009.

⁴⁴ United Nations Statistics Division. 'Final Report of the Ninth UN Geographic Information Working Group Plenary Meeting, 5-7 November 2008', Vienna, Austria.

⁴⁵ UNICEF, 'Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey', available at www.unicef.org/statistics/index_24302.html, accessed 20 March 2009.

⁴⁶ These MICS are carried out at five-year intervals, three yearly from 2009.

⁴⁷ DevInfo databases are collections of data within DevInfo Software. A DevInfo adaptation is a collection of one or more such databases held together in DevInfo software adapted for a specific country, regional or thematic use.

Zoomerang descriptive statistics and charts supplemented by SPSS⁴⁸ for statistical analysis and cross-tabulation. Survey methodology questions and tables are given in Annex V.

18. Interviews were conducted with more than 250 stakeholders with a variety of backgrounds at the national, regional and global level to give as wide a range of perspectives and evidence as possible. The profiles of informants are given in Annex III. An illustrative sample of six countries was identified to provide a mix of geographic location, size, economic development, maturity of DevInfo and emergency status. The Americas and Caribbean Regional Office of UNICEF, East Asia and Pacific Regional Office and the Asia and Pacific Support Services Centre in Bangkok were visited. Regional M&E advisers in the other regional offices of UNICEF were interviewed by phone.

19. Data quality assurance was achieved through triangulation of data from a variety of methods. Ethical dilemmas about privacy were identified, so individual informants are not identified within this report.

Limitations

20. The sampling frame of the user survey comprised users in the DSG database identified through training activities or other forms of technical support. No attempt was made to identify other users—for example, those at the sub-national level—or to develop a globally representative sampling frame. Thus the findings may not be generally representative. Restriction to scalable closed questions, with a single qualitative question, allowed comparison and analysis of results, but reduced qualitative review. DevInfo adaptations are in multiple languages, hence restriction of the survey to English, French and Spanish may have limited the access for some respondents.

21. The countries visited provided a reasonable range of experiences in different regions. Feedback from Latin America was obtained from several countries in the region via a two-day meeting. No Francophone countries were visited. A general assessment was made of rapidly developing industry trends in data presentation and display, but the evaluation did not explore in depth how such tools might evolve in the next three to five years. There was no technical review of the DevInfo software. The DevInfo website is in the process of redesign and so it was not reviewed.

⁴⁸ SPSS is a software package used for statistical analysis.

B. DevInfo overview

Origins in ChildInfo

22. ChildInfo originated from a series of efforts in South Asia in the 1990s to collate and better understand data on the situation of women and children in the region. It began with an exercise to gather all of the data available in India related to child nutrition, particularly sub-national data. This process included data produced by a large-scale national nutrition programme titled Integrated Child Development Services,⁴⁹ which was launched in 1975 and is still ongoing. Integrated Child Development Services collects a number of indicators related to child nutrition and health based on a nutrition conceptual framework. These are used to support decentralized decision making. A prototype for an innovative software tool that generated tables, graphs and maps on nutrition for reports and presentations was the successful outcome of this exercise in 1994. The UNICEF India Country Office recognized this tool's potential for wider use across UNICEF country programmes in the region.

23. Working with a technology partner, CSF, the India Country Office developed the first version of ChildInfo in 1994. In 1995, this system was chosen as the platform on which to start building a South Asia region-wide database managed collaboratively by UNICEF's Regional Office for South Asia and country offices. The project started with the development of a core list of indicators for potential use in a regional atlas publication. An important aspect of this initiative was its focus on disparities and sub-national data. Data were collated on key indicators through a combination of regional teamwork involving UNICEF country offices in South Asia and through a search of published databases. The eventual collection was published in 1997 as the *UNICEF Atlas of South Asian Children and Women*.⁵⁰

24. The task of making a first compilation of the database gave the region-wide UNICEF team a first-hand look at collective capabilities and formed the basis for a regional task in 1998 aimed at further building upon the region-wide assessment capabilities of UNICEF. This led to the expansion of the work into a formal regional work plan task under the guidance of the UNICEF South Asia regional management team. The Iran Country Office and the UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office joined the task. At the outset, the regional M&E officer was assigned to coordinate the task with the close advice of the regional director, the regional planning officer and the regional education officer.

25. In subsequent versions of ChildInfo, information technology standards were upgraded and storage from multiple sources was added, thus allowing users to profile sources and data collection methods and make judgements on the indicators they would use. By 2003, ChildInfo was used by 5 regional offices and approximately 40 country offices, and another 80 country offices had shown interest in using the tool. Ten countries had customized ChildInfo to reflect local ownership of their respective databases.

Highlights in the evolution of DevInfo

26. In February 1998, the framework for a common UN database was created by the UN Inter-agency Working Group in India, led by the UNICEF India Country Office. This database was called DevInfo (Development Information System). In collaboration with CSF, the UN system in India moved forward with the concept of a common UN database. Through a key consultation, they consolidated the array of reporting indicators internationally agreed upon by India. The Maldives followed suit with a similar process. By 2001, a number of UN common databases had appeared as a direct outcome of the work being done with ChildInfo databases at the country level.

27. In 2002, the Executive Directory of UNICEF offered to share UNICEF's experiences with using ChildInfo to collect data and report on indicators with other UN organizations⁵¹—stating that one third of

⁴⁹ Integrated Child Development Services Scheme, 'Integrated Child Development Services Website', Government of India, available at <http://icds.gov.in>, accessed 3 March 2009.

⁵⁰ UNICEF, *Atlas of South Asian Children and Women*, ISBN: 92-806-3232-9, 1996. Issued as part of ChildInfo version 1.01 on CD.

⁵¹ UNICEF. 'Letter from UNICEF Executive Director to UN Secretary-General', 2002.

the 48 MDG indicators were already being monitored, more than 40 countries were using this system, and approximately 25 UN country teams and national partners had adapted their own versions of ChildInfo. At the time, some UN organizations were using other tools to analyse and display data in different formats. DevInfo was not intended to replace those systems but was assumed to provide a common platform for sharing data.

28. The diversity of the needs of national partners and UN organizations was noted. The following quote is an extract from the DevInfo Information Series: “A number of software tools are currently in use in the UN system and among national counterparts to help improve data processing, analysis and application for evidence-based policy development. A wide range of well-established UN and non-UN initiatives exist in this regard at the global, regional and country level, including specific sectoral initiatives for monitoring individual goals or topics, often mandated by governing boards. DevInfo is in no way an attempt to supplant or replace such efforts.”⁵²

29. UNICEF proposed to support the development of ChildInfo 3.5 into DevInfo 4.0 by broadening the involvement of more stakeholders—both UN organizations and national partners—and by expanding the content of the database from child-related indicators to all key human development indicators, organized around the agenda of the Millennium Declaration. It was recognized from the outset that each national adaptation of the system would require the option for adding country-specific indicators and monitoring systems. Therefore, the system was developed with the 48 MDG indicators available to the database. Then database administrators at the national level had the option to add more country-specific or agency-specific indicators. During discussions with the DIAAC, it was decided that DevInfo 4.0 would be deployed only on compact discs (CDs) and not via the Internet.⁵³ UNICEF contracted CSF as the technology partner to develop DevInfo 4.0 and to implement the technical support and training missions at the global, regional and country levels.

30. The early versions of ChildInfo were developed using Microsoft FoxPro database technology integrated with Microsoft Office for data management and presentations. Data input, export and exchange were developed using simple Microsoft Excel structured formats that were easy to understand and use. The early solution for digital mapping involved the export of data from the database to commercial desktop mapping software to generate maps. This early solution was originally based on the ESRI Atlas GIS and later the ESRI ArcView GIS.⁵⁴

31. DevInfo 4.0 was developed using Microsoft Visual Basic and the Microsoft Access database system. This technology platform was selected due to the options to reuse code from ChildInfo 3.5 in the development process and the requirement to be able to deploy the product royalty-free and on low-end desktop systems running on the Microsoft XP operating system. The mapping solution integrated into DevInfo 4.0 was a third-party component (ESRI MapObjects), which allowed basic mapping functions to be integrated into Microsoft Visual Basic code and allowed the product to be further distributed to end users royalty-free. At this stage, the options to use other development approaches, such as open source programming languages (such as Java) and other operating systems (such as Linux), were discussed. Citing the investment already made, a decision was made to continue with Microsoft software development technology and with Microsoft Office (especially Excel) for data management, graphics and slideshows.⁵⁵

32. The first global version of DevInfo, DevInfo 4.0, was released on 2 June 2004 and deployed in five integrated modules. The User Interface module allowed users to search for data by indicators, time periods and geographic areas and create tables, graphs and maps. The other four modules were for database administration.

33. The Template module was used to change the content of the database. The database came with access to the 48 MDG indicators. Database administrators could use the Template module to add new country-specific indicators, sub-national regions and sub-groups. The Template module could also be

⁵² DSG, 'DevInfo Technical Guidelines and Standards for Implementation', first published in 2004 and periodically updated.

⁵³ Information obtained during interviews with the UN Global Administrator and DSG.

⁵⁴ ESRI is a company that designs and develops geographic information system (GIS) technology. At a review of ChildInfo at an international conference in 2003, the owner of ESRI saw the potential of DevInfo and donated 100 copies of ESRI ArcView GIS to UNICEF to promote the use of the system.

⁵⁵ Information from interviews with the Global DevInfo Administrator and first DevInfo project manager.

used to classify and organize groups of indicators by national monitoring frameworks, such as poverty reduction schemes and other national development plans.

34. The Data Entry module allowed data to be entered into the system and provided methods for uploading data from standardized spreadsheets. The Language module provided a method for translating the user interface and database content into any other language. The Customize module allowed the database administrator to customize the branding of the product, to change the name, the color scheme, the logos, the images and the web links, thus allowing national institutions to use their own 'brand' and remove reference to the United Nations or the name DevInfo.

35. After two years, during which the DevInfo initiative expanded and feedback from users was obtained on the DevInfo 4.0 software package, a new version was released in 2006 as DevInfo 5.0. Development was still linked to the Microsoft platform, using the software development tools of Microsoft Visual Studio, including .NET and ASP.NET.⁵⁶ DevInfo 5.0 offered several new features. The most significant was an option to deploy DevInfo databases on both desktops and via the Internet. The mapping module was completely reworked and integrated into the DevInfo product, without using a third-party proprietary component. This enhanced mapping feature provided methods to overlay thematic (vector) maps on satellite images (raster maps) visualized on a virtual globe. Another innovation was to visualize the change in data trends by animating thematic maps over time. DevInfo thus became a royalty-free software application that provided a mapping feature to analyse changes in human development indicators.⁵⁷

36. The DevInfo 5.0 database administration modules were upgraded, streamlined and expanded to 11 new modules deployed as one integrated application. The original five modules—the User Interface, Template, Data Entry, Language and Customize modules were upgraded—and six new modules were developed.

37. The Data module and Template module were upgraded to expand the options for deployment of DevInfo databases from Microsoft Access databases to other database technology, including Microsoft SQL Server and MySQL (an open source database). This provided more options for database administrators and improved performance in handling large data sets.

38. New modules included a Tools module that handled database importing, splitting and merging. A Metadata module allowed users to enter and edit XML content for metadata on indicators, data sources and digital maps following the international standards for these metadata formats. A Mapping module provided methods for database administrators to manage digital maps. A User module provided methods for assigning user roles and access options for data entry. A Gallery module provided options for publishing DevInfo galleries on CDs and the web. A Data Exchange module added data exchange options with other software packages (SPSS, SAS, STATA, CsPro) and data export options to XLS, HTML, PDF, CSV and XML files.⁵⁸

39. With regard to international data standards compliance, DevInfo 5.0 is SDMX compliant and stores source information in DDI/Dublin Core format. The DevInfo Database Administration module is integrated with the International Household Survey Network. DevInfo 5.0 stores digital map metadata in ISO 19115:2003 format and uses the dates of the representativity of the maps to link data to maps over time, even when sub-national administrative boundaries change.⁵⁹

40. The DevInfo evaluation started just before the release of DevInfo 6.0. During a DevInfo Master Trainers Meeting in New Delhi, India in February 2009, the new features of DevInfo were presented along three dimensions: the user interface, the administration module and the DevInfo.org website. DevInfo 6.0 was tested and cleared for global release after having followed the standard UNICEF Institute for Trade Standards and Sustainable Development (ITSSD) testing procedures. DevInfo 6.0 was released on 1 May 2009. This evaluation did not assess the functionality of DevInfo 6.0.

⁵⁶ .NET is a software framework that can be installed on computers running Microsoft Windows operating systems. ASP.NET is a web application framework developed by Microsoft that allows programmers to build websites and applications.

⁵⁷ As reported by the DevInfo Global Administrator in April 2009.

⁵⁸ DevInfo, 'Frequently Asked Questions', available at www.devinfo.org/di_faq.html.

⁵⁹ DSG, 'DevInfo and International Standards'.

41. DevInfo 6.0 builds on and enhances the programming base of earlier versions. The user interface will include new features including a Data Wizard that: enables first-time users to easily access data and generate presentation objects with minimal training; instantly previews table, graph and map options when generating data views; provides a gallery of previously created tables, graphs and maps that can be edited; offers a search function for presentation objects based on keywords; offers drill down for data; and includes a flip book, video, sidebar, data analyser and a monitoring process in the country profile. New features in the DevInfo Data Admin module include user-defined sub-groups, creation of templates, automatic database upgrade, live software updates, management of mapping, and import and export of data using SDMX standards. On the DevInfo.org website, new features will include online access to databases, technical support and other options including forums, DevInfo Wikipedia, showcases, games, galleries and examples of DevInfo adaptations worldwide.⁶⁰

42. DevInfo 6.0 will be available as both a desktop application for users with poor Internet access and via the web interface. A reduced version of DevInfo called 'DevInfo Lite' offers the users the option of running DevInfo 6.0 directly from the setup CD instead of having to install it on a computer, thereby saving space on the hard drive.⁶¹

Adaptations of DevInfo

43. DevInfo can be used as a basic database for storing information. The software can also be customized or adapted to suit a country, region or theme, and branded. Several types of adaptations have been developed using DevInfo database technology.⁶² The majority are *national adaptations*, where countries design a customized database to include a range of indicators linked to national plans and international goals from the national to sub-national level and local maps are uploaded for display of the data. There are also a number of *regional or multi-country adaptations* (for example, for South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, and the Arab Youth Database⁶³) that contain development indicators across several countries. *Thematic adaptations* focus on a topic such as HIV/AIDS, child mortality or education and can be focused on either a global, regional or national level. DevInfo has also been used to support programming of the CCA/UNDAF process and the country pilot programmes commonly referred to as Delivering as One,⁶⁴ especially in Pakistan, Rwanda and Viet Nam. Most adaptations are posted on the DevInfo website. The growing list is updated periodically but is not complete. A list of known adaptations is given in Annex VIII and some of the major global ones are described below.

44. **CMEInfo.** The work of the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation has been enhanced by CMEInfo,⁶⁵ a DevInfo adaptation that produces national trend lines for under-five mortality rates and infant mortality rates using different data sources and international methods for mortality estimation (including spline regression and loess). This DevInfo adaptation has pioneered the implementation of a transparent, collaborative system for use by the United Nations and national partners to fully understand and communicate the complexities involved in the computation of child mortality estimations. This application has been implemented with open source software (Flex/PHP/MySQL) and is powered by DevInfo database technology.

45. **MDGInfo.** MDGInfo is produced by the UN Statistics Division. It is an adaptation of DevInfo to disseminate the MDG indicators database used for the regional and global monitoring of progress achieved towards the MDGs. It has been released annually for data from 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008,⁶⁶ and incorporates the contributions of more than 20 UN organizations in monitoring key human

⁶⁰ Presentation by Kris Oswalt to the DIAAC meeting 8 October 2008; noted in the minutes of the meeting.

⁶¹ DSG, 'DI v6.0 User Guide', CSF, 2009.

⁶² Most but not all can be found on the www.devinfo.org homepage.

⁶³ Statistics Division of ESCWA. 'Arab Youth Database', Economic and Social Commission for West Asia, available at <http://youthinfo.escwa.org.lb>, accessed 25 March 2009

⁶⁴ Delivering as One UN pilots have been conducted in eight countries (Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam) as a follow up to the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment, Delivering as One, United Nations, New York, November 2006.

⁶⁵ Inter-agency Group on Child Mortality Estimation, 'Child Mortality Estimate Info (CMEInfo) Website', www.childmortality.org, accessed 29 March 2009.

⁶⁶ UN Statistics Division, 'MDGInfo Homepage', www.devinfo.info/mdginfo2008, accessed 29 March 2009.

development indicators. These data are used to produce the UN Secretary-General's annual report on progress toward achieving the MDGs since 2005 along with posters, brochures and other related advocacy materials.

46. **Immunization Summary Database.** The Immunization Summary Database is a combined product of UNICEF and the World Health Organization and contains immunization data by country through 2007.⁶⁷ This database has been produced by the DSG for the last two years and plans are in place for producing it again in 2009.

47. **UrbanInfo.** UN-HABITAT (the United Nations Human Settlements Programme) launched its UrbanInfo statistical database system in 2006 at the World Urban Forum in Vancouver. The database contains social development indicators that allow comparison between rural and urban areas and give figures on shelter deprivations including lack of access to water and sanitation, overcrowding, and housing structure conditions at the city and national level.⁶⁸

48. **EmergencyInfo.** EmergencyInfo originated from the 1999 Orissa and 2001 Gujarat emergencies in India. It was formally developed as a global product in 2005 to assist in monitoring post-tsunami relief operations and is now a decision support system intended for use in emergency situations. The stated intention is to "help to bridge information gaps within the first 72 hours of an emergency and provide support for rapid data collection, situation assessment, standard monitoring reports and disaster preparedness."⁶⁹ It combines the data access and presentation features of DevInfo with hand-held computers and personal digital assistants to capture data from multiple affected areas and multiple sources. The data is captured in XML format on memory sticks and can be transferred by plugging the personal digital assistant into a desktop computer or by sending the data by e-mail. Use has been mostly limited to emergencies in Asia (India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Indonesia, Myanmar, Thailand, Pakistan).

49. **GenderInfo.** GenderInfo 2007, a joint UN programme with UNICEF, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), is a global database of gender statistics and indicators on a wide range of policy areas, including population, families, health, education, work and political participation.⁷⁰

50. **CensusInfo.** CensusInfo is a major adaptation of DevInfo commissioned by the UN Statistics Division in partnership with UNICEF and UNFPA. DevInfo technology was adopted for the 2001 India national census and used to present and display the provisional results in 2002. Later, another version of India's Census Info 2.0 was released with final data and with more indicators included. Building on the experience of India and other countries, the United Nations commissioned the development of an enhanced version of CensusInfo to help countries disseminate census data on CD and on the web. Functionalities have been added to meet census dissemination requirements including enhanced performance, template reports for dissemination at any geographical level, and mapping facilities. Although a standard list of indicators are proposed with the software, countries will be able to customize the list of statistics and indicators to suit national data needs. CensusInfo was launched at the UN Statistics Commission in New York on 23 February 2009.⁷¹

Current structure and organization of DevInfo

51. DevInfo is organized as a global UN joint programme managed by UNICEF on behalf of the UN system. The main oversight body is the DIAAC,⁷² which is organizationally located within the UNDG Working Group on Programming Issues. The DIAAC meets on average twice per year.⁷³

⁶⁷ UNICEF and WHO, 'Immunization Summary', www.childinfo.org/immunization.html, accessed 29 March 2009.

⁶⁸ UN-HABITAT, 'UrbanInfo Homepage', www.devinfo.info/urbaninfo, accessed 29 March 2009.

⁶⁹ UNICEF, 'EmergencyInfo Homepage', www.devinfo.info/emergencyinfo/index.htm, accessed 29 March 2009.

⁷⁰ UNIFEM, 'GenderInfo Homepage', www.devinfo.info/genderinfo, accessed 29 March 2009.

⁷¹ UN Statistical Commission, 'Organizational Website', http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/statcom_09/seminars/population_census/CensusInfo.html, accessed 3 March 2009.

⁷² Convened on 24 November 2004 as the DevInfo Inter-agency Steering Committee, the name was changed shortly after.

52. The objectives of this coordination mechanism are to: provide a forum to share and discuss agency-specific considerations in implementing DevInfo; offer DIACC members an environment to share technical inputs for software innovation and development to meet the requirements of governments in the dissemination of statistics related to MDGs and human development in general; strengthen commitments of UN organizations at the global, regional and country level in the implementation of DevInfo by identifying ways for existing initiatives and systems to complement or contribute to DevInfo; and facilitate the mobilization of funds towards the implementation of DevInfo as a common tool for dissemination of human development and MDG databases for monitoring and programming purposes as well as strategic decision making.⁷⁴

53. DOCO is the Secretariat of the UNDG and also acts as the Technical Support Unit to the country operations pillar of the UNDG. In 2008, specific reference to DevInfo was made in one of the main areas of DOCO work: support to the introduction and application of agreed new ways of working together at the country level through support to the Resident Coordinator System. Under results-based management and M&E, DOCO “supports the linkage of country level national monitoring of development results (DevInfo), to monitoring of the UNDAF.” Under knowledge management support, DOCO “supports UNDG agreements on the further development of DevInfo—the common database for countries to report on human development and the MDGs—as a shared impact monitoring tool, linked to plans and budgets for results-based management” and “builds capacity of UNDG members to introduce DevInfo at national level to support effective monitoring of impact.”⁷⁵

54. Within the UNICEF Division of Policy and Planning, the DevInfo Global Administrator,⁷⁶ a senior post created in 2004, has direct management responsibility for implementing DevInfo. The DevInfo Global Administrator chairs the DIAAC, guides the policy and administration of the initiative, develops the annual work plans, manages the implementation of activities on a day-to-day basis and reports to all stakeholders on the status of implementation.⁷⁷ Within DOCO,⁷⁸ a DevInfo Project Manager post was created in 2004 to: support inter-agency work at the global level; ensure full participation and commitment of UNDG members; promote the use of DevInfo; collect feedback from UN country teams; and work with the DevInfo Global Administrator planning joint UN activities and reporting on DevInfo implementation and events.

55. A Global DevInfo Field Reference Group is convened on an *ad hoc* basis, meeting in principle once per year. It has no generic terms of reference but has specific technical objectives for each meeting, the results of which are then used to inform the development of DevInfo. It comprises membership from a range of national and UN stakeholders, most of whom are active users of DevInfo. Additional meetings are called from time to time that further inform DevInfo development.⁷⁹

56. The implementing partner for DevInfo is CSF, a not-for-profit foundation registered in Michigan, United States in 1963. CSF reports that it “develops information technology for management information systems, geographic information systems, institution building, social welfare programme design, management training, technical support services, data dissemination, technical publications, scientific research and evaluation methodologies.”⁸⁰ During the last decade, the DevInfo initiative has grown to become a significant area of the CSF programme portfolio.

57. To implement the DevInfo initiative, CSF has set up and manages the DSG. CSF provides technical support and guidance for executive management of the initiative, programme planning, implementation, software analysis and design, research and development, and training. The DSG has used a network of international trainers and technical support advisers for in-country DevInfo missions.

⁷³ It is tasked to meet quarterly. See: UNDG, ‘Terms of Reference for the DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee’, December 2007.

⁷⁴ UNDG, ‘Terms of Reference for the DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee’, December 2007.

⁷⁵ UNDP Accountability Framework UNDP Organizational Guide, ‘Functional Description of the UN Development Operations Coordination Office’, Final Version, 25 April 2008.

⁷⁶ The post of DevInfo Global Administrator was created in March 2004.

⁷⁷ Job specification as reported by the DevInfo Global Administrator.

⁷⁸ Then known as the Development Group Office.

⁷⁹ Examples include the DevInfo Master Trainers workshop in New Delhi, 15-20 February 2009 and the DevInfo for Decision Making regional workshop in Bangkok, 27-28 January 2009.

⁸⁰ Community Systems Foundation. ‘Organizational Website’, www.communitysystemsfoundation.net, accessed 12 February 2009.

Within the DSG, CSF has outsourced software development and related activities to an information technology consulting company in New Delhi, India called Avalon Information Systems Pvt. Ltd. This firm provides technical support for software development, quality assurance, database administration, digital mapping, advocacy materials, graphics, web content management, a helpdesk and network administration. Avalon also provides additional training and technical advisers.

58. Adaptations of DevInfo are supported by independent technical database administration teams. It is up to these national partners, in consultation with the UN country teams or their UN organization, to decide upon the level of technical support required from an external service provider and to identify the appropriate service provider. This is most often the DSG but can also be the DevInfo Latin America and Caribbean Support Unit (DevInfoLAC), independent consultants and local information technology firms in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East.⁸¹

59. Each country and each activity has a DevInfo focal point who helps support communication and implementation. Each DevInfo activity under the DSG is reported on by the national country focal point and/or agency focal point. When the activity is a training event, the participants evaluate the quality of the training.⁸² The UNICEF DevInfo management unit reviews all signed activity reports of the DSG and budgets are compared to actual invoices.

60. Training is provided for both users and administrators. There are standard, advanced and expert training modules tailored to various audiences. The courseware is available for free as e-learning packages available online and on CD and comes with lesson plans, agendas, teaching materials, workbook exercises and evaluation sheets. Materials are provided in English, but there have been translations into the main UN languages. Training courseware can be adapted to country-specific requirements including content, language, branding, thematic topics and monitoring frameworks. Through a 'Training of Trainers' approach, a regionally based pool of more than 35 DevInfo Master Trainers has been developed. The majority are UNICEF staff members, many of them in M&E positions.

Added value to other systems and compatibility issues

61. Systems to monitor human development indicators have increased during the past five years, and the environment is now more crowded at both the national and global level. There are now multiple systems in use within the United Nations and, to this evaluation's knowledge, there has been no review of their compatibility or connectivity.

62. DevInfo is based on a Microsoft platform and requires PCs loaded with Microsoft Windows XP or another version (including the more recent Microsoft Vista). Users of DevInfo 5.0 do not need Microsoft Access loaded on their computers and do not need a license for Microsoft Access. DevInfo 5.0 is not compatible with Macintosh computers. A decision was made for DevInfo 5.0 to be compatible with Microsoft Internet Explorer in order for the Internet version to mirror the look and feel of the desktop version—an option that other browsers did not offer at the time. DevInfo 5.0 is not compatible with other browsers such as Firefox and Safari.

Previous evaluations and implementation progress reviews

63. A formal assessment of ChildInfo was conducted in 2003 to obtain information on the scope, performance and relevance of ChildInfo, particularly in relation to its ability to function well in a worldwide monitoring system.⁸³ The evaluation praised the implementation of ChildInfo in its prevailing context and CSF for both providing good support in the development and use of ChildInfo and for its commitment to support UNICEF in implementing ChildInfo at the country level.

64. However, the evaluation raised concerns about future deployment on a global level. The evaluation indicated that the software package would require changes, CSF's capacity to support the wider use of

⁸¹ Use of local technology firms was reported by the DevInfo Global Administrator but not independently verified.

⁸² A report is made directly after the training event and there is no medium- or long-term follow up of the results of training.

⁸³ The evaluation was conducted by Universalis and headed by Jean Quesnel, Director of the Evaluation Office in UNICEF in 2003.

ChildInfo was questioned, and the evaluation recommended that the contractual arrangements with CSF be revised. Regarding the use of ChildInfo in UNICEF country offices, concerns were raised about the extent of use and capacity of M&E functions within UNICEF, and it is not clear that these have been fully addressed. The evaluation also concluded that contractual and institutional arrangements within CSF are very dependent on one person. Many of these concerns still apply in the current context of DevInfo. The following is a quote from the 2003 ChildInfo evaluation: "CSF itself depends on a single software company subcontract, the UNICEF mechanism for contracting with CSF is problematic for both CSF and UNICEF and the capacity of CSF to meet larger needs in the use of ChildInfo were uncertain."⁸⁴

65. In 2005, an analysis was conducted of CSF and four similar providers on unit costs of the following services: Database Training Unit, Database Technical Support, Database Advocacy Materials Development, and Replication and Database Mapping and Software Development.⁸⁵ The conclusion was that CSF offered good value for the money and had the advantage of being a 'one-stop shop'. This has formed the basis for repeated single-source annual contracts between 2005 and 2008.

66. A DevInfo Implementation Review conducted by UNICEF in 2007 analysed implementation, identified constraints and provided examples of best practice.⁸⁶ This was used to help develop standards for national adaptations. Follow-up included distribution of the best practice examples and further development of DevInfo country fact sheets.

67. In the first quarter of 2009, at the request of the DevInfo Global Administrator, the UNICEF Office of Internal Audit conducted a review of the contractual arrangement between UNICEF and CSF. This consisted of a risk assessment review of the UNICEF service contract with CSF and its management.⁸⁷ The report concluded that while CSF has been a reliable and effective partner, the costs and risks of working with other partners had not sufficiently been documented and procedures to ensure competition and rigorous bidding had not been envisaged during the lengthy period of cooperation with CSF. While it was noted that CSF has enhanced its capacity in administration and technical support and satisfactorily implemented each annual contract since 2003, there is the risk related to the fact that UNICEF relies heavily on CSF for software development, enhancements and the implementation of work plan activities. If the company folded, did not implement the UNICEF work plan, or arbitrarily increased its rates, UNICEF would incur substantive costs to get another service provider. It was recommended to adopt a strategy for ensuring non-reliance on one service provider for DevInfo services. Alternatively, UNICEF could develop an internal capacity to provide the same services. In response to this report, the UNICEF Division of Policy and Planning fielded a request for proposals in April 2009 in view of establishing a long-term arrangement for the provision of products and services to implement the DevInfo initiative.

⁸⁴ UNICEF, 'ChildInfo Consolidated Assessment Report', UNICEF Headquarters, New York, 2003.

⁸⁵ UNICEF, 'DevInfo Monitoring Human Development: Unit Cost Comparison Survey', Division of Policy and Planning/Strategic Information Section/DevInfo Project Unit, New York, 5 May 2005.

⁸⁶ UNICEF, 'DevInfo Implementation Review', Strategic Information Section, New York, 2007.

⁸⁷ UNICEF, 'Risk Assessment: Contracting and Managing the DevInfo Service Contract', Office of Internal Audit, New York, April 2009.

C. Relevance and effectiveness of DevInfo

Relevance

Findings

68. There has been growing demand during the past decade from policy and decision makers around the world for sound and accessible statistical data notably related to national development goals and the agendas of Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the MDGs.

69. Since 2004, DevInfo has pursued the goal to contribute to the establishment of common database standards (among member states) for tracking national human development indicators, containing high-quality data with adequate coverage and depth to sustain good governance around the agenda of achieving the MDGs.⁸⁸ DevInfo was meant to become a general purpose database system designed for the accumulation, dissemination, presentation and advocacy of human development indicators. It was expected that DevInfo would add value to national statistics systems, notably for MDG monitoring, by complementing existing databases and bridging data dissemination gaps.

70. The quest for common database standards for tracking human development indicators, especially those related to the MDGs, is highly relevant given the diversity of data collection systems and sources that exist in different countries, regions and among the different organizations of the UN system. A very important functional requirement in the design of DevInfo 5.0 was to frame the design of the database model to comply with the key emerging standards for human development indicators. The DevInfo initiative has contributed to the advancement of three major international standards⁸⁹ through technical consultations and international meetings as well as to the harmonization of standards related to the MDGs.

71. The agenda set out in 2004 is very much linked to the normative and analytical mandates of UNICEF and the UN system. DevInfo originated in ChildInfo, which aimed to demonstrate disparities in the realization of children's rights, notably at the sub-national level. Both ChildInfo and DevInfo were meant to be advocacy tools for UNICEF and the UN system to engage governments and civil society in policy choices for the protection and promotion of children's rights and ultimately for human development.

72. DevInfo has developed a comprehensive approach that addresses various dimensions of this ambitious agenda. There is evidence that national and UN users of DevInfo particularly appreciate DevInfo's display functions, which allow them to demonstrate disparities in terms of gender, group, geography, and so on. Through national adaptations, DevInfo contributed to and shaped national data systems in this regard in many countries. There are also various global, regional databases and thematic adaptations of DevInfo, for example, CensusInfo, EmergencyInfo, Child Mortality Estimations Info, MDGInfo and GenderInfo.

73. The relevance of DevInfo adaptations will depend on the degree to which they add value to existing systems as well as on the timeliness and quality of the data. DevInfo adaptations are being disseminated both on CDs and through the web. In this way, the DevInfo initiative has strived to optimize access to the most recent data available on human development to the broadest audience possible, even when many of the stakeholders of national DevInfo databases are challenged by non-existent or unreliable web access. As access to the Internet gradually improves around the world, more DevInfo databases are being updated and disseminated online via the web-enabled DevInfo 5.0. This mitigates the risks of DevInfo becoming obsolete and therefore of little use to policy and decision makers. However, this may pose a challenge for users in countries with limited Internet access.

74. Quality of metadata is an issue at the global level and in many countries, which DevInfo cannot solve by itself. In the worst case, poor and misleading data are displayed in an attractive manner.

⁸⁸ Vision statement expressed by UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy to the UN Chief Executives Board in 2004.

⁸⁹ DSG, 'DevInfo and International Standards'.

However, DevInfo's features do show and compare different sets of metadata. In addition, DevInfo allows for the inclusion of experts' comments, making it possible for the system to contribute to the improvement of the standardization and quality control of metadata.

75. Relevance varies in each setting as there are significant national and regional variations in need and demand for DevInfo. When it comes to national approaches to DevInfo design, most countries have followed the templates, database pattern, management and oversight model proposed by the DSG and management team and have implemented each new global suggestion. But some countries have tested new approaches, for example, Thailand has experimented with different remote data uploads and Brazil has designed a new approach to school mapping. Within some countries (such as Liberia and Malawi), national models are centrally focused, while other countries (such as Serbia and Thailand) have emphasized decentralized databases. Central control over the DevInfo programme code has retained consistency and uniformity in the product but limited changes to it.

Conclusion and recommendations

76. DevInfo is a relevant initiative that contributes to the standardization of statistical data that are indispensable for sound policy and decision making related to human development within and among countries. Its value is anchored in the normative and analytical mandates of the UN system, and this represents its comparative advantage in an environment of rapidly evolving and competitive innovations in information technology. The relevance of DevInfo adaptations will depend on their additionality to existing and nascent systems as well as on the quality and timeliness of data. Promotion and development of DevInfo should be part of capacity development by the UN system in member countries.

Effectiveness—outputs, outcomes and impact

Findings on outputs

77. 'Effectiveness' is defined as the extent to which a development intervention's objectives are achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance. The term effectiveness is closely related to that of 'effect', which is the intended or unintended change due directly or indirectly to an intervention. In turn, effect relates to 'results', which are outputs, outcomes or impact (intended or unintended, positive or negative) of a development intervention.⁹⁰ The term is also used as a broader, aggregate measure—encompassing efficiency and other criteria that determine the quality of a development intervention.

78. The assessment of effectiveness of DevInfo is hampered by the fact that beyond the original vision statement there has not been a comprehensive and consistent design of DevInfo. The assessment of effectiveness of DevInfo is linked to how the system originated in the field and grew organically with the impetus of individual champions. The result has been a proliferation of databases loosely organized around the agenda of the Millennium Declaration but customized to country or agency specific needs. The scope of each database has been defined by each country without any limitations imposed by an overall or comprehensive DevInfo monitoring plan. The vision and the objectives of the initiative have also been interpreted and implemented in different ways by different countries and in different documents of the DSG.

79. Set out in 2004, the three key performance monitoring indicators for the DevInfo initiative were: number of countries using DevInfo; number of adaptations of DevInfo; and number of trained users. These three indicators address effectiveness mostly in terms of outputs and, to a limited extent, address outcomes and impact.

⁹⁰ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee, 'Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation', May 2002, available at: www.oecd.org/findDocument/0,2350,en_2649_34435_1_119678_1_1_1,00.html.

80. Readily available information⁹¹ shows that DevInfo has considerable global spread in developing countries. Countries can use DevInfo in a range of ways to store databases, to produce fully-fledged national or thematic adaptations, or as part of a wider regional effort. As of March 2009, an estimated 106 countries have national adaptations, some of which have been updated two to four times. In addition, there are an estimated 19 regional and 19 global databases, bringing the total number of known adaptations to 144. Table 1 shows this in more detail. Adaptations powered by ChildInfo, DevInfo 4.0 and DevInfo 5.0 are all in use. The user survey reported that 80 percent of respondents used either DevInfo version 4.0 or 5.0. It is assumed that most of the adaptations based on ChildInfo and not upgraded are now defunct. An updated inventory is available in Annex VIII.

Table 1. DevInfo worldwide adaptations						
Adaptations	Number of countries/ regions using DevInfo	Number of adaptations and updates	Online adaptations	ChildInfo	Dev- Info 4.0	Dev- Info 5.0
National (countries)						
Africa	41	77	9	27	15	35
Asia/Middle East	33	60	13	17	16	27
European	10	11	3	0	4	7
Americas	20	26	6	4	5	17
Oceania	2	3	0	1	1	1
Subtotal countries	106	177	31	49	41	87
Regional						
Africa	5	10	2	3	5	1
Asia/Middle East	7	9	5	6	1	2
European	3	4	4	0	0	4
Americas	4	8	5	3	2	3
Oceania	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal regional	19	31	16	12	8	10
Global	19	29	25	0	6	23
Total	144	237	72	61	55	120

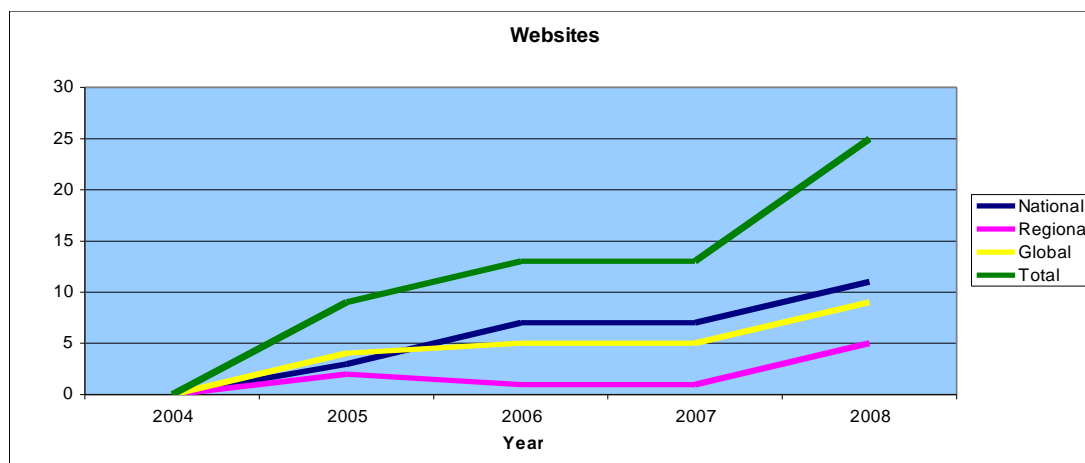
81. The numbers do not reveal the tremendous multiplicity of uses and users of DevInfo at national, regional and global levels. DevInfo adaptations are at varying stages of maturity—ranging from recent creations to nationally owned, fully established and regularly updated databases. In some cases, adaptations peaked at a point in the past and are currently in decline. There have been creative examples of development in many countries. DevInfo is also used at the sub-national level.⁹² Of the six countries studied in depth, Egypt had sub-national data in the EglyInfo database, Thailand had focused heavily on separate but linked provincial-level databases, Liberia and Malawi both had sub-national data included, Serbia had developed separate and unlinked district databases in 21 of its districts, and India had plans in place to decentralize and is developing state-level databases linked to planning functions in at least one state (Madhya Pradesh).

82. There has been an increasing shift to online DevInfo adaptations over time. Figure 1 shows the cumulative number of online adaptations in DevInfo 6.0 by year. A total of 25 were online at the end of 2008, of which 11 were at the national level.

⁹¹ From DevInfo main website, interviews and search on Google

⁹² Of the six countries visited, Thailand and Serbia have both developed substantial sub-national databases.

Figure 1. Online adaptations of DevInfo



Sources: DevInfo website, project reports and Google searches. Extracted from Annex VIII.

83. Estimates from the six country visits and from a review of information on some of the available DevInfo country fact sheets⁹³ suggest that national adaptations are usually updated annually. A barrier to more frequent updates is the need to reproduce and redistribute CDs. When data is not current, the DevInfo adaptation can rapidly fall out of use. Informants noted that a notification system for when new data was posted on website versions would be useful.

84. More than 12,500 users have reportedly been trained by the DSG since 2004.⁹⁴ Training is provided for both users and administrators of DevInfo. All training materials of the DSG are available on the DevInfo website. The training model relies predominantly on face-to-face training delivered in a computer lab. The majority of trainers are UN staff, and the majority of those are UNICEF staff. There is anecdotal evidence that some people may have trained themselves using the online training courses on the DevInfo.org website. DevInfo training has been included in the training plans of some NSOs and other institutes of countries visited. A trainee satisfaction report is completed with each DSG training course and the reports are sent to the DSG. However, medium- to long-term results of training are not routinely assessed. In the evaluation user survey, an overwhelming majority (95 percent) of those who reported they had been trained found the training useful or very useful.

85. DevInfo is not easily accessible to those without specific training, access to computers and knowledge of how to use them, and a reasonable understanding of numerical indicators. In some countries, the national adaptation has not been translated so there are language barriers to use. In some cases, the availability of appropriate information technology also limits access. Earlier versions of DevInfo were primarily provided on CD. The advantage of this distribution method was less dependence on Internet connectivity, but it had the drawback of less timely and up-to-date information. Web-based DevInfo software is sometimes hard to download in areas of poor connectivity.

86. The forthcoming DevInfo 6.0 has more features. While still available on CD, this new version is said to have been optimized for the web. While the DevInfo database technology platform is still a Windows application, the new DevInfo 6.0 web portal is supposed to run on other proprietary platforms (such as Macintosh) as well as open source platforms (e.g., CMEInfo, MICS Compiler and Galleries.) The web-based DevInfo 6.0 will also operate on both Internet Explorer and Firefox. This evaluation was not able to independently confirm these features.

⁹³ Country fact sheets are now available online at www.devinfo.org/Di-wiki/index.php?title=Portal:Country_Factsheets, accessed in February and March 2009.

⁹⁴ Summary data is only by year. Figures were collated from training reports by DSG but not separately verified. Reporting is not 100 percent and, in a few cases, some people may have had more than one training session, thus an accurate figure for people trained cannot be cited.

Findings on outcomes and impact

87. This evaluation sought to assess the use of DevInfo within the UN system and, more importantly, by national partners. Evidence concerning results at the outcome and impact level is limited, as there is no system for monitoring and reporting on such developments. Such evidence would depict institutional or behavioural changes that could be attributed to or associated with DevInfo.⁹⁵

88. Evidence from country visits shows that many of those trained on DevInfo may not apply or use it. Interviews conducted at country and regional levels suggest that DevInfo has not been mainstreamed as a data monitoring or display tool in most NSOs, UNICEF offices and UN offices. Within the UN system, it is used most within UNICEF, although even in UNICEF offices there are often only one or two DevInfo experts who then service the rest of the office.⁹⁶

89. DevInfo users are typically experts in their field who seek and use innovative technologies. They encourage the use of DevInfo and often 'champion' its cause. In some cases, the use of DevInfo may stop when those who champion the software are called to other duties or management is not committed to using DevInfo.

90. The use of DevInfo increases when those who champion the software secure interest and commitment from policy and decision makers. DevInfo display functionalities have been especially useful tools for increasing interest in statistical evidence to support policy and decision making. Appreciation of DevInfo by policy makers is dependant on the existence of a mature and active national data collection and processing system clearly linked to national policy making and planning with clear and engaged national ownership. Policy and decision makers do not require specific technology skills for using DevInfo if they have technical staff to provide them with tables, graphs and maps.

91. The immediate users of DevInfo are technical staff, most of whom are in NSOs or similar institutions that manage the DevInfo database or produce the ultimate outputs. The most prominent partners and users of the national adaptations are NSOs. However, if the partnership is limited only to NSOs, results are likely to be limited to presentation of indicators for monitoring and reporting and more policy and planning related uses will be limited. NSOs may also have competing and alternative database systems and be asked to provide data for other UN-supported databases, thus they may not be as committed to supporting DevInfo.

92. In the evaluation user survey, respondents reported using DevInfo for the following: monitoring MDGs (59 percent); monitoring national development goals (45 percent) sector-wide monitoring (10 percent), such as health and education; national-level planning (10 percent); census data and household data survey dissemination (10 percent); other unspecified use (10 percent); and monitoring aid effectiveness (7 percent).

93. Thanks in part to the general DevInfo template in use in DevInfo 4.0 and 5.0, which comes preset for global MDG indicators, national adaptations of DevInfo are structured around global and, in some cases, nationally adapted MDG indicators. In some countries, MDG reports are prepared using data from national adaptations and some national reports use the mapping and presentation features of DevInfo to produce graphics and presentation materials. However, the use of DevInfo data for MDG reporting is not universal. While the MDG networks advocate using it for reporting, agencies do not systematically support it. Thus the full potential of DevInfo MDG reporting is not reached.

94. National DevInfo databases are being used to improve the capacity of results-based planning and monitoring national development priorities. In the user survey, 83 percent of respondents indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that DevInfo local adaptation had been used for presenting statistical data to decision makers, but only 64 percent agreed or strongly agreed that DevInfo local adaptation had been used for supporting decisions. This was echoed during the country visits, where it was noted that monitoring and presentation of the data was more clearly represented than actual use of the data to make

⁹⁵ The 2008 publication by UNICEF, *Country-led M&E Systems: Better Evidence, Better Policies, Better Development Results*, contains a chapter titled 'Strengthening Country Data Dissemination System: Good Practices in Using DevInfo'. The chapter contains good illustrative evidence for the use of DevInfo but does not contain much information on outcomes and impact.

⁹⁶ This was noted during country office visits, including India and Thailand.

decisions. The level of maturity and the quality and design of the national adaptation appeared to influence the results.

95. DevInfo is apparently primarily used for its display functionalities. Its potential use as a database system for monitoring development indicators is less prominent. By presenting multiple sources of data on one indicator, DevInfo can assist in the discourse on data harmonization. For example, CMEInfo (the child mortality database) appears to have triggered useful debate at both the global level and in some countries. The process of developing DevInfo national adaptations also appears to trigger action and discourse on data quality and sources as decisions are made on what data sources to use and what data to enter. DevInfo has contributed substantially to the harmonization of national and sub-national monitoring systems in some countries (such as Thailand and Serbia) and is showing promise in others.

Conclusions and recommendations

96. While the current approach of training a large number of people on DevInfo (many of whom do not actually use it) and providing support to users upon request has produced some results at the outcome and impact levels, it has limitations and does not allow DevInfo to be used to its full potential. A more systematic approach should be adopted at the country level that focuses on added value and comparative advantage of DevInfo within the national context of specific countries. DevInfo would thus become less dependent on individual 'champions' and less supply driven and more demand driven. Display functionalities of DevInfo have been effective tools for raising interest of policy and decision makers in statistical evidence. The utility of DevInfo as a database system for monitoring human development indicators and MDGs would be enhanced if more systematic attention were paid to compatibility of DevInfo with other database systems in use in specific countries. DevInfo can contribute to increased compliance of different systems with international database standards.

97. There is a need to revisit the vision and revise the original objectives of DevInfo for the next five years. The emphasis should be on the additionality and complementarities of DevInfo as compared to other database systems addressing dimensions of human development at the global, regional, national and sub-national levels. The statements on vision and objectives should focus on the specific contribution of DevInfo to strengthening national capacities in developing countries to monitor human development against national development goals and MDGs. The evaluation suggests a more focused approach that abides by principles of results-based management, set in the wider context of knowledge development and evidence-based decision making and takes into account current and emerging trends in information technology.

D. Oversight, management, funding and implementation of DevInfo

Oversight and management

Findings

98. The oversight and management structure of DevInfo at the global level has been relatively light and flexible. Staffing costs—which included a Global Administrator with minimal support staff, a single Project Manager in DOCO, and a relatively small DSG—have been limited. The fact that such a small base of administrators has managed such a complex architecture with palpable results in more than 100 countries is mainly due to the tremendous personal commitment of the individuals involved, notably the Head of CSF and the Global Administrator. The results achieved also would not have been possible without numerous ‘champions’ working at national and regional levels around the world.

99. Oversight is provided by the DIAAC, a working group of the UNDG. The membership and position of DIAAC is at a relatively technical level within the UN system. The DIAAC is accountable to the Working Group on Programming Issues within the UNDG architecture. Membership varies from meeting to meeting and is predominately made up of mid-level UN staff.⁹⁷ There is no annual programme of work for the Committee, but agendas are set for each meeting and minutes are taken. In terms of reporting up within the UNDG framework, there are occasional references to DevInfo in meetings of the High-level Committee on Programmes of the Chief Executives Board.^{98,99}

100. Day-to-day management is primarily in the hands of a single UNICEF staff member with minimal technical and administrative support. All the reporting and implementation functions reside in a single-source annual sub-contract to one NGO. Reporting by the NGO is comprehensive but mainly activity based. M&E indicators are limited and do not fully reflect progress or the complexity of the programme.

101. The DevInfo Field Reference Group is convened on an *ad hoc* basis and has no standing membership or terms of reference. This has reportedly provided flexibility to include different members for different meetings. The majority of members have been UN and UNICEF staff or NSO counterparts. There has been little participation from wider users such as line ministries and none from civil society or academia. The UNICEF and UN members have been mostly M&E officers.

102. DevInfo focal points are named for each national adaptation and also for each regional or thematic adaptation. They can be drawn from the United Nations, government or other agencies. A focal point was listed for the 109 countries that completed a country fact sheet on the DevInfo website. A complete and updated roster is not available so the profile over time cannot be verified. There is a wider network of focal points for each training event or other separate activity. They are responsible for organizing and reporting on that activity. Members of the field reference group are drawn from their ranks.

103. The CSF and DSG provide a range of services, the majority of which are outsourced to the information technology consulting company Avalon. Of the 379 survey respondents, 222 (59 percent) reported they had contacted DSG for support; 163 (73 percent) were either satisfied or very satisfied.

104. The advantage of DevInfo being a UNDG joint programme at the global level is that there is greater legitimacy within the UN system. At the national level, there have been some successes in delivery as a joint UN programme. Resident Coordinators’ Annual Reports provide a good source of information in this respect. A review conducted for this evaluation of Annual Reports from 2006, 2007 and 2008 shows that there is sufficiently robust evidence of joint UN activities and programmes on DevInfo in 32 countries or

⁹⁷ Attendees are generally at the P4 and P5 level with the occasional D1 attendee.

⁹⁸ Complementarity of work on UN Geographic Information Working Group and DevInfo was noted in ‘Chief Executives Board for Coordination’, 06-36479 (E) 070706, 24 March 2006, and ‘Report of the High-level Committee on Programmes at its 11th Session’, Paris, 27 February to 1 March 2006.

⁹⁹ It was noted that both MDGInfo and GenderInfo were based on a DevInfo platform in ‘Chief Executives Board for Coordination’, 06-36479 (E) 070706, 16 October 2006, and ‘Report of the High-level Committee on Programmes at its 12th Session’, Rome, 29-30 September 2006.

that activities supported by UNICEF were found noteworthy enough to be included in the Resident Coordinator Report. Activities mentioned range from training of national and UN staff in DevInfo to the use of DevInfo for national planning processes and MDG reporting.

Conclusions and recommendations

105. The oversight and management structure has its limitations and is not appropriate if DevInfo is to evolve to its full potential. First, there could be a perceived conflict of interest in having the Administrator chair the DIAAC, as the Administrator is essentially advising and overseeing himself or herself. Second, membership in the DIAAC is mostly at a technical level and does not involve senior levels of management. This is linked to the rather technical role of the DIAAC according to its current terms of reference.

106. Third, and most important, the link between the mandate of the DIAAC and the overall policy framework of the UNDG Working Group on Programming Issues is relatively weak. DevInfo is expected to contribute to knowledge management support. DevInfo is perceived to be the common database for human development and the MDGs, as a shared impact monitoring tool, linked to plans and budgets for results-based management. The present oversight and management structure does not allow DevInfo to respond to the expectation that it should support the linkage of country-level national monitoring of development results to monitoring of the UNDAF. This would require a more explicit policy and guidance framework to be developed by the Working Group on Programming Issues with high-level UNDG endorsement that would embed DevInfo into a comprehensive approach toward strengthening M&E capacities in developing countries. DIAAC is currently not empowered or capable to propose a roadmap that would allow the Working Group on Programming Issues and UNDG to actually implement its ambitious agenda.

107. At global, regional and country levels, DevInfo is still strongly perceived to be a programme sponsored, managed and implemented by UNICEF. UNICEF does not act as a mere administrative agent of this joint programme. At the global level, while it is acknowledged that DOCO does provide some technical support at the request of Resident Coordinators and UN country teams, it might be appropriate for DOCO to assume a stronger role in the overall coordination of DevInfo and expand its support role. At regional and country levels, M&E strengthening, including the promotion of DevInfo, should be granted the necessary attention in overall priority setting of regional management teams and UN country teams. In addition, UNICEF should continue to exercise the role of administrative agent and Secretariat during the foreseeable future. Within this context, it is equally important to ensure that the DevInfo initiative advances from being viewed by national partners as a UN project to a significant tool in strengthening national M&E capacities with full ownership by national institutions.

108. This evaluation endorses the observations of the Office of Internal Audit of UNICEF concerning the contractual relationship between UNICEF and the CSF,¹⁰⁰ but notes that DevInfo is not an exclusive UNICEF programme and that the risks need to be considered in the inter-agency context of the UNDG. The exploration of alternative arrangements should also take into account the possibility of certain services being provided by regional providers. The experience of the Latin America and Caribbean region is instructive in this regard.¹⁰¹

Funding and implementation

Findings

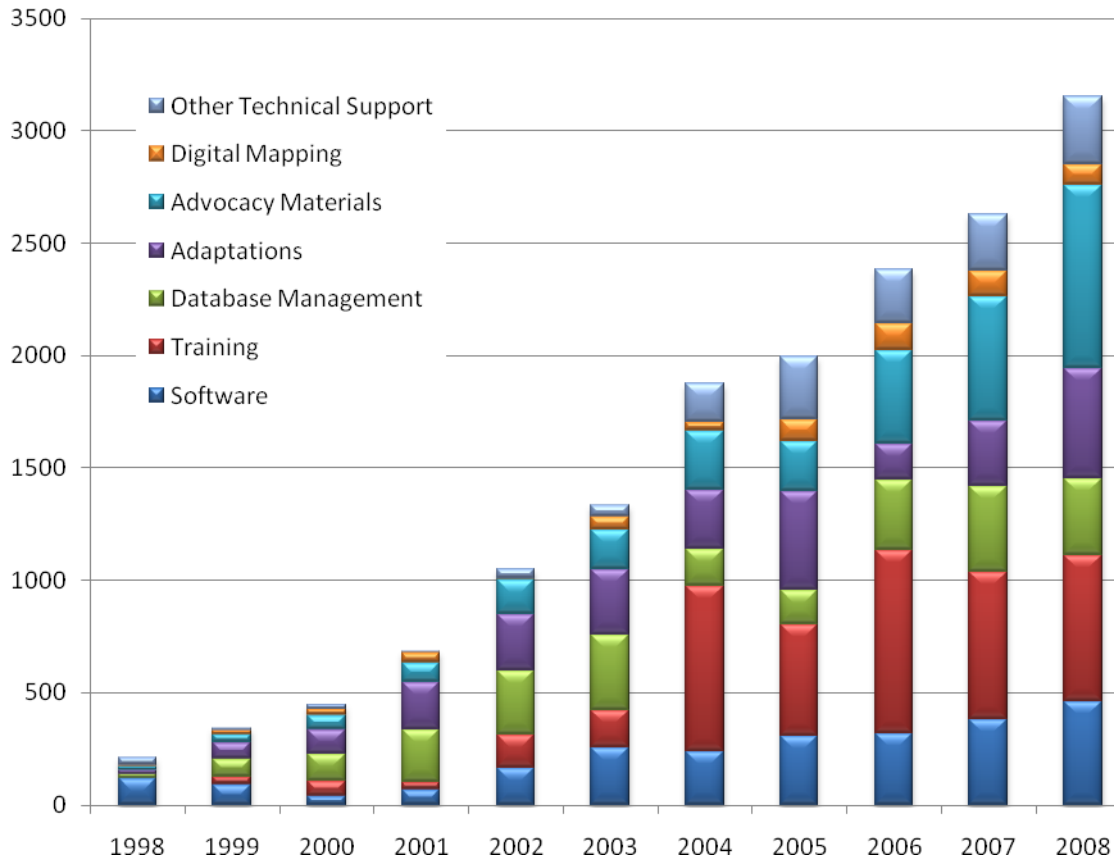
109. The annual value of CSF contracts has risen steadily from USD 1.8 million in 2004 to USD 3.1 million in 2008 as shown in Figure 2 and Table 2. These amounts represent only the expenditure routed through the DSG. There are also costs associated with the DevInfo Global Administrator and staff in

¹⁰⁰ See paragraph 65.

¹⁰¹ See Section E, paragraph 135 for more details.

UNICEF Headquarters Division of Policy and Planning (which totaled 898,000 USD in 2008),¹⁰² the costs directly incurred by DOCO, and the costs incurred by members of the guiding committees.¹⁰³ In addition, there are considerable direct expenditures at the country, regional and programme level that are not recorded in this system,¹⁰⁴ including the costs of UN and national staff time, capacity building, recruitment, training, information technology infrastructure, office space, communications, database production, and advocacy materials. UNICEF Headquarters funding has remained fairly constant since 2004, whereas regional and other UN funding is rising.

Figure 2. ChildInfo/DevInfo funding via CSF, 1998-2008 (USD, thousands)



¹⁰² UNICEF, 'Risk Assessment: Contracting and Managing the DevInfo Service Contract', Office of Internal Audit, New York, April 2009.

¹⁰³ These were not estimated.

¹⁰⁴ Examples would be: costs of travel and accommodation for training participants met directly out of UNICEF country office budgets, printing and translation costs for materials where the work is not done by DSG, and direct and in-kind costs incurred by NSOs in developing and maintaining national adaptations.

Table 2. ChildInfo/DevInfo funding via CSF, 1998-2008 (USD, thousands)											
Category	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Software	118	90	42	69	167	254	239	307	318	381	462
Training	0	35	65	32	146	170	736	498	817	658	650
Database management	20	81	123	236	286	332	164	151	311	382	343
Adaptations	18	72	108	213	253	293	264	441	160	289	490
Advocacy materials	13	37	62	85	152	176	263	223	417	552	812
Digital mapping	6	18	25	42	4	60	36	96	119	115	91
Other technical support	35	9	21	4	44	51	174	279	242	250	303
Total	210	342	446	681	1,102	1,336	1,876	1,995	2,384	2,627	3,151

Source: DevInfo Global Administrator, February 2009.

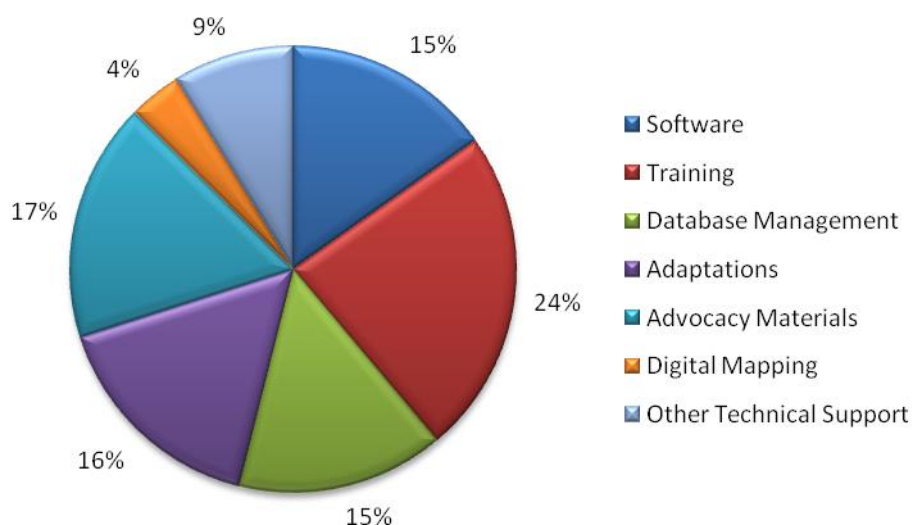
110. A more detailed breakdown of the funding via UN organizations other than UNICEF is given in Table 3 and illustrates how such funds are linked to specific DevInfo adaptations.

Table 3. DevInfo funding via CSF by joint UN programme and other UN organizations (USD, thousands)						
UN organizations	Description	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
UN joint programme	EmergencyInfo		268	122	238	5
UN joint programme	Child Mortality Estimation (CMEInfo)				21	210
UN joint programme	Immunization Summary Database				36	52
UN joint programme	CensusInfo 2010					50
UN joint programme	GenderInfo				56	
UN joint programme	Other joint programmes		90		59	98
UNDGO (DOCO)	Capacity-building UN system and counterparts	260	282	229	257	313
UNDP	UN country team/NSO support			39	60	69
UNFPA	CensusInfo 2010, data exchange			27	13	55
DFID/UNSD	Web Pilot/Portal/MDGInfo/SDMX	320	33	288	56	290
UNSD	CensusInfo 2010					50
UN-HABITAT	UrbanInfo		64	49		59
Total		580	738	754	796	1,251

Source: DevInfo Global Administrator, February 2009. Note: UNDGO stands for United Nations Development Group Office; UNDP, United Nations Development Programme; UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund; DFID, Department for International Development; UNSD, United Nations Statistics Division; UN-HABITAT, United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

111. Categories of expenditure by CSF are given in Figure 3. Training includes the cost of consultants and travel, largely conducted by face-to-face training sessions. Advocacy materials include the direct costs of the design, development, printing and shipping. There are also additional expenditures not captured here or recorded centrally that are incurred directly within DevInfo national work plans (for UN organizations and national institutions).

Figure 3. ChildInfo/DevInfo CSF expenditure by category, 1998-2008



Source: *DevInfo Global Administrator, February 2009.*

112. An extensive DevInfo management reporting system of the DSG compiles reports from each activity completed. Annex VII provides more detail. The DevInfo website is the main communication hub and contains adaptable materials, software downloads, key contacts, presentations, reports and records of meetings. Each country maintains an individual fact sheet with key information. These fact sheets are maintained by the DSG based on country submissions and vary in degree of completeness and currency. The documentation available is extensive.

113. The DevInfo initiative is now being implemented in more than 100 countries with many partners—both government and UN organizations—involved in each activity. In addition, there are nine UN organizations involved at the global level in joint programming of DevInfo activities, as well as UNDG.¹⁰⁵ There are more UN organizations involved at the national level. This has resulted in a lengthy administrative procedure of consolidating annual work plans in the beginning of the year. UNICEF has consistently provided funding in a cost-sharing arrangement with DOCO for core activities including software development, maintenance, helpdesk and technical support, and project administration.

114. Prior to 2004, ChildInfo activities had been managed directly by various UNICEF regional and country offices through a series of regional and country-level contracts with CSF. Since 2004, the DevInfo Global Administrator has ensured central management and administration of funds through global work planning and an annual contracting process with CSF. This has been a step forward in terms of efficiency and transparency. At the country level, UN country teams consolidate work plans into one country-level agreement between the country stakeholders and integrate the work plan into the global DevInfo work plan. When other donors and UN organizations are involved, they are encouraged to have UNICEF manage the funds on behalf of the DevInfo initiative. An annual core contract is signed each year between UNICEF Headquarters and CSF that covers overall management of the project, software development and technical support. The core funding is subject to approval of the combined annual work plan and also signature of an annual contract each year between CSF and UNICEF. Additional funds are routed via regional and country offices.

115. Many regional and country-level work plans are not funded at the start of the year and, in fact, remain unfunded, as indicated in Table 4.

¹⁰⁵ These are Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Food Programme (UNFPA), United Nations Settlement Programme (UN-HABITAT), UNICEF, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), UN Statistics Division and WHO. UNDG also makes contributions.

Table 4. Funded activities for DevInfo by year, 2006-2008

Year	Budgeted activities, USD	Unfunded activities, USD	Funded, USD
2008	4,416,567	1,353,678	3,062,889
2007	4,928,167	2,079,545	2,848,622
2006	2,821,164	477,258	2,343,906

Source: UNICEF Risk DevInfo Assessment Report Internal Audit Office 2009.

116. As a result, there has been a steady stream of requests each year from DevInfo focal points for activities to be added, modified, deleted and postponed. Under the current management structure, these requests have been consolidated into CSF contract amendments submitted for review by UNICEF management. The consolidation process has taken three to four months on average and has constrained the ability of the initiative to respond to partner requests for immediate and timely action in the implementation of DevInfo activities in the field. The approval process and complexity of work planning for 200 to 300 activities each year causes implementation delays of up to several months at the beginning of each year.¹⁰⁶

117. The major drawback of the current practice is that work plans are limited to annual cycles and that no medium- and long-term plans are established. This also makes it necessary to limit contracts with CSF to annual cycles. This has numerous disadvantages. First, it is unnecessarily labour-intensive for UNICEF, as it involves numerous planning documents, administration of a large number of fund commitments, numerous amendments, and intense correspondence with field offices. Second, it entails a heavy burden on the service provider, who has to provide continuous services with short-term contracts and frequent amendments to the contracts. In practice, CSF has been able to mitigate the risks of an uneven funding situation and has managed to provide continuous technical support to the rapidly expanding DevInfo user base.

118. Third, and most important, the short-term and *ad hoc* funding and work planning modalities are not conducive to the development of a medium- and long-term vision for DevInfo. The business model also carries the risk that medium- and long-term commitments made by DevInfo are not backed up by secure funding and programmatic intent. An example is the 2009 launch of CensusInfo in the UN Statistical Commission of the General Assembly, when assurances of sustainability were made without organizational backup.

119. DevInfo has not explored the option of fund-raising from member states or other sources of funding, such as global funds. There is no doubt that the generation and dissemination of good statistical data to support policy and decision making in developing countries is of great interest to certain donor countries and possibly also to middle-income countries and those under South-South Cooperation.¹⁰⁷ Global funds (such as the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization or the Clinton Foundation) might also show some interest in this regard. The possibility of creating trust funds to support DevInfo—and possibly also more general M&E capacity development—should be explored. This will, in turn, make it necessary to develop a medium- to long-term vision for DevInfo as well as a coherent results framework with SMART¹⁰⁸ objectives and indicators.

120. While the business model has become more streamlined and has been successful in terms of mobilization of internal resources and more equitable burden-sharing within the UN system, it is still unnecessarily burdensome for both UNICEF and the service provider. Most importantly, it has not been conducive to the development of a medium- and long-term vision in response to the challenges related to a more systemic and comprehensive strengthening of M&E capacities in developing countries. DevInfo should also mobilize resources of donors and other sources of funding and constitute trust funds for this purpose.

¹⁰⁶ At the time of writing in March 2009, the annual UNICEF Headquarters DevInfo contract had not yet been approved

¹⁰⁷ The example of Thailand applies, where the NSO has advised a neighboring country, Laos, in setting up DevInfo.

¹⁰⁸ SMART indicates specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

E. Opportunities and challenges for the future

DevInfo as part of M&E capacity development in developing countries

121. There is an increasing demand from policy and decision makers for reliable and accessible data concerning all dimensions of human development and more particularly those covered by the MDGs. Notably, NSOs are challenged to generate such data and make them available to users and the public at large, who have no specific training in statistics. The reliability of data depends upon their accuracy, standardization and coherence, while accessibility concerns their transparency, display and timeliness. In some cases, the observation of human development indicators is linked to the M&E of government and others' performance and involves assessing relevance and effectiveness of developmental policies or interventions, such as development effectiveness and aid effectiveness. NSOs and other institutions producing, analysing and disseminating data are challenged to develop their capacities in this regard. DevInfo possesses features that enable it to make a contribution to such M&E capacity development.

122. Capacity is defined as the ability of people, organizations and society to manage their affairs successfully.¹⁰⁹ Capacity development is defined as the process whereby people, organizations and society unleash, create, adapt, strengthen and maintain capacity over time. The UN development system has a direct role in capacity development at the country level and its efforts are embedded in national processes in this regard. Capacity development is commonly associated with various forms of support aimed at individuals (training), institutions (organizational development) and the enabling environment (support to policies and strategies). Capacity development is at the core of the UN system's contribution to development. There is also a strong link between capacity development and related dimensions of the UN system's normative roles decided by all member states, including norms and standards setting and advocacy for ratification and implementation of international conventions and instruments. What roles the UN system performs in a specific country are, in principle, determined through agreements between the national partners and UN organizations.

123. The UN system has not developed a comprehensive and coherent approach to M&E capacity development in developing countries in general and capacity development in statistics in particular. But there are currently numerous initiatives that address the challenges of data harmonization and dissemination for decision making, such as the SDMX data standards sponsored by the UN Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the UN Spatial Data Infrastructure sponsored by the UN Geographic Information Working Group. Assistance is also provided by several UN organizations to various forms of sectoral and thematic data collection (such as health, education, agriculture, food security and gender) and to household surveys, the latter by UNICEF. The UNDG has defined the areas of DOCO work as, among other things, including support to the linkage between country-level monitoring of development results to M&E of UNDAF results. While there is DOCO guidance on M&E related to the UNDAF, there is no framework for country-level activities of the UN system related to the development of M&E capacities by NSOs and other institutions involved in data collection and dissemination related to human development indicators.

124. DevInfo should be more strategically embedded in M&E capacity development activities of the UN system at the country level, notably the development of statistical capacities to monitor human development indicators. Database and display functionalities of DevInfo allow it to make a major contribution to such efforts. In its communication strategies, DevInfo should present itself with less emphasis on its software characteristics (which are largely adaptations of universally available software), and more emphasis on its use as a UN system for storing and disseminating data on human development to support standardization and compatibility of data both within countries and internationally. DevInfo needs to demonstrate its added value and comparative advantage in relation to other tools for MDG monitoring and measurement of development effectiveness. This needs to happen globally and at the country level.

¹⁰⁹ Position statement of the UNDG.

125. The capacity development role of the UN system extends to regional entities uniting individual countries, such as the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), the South African Development Community (SADC) and the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat). There is evidence that DevInfo has established mutually enriching forms of cooperation with such entities in support of countries in different regions. While the UN system has an extensive mandate to support data standardization and dissemination around the world, regional bodies play an important role in this regard as well.

126. More systematic UN support to M&E capacity development at the country level will require an explicit demand from national partners to ensure national ownership and leadership in the process and a high degree of responsiveness from the Resident Coordinator and the UN country team. Such capacity development should ideally be part of the CCA/UNDAF process and possibly be articulated as a joint programme of the UN system. Given its M&E capacity in country offices, UNICEF could assume the role of lead agency or administrative agent. The role and contribution of DevInfo based on its added value and comparative advantage in relation to other national data collection, storage and dissemination systems would have to be spelled out in detail as well as objectives and results to be achieved within the UNDAF. This demand-based and integrated approach should be piloted in a limited number of countries that show interest and commitment.

Options for institutional sustainability and possible expansion of DevInfo

DevInfo as part of UN system M&E support

127. DevInfo is a joint programme of the UN system at the global level in the sense that it is co-funded by nine UN organizations and that DOCO ensures liaison with other support functions within the UNDG. However, the link with other areas of knowledge management and notably guidance to the CCA/UNDAF process at the country level is relatively weak. The DIAAC is mostly composed of technical staff from different agencies and does not perform a strategic role in liaising with the UNDG Working Group on Programming Issues. Senior levels of the UNDG have not renewed their commitment to DevInfo for a long time. In many ways, DevInfo is still what it was in 2004, when the Executive Director of UNICEF offered DevInfo as a tool developed and managed by UNICEF to contribute to MDG monitoring. DevInfo is mostly not conceptualized as a joint programme at the country level. It is usually perceived as a UNICEF supported initiative with Resident Coordinator and UN country team endorsement.

128. For DevInfo to become a truly joint programme of the UN development system at the global level, senior management of UNDG needs to renew its commitment to the system. The Global Administrator, in consultation with the DIAAC, should prepare a strategy document that would outline a renewed vision and objectives for DevInfo for the coming 5 to 10 years. The document should be approved by the Working Group on Programming Issues and/or the UNDG senior management meeting.

129. In the strategy document, DevInfo could be presented as the lynchpin of overall M&E capacity development support by the UN system in developing countries. Objectives should, to the greatest possible extent, be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound). Strategy development may require choices to be made as to which thematic or country-level adaptations could be supported within the given time-frame. The strategy document should be accompanied by a budget and a resource mobilization plan. The development of a medium-term strategy would represent a break with the current practice of *ad hoc* budgets and work plans on an annual basis and even shorter time-frames.

130. The strategy document should also contain clear indications concerning the perceived added value and comparative advantage of DevInfo given current and emerging trends in statistical data processing and dissemination and in the context of developments in information technology. To the greatest possible extent, the document should be forward looking and minimize the risk of DevInfo becoming obsolete in the medium term.

131. A renewed commitment by UNDG may entail strengthening the role of DOCO in the administration of DevInfo. If M&E capacity development is recognized as an important part of the role and contribution of

the UN development system at the country level, this may require a substantive revision of the CCA/UNDAF guidance issued by the Working Group on Programming Issues of the UNDG with DOCO support.

132. A consultative process with member countries and UN country teams on the draft strategy document will be required to ensure that DevInfo remains demand-driven and responsive to needs and priorities at the country level. Such consultations could be ensured, for example, through the UN Statistical Commission of the General Assembly (which recently launched CensusInfo) and possibly the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Another process should be launched with Resident Coordinators and UN country teams, especially in countries that have mature national adaptations of DevInfo. In such countries, UN support could be organized as joint programmes, possibly with UNICEF as the lead agency or administrative agent.

133. The strengthening of the coordination role of DOCO will have to be a gradual process, which will require strong support from UNICEF. During the transition period, which may take several years, UNICEF will have to continue to ensure a coordinating and administrative role, which can only gradually be transferred to DOCO.

Options for DevInfo support

134. The recent assessment carried out by the UNICEF Office of Internal Audit of the contractual relationship with CSF has drawn attention to the risks for UNICEF (and *ipso facto* the UN system) of relying almost exclusively on a single service provider for DevInfo support. While the relationship has been reliable and the services rendered of high quality, alternative arrangements should be explored either within UNICEF or by documenting the costs and risks of working with other partners.

135. In the original proposal for DevInfo in 2004, regional technical support centres were envisaged, but the idea was not pursued due to lack of funding. There are several regional support components at present, each with a different emphasis. Latin American and Caribbean countries already organize their own DevInfo support and are also at the forefront of some interesting innovations in DevInfo applications, for example cooperation with a regional body outside the UN system (CARICOM) and support mechanisms between countries under South-South Cooperation. The Asia and Pacific Support Services Centre of UNICEF in Bangkok has organized consultations to look at the regional role and strategic intent of DevInfo, which has added to the global fund of knowledge and thinking on DevInfo. The UNICEF Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States Regional Office has developed communication strategies around DevInfo.

136. A renewed UNDG commitment to DevInfo as part of UN support to M&E capacity development and a strengthened role for DOCO will have to address the issue of coordination and possibly harmonization of various initiatives of the UN system to standardize data for the monitoring of human development. DevInfo can play a lead, or at least catalyzing, role in such an endeavour.

137. The proprietary software and closed development model of DevInfo has been challenged by the open source model, which is defined as computer software for which the source code and certain other rights normally reserved for copyright holders are provided under a software license that meets the Open Source Definition or that is in the public domain. This permits users to use, change and improve the software, and to redistribute it in modified or unmodified forms

138. With the rapid growth in Internet applications, there are an increasing number of applications built on open source technologies. However, the important debate is not between open source versus proprietary software but about how to increase interoperability and to work within open standards. The development of DevInfo started with proprietary software development tools but has been increasingly using open source software development tools. The DevInfo initiative has made a significant contribution to interoperability through its leadership role in implementing emerging international standards for socio-economic data (such as SDMX, DDI and the UN Geographic Information Working Group). DevInfo could now shift to allow DevInfo technology to be available to software developers who could then take the currently available DevInfo 6.0 Software Development Toolkit even further.

139. Such an approach would be highly compatible with principles of national ownership and leadership in development and the specific role of the UN system in capacity development, including facilitating exchanges of innovations among countries and reducing dependence on commercial service providers whenever feasible and advantageous. DevInfo is also not at risk of losing the unique role and contribution, which is related to data dissemination and visualization, as DevInfo database technology is not limited to one software development model or another, as long as the DevInfo database model itself is compliant with the agreed international standards. Aware of the growing interest in open software development platforms, DevInfo management has decided to commission an open source solution for DevInfo in 2009 in addition to the current platform. This open source version will provide developers with the source code, technical documentation and a governance mechanism for software change management procedures for the official reference version. This will also include strengthening technical oversight and support as part of the governing and guidance structure, with the intent that DevInfo technical innovations will emerge from an exchange among developers in different countries facilitated by the DSG and other DevInfo support structures.

Options to create a sustainable funding base

140. DevInfo coordination and support has relied exclusively on financial resources provided from within the UN system with UNICEF covering a major share, which is, however, decreasing in relative terms. While there are no indications that UNICEF or other participating UN organizations would withdraw or decrease their support to DevInfo, there is currently no institutional framework or organizational setup to guarantee sustainability of the programme funding beyond the current year. In light of competing priorities for senior management of UNICEF and other UN organizations, continued funding at the same level should not be taken for granted. Moreover it is increasingly recognized that the current business model is rather cost-intensive for all parties involved and is not conducive to the development of a medium- and long-term vision.

141. There is an expectation that DevInfo will continue to be offered free of charge and that coordination and support (including training and technical assistance) will come with at least some funding from the UN system. There is no evidence that users in developing countries would be prepared or even able to pay for DevInfo. Free use and support has increased the acceptability of the system and has encouraged its adoption. The current fund-raising approach has not encouraged national or other counterparts to be self-sufficient. Only some middle-income countries have become relatively self-sufficient in DevInfo management (for example, Thailand). Given the rising year-on-year expenditure and the increasing number of adaptations, the approach to budgeting and fund-raising may have to be re-assessed.

142. DevInfo could be considered a public good, as the information it stores and disseminates is universally available (at least to those with information technology and the ability to use it), its consumption and use is non-rival, and it can be used repeatedly. However, there is an uneven distribution of DevInfo's utility in terms of net benefits. DevInfo is potentially there for all, but only some have interest in the data and information it generates.

143. If the proprietary model for DevInfo support is maintained, partial privatization that involves spinning off a commercial branch comprising the software development or training and technical support could be considered. Introduction of user fees or another payment system has been suggested. The major online and CD databases of the World Bank, Global Development Finance and Asian Development Bank have annual subscriber fees of 200-550 USD for their multi-year CDs and online versions.¹¹⁰ But given the mission DevInfo has pursued since its creation—to be accessible to and used by people in developing countries, including those without resources for data processing and dissemination—this pleads strongly in favour of the current subsidized model. This would also, and perhaps increasingly, be the case if DevInfo were to evolve into an open source model.

144. Development of a stand-alone foundation with charitable or not-for-profit status and a mandate to support and extend DevInfo globally is an option that may be explored if the undg were not to commit itself to DevInfo as part of M&E capacity development in developing countries. However in that scenario,

¹¹⁰ World Bank, 'WDI, GDF & ADI Online Databases', <http://go.worldbank.org/6HAYAHG8H0>, accessed 24 April 2009.

DevInfo would miss the link to the normative mandates of the UN system to help countries achieve MDGs and other development goals. It would also be less likely that DevInfo could rely on field presence of the UN system and UNICEF in particular. Funding and management of DevInfo by the UN system is therefore clearly the preferred option.

145. To date, there has been no coordinated fund-raising by UNICEF or by the UN system. At the national level, UNICEF country offices have occasionally sought donor funding in the context of wider fund-raising efforts without specifically targeting fund-raising around DevInfo.¹¹¹ Thus the donor response to DevInfo is largely untested. However, donors and other funders have consistently complained about poor quality data in developing countries and would most likely be willing to invest in systems that are conducive to improvements and national capacity development in this regard. The establishment of a UN Trust Fund, with funds pooled by major stakeholders, is a model that has worked for other initiatives.

146. Fund-raising may have to be broadened beyond internal UN and traditional donors to include South-South Cooperation (already practiced on a limited level, for example with the Government of Panama supporting DevInfoLAC—the DevInfo Latin America and Caribbean Support Unit) and other development funds such as civil society and the private sector. Any extension of the fund-raising base requires consideration of whether there are other sources of funds for such an initiative. So far, there has been limited testing of such interest and support.

Conditions for a possible expansion of DevInfo

147. DevInfo has proven a relevant and potentially effective tool to generate and disseminate statistical evidence related to human development in support of policy and decision making. With a presence in more than 100 countries and a proliferation of adaptations and themes, the question is whether DevInfo should expand further or consolidate and become more coherent and focused.

148. The current business model is still rather dependent on individual ‘champions’ both at the global level and in regions and countries. In addition, a longer-term vision and possible expansion of DevInfo is limited by the facts that fund-raising is limited to internal sources within UNICEF and the UN system and that work planning and contractual agreements are with a single service provider on an annual basis.

149. Possible expansion would have to be considered in the context of broader UNDG engagement in a comprehensive and multi-year capacity development programme concerning M&E, in which DevInfo could play a major role. Placing DevInfo in such a broader framework would entail major changes in fund-raising modalities (including the establishment of trust funds) and institutional arrangements (including a strengthened role for DOCO), and considering changes in the DevInfo support role in an environment evolving to open source models.

¹¹¹ Information gathered from country visits and during stakeholder interviews. An example is UNICEF India, which specifically avoided earmarked funding and supports DevInfo from a general donor grant.

Annex I. Terms of reference for the DevInfo evaluation

Background

The Development Information System (DevInfo) is a database system for monitoring human development. It is a tool for organizing, storing and presenting data in a uniform way to facilitate data sharing at the country level across government departments, United Nations (UN) organizations and development partners. DevInfo has features that produce tables, graphs and maps for inclusion in reports, presentations and advocacy materials. The software supports both standard indicators (the MDG indicators) and user-defined indicators. DevInfo is compliant with international statistical standards to support open access and widespread data exchange and operates both as a desktop application as well as on the web so it can be accessed from anywhere.

In 2004, DevInfo was endorsed by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) to assist countries in monitoring achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The DevInfo initiative originated as ChildInfo and is managed by UNICEF on behalf of, and with support from, 20 member agencies of the UNDG. In many countries, and notably in the Delivering as One programme pilots, the DevInfo initiative is implemented as a joint programme and can be seen as a concrete product of joint implementation by UN organizations.

By the end of 2007, more than 100 countries were using DevInfo as the platform to develop a national socio-economic database. Specific adaptations of DevInfo have been released such as EmergencyInfo and MTSPInfo, along with country-specific adaptations. More than 80 national statistics organizations and other agencies have officially launched an adapted DevInfo database with their user-specified requirements. The software is available royalty-free. The DevInfo Support Group (DSG) is providing technical assistance to the countries as well as supporting national capacity-building efforts, with more than 20,000 professionals trained by the end of 2007 (60 percent government and 40 percent UN staff).

Software development and technical maintenance are ensured through a long-term technical support partnership commitment to this initiative with the Community Systems Foundation (CSF). The DevInfo software design process is guided by the DevInfo Field Reference Group and coordinated by the DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee (DIAAC). This process builds upon national user requirements and technical feedback.

Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to inform the DIAAC and UNICEF senior management in their decision making concerning the way forward for the initiative, most notably as far as the future management and implementation structure of the initiative and its sustainability and possible expansion are concerned. The timing of the evaluation is scheduled to inform both the UNICEF biennium 2010-2011 planning processes and the initiative's partnership framework with CSF.

Objectives and key questions

The evaluation has three distinct objectives.

Objective 1: Assess relevance, effectiveness and impact of DevInfo at national and sub-national levels by governments and other partners in programme countries as well as by the UN system.

Examples of key questions are:

Relevance

1. To what extent and in what ways is the DevInfo initiative responding to a demand to access to human development data for evidence-based planning purposes by:
 - Policy makers
 - UN system
 - Donor community
2. To what extent and in what ways is the DevInfo initiative responding to a demand by national statistics offices to better disseminate human development statistics?
3. To what extent and in what ways is DevInfo being used to monitor the MDGs and report on the Millennium Agenda?

Effectiveness

4. How is DevInfo being used at different levels?
 - How accessible is DevInfo to different users?
 - Is it being used to its full potential?
 - Is use limited to national levels and national statistics offices, or has it penetrated sub-national levels?
 - How can it be scaled up and reach even more users?
5. How many DevInfo databases have been created, launched and adapted by national partners, UN organizations and donors?
6. What is the evidence that national DevInfo databases are being used to improve the capacity of results-based planning and monitoring of national development priorities?
7. How is DevInfo perceived as compared to other information systems and platforms of a similar nature?
8. National capacity building efforts:
 - How many technical and policy staff have been trained in the use of DevInfo database technology?
 - Has this training helped strengthen statistical literacy and capacity, both at national and international levels, for use of data for strategic decision making?
 - What is the contribution of DevInfo to national capacity building efforts among:
 - National statistics offices
 - Policy makers
 - Civil society and private sector
 - What is the contribution of DevInfo to capacity building in UNICEF and other UN and development organizations:
 - M&E staff
 - Programme officers
 - Overall capacity for data management issues
 - Have the capacity strengthening methods and intentions been appropriate to the needs to date for both internal and external actors?
 - Have capacity strengthening efforts been translated into sustainable capacity increases for both internal and external actors?

Impact

9. To what extent and in what ways is DevInfo database technology supporting the harmonization of national monitoring systems?
10. Does national ownership of DevInfo increase its use by decision makers for evidence-based planning purposes?
11. To what extent and in what ways is DevInfo used by clients whose voices are often not heard?
12. How is DevInfo (EmergencyInfo) being used in efforts to strengthen national and international emergency-preparedness and response?

Objective 2: Assess efficiency in terms of oversight, management and implementation of DevInfo.

1. Is the DevInfo oversight, management, and implementation structure appropriate?
 - UNICEF DevInfo Management Team
 - UNDG Office Steering Committee
 - DevInfo Field Reference Group
 - DevInfo focal points (United Nations, government, other)
 - CSF/DSG (contractual arrangements, outsourcing, competitiveness/cost analysis)
2. Are the DevInfo annual work planning and administrative procedures appropriate?
 - UN joint programming advantages and bottlenecks
 - UN fund transfer issues
 - Advantages and bottlenecks of centralized purchases through UNICEF versus direct purchases of products and services by the DSG
 - Opportunities and risks to change administrative procedures
 - Complexity of activity and budget management (hundreds of activities, hundreds of budget codes)
3. Is the DevInfo fund-raising mechanism meeting stakeholder expectations?
 - Does the current short-term funding model support the long-term vision for DevInfo?
 - Does the current complex funding model work or are there ways to streamline it?
4. How frequently are mature applications of DevInfo updated?

Objective 3: Explore options for institutional sustainability and possible opportunities for expansion of DevInfo.

1. To what extent should DevInfo be considered a 'global public good'?¹¹²
2. What are options to ensure sustainability of DevInfo in its current form, for example, through:
 - Continued subsidy from UNICEF and other UNDG members
 - Establishment of a UN Trust Fund (funds pooled by major stakeholders)
 - Partial or total privatization
 - Introduction of user fees
 - Licensing
 - Foundation or subscriptions
 - Multi-tiered (user fee/membership fee/subscription) price schedule with subsidies
3. What are the sustainability issues related to a centralized versus decentralized management plan and technical support (regional technical support centres under the DSG)?

Existing information sources

- www.devinfo.org
- www.devinfo.info
- www.devinfo.info/support (now available at www.devinfo.org/di-support/users/main.php)
- DevInfo Evaluation 2002/2003 Report
- DevInfo Annual Work Plans (2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008)
- DevInfo UNICEF Division of Policy and Planning CSF/DSG Contracts (2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008)

¹¹² Public good is defined as "public goods have the properties of non-rivalry in consumption and non-excludability", that is "consumption of the good by one individual does not reduce availability of the good for consumption by others; and no one can be effectively excluded from using the good." A global public good is defined as "a public good with benefits that are strongly universal in terms of countries, people, and generations...." Source: Kaul I, Grunberg I, Stern M (Eds.), *Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the 21st Century*, Oxford University Press, 1999.

- DevInfo Activity Reports (for all above work plans)
- DevInfo Participant Feedback and Evaluations (for each training activity)
- DevInfo Digital Map Library
- DevInfo User Survey (2005)
- DevInfo Implementation Review (2007)
- DevInfo Comparative Cost Analysis (2005)
- DevInfo Progress Reports by CSF/DSG (2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008)
- DevInfo Technical Documentation (Dlv4.0, Dlv5.0, Dlv6.0)
- DevInfo Training Materials and e-Learning CDs
- UN Resident Coordinator's Annual Reports
- UNICEF Annual Reports
- UNICEF Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States Regional Office Publication, 'Bridging the Gap'

Evaluation methodology

The evaluation methodology will be guided by Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).¹¹³ The evaluation methodology will be further defined with support from the consultants. This is just a brief overview of the process and the methods to be used.

1. Desk review of existing information sources
2. Determine survey sample in consultation with evaluation management team (including UNICEF Evaluation Office, Division of Policy and Planning and Inter-agency Steering Committee)
3. Design and pilot test global user survey in consultation with management team
4. Launch survey and monitor responses
5. Analyse and present preliminary findings of the survey
6. Identify potential candidates for follow-up interviews in consultation with management team
7. Design and conduct follow-up interviews
8. Conduct number of field visits to selected countries
9. Analyse and cross-tabulate findings from the four different data sources
10. Based on these results, draft evaluation report and present to key stakeholders
11. Revise and finalize report based on feedback from key stakeholders
12. Submit final report

<i>Process and Methods</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Number of days</i>
Desk review of existing information sources	Q4-2008	
Global user survey	Q4-2008 / Q1-2009	
Stakeholder analysis	Q4-2008 / Q1-2009	
Interviews (by evaluation team)	Q4-2008 / Q1-2009	
Field visits (by evaluation team)	Q4-2008 / Q1-2009	
Presentation of preliminary findings	Q1-2009	
Final recommendations	Q1-2009	

¹¹³ UNEG, 'UNEG Norms and Standards', available online at: www.uneval.org/normsandstandards/index.jsp?doc_cat_source_id=4.

Deliverables

- Inception report (including work plan, presentation of methodological approach, global user survey design and instruments, interview and country visit protocols, annotated outline of final report)
- Six country visit reports
- Global user survey report
- Draft findings, conclusions and recommendations (from all data sources used in the evaluation)
- Final evaluation report

Stakeholder participation

The following DevInfo stakeholders will be involved either directly or through interviews and surveys:

- UNICEF DevInfo Management Team
- UNDGO DevInfo Project Manager
- Inter-agency DevInfo Advisory Group Members
- CSF/DSG
- National partners
- DevInfo focal points (selected)
- UNICEF senior management

Note: The DevInfo Master Training scheduled to take place in New Delhi, India in January 2009 will be a major opportunity for consultations with stakeholders.

Organization and management

The evaluation will be managed by the UNICEF Evaluation Office with support from the Division of Policy and Planning. The DIAAC will function as a reference group for the evaluation and assume the following responsibilities for the evaluation:

- Review the terms of reference for the evaluation at the start of the evaluation process
- Review the inception report (including proposals for desk review of documents, survey approaches and instruments, country visits, annotated outline of the report)
- Review preliminary findings for the validation of facts and analyses and contribute to the generation of recommendations
- Review final report as well as management response

The management of the evaluation will include development of the terms of reference, assignment of the evaluation team, liaison between the evaluation team and stakeholders involved (including with the reference group), as well as quality assurance of the report. The evaluation report will eventually be published by the Evaluation Office.

The evaluation team will have two members, one of whom will be assigned as team leader. The qualifications and skill areas required include:

Team leader

- Extensive evaluation expertise and experience, including of research institutions and networks as well as information and database systems
- Familiarity with institutional issues related to the provision of global public goods (including funding, administration, the role of the UN system, public and private partnerships, issues related to sustainability of activities)
- Familiarity with technical aspects related to information and database systems

Technical expert

- Extensive evaluation expertise and experience (including data collection skills) and demonstrated skills in the development and implementation of user surveys
- Knowledge of technical aspects of similar programmes, notably related to statistics and dissemination of statistical information

Both members of the team

- Language proficiency: English (mandatory) plus French and Spanish (desired); excellent writing skills in English
- In-country or regional work experience: Should have at least eight years of field experience in developing countries; experience in working with UN organizations and national statistics offices (desired)
- Analytical skills: Demonstrated analytical skills related to the use of statistics for decision making
- Process management skills: Demonstrated skills and experience in the implementation and presentation of evaluations

Senior adviser

In addition to the two team members, a senior adviser with extensive expertise and experience in institutional issues related to global public goods will review interim products of the evaluation, notably the: inception report; six country reports; survey report; and draft findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Annex II. Timeline of evaluation

Activity	Timeline
Desk review	Throughout project
Project kick off meeting and interviews with key stakeholders at Headquarters	7-12 December 2008
Prepare inception report	15 December 2008 - 5 January 2009
Prepare global user survey	15 December 2008 - 5 January 2009
Submit draft inception report including draft survey for review	6 January 2009
Solicit feedback from Evaluation Office and advisers	6-12 January 2009
Prepare final inception report	13-16 January 2009
Launch pilot test of survey	16-23 January 2009
Country visit – Egypt	17-23 January 2009
Prepare country report – Egypt	26-30 January 2009
Submit final inception report	30 January 2009
Submit country report – Egypt	30 January 2009
Launch pilot test of survey	1-7 February 2009
Country visit – Malawi	8-14 February 2009
Country visit – India	8-21 February 2009
Country and regional visit – Thailand	21-28 February 2009
Analyse results of pilot test	23-24 February 2009
Prepare country report – Malawi	23-28 February 2009
Translate survey	25 February - 7 March 2009
Submit country report – Malawi	28 February 2009
Country visit – Serbia	1-7 March 2009
Launch survey	8-22 March 2009
Prepare country reports – India and Thailand	9-15 March 2009
Submit country reports – India and Thailand	15 March 2009
Country visit – Liberia	15-21 March 2009
Prepare draft final report	16-29 March 2009
Translate responses	23 March - 5 April 2009
Analysis of survey results	23 March - 5 April 2009
Submit draft survey report	8 April 2009
Submit draft final report	8 April 2009
Debriefing Headquarters – New York	12-15 April 2009
Country and regional visit – Panama	16-17 April 2009
Prepare final report	18-30 April 2009
Submit final report	30 April 2009

Annex III. Persons met

Global

Visits to New York (7-12 December 2008 and 12-15 April 2009)

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Morgan, Richard (Mr.), Deputy Programme Director, UNICEF Headquarters
Pron, Nicolas (Mr.), DevInfo Global Administrator, Division of Policy & Planning, UNICEF
Ritter, George (Mr.), Business Information Project Manager, UNICEF
Wardlaw, Tessa (Ms.), Chief, Strategic Information Section, UNICEF Headquarters

New Delhi, India Workshop (16-20 February 2009)

Anum, Jacqueline (Ms.), Database Administrator of the IT Division, Ghana Statistical Services, Ghana
Edmondson, Donneth (Ms.), Director, JamStats Secretariat at Planning Institute of Jamaica, JamStats, Jamaica
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Vejas De Quiroz, Ruth (Ms.), Manager, DevInfoLAC, Panama
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Regional

UNICEF Regional M&E Evaluators (by phone)

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Panama City, Panama Workshop (16-17 April 2009)

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Country

Egypt (18-24 January 2009)

Non-UN organizations

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UN organizations

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India (8-21 February 2009)

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Liberia (15- 21 March 2009)

Non-UN organizations

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Malawi (8-14 February 2009)

Non-UN organizations

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Serbia (1-7 March 2009)

Non-UN organizations

Antic, Zoran (Mr.), Vice President of the City Assembly, City of Vranje
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—, 'Booklet 3: Meta Data, Poverty Maps of Thailand, Thailand Provincial Development Information: TPD Info', Thailand, 2006.
—, 'Booklet 4, Meta Data, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Thailand Provincial Development Information: TPD Info', Thailand, 2006.
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Annex V. DevInfo evaluation global user survey

Introduction

The DevInfo Evaluation Global User Survey (called hereafter ‘the survey’) is one of the research tools used in the 2008-2009 evaluation of DevInfo. The survey was conducted among former trainees of the DevInfo Support Group (DSG) designed to measure use and user satisfaction of DevInfo. The survey questions were developed in line with the evaluation objectives and aim to respond to specific evaluation questions as outlined in the evaluation matrix. In order to ensure high response and completion rates, it was agreed to keep the survey short.

Sample frame

For reasons of practicality and due to time constraints, a convenience sample was used. This consisted of a list provided by the DSG of approximately 2,400 names and e-mail addresses of participants in DevInfo user and administrator training conducted between 2004 and 2008. This list was not vetted or verified by the evaluation team because of limited time. It was, however, cleaned of e-mails that were not in the correct format, leaving a total of 2,121 e-mails.

DSG estimates that a total of 12,500 people were trained between 2004 and 2008 in DevInfo. The e-mail list provided included those known to and trained by Community Systems Foundation and DSG. The majority of training participants work for UNICEF, UN organizations or DevInfo national partners, especially national statistical offices. Some of the people on the provided list had moved to new jobs or countries or changed e-mail addresses since they took the training. Given the limitations of the sampling frame, the results of the survey need to be interpreted with caution.

Methodology

A pilot test of the survey was carried out using the online survey software Zoomerang (www.zoomerang.com) between 26 January 2009 and 6 February 2009. One hundred and nine monitoring and evaluation experts, who were working for different UN organizations worldwide and who had been previously trained in the use of DevInfo, were invited to take the pilot survey and provide feedback on the design, format and questions. Forty-six (42%) of the experts visited the pilot survey website and 32 (29%) completed the survey. Feedback from survey respondents and consultations with the DevInfo evaluation team guided the finalization of the survey instrument.

The survey was conducted from 10 to 21 March 2009. One reminder was sent by e-mail. The survey tool design was in three sections: closed, scalable questions about DevInfo; questions about the profile of the respondent; and an open-ended question for descriptive answers. Zoomerang was used to administer the pilot and final surveys. The survey was deployed in three languages (English, French and Spanish) and responses in French and Spanish to the open-ended question were translated into English.

Note: The percentages mentioned in this report are rounded to the nearest integer.

Approach to analysis

Zoomerang was used to generate tables and cross analysis was conducted via SPSS¹¹⁴ for the closed questions. Respondents who replied either “I don’t know” or “N/A” to a particular survey question were not included in the calculations for that particular question.

A scale of 1 to 5 was used to measure responses in the survey. For the purpose of the evaluation, a scale of **high**, **medium** and **low** was applied to the survey responses, where **low** was defined as less than 3 out of 5 (or 60% or less); **medium** was 3 to less than 4; and **high** was 4 to 5 (or 80% and above). The highest two frequencies (e.g., ‘easy’ and ‘very easy’) and the lowest two frequencies (e.g., ‘difficult’ and ‘very difficult’) were grouped together.

The survey data has a maximum margin of error of +/- 5.0% at the 95% confidence level. In other words, it is 95% certain that if all invited to take the survey had responded to the survey, the percentages for any given answer choice would be plus or minus 5.0 percentage points of the survey data presented in this report. In the narrative, percentages are rounded up to whole numbers, so totals may not add up to 100%.

Survey response rate

A total of 2,121 invitations were sent out, and 737 visits were made to the survey site. (The survey responses were restricted to one per user.) A total of 379 persons answered the survey: 320 did so completely and 59 answered partially, representing a response rate of 18% to all invitations sent. Table 1 gives the completion and language statistics of survey visitors.

Table 1. Survey statistics

Language	English	French	Spanish	Total
Visits	575	88	74	737
Partials	50	4	5	59
Completes	258	33	29	320
Total (complete and partial)	308	37	34	379

Survey findings: Part I—Summary

Summary of survey demographics

- Respondents from 108 global, regional or country offices participated in the survey.
- Of the total respondents, 57% were from national partners and independent users of DevInfo and 43% were from UN organizations. The majority of UN organization respondents were from country offices (65%) followed by regional offices (14%). Respondents from UNICEF represented 68%, followed by respondents from UNDP and UNFPA at 10% each.
- The majority of national agency respondents were from national statistical offices (44%), followed by other national agencies (31%).

¹¹⁴ SPSS, or Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, is a computer programme used for statistical analysis.

- Respondents represented various professional activities with percentages ranging from 15% for Statistics to 2% for Finance. Respondents also came from various sectors with percentages ranging from 13% for the Health sector to 7% for the Agriculture sector.
- Approximately two thirds of the respondents were males compared to one third females.

Summary of survey findings

It is worth noting that this sample included only participants who had received training on the use of DevInfo. Most of the respondents were also intensely involved with DevInfo either as master trainers, focal points, national partners, advocates or in other capacities. Therefore findings cannot be generalized to all users of DevInfo, including those who have not had training.

High

- 95% of those who participated in DevInfo training found it either useful or very useful.
- 83% indicated they agree or strongly agree that DevInfo/local adaptation has been used for presenting statistical data to decision makers.
- 80% indicated that DevInfo is user friendly.
- 80% indicated they agree or strongly agree that DevInfo/local adaptation has been used for monitoring MDGs/national development goals.

Medium

- 79% indicated they agree or strongly agree that DevInfo/local adaptation has been used for mapping MDGs/national development goals.
- 78% were either satisfied or very satisfied with their overall DevInfo experience.
- 74% were either satisfied or very satisfied with DevInfo data quality.
- 73% of those who contacted DSG for support were either satisfied or very satisfied.
- 73% found it easy or very easy to adapt DevInfo to national requirements.
- 72% indicated they agree or strongly agree that DevInfo/local adaptation has been fully supported by the UN country team.
- 71% of the respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with DevInfo language support.
- 64% of the respondents indicated they agree or strongly agree that DevInfo/local adaptation has been used for supporting decisions.

Low

- 56% indicated they agree or strongly agree that DevInfo/local adaptation is frequently updated.
- 49% were either satisfied or very satisfied with data exchange with other programmes.
- 29% indicated that they visit the DevInfo website regularly on a weekly or daily basis.

Survey findings: Part II—Closed questions

Question 1: Which version of DevInfo/adaptations do you currently use?

Answers (N=362)	Percent
DevInfo 5.0	65
DevInfo 4.0	15
I don't use DevInfo	20

Question 3: If you have participated in DevInfo training, how useful was the training?

Answer (N=344)	Percent
Neutral	5
Useful	38
Very useful	57

Question 5: Could DevInfo be used easily to adapt to your national requirements (DevInfo adaptations)?

Answer (N=344)	Percent
Difficult/Very difficult	8
Neutral	18
Easy/Very easy	74

Question 7: How satisfied are you with DevInfo language support?

Answers (N=310)	Percent
Dissatisfied/Very dissatisfied	5
Neutral	24
Satisfied/Very satisfied	71

Question 9: How easy is exchanging data between DevInfo and other programmes?

Answers (N=312)	Percent
Difficult/Very difficult	19
Neutral	32
Easy/Very easy	49

Question 2: How often do you visit the DevInfo website?

Answer (N=350)	Percent
Never	11
Rarely	60
Weekly	26
Daily	3

Question 4: If you have contacted DevInfo Support Group for help, how satisfied are you with the level of support?

Answer (N=222)	Percent
Dissatisfied/Very dissatisfied	8
Neutral	19
Satisfied/Very satisfied	73

Question 6: How user friendly is DevInfo?

Answer (N=348)	Percent
Difficult/Very difficult	5
Neutral	15
Easy/Very easy	80

Question 8: How satisfied are you with DevInfo data quality?

Answers (N=334)	Percent
Dissatisfied/Very dissatisfied	6
Neutral	20
Satisfied/Very satisfied	74

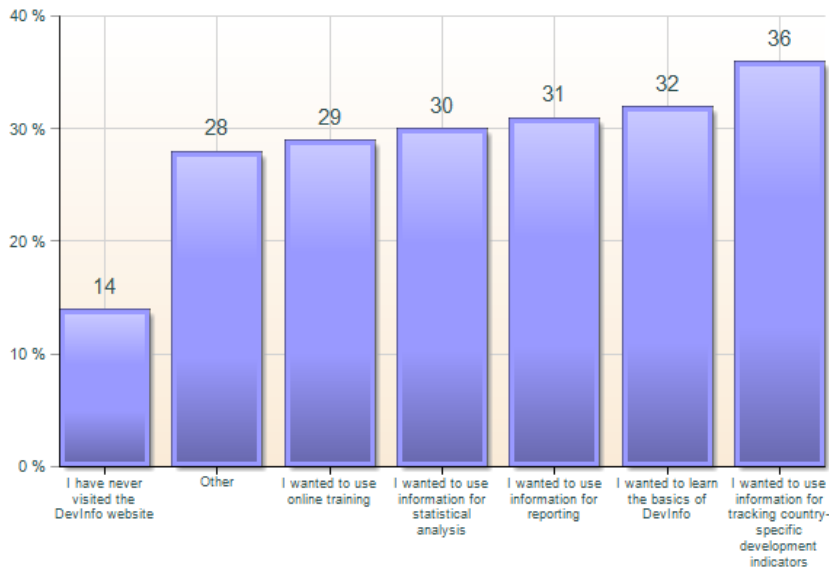
Question 10: How satisfied are you with your overall DevInfo experience?

Answers (N=337)	Percent
Dissatisfied	4
Neutral	18
Satisfied/Very satisfied	78

Question 11: Why did you visit the DevInfo website (www.devinfo.org)?

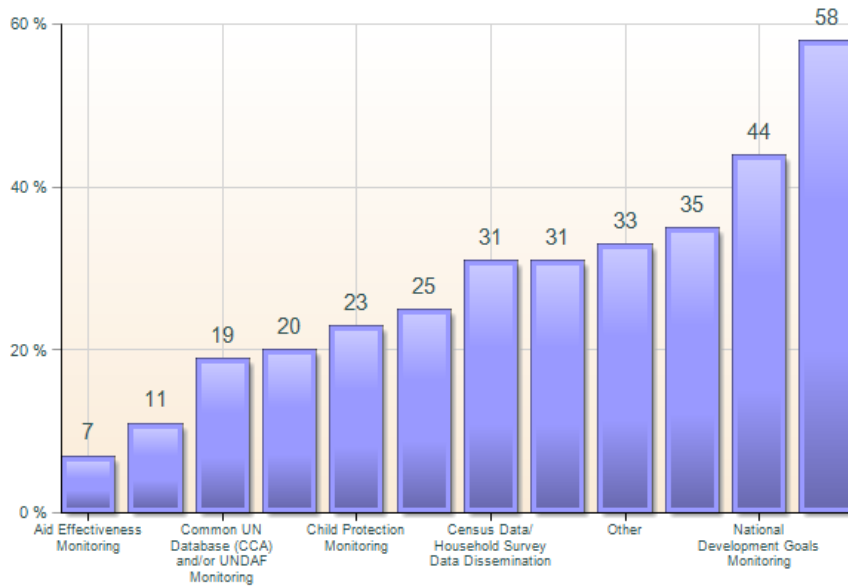
Note: This question allowed respondents to tick multiple answers.

Why did you visit DevInfo website (www.devinfo.org)? (Check all that apply)



Question 12: For what purpose do you mainly use DevInfo/adaptation?

For what purpose do you mainly use DevInfo/adaptation? (Please check all that apply)



Question 13: DevInfo/local adaptation has been used for monitoring MDGs/national development goals

Answers (N=305)	Percent
Disagree/Strongly disagree	6
Neutral	14
Agree/Strongly agree	80

Question 14: DevInfo/local adaptation has been used for mapping MDGs/national development goals

Answers (N=237)	Percent
Disagree	8
Neutral	13
Agree/Strongly agree	79

Question 15: DevInfo/local adaptation has been used for presenting statistical data to decision makers

Answers (N=241)	Percent
Disagree	5
Neutral	12
Agree/Strongly agree	83

Question 17: DevInfo/local adaptation has been used for supporting decisions

Answers (N=232)	Percent
Disagree/Strongly disagree	8
Neutral	28
Agree/Strongly agree	64

Question 16: DevInfo/local adaptation is frequently updated

Answers (N=230)	Percent
Disagree/Strongly disagree	14
Neutral	30
Agree/Strongly agree	56

Question 18: DevInfo/local adaptation has been fully supported by the UN country team

Answers (N=229)	Percent
Disagree/Strongly disagree	11
Neutral	17
Agree/Strongly agree	72

Question 19: Country (Please select)

Global/Regional/Country (N=306)	N	Percent
Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States	45	15
Albania	3	
Armenia	4	
Azerbaijan	4	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3	
Kyrgyzstan	1	
Moldova, Republic of	1	
Romania	1	
Russian Federation	1	
Serbia	9	
Tajikistan	7	
Turkey	3	
Turkmenistan	1	
Ukraine	3	
Uzbekistan	4	
East Asia and Pacific	34	11
Cambodia	1	
China	1	
Fiji	1	
Kiribati	1	
Lao PDR	3	
Mongolia	3	
Myanmar	7	
Papua New Guinea	3	
Philippines	1	
Samoa	1	
Thailand	6	
Timor Leste	5	
Viet Nam	1	
East and Southern Africa	69	23
Botswana	2	
Burundi	2	
Comoros	3	
Eritrea	3	
Ethiopia	11	

Kenya	7	
Lesotho	11	
Madagascar	3	
Malawi	2	
Mozambique	1	
Rwanda	4	
Seychelles	1	
Somalia	1	
South Africa	6	
Swaziland	7	
Uganda	2	
Zambia	1	
Zimbabwe	2	
Industrialized Countries	12	4
Denmark	2	
France	1	
Hong Kong SAR	1	
Italy	1	
Switzerland	2	
United States of America	5	
Latin America and the Caribbean	45	15
Antigua and Barbuda	1	
Argentina	1	
Barbados	2	
Bolivia	1	
Brazil	1	
British Virgin Islands	1	
Chile	1	
Colombia	1	
Costa Rica	2	
Dominica	1	
Dominican Republic	1	
El Salvador	2	
Guyana	1	
Haiti	1	
Honduras	4	
Jamaica	3	
Nicaragua	1	
Panama	8	
Paraguay	1	
Saint Kitts and Nevis	1	
Saint Lucia	7	
Venezuela	3	
Middle East and North Africa	17	6
Algeria	5	
Egypt	2	
Jordan	1	
Iran	2	
Iraq	1	
Palestinian Territory, Occupied	2	
Syria	2	
Yemen	2	

South Asia	38	12
Afghanistan	4	
Bangladesh	7	
India	12	
Maldives	6	
Nepal	4	
Pakistan	2	
Sri Lanka	3	
West and Central Africa	37	12
Benin	2	
Bhutan	11	
Burkina Faso	1	
Cameroon	1	
Central African Republic	1	
Chad	1	
Congo	2	
Ghana	4	
Guinea	3	
Niger	2	
Nigeria	2	
Sao Tome and Principe	1	
Senegal	2	
Sudan	3	
Sierra Leone	1	
Global	5	
Regional	4	
Total	306	100

Question 20: Select Agency Type (Please select one)

	Frequency	Percent
UN organization	145	43
Government agency	89	27
Ministry	55	16
Other	17	5
Research institute/university	14	4
Private sector	10	3
Non-governmental organization	3	1
Civil society organization	2	1
Total	335	100

Question 21: Name of UN Organization (Please select)

	Frequency	Percent
UNICEF	88	68
UNDP	13	10
UNFPA	13	10
WFP	3	2
UNIFEM	2	2
Office of the High Rep. for the Least, Landlocked & Small Island DCs	2	2
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights	1	1
UNESCO	1	1
FAO	1	1
EC for Africa (ECA)	1	1

EC for Latin America (ECLAC)	1	1
EC for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP)	1	1
United Nations World Tourism Organization	1	1
Director, Office of the Deputy Secretary General	1	1
Total	129	100

Question 22: Location of UN Organization
(Please select)

	Responses	
	N	Percent
Country office	91	66
Regional office	20	14
Headquarters	15	11
Field office	11	8
Other	2	1
Total	139	100

Question 23: Government Agency Type
(Please select one)

	Frequency	Percent
National statistical organization	105	44
Other	74	31
Ministry	38	16
National planning organization	11	5
National research institute	9	4
President's office	3	1
Total	240	100

Question 24: Select Sector
(Please check all that apply)

	Responses	
	N	Percent
Health	132	13
Demography	127	13
Education	118	12
Economy	108	11
Other	103	10
Women	94	9
Information and communication	89	9
Environment	80	8
Nutrition	77	8
Agriculture	67	7
Total	995	100

Question 25: Which of the following groups best portray your professional activities? (Please check all that apply)

	Responses	
	N	Percent
Statistics	165	15
Monitoring	155	14
Database administration	128	11
Planning	122	11
Information technology	89	8
Research	88	8
Programme management	84	7
Management	67	6
Decision making	56	5
Economy	44	4
Strategy	44	4
Consulting	37	3
Other	28	2
Finance	25	2
Total	1,132	100

Question 26: Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	204	65
Female	111	35
Total	315	100

Survey findings: Part III—Open-ended question

Question 27: General feedback on DevInfo (preferably in English)

Feedback given to the open-ended question was generally positive. However, the answers showed that there is still a significant discrepancy in understanding of DevInfo and its different features and functions. For example:

- “DevInfo is a powerful database system for monitoring human development. DevInfo provides user friendly methods to organize, store and display data in a uniform way to facilitate data sharing at the country level across government departments, UN agencies and development partners. DevInfo has simple features that produce tables, graphs and maps for inclusion in reports, presentations and advocacy materials. The software supports both standard indicators (the MDG indicators) and user-defined indicators. DevInfo is compliant with international statistical standards to support open access and widespread data exchange.”
- “It would be more complete if it allowed data to be introduced instead of being just a presentation tool. A web-based version would be ideal in order for it to work on a local intranet.”
- “Adapt it to permit using in other situations, not only in MDG.”

The first example shows a very thorough understanding of DevInfo, whereas the other two examples show that its functions are still not fully understood, as DevInfo is highly adaptable (not only MDGs) and has been web-based since version 5.0. Further examples show that perceptions of DevInfo also vary widely from being very easy and user friendly to being very complicated and in need of simplification.

Other issues raised in the feedback on the open-ended question included: the need for more training, follow up after training, and training on specific issues, such as the use of PDAs and rapid assessments in emergencies; training on the use of the web-based version; and training on indicators and how to construct them. Respondents observed that even though training is conducted and considered very useful, there is often no follow up or use of DevInfo after the training.

Certain respondents focused on the DSG—pointing out a high dependency on the DSG, with support provided not always being consistent, timely or of acceptable quality. Below are two examples to illustrate these concerns.

- “I would suggest that the DSG fees be renegotiated to a lower rate, but perhaps placed on an LTA so that countries can contact DSG directly for services needed as they arise (rather than the laborious annual work plan, which never starts on time anyways).”
- “It is not seen as a wider UN initiative. Any suggestions sent to the support group and alleviated to the Global Manager are totally ignored. It has been monopolized by the software development group. Advocated as free software, it is too hard to integrate it as everything comes with an exorbitant price tag including the trainings and advocacy materials. The approach is to be dependent on this software house in Delhi all the time and the genuine contributors feel totally alienated by constantly ignoring their genuine feedbacks on both software and implementation issues.”

Annex VI. Evolution of web mapping systems

Maps have traditionally been used to explore the Earth and to exploit its resources. Geographic information system (GIS) technology, as an expansion of cartographic science, has enhanced the efficiency and analytic power of traditional mapping. Now, as the scientific community recognizes the environmental consequences of human activity, GIS technology is becoming an essential tool in the effort to understand the process of global change. Various map and satellite information sources can combine in modes that simulate the interactions of complex natural systems.

Through a function known as visualization, a GIS can be used to produce images—not only maps, but also drawings, animations and other cartographic products. These images allow researchers to view their subjects in ways that they have literally never been seen before. The images are often invaluable for conveying the technical concepts of GIS study subjects to non-scientists.

Web mapping evolved in four generations of web applications.¹¹⁵ Researcher Brandon Plewe calls the first generation in the evolution 'web mapping'. It is characterized by simple HTML protocols and mostly static maps. These first-generation sites were common during the period 1993 to 1999.

A second generation of web mapping applications took advantage of emerging technologies such as dynamic HTML, Java and ActiveX to produce sites with greater interactivity and performance. This so-called 'WebGIS' era saw GIS vendors develop server-based software (such as ESRI's ArcIMS and Intergraph's GeoMedia Web Map) so that their clients, particularly public-sector agencies, could put their geographic data online. This generation of sites were state-of-the-art from their inception in 1995 through 2004.

The next major development in web mapping in 2005 brought significant improvements in performance. A new technology called Ajax (Asynchronous JavaScript and XML) enabled web developers to finally develop sites (both mapping and non-mapping) that responded more like desktop applications than the 'click-and-wait' applications of the past. This third generation of web mapping is best exemplified by the site that first took advantage of Ajax programming techniques—Google Maps. Other online mapping companies quickly adopted the technology as well, most notably Yahoo! and MapQuest. ESRI improved on its web server software by incorporating Ajax into its ArcGIS Server product.

Until 2005, delivery of geographic information and GIS capabilities over the Internet was possible and increasingly more sophisticated, but a combination of factors limited their use. Developing an Internet-based mapping application remained complex, and this limited the number of developers and kept the cost of web mapping high. In addition, as most of these Internet mapping applications rely on some background cartography, this required purchasing expensive background maps. From an end-user perspective, the delivery of geographic information in a graphical form was limited due to network bandwidth, especially because many users were still using dial-up access to the Internet when these standards were first introduced.¹¹⁶

The landscape of Internet mapping technologies has changed dramatically since 2005. In mid 2005, the market leader in the United Kingdom (Multimap) attracted 7.3 million visitors and, in the United States, Mapquest was used by 47 million visitors. By the end of 2007, Google Maps was used by 71.5 million and Google Earth by 22.7 million.¹¹⁷ Moreover, by mid 2007, there were more than 50,000 new websites that were based on Google Maps.¹¹⁸

Plewe also identifies a fourth generation of web mapping. This generation is characterized by applications that strive for greater realism in our representations of the world through the use of 3-D globes and immersive environments. Google is a pioneer in this generation with its Google Earth application. Other popular globe technologies include Microsoft's Virtual Earth and NASA's WorldWind.

¹¹⁵ Detwiler J, 'Evolution of Web Mapping Technology', Penn State University, 20 Jan 2009, available at www.e-education.psu.edu/geog863/resources/l3_p3.html.

¹¹⁶ Haklay M, Singleton A, Parker C, 'Web Mapping 2.0: The Neogeography of the GeoWeb', University College London, 2008.

¹¹⁷ Figures according to *The Wall Street Journal*, 2007.

¹¹⁸ Haklay M, Singleton A, Parker C, 'Web Mapping 2.0: The Neogeography of the GeoWeb', University College London, 2008.

The following is a list of the major technologies involved in the realm of web mapping today:¹¹⁹

- **Commercial**—ArcGIS Server (ESRI), GeoMedia WebMap (Intergraph), MapXtreme (MapInfo), MapGuide (Autodesk), plus many others
- **Open source**—MapServer, GeoServer, OpenLayers, Scaleable Vector Graphics (SVG), Adobe Flex (part open, part proprietary), GRASS, ILWIS, plus others
- **Public Application Programming Interfaces (APIs)**—Google Maps, Yahoo! Maps, Microsoft Virtual Earth (2D), and MapQuest's OpenAPI
- **Globes**—Google Earth, Microsoft Virtual Earth (3D), ArcGIS Explorer, and NASA WorldWind

¹¹⁹ Detwiler J, 'Current Web Mapping Technologies', Penn State University, 20 Jan 2009, available at: www.e-education.psu.edu/geog863/resources/l3_p5.html.

Annex VII. Management process for DevInfo

DevInfo initiative management process

The management process for the DevInfo initiative is officially described as follows. It is based on a participatory course of action to develop and implement annual work plans based on needs at the national level. The management process is organized as a joint United Nations (UN) programme guided by the DevInfo Inter-agency Advisory Committee (DIAAC) with broad representation of UN organization stakeholders. The implementation process is overseen by the UN Managing Agent (UNICEF) assigned by the stakeholders and executed by the DevInfo Support Group (DSG).

The management process is comprised of the following steps.

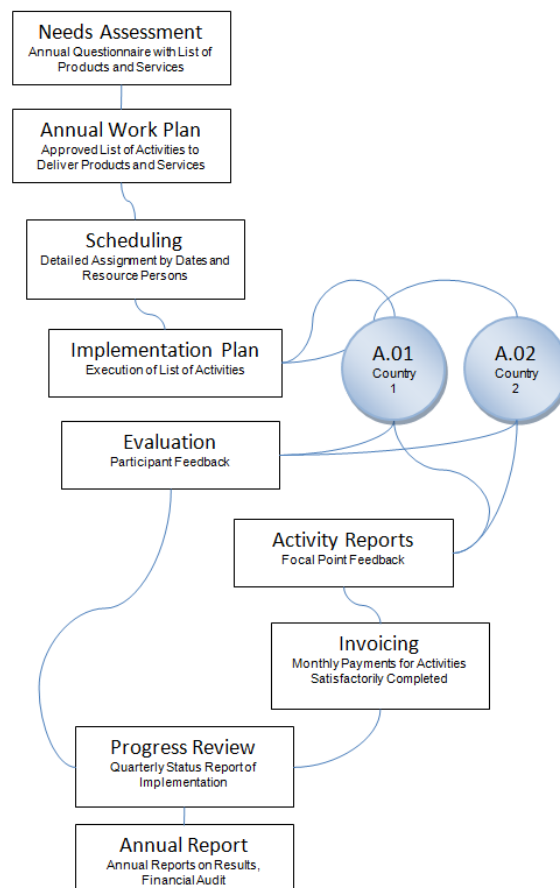
1. Needs assessment—The first step is to define the needs of each *participating country and agency*. A standardized list of products and services is sent to all UN country teams along with a questionnaire to determine the needs of national partners in this area. This list contains a description of each product and service and the unit costs. The needs assessment exercise is coordinated by the UN country team with assistance of UNICEF Headquarters in New York and the DSG to analyse the results.

2. Work plan—The results of the needs assessment are compiled into an annual work plan¹²⁰ with a list of activities organized by country. The work plan is assembled into an approved list of activities and illustrative budget with budget commitments by each country based on approved unit costs for each product and service. Travel costs are estimated for in-country missions based on UN guidelines for travel and accommodation. Travel costs are reimbursed against actual expenditures.

3. Scheduling—Once the work plan is approved, the DSG communicates proposed dates and resource persons for each activity in consultation with *country focal points*. This process is monitored daily to accommodate requests for changes in mission dates during the course of the year.

4. Implementation plan—The execution of the list of activities is monitored on a daily basis by the DSG to ensure that each activity in the annual work plan is carried out on time. Mission preparation includes the preparation of the agenda, customized workshop sessions, background reading material, sample databases, hands-on exercises and self-assessment tests.

5. Evaluation—Each *participant* involved in the implementation of activities is asked to provide feedback on the quality of the service and product provided, added value and level of satisfaction.



¹²⁰ DevInfo Annual Work Plans 2004-2008.

6. Activity reports—Each *activity focal point* (usually a national or UN counterpart) is required to fill in and sign an activity report¹²¹ certifying the completion date and assessing the quality of the service and product provided. Focal points are required to provide feedback on follow-up activities, if any.

7. Invoicing—Monthly invoicing from DSG to the DevInfo Global Administrator is based on signed activity reports for activities that have been satisfactorily completed. For some activities, phased progress payments may be made against activity reports for which benchmarks have been met.

8. Progress review—Progress reports¹²² are prepared by DSG on the status of the implementation of the annual work plan. These are issued monthly and grouped according to core global activities, joint programme activities, and regional and country activities, and show percentage completion of agreed activities. Activities may be added or dropped based on the re-assessment of current needs subject to the approval of the DevInfo Global Administrator.

9. Annual report—An annual report¹²³ records the results achieved against the work plan and against the overall long-term objectives of the DevInfo initiative.

10. Management portal—All management processes are supported by a secure web portal¹²⁴ that contains the list of activities included in the annual plans, the budgets, the implementation schedule (by dates, country, resource person), the status of implementation, profiles of workshop participants, evaluation feedback and signed activity reports. The site also stores resource materials including the DevInfo digital map library, examples of posters and brochures that can be used and customized, training materials and a calendar of upcoming events.

¹²¹ DevInfo Activity Reports 2004-2008.

¹²² CSF/DSG, DevInfo Progress Reports 2004-2008.

¹²³ DevInfo Annual Reports 2004-2008.

¹²⁴ Password protect portal, available at www.devinform.org/di-support/users/main.php.

Annex VIII. Table of DevInfo adaptations

Adaptations of DevInfo at the national, regional and global level (as of April 10, 2009)

Country or organization	Name of DevInfo adaptation	Year	DevInfo version	Website
Region: Africa				
Algeria	ELDJAZAIRInfo 1.0	2004	4.0	none
	ELDJAZAIRInfo 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
	MICS Algeria 1.0	2006	5.0	none
Angola	AngolaInfo 1.0	2006	5.0	none
Benin	BenInfo 2.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
	BenInfo 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
Botswana	DevInfo Botswana 1.0	2005	4.0	none
	ChildInfo Botswana 1.0	2003	4.0	none
Burkina Faso	Burkina Info 5.0	2006	5.0	none
Burundi	Burundi Info 5.0	2006	5.0	none
	BDSEB 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Cameroon	CamSED 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Cape Verde	Cape Verde Info 1.0	2006	5.0	none
Chad	Tchadinfo 4.1	2006	5.0	none
	Tchadinfo 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Comoros	Comoros Info 1.0	2006	5.0	none
Congo, Democratic Republic	RDCongoInfo 2.0	2008	5.0	none
	RDCongoInfo 1.0	2006	5.0	none
Côte d'Ivoire	BDSECI 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Egypt	EgyInfo 1.0	2008	5.0	www.egyinfo.net.eg
Eritrea	DevInfo Eritrea 1.0*	2003	ChildInfo	none
Ethiopia	EthioInfo 2.0	2006	5.0	none
	EthioInfo 1.0	2005	4.0	none
Gambia	GamInfo	2008	5.0	none
Ghana	GhanaInfo 3.0	2007	5.0	none
	GhanaInfo 2.0	2005	4.0	none
	GhanaInfo 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Kenya	KenInfo 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	www.devinfo-kenya.org
Lesotho	Lesotho VACInfo 1.0	2008	5.0	none
	Lesotho VACInfo 1.0	2006	5.0	none
Madagascar	MultiDataGasy 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Malawi	MASEDA 3.0	2006	5.0	www.maseda.info
	Malawi VACInfo 1.0	2006	5.0	none
	MASEDA 2.0	2005	4.0	none
	MASEDA 2.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
	MASEDA 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
Mali	MaliKunnaFoni 2.0	2007	5.0	www.malikunnaFoni.com

Mauritania	MauritInfo 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Mauritius	MRU-ChildInfo	2003	ChildInfo	none
Morocco	MarocInfo	2008	5.0	none
Mozambique	ESDEM 4.0	2007	5.0	none
	ESDEM 3.0	2005	4.0	none
	ESDEM 2.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
	ESDEM 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
Niger	NIGERINFO 1.0	2007	5.0	www.ins.ne
	ChildInfo Niger 3.5	2002	ChildInfo	none
Namibia	NAMInfo 1.0	2006	5.0	none
Rwanda	Rwanda DevInfo	2005	4.0	none
	Rwanda DevInfo 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Senegal	SenDevInfo	2008	5	none
Sierra Leone	SaLInfo 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Somalia	SomInfo	2008	5.0	www.sominfo.org
	SomInfo 1.0	2007	5.0	none
South Africa	South Africa Development Indicators	2008	5.0	www.devinfo.info/southafrica
Sudan	Southern Sudan Info 1.0	2007	5.0	none
Swaziland	SwaziInfo 1.0	2006	5.0	none
Tanzania	TSED 5.0	2007	5.0	www.twed.org
	TSED Zanzibar 5.0	2007	5.0	none
	TSED 5.0	2006	5.0	none
	TSED Zanzibar 1.0	2005	4.0	none
	TSED 3.0	2005	4.0	none
	TSED 2.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
	Tanzanian HBS 2000-2001	2002	ChildInfo	none
Togo	TogolInfo MISC 1.0	2007	5.0	www.stat-togo.org
Tunisia	DevInfo Tunisa 1.0	2004	ChildInfo	none
Uganda	CensusInfo 1.0	2005	4	none
	UgandaInfo 2.0	2005	4	none
	UgandaInfo 1.0a	2004	ChildInfo	none
Zambia	Zambia VACInfo	2006	5.0	none
	Zambia Info 3.0	2006	5.0	none
	Zambia Info 2.0	2005	4.0	none
	ZamSED 1.2	2004	4.0	none
	ZamSED 1.1	2003	ChildInfo	none
	ZamSED 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
Zimbabwe	ZIMDAT 2.0	2008	5.0	none
	ZIMDAT 1.0	2005	4.0	none
	DevInfo Zimbabwe 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Region: Asia and the Middle East				
Afghanistan	AfghanInfo 1.0	2007	5.0	none
Armenia	ArmeniaInfo 1.0	2006	5.0	none
Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan	2007	5.0	www.azerbaijaninfo.az
Bangladesh	BDInfo 1.0	2007	5.0	none
Bhutan	DrukInfo 2.0	2005	4.0	none
	DrukInfo 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Cambodia	CAMInfo 3.0	2007	5.0	www.caminfo.org
	CAMInfo 1.1	2004	4.0	none
	CAMInfo 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	none

China	NPAInfo	2005	4.0	none
	DevInfo China 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
Georgia	GeorgialInfo 1.0	2005	4.0	none
India	DevInfo India 2.0	2007	5.0	www.devinfoindia.org
	HIVInfo 1.0	2008	5.0	none
	ChildInfo 3.5	2003	ChildInfo	none
	ShishuInfo 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
	CensusInfo 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
	GSDMA	2001	ChildInfo	none
	DevInfo Orissa	1999	ChildInfo	none
Indonesia	AcehInfo Indonesia 2.0	2008	5.0	www.acehinfo.nad.go.id
	DevInfo Indonesia	2005	4.0	none
Iran	IranInfo 4.0	2005	4.0	none
Iraq	IraqInfo 2008	2008	5.0	www.iraqinfo-online.org
Kyrgyzstan	KrygyzInfo 1.0	2007	5.0	none
Lao PDR	LaolInfo 4.1	2005	4.0	none
Lebanon	LebInfo	2007	5.0	none
Malaysia	MalaysiaInfo 1.0	2007	5.0	none
	MalaysiaInfo 1.0	2005	4.0	none
Maldives	MaldivelInfo 1.0	2007	5.0	none
	DevInfo Maldives 2.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
Mongolia	Mongol Info	2004	4.0	none
	Mongol Info 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Myanmar	MyalInfo 1.0	2005	4.0	none
	MylInfo 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
Nepal	NepalInfo 5.0	2006	5.0	none
	NepalInfo 3.0	2005	4.0	none
	NepalInfo 2.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
	NepalInfo 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
Occupied Palestinian Territory	PallInfo 1.0	2005	4.0	www.pcbs.gov.ps/DI5Web/home.aspx
Oman	OSID 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Philippines	Philippine DevInfo 1.0	2005	5.0	none
Pakistan	Pakistan Social Database	2006	5.0	none
Sri Lanka	MDGInfo Sri Lanka 1.0	2006	5.0	http://census.sltidc.lk
	MDG Info Sri Lanka 1.0	2005	4.0	http://census.sltidc.lk
Syria	Syria MDG Monitoring database	2006	5.0	none
Tajikistan	TojikInfo	2008	5.0	www.tojikinfo.tj
Thailand	TPDInfo1.0	2006	5.0	http://app.nic.go.th/tpdinfo
	TPD Info	2005	4.0	none
	ChildInfo Thai 3.5	2002	ChildInfo	none
Timor Leste	Timor-Leste DevInfo 1.0	2008	5.0	none
	Oecussi Info	2008	5.0	none
	Timor-Leste DevInfo 1.0	2006	4.0	none
	DevInfo Timor Leste 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Turkey	DecilInfo Turk 1.0	2007	5.0	none
Turkmenistan	TurkmenInfo 1.0	2008	5.0	none
	TurkmenInfo 1.0	2007	5.0	none

Viet Nam	VietInfo 5.0	2006	5.0	http://vdd.gso.gov.vn
	VietInfo 4.0	2005	4.0	http://vdd.gso.gov.vn
	VietInfo 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	http://vdd.gso.gov.vn
Yemen	Yemen Population Census 2004	2005	5.0	none
Region: Europe				
Albania	AlbInfo	2005	4.0	none
Belarus	BelarusInfo 2006	2007	5.0	none
Bulgaria	BullInfo 1.0	2007	5.0	none
Kosovo	KosovoInfo 5.0	2007	5.0	none
	DevInfo Kosovo 4.0	2005	4.0	none
Macedonia	MakInfo 1.0	2006	4.0	none
Republic of Moldova	DevInfo Moldova	2006	5.0	www.devinfo.m
Romania	DevInfo Romania 4.0	2005	4.0	none
Russian Federation	RussialInfo	2006	5.0	none
Serbia	DevInfo Serbia	2008	5.0	http://devinfo.stat.gov.rs
Montenegro	DevInfo Montenegro	2008	5.0	www.monstat.cg.yu
Region: Americas				
Argentina	Info UNICEF Argentina	2006	5.0	none
	Info Misiones	2006	5.0	none
	Info San Juan	2006	5.0	none
Barbados	BIMInfo	2008	5.0	none
Brazil	MODELO	2008	5.0	none
	MODELO	2005	4.0	none
Belize	NPA Info 1.0	2006	5.0	none
Bolivia	BDSI-DevInfo	2005	4.0	none
Colombia	ColumbialInfo 1.0	2008	5.0	none
Costa Rica	Costa Rica Info 4.5	2005	4.0	none
	Costa Rica Info 4.0	2004	4.0	none
Dominica	NaturelsleInfo	8	5	none
Dominican Republic	InfoDom	6	5	none
El Salvador	El Salvador Info 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Guatemala	Gender Analysis Indicators of Guatemala	8	5.0	www.infoiarna.org.gt
Guyana	MDG Monitoring database	2006	5.0	www.statisticsguyana.gov.gy
Haiti	DevInfo Haiti 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Honduras	ChildInfo Honduras 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Jamaica	JamStats	2008	5.0	www.jamstats.gov.jm
	JamStats 1.2	2005	4.0	none
	JamStats 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Nicaragua	InfoNic 4.0	2006	5.0	none
Panama	DevInfo Panama	2006	5.0	none
St Lucia	HelenInfo 1.0	2006	5.0	www.stats.gov.lc
Trinidad and Tobago	CTTInfo	2008	5.0	www.cso.gov.tt
Venezuela	INEInfo	2008	5.0	www.ine.gov
Region: Oceania				
Papua New Guinea	ONGInfo 1.0	2006	5.0	none
Fiji	FijilInfo 4.0	2004	4.0	none

	FijiInfo 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
Regional Africa				
African Union	AfricaInfo 2.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
	AfricaInfo 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
ADEA, in conjunction with NESIS	African Union Outlook	2008	5.0	none
	SADC Eye	2008	5.0	www.sadc.int
	ECCAS Eye	2008	5.0	www.ceeac-eccas.org
	African Continent NESIS Eye		planning stage	none
Horn of Africa Region	Horn of Africa DevInfo 5.0	2006	5.0	none
	Horn of Africa DevInfo 4.0	2006	4.0	none
Malawi, Lesotho and Zambia	Regional VACInfo 1.0	2006	5.0	none
UNICEF ESAR	EmergencyInfo ESAR 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
Regional Asia and the Middle East				
Arab States	ArabiInfo 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	none
Education for all	EFA Info 2008	2008	5.0	none
	EFA Info 1.0	2007	5.0	none
UNICEF MENA	Mena Info 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	www.childinfo.org
Intergovernmental Convention on Sexually Exploited Children	CSEC Info 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	www.childinfo.org
UNICEF ROSA	Child Info 3.5 ROSA	2003	ChildInfo	www.childinfo.org
	ChildInfo ROSA	2002	ChildInfo	www.childinfo.org
South Asia region	SouthAsia Info 1.0	2005	4.0	none
UNICEF EAPRO	EAPRO DevInfo Database	2003	ChildInfo	www.childinfo.org
Regional Europe				
UNICEF, UNECE and UNDP, UNFPA	Regional MDG Info	2008	5.0	www.regionalmdg.org
UNICEF Innocenti Centre	MONEE Info 2008	2008	5.0	moneeinfo.org
	MONEE Info 2007	2007	5.0	
UNICEF	CEE/CIS Regional MICS Info	2008	5.0	www.micsinfo.org
Regional Americas				
DevInfoLAC	Info LAC 3.0	2005	4.0	none
	Info LAC 2.0	2004	4.0	none
	Info LAC 1.0	2002	ChildInfo	none
International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labor	IPEC Info 2.0	2005	5.0	www.ilo.org/ipec/lang-en/index.htm
	IPEC Info 1.0	2005	5.0	www.ilo.org/ipec/lang-en/index.htm
Argentina, Chile and Uruguay	Mosaicos 2.0	2003	ChildInfo	www.childinfo.org
	Mosaicos 1.0	2003	ChildInfo	www.childinfo.org
CARICOM	Caricom Info 1.0	2006	5.0	www.caricom.org
Regional Oceania				
None				
Global Level				
UNSD, UNFPA, UNICEF	CensusInfo	2009	5.0	UNSD website allows software downloads and will eventually be a portal for adaptations

UN System Influenza Coordinator UNSIC/UNDG	AHInfo 1.0	2006	5.0	none
UNICEF, Child Mortality Estimates	CMEInfo	2008	5.0	www.childmortality.org
HIV/AIDS Data Hub	Evidence to Action	2008	5.0	www.aidsdatahub.org
UNICEF, WHO	Immunization summary	2008	5.0	www.childinfo.org/immunization.html
	Immunization summary	2007	5.0	www.childinfo.org/immunization.html
Human Development Indicators	Aid Effectiveness	2007	5.0	none
UNICEF	Emergency Info	2007	5.0	www.devinform.info/emergencyinfo
UNICEF, Accelerated Child Survival and Development	ACDSInfo	2008	5.0	www.unicef.org/health/index_childsurvival.html
UNIFEM	GenderInfo	2007	5.0	none
ILO	IPEInfo 2.0	2005	4.0	www.ilo.org/ipecc/lang-en/index.htm
UNICEF HQ State of the World's Children	SOWCInfo 2009	2009	5.0	www.unicef.org/sowc
	SOWCInfo 2008	2007	5.0	www.unicef.org/sowc
	SOWCInfo 2007	2006	5.0	www.unicef.org/sowc
	SOWCInfo 2006	2006	4.0	www.unicef.org/sowc
	SOWCInfo 2005	2005	4.0	www.unicef.org/sowc
UN-HABITAT	UrbanInfo 2.0	2008	5.0	www.devinform.info/galleries/urbaninfo
	UrbanInfo 1.0	2005	4.0	none
UNICEF HQ	MTSP Info 2.0	2008	5.0	www.unicef.org/search/search.php?q=mtsp
	MTSP Info 1.0	2006	5.0	www.unicef.org/search/search.php?q=mtsp
Millennium Villages Project	Millennium Villages Info	2008	5.0	www.millenniumvillages.org
UNICEF	MICSInfo	2008	5.0	www.unicef.org/statistics/index_24302.html
UNICEF, Child Protection Section	Child Protection Info 1.0	2007	5.0	www.unicef.org/protection
DFID	DFID Portal	2006	5.0	www.dfid.gov.uk/research/portal.asp
UNHCR	Ref Info 2005 1.0	2005	4.0	www.unhcr.org/refworld
UNSD and Office of UNSG	MDGInfo 2008	2008	5.0	http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Default.aspx
	MDGInfo 2007	2007	5.0	http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Default.aspx
	MDGInfo 2006	2006	5.0	http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Default.aspx
	MDGInfo 2005	2005	4.0	http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Default.aspx

Possible DevInfo Adaptations				
Central African Republic	Central African Republic DevInfo			none
Guinea Bissau				none
Sao Tome and Principe	STPInfo			none
Jordan	Jordan DevInfo			unable to confirm
Paraguay				www.dgeec.gov.py
Peru	SIDPERU			unable to confirm
Solomon Islands	Possibly an EmergencyInfo update			
OECS	OECS Info		planning stage	www.oecs.org
CEMAC	CEMAC Info			www.cemac.cf
ESCWA	Arab GenderInfo			www.escwa.un.org
ESCWA	Arab Youth Database			www.escwa.un.org
Development Initiatives	AIDInfo			www.aidinfo.org

Notes: ADEA indicates Association for the Development of Education in Africa; CARICOM, Caribbean Community; CEMAC, Communité Economique et Monétaire d'Afrique Centrale; DevInfoLAC, DevInfo Latin America and Caribbean Support Unit; DFID, Department for International Development; APRO, East Asia and Pacific Regional Office; ECCAS, Economic Community of Central African States; ESAR, (REgional Office for) Eastern and Southern Africa Region; ESCWA, Economic and Social Commission for West Asia; HQ, Headquarters; ILO, International Labour Organization; MENA, (Regional Office for) Middle East North Africa; NESIS, National Education Statistical Information Systems; OECS, Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States; ROSA, Regional Office for South Asia; SADC, Southern African Development community; UNDP, United Nations Development Programme; UNECE, UN Economic Commission for Europe; UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund; UN-HABITAT, United Nations Human Settlements Programme; UNIFEM, United Nations Development Fund for Women; UNHCR, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; UNSD, United Nations Statistics Division; UNSG, United Nations Secretary-General; UNSIC, United Nations System Influenza Coordinator; WHO, World Health Organization.

Annex IX. Country reports

Egypt (country visit, 18- 24 January 2009)

The Egyptian context

There are two partners with UNICEF in the DevInfo initiative: the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) and the Information and Decision Support Centre (IDSC). CAPMAS was established in 1964 and is the official source for data, statistics and reports to assist all state agencies and authorities, universities, research centres, and international organizations in planning, developing, assessing, and making policies and decisions. IDSC is a newer body, established in 1985. IDSC describes itself as the Egyptian Cabinet's think tank and is primarily tasked with supporting decision makers on issues of relevance to economic, social and political reform. Since its inception, IDSC endeavours have been focused on priority issues, giving momentum to development reform. IDSC seeks to upgrade Egyptian society starting with informational infrastructure then addressing decision support in issues relevant to development in the economic, political and social spheres.

Separate sources of data, low levels of access to and skills in information technology, and weak evidence-based planning characterize the Egyptian human development data environment. However, things appear to have improved during the past five years with increased computer literacy, interest in data for monitoring, and evidence-based planning from line ministries and other agencies. This makes Egypt a challenging yet timely environment for DevInfo.

The UNICEF Egypt Country Office first prepared a DevInfo database in 2004. The database was customized, updated and launched as EgyInfo 1.0 on 26 May 2008. A web-based version at www.egyinfo.net.eg was announced at the time.

Overview of DevInfo in Egypt

EgyInfo is currently the sole DevInfo database in the country. It is *de facto* coordinated by the UNICEF Egypt Country Office. A tripartite memorandum of understanding was signed between UNICEF, IDSC and CAPMAS in 2006. There are four stated objectives for the next stage of EgyInfo (which is referred to as "after EgyInfo1.0" but with no given timelines): to vertically and horizontally decentralize the use and administration of DevInfo at the sub-national level and among national authorities and agencies; to disseminate and use the database (including develop a group of working partners and further training); to update the database annually and translate it into Arabic; and to add new databases under EgyInfo as a tool for monitoring and evaluation (including the national five-year plan, the President's agenda, and sectoral databases including in health and education).

The current database under EgyInfo is maintained by CAPMAS and hosted on the IDSC server. EgyInfo 1.0 has been distributed on CD to UN colleagues and counterparts directly and at various events including three major national conferences. The CD cover text explains the initiative and has the subtitle "A UN Egypt ¹²⁵ Initiative based on UNICEF's DevInfo" as specified in the memorandum of understanding. Technical data for hardware requirements are missing from the CD cover. However, they are included in the user's guide uploaded with the system. There is no online help function and the technical support function is unclear. EgyInfo is currently available in English. EgyInfo 1.0 currently contains one database on human development, which is at the national and first sub-national level with a total of 174 indicators defined.

¹²⁵ Same citation on www.egyinfo.net.eg, with the addition of the word 'sponsored' after UNICEF.

Main findings

These are grouped according to the DevInfo Global Evaluation objectives.

Objective 1: Assess relevance, effectiveness and impact of DevInfo at national and sub-national levels by governments and other partners in programme countries as well as by the UN system.

Relevance

National partners and research institutes acknowledge that a single source of data on human development in Egypt is needed. At present, data is not easily available in one place. The emerging consensus is for a searchable, easy to use (with minimal or no training), web-based database in both English and Arabic that is linked to national, regional and local plans and to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

CAPMAS and IDSC both issue regular data bulletins using their own databases. IDSC has developed a database called Egypt Information and is considering displaying this data through DevInfo, which has better display features. Research bodies maintain their own databases. Research institutes have received DevInfo CDs, briefing and training, but have yet to use them. DevInfo has been introduced to two tertiary teaching centres: the Social Research Center of American University in Cairo and Sadat Academy. DevInfo has been used as an educational tool to monitor progress on MDGs in a summer course for students and teaching staff. A DevInfo section is envisaged to be included in the curriculum of a course on International Contemporary Issues in 2010-2011.

Within the United Nations, the World Food Programme (WFP) uses ArcGIS, which was developed by ESRI. This geographic information system has been customized down to the village level and is widely used throughout the country. Reportedly the World Health Organization uses Healthmapper. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) uses ATLAS¹²⁶ for its current country programme and contracts with the Institute of National Planning to build separate databases for the Human Development Reports. Although the DevInfo database was consulted for the Common Country Assessment, the country United Nations Development Assistance Framework monitoring framework is in a word document and manually updated. UN teams are not clear that DevInfo would meet any of their current needs and note that they are usually instructed to use systems from senior management. The mid-term MDG report in 2008 did not mention either DevInfo or EGYInfo.

Effectiveness

Perceptions of DevInfo vary. Those who are not technically proficient find it difficult to use, while those who are technically proficient find it easy to use but with too limited functions. As a database and a process for developing a shared understanding of indicators, it is seen as useful, but technically it is seen as not very up to date. However, this assessment is based on the current DevInfo 5.0 database and not on the soon-to-be-released DevInfo 6.0.¹²⁷

Training has been provided to national partners IDSC (DevInfo Partner), CAPMAS (DevInfo Partner), the Ministry of Social Solidarity, and the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood. Within the United Nations, UNICEF, WFP and UNDP have been trained. Although all UNICEF computers have DevInfo uploaded, they do not all have EGYInfo uploaded and use of both is very limited. Few UN staff have uploaded or tried to use either, including in the Resident Coordinator's office. Training has been provided for academia at the Sadat Academy, the Social Research Centre of the American University in Cairo and Cairo University. Research centres reached include the public Institute of National Planning. There has been no longer term follow up to see if training was understood or applied.

¹²⁶ The UNDP Enterprise Resource Management system.

¹²⁷ Quote from a national expert in information technology who is also trained in DevInfo: "DevInfo is not a good data management system: difficult to manipulate and cannot work in it as a group. It is based on access. It is not a statistical tool, cannot compare with SPSS. It is not a reporting layer for another management system, e.g. Oracle discovery."

Impact

The impact of DevInfo to date is limited. EgyInfo has exposed certain weaknesses in national statistical agencies, including how they work together. Although these issues have not been resolved, some informants felt the process was helpful.

Objective 2: Assess efficiency in terms of oversight, management and implementation of DevInfo.

Oversight, implementation and management structure

The UNICEF Egypt Country Office *de facto* coordinates EgyInfo, and oversight within the UN family framework is absent. The tripartite memorandum of understanding signed in 2006 between UNICEF, IDSC and CAPMAS was meant to cover one year and has been tacitly extended without a formal review of whether the agreed tasks were met by all partners. No lead agency has been nominated. Some tasks and responsibilities have been jointly assigned between IDSC and CAPMAS with UNICEF playing a 'brokering' role. The two national partners both claim the current structure hinders progress but are unclear about alternatives. IDSC, as the newer, more flexible organization, appears to have more capacity than CAPMAS, and this seems unlikely to change. There is no wider advisory body of stakeholders, and implementation is driven by UNICEF and highly dependent on one local staff member. However, a proposal to form a national entity to coordinate and act as a training hub for DevInfo activities in Egypt is planned for 2009.

DevInfo is part of the Egypt Country Office Social Policy and M&E Programme and has annual work plans, which are largely invested in training local counterparts, technical development and rollout of DevInfo. The Egypt Country Office also sees DevInfo within the wider framework of knowledge management in the office and in the country. Funds are transferred for specific tasks to counterparts, and this process does not seem to be problematic.

Fund-raising mechanism

At present, UNICEF Headquarters provides technical support and training via Community Systems Foundation (CSF). The Egypt Country Office has provided the majority of national funding for DevInfo/EgyInfo. UNDP provided some funds for counterpart training. National partners contribute in time (they were not paid for development of the initial DevInfo database but CAPMAS is now paid for data updating and checking). The current model is only sustainable if UNICEF financial support continues at both the country and global level.

Frequency of updates

EgyInfo 1.0 took 14 months to enter data, review it and customize. The Egypt DevInfo 2008 database has already taken eight months and the data is not yet fully updated. Data has been prepared by CAPMAS and reviewed by CAPMAS and IDSC, but a conclusion upon what will be presented has not yet been reached. The Egypt Country Office has decided that unless new databases are included in the next version, it will not be called EgyInfo 2.0. At present, metadata exist for 165 indicators out of 174 in total and for all data sources.

Objective 3: Explore options for institutional sustainability and possible opportunities for expansion of DevInfo.

Sustainability.

Stakeholders see DevInfo as a useful idea but one that produces little value at the moment. They see it as UNICEF owned rather than publicly owned.

Most stakeholders expect that DevInfo will continue to be provided for free by the United Nations. Concern was expressed about user fees, although the government routinely purchases commercial software and training packages. No donors were met.

An Egypt Country Office staff member has the main responsibility for DevInfo and is also a master trainer for Egypt and the region. Her time is divided between DevInfo, knowledge management and other duties within the Social Policy Section in the Egypt Country Office. If this staff member were to move to another position, the training plan would be vulnerable, although there are discussions underway about setting up a national training hub. There are current tensions between the staff member's country and regional roles, and it is not clear that regional training can be scaled up if it is to rely solely on this staff member.

Conclusions

DevInfo is currently used only for EgyInfo, which is at an early stage of development, as it only contains one database. EgyInfo has yet to be fully owned by national partners—where ownership is defined in terms of leadership, decision making, coordination, implementation, funding and use to measure national priorities and plans. There is goodwill from the United Nations but little practical engagement.

Delays in updating the database and the lack of an Arabic version have reduced its use. There have been results in terms of outputs (including training and development of the database) but the initiative currently has limited relevance and effectiveness in Egypt and has not reached its full potential. The management and governance structure has enabled DevInfo to get off the ground but would not be ideal for future growth. If this trend continues, data entry continues to be late and incomplete, and a solution for national leadership is not identified, EgyInfo will not reach its full potential and could be abandoned, unless other databases (such as thematic and sub-national ones) are included.

- EgyInfo could benefit from a more effective governance and decision-making structure. This might include people who have a role in relation to users (such as ministries, academic bodies and policy makers) as well as those who can help make technical decisions.
- From a user perspective, the priorities include development of the web-based tool, an Arabic version, and data that is not more than a year old and is as complete as possible. A wish has been expressed to develop an 'EgyInfo Community', which might be online. There are parallel initiatives on document databases that could be linked.
- The 2008 Demographic and Health Survey data is now available and the Egypt Country Office is considering entering it as a linked database called EDHSInfo2008. Other databases feeding into EgyInfo are under discussion but not yet formally in place. There is a need to update data more quickly and include other databases under EgyInfo.
- It would be timely to review the metadata now, especially for local indicators, to close any gaps and enrich their content.
- Further releases on CD and the EgyInfo website would benefit from technical data that explains system requirements and addresses frequently asked questions. Search engine optimization is not currently provided by DevInfo, but it would be useful to consider this at the global level in the future.
- A national training plan that builds on local capacity, relies less on a single UNICEF staff member, includes some of the already trained national partners, and uses online training options (which might be a challenge given the limited information technology capacities and resources of some national entities) should be developed. A longer perspective on training evaluation would help assess the

impact of training. The regional training role of the sole Egypt Country Office staff member should be clarified, as this could be a bottleneck in both regional and national development.

- The perception by the Resident Coordinator's Office and UN organizations that DevInfo is solely a UNICEF project should be explored. Interest was expressed by mid-level UN staff in using DevInfo to display the 2007-2011 and subsequent Common Country Assessments and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, using DevInfo for the next Human Development Report, and concerted UN country team support for EgyInfo.

India (country visit, 8-21 February 2009)

The Indian context

India faces several challenges in monitoring and reporting on human development, one of which is the size of both the country and its population. India is the world's seventh largest country in terms of land mass, second-most populous country (with an estimated population of 1.15 billion or 17 percent of the world's population,)¹²⁸ and home to the largest number of children of any country in the world. Another challenge the country faces is rapid urbanization and ongoing migration. In 2001, 28 percent of the total population lived in urban areas.¹²⁹ This figure is projected to increase to 32 percent by 2021.¹³⁰

National governance, planning and service delivery occur at several levels. At the national level, India is a democratically elected federal republic with state-level ministries and institutions. It has 28 states and 7 union territories, each of which may have their own governing bodies. These are then subdivided into 610 districts. There is further subdivision into blocks and villages. Under the current five-year national plan 2007-2011 (the eleventh of these plans), India is committed to decentralized government and planning to the district level and below.

India is a data rich country, with a long history and extensive experience in census, vital statistics and surveys. However there are still gaps, especially in child-related and disaggregated data. Under India's eleventh five-year plan, the Ministry of Statistics and Implementation will substantially invest in strengthening statistical systems and data collection, especially at state and district level. Government information technology access and services throughout the country will also increase. Informatics centres currently exist at the national, state and district level. In the next two to three years, government broadband access is planned to even lower (block) level. Common service centres will be in place in the next one to two years. Thus new opportunities for data collection, analysis and use are emerging.

Overview of DevInfo India

DevInfo originated in India. A database called NutritionInfo was developed by the UNICEF India Country Office Nutrition Section in the mid 1990s based on the UNICEF conceptual framework for nutrition. The tool allowed users to present data in tables, graphs and maps for reports and presentations. The India Country Office Planning Section then developed the tool for wider use across the country programme. Working with a partner, Community Systems Foundation (CSF), and with Swedish funding of USD 80,000, the India Country Office developed a local area network system called ChildInfo in 1994. Mapping features from the Integrated Child Development Services Management Information System under a United States Agency for International Aid (USAID) project in India were incorporated. The system was initially developed in Foxpro 2.0 and later upgraded to Foxpro 2.6.

In subsequent versions of ChildInfo, information technology standards were upgraded and storage from multiple sources was added, thus allowing users to profile sources and data collection methods and make judgements on the indicators they would use. By 1996, ChildInfo had become a regional project, and by 1997, it was in global use. In February 1998, the framework for a common UN database was created and the term DevInfo coined. In 1999, the India Country Office in collaboration with CSF and an inter-agency working group consolidated the array of reporting indicators internationally agreed by India and narrowed the estimated 1,200 list down to a more manageable number. These were used to develop the first UN common database in 2001.

With further development, DevInfo India 1.0 was released on CD in 2005 as a product of the Ministry of Statistics and all subsequent development has been coordinated by them. The Central Statistical

¹²⁸ Projected estimate July 2008 based on 2001 Census data, available at www.censusindia.gov.in.

¹²⁹ Government of India, 'Population Projections of India and States 2001- 2026 and Census of India', Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, 2001.

¹³⁰ UNICEF India, 'Annual Report 2008', India, December 2008.

Organization has formed an Inter-Ministry Technical Group with representation from key ministries and receives data from partners. The Central Statistical Organization receives and approves all suggestions for new indicators and data sources. The second and current version, DevInfo India 2.0,¹³¹ is powered by DevInfo 5.0 and was released on the second Indian National Statistics Day in June 2008.

In a parallel development, DevInfo technology was adopted for the 2001 India National Census and used to present and display the provisional results in 2002. This version was called CensusInfo India. Later, another version of CensusInfo 2.0 was released with final data and with more indicators included. DevInfo was selected against other data display software in part because it was free and endorsed by the United Nations. This was the largest database built to date in DevInfo, comprising over one million records. It is now used for testing the newer version of the DevInfo software. CensusInfo is recommended by the UN Statistical Office for presenting statistical data.

Current status of DevInfo in India

There are two main DevInfo products in India—DevInfo India and CensusInfo India. There are also a number of applications in trial or development mode.

DevInfo India is a national database system helps that aims to monitor and report on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the national and sub-national level and to provide theme-based data to help monitor locally relevant goals such as the national health policy and the national planning goals. It contains data on 301 indicators from 31 sources. Indicators with data from a wider range of time periods, such as vital statistics and the census, cover up to 59 time periods and up to 4 administrative levels. UNICEF has provided funding via an un-earmarked Department for International Development (DFID) donation. Technical support has been provided to date by CSF via the DevInfo Support Group (DSG).

CensusInfo India was based on the 2001 census and includes earlier time series data. A memorandum of understanding to cover support from the United Nations for the next India National Census in 2011 was signed in October 2008 between the India Census Office, UNICEF, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).¹³²

A long-term agreement was signed at the end of 2008 between UNICEF and Avalon Information Systems, a New Delhi based sub-contractor of CSF, to cover direct support on training and software development.

Main findings

These are grouped according to the DevInfo Global Evaluation objectives.

Objective 1: Assess relevance, effectiveness and impact of DevInfo at national and sub-national levels by governments and other partners in programme countries as well as by the UN system.

Relevance

DevInfo met the needs for census data display from 2001 to date and will do so in the next census. It addressed the problems at the time of the absence of metadata, standards and depiction methods for data and allowed a much greater dissemination of the census data than had previously occurred. The model developed in India has also led to a global project, CensusInfo (www.devinfo.info/censusinfo), endorsed by the UN Statistical Office on census display.

¹³¹ Government of India, 'DevInfo India 2.0', Central Statistical Organization, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, India, 2008.

¹³² Government of India - Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNIFEM 'Memorandum of Understanding on a Framework of Support to the 2011 Census of India', New Delhi, October 2008.

DevInfo data was used in part for the 2007 MDG report.¹³³ The Central Statistical Organization appears to have used DevInfo data for this report and Macromedia software to prepare the report and presentations. Materials produced using DevInfo do appear in national and state reports but are often not cited as being produced using DevInfo.

There is a great need and demand for decentralized data display for planning and monitoring purposes and DevInfo technology could meet this in the future, at least to the district level. It is not clear if village-level mapping display and database maintenance is feasible. State versions are now under discussion. In Madya Pradesh, a memorandum of understanding signed on 28 August 2008 between UNICEF and the State Planning Commission defines clear steps to complete and launch a state version and maintain it in future.

Thematic DevInfo databases are being developed. An HIV database is currently being populated with data and tested in two districts. This is coordinated between the India Country Office and the National AIDS Control Organization. A crime statistics database is under consideration.¹³⁴ There have also been some applications that were temporary and not sustained, including an emergency database produced in Gujarat.

More than 100 people have been trained on DevInfo, but there is little evidence that the training has resulted in direct use by many of them. There are exceptions: one trained person moved to the Crime Statistics Bureau and has convinced this group to develop a database. Interest in training for UN staff has been low. After the release of DevInfo India 2.0, a 2008 UNICEF call for training requests to sister agencies was met with no response. Within UNICEF, use is focused on data display functions by the technical sections and for reports, publications and one map in the Country Programme Action Plan. Use within the United Nations appears to be minimal.

Impact

DevInfo database technology reached a mature stage of implementation in India earlier than any other country and was nationally owned at an early stage. Early national ownership was apparently the key to effective use of the tool for census data display, which has since led to more than 10 countries following suit and a global project, CensusInfo, which includes UN adoption of DevInfo as the advised technical tool for census data display. Thus India has contributed to global harmonization of development data and indicators. The same could be said for the early Indian example of DevInfo India. However, the impact on harmonization of national data within India has been less marked. Despite being a well developed integrated database, it has not yet led to active national debate around the harmonization of indicators but is well placed to do so in future.

Objective 2: Assess efficiency in terms of oversight, management and implementation of DevInfo.

Oversight, implementation and management structure

There is national ownership of both major DevInfo products in India—CensusInfo India and DevInfo India—and in-kind support is provided nationally. There is also some funding provided by UN organizations for CensusInfo India and on an annual basis by UNICEF for DevInfo India.

The Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner oversee CensusInfo India and there is an agreement in place that the results of the 2011 census will be displayed using DevInfo technology. The newly appointed Census Commissioner is keen that quality control of data in the main DevInfo India database be taken seriously and is engaging in this discussion.

¹³³ Government of India, 'Millennium Development Goals. India Country Report 2007', Public Diplomacy Division, Ministry of External Affairs, India, 2007, available at www.meaindia.nic.in.

¹³⁴ Government of India, 'Crime in India 2007', National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, 2007.

The Central Statistical Organization oversees DevInfo India and reports on this annually.¹³⁵ The Central Statistical Organization has a Technical Advisory Group, which reviews and approves all new suggested indicators and data sources. Sectoral groups led by the relevant government ministry handle thematic databases within DevInfo India. The current mechanism appears to work well but takes a few months for new indicators and sources to be adopted and entered.

The current products are all CD based, and this limits both the use and frequency of updating. There is also a challenge in the identification and distribution of new information when uploaded. UNICEF provides coordination and guidance to DevInfo development. Implementation and ongoing technical support is provided by CSF via the DSG and directly by the CSF sub-contractor Avalon via a long-standing agreement signed with UNICEF in December 2008.

Inter-agency activity appears to have decreased since the early days of DevInfo India development. The Inter-agency Monitoring and Evaluation Group has also lapsed and reconstitution might need to be considered. The DevInfo India fact sheet¹³⁶ was reviewed and is not completely up to date. The planned DSG move to online updating of this fact sheet might make this timelier in future.

Fund-raising mechanism

DevInfo India is funded by UNICEF via an un-earmarked contribution from DFID. There has been no separate resource mobilization by the India Country Office for DevInfo India. CensusInfo India 2011 will be funded in part by the Government of India and in part by UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF under a separate memorandum of understanding.

Frequency of updates

DevInfo India has been updated twice to date, with a new release each time. A further update is planned in 2009. Indicators are proposed to the technical committee coordinated by the National Statistical Office and take three to five months to approve. Distribution is by CD, and there is also an online version of DevInfo India. The state-level databases that are currently being developed will be maintained separately and there are no plans to directly link them to the national database. A full provincial-level database has not yet been launched but is planned for 2009.

Strategic partnership with the India Census has been important in obtaining official boundary maps to the lowest levels and electronic versions of the extensive India Census data. There has also been easy access to DSG support in New Delhi.

Objective 3: Explore options for institutional sustainability and possible opportunities for expansion of DevInfo.

Sustainability

The DevInfo national database is maintained, nationally owned and updated and thus is likely to continue. There is support to bring DevInfo to the state and district level and the State of Madhya Pradesh is on its way to achieving this. In the State of Maharashtra, interest is expressed in bringing DevInfo further to the village level for use in planning and monitoring of programmes. It is not certain that such an expansion is feasible either technically or has a full support structure in place.

UNICEF has so far provided direct funding from the India Country Office for DevInfo India and, apart from limited DFID interest (in addition to the un-earmarked DFID donation used to fund country-level work), there has been no major donor funding sought or interest expressed. There may be technical limitations of the current .NET software platform, which is not compliant with Government of India software standards.

¹³⁵ Government of India, 'Annual Report 2007-2008', Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, India, available at www.mospi.gov.in.

¹³⁶ DevInfo, 'DevInfo India Fact Sheet', available at www.devinfo.org/Di-wiki/index.php?title=Portal:Country_Factsheets, accessed 16 February 2008.

CensusInfo India 2011 will be supported by significant funding from four UN organizations of more than USD 2.25 million. This will include map development, software development and training. Plans are already in place for these components.

The lack of wider UN support and the reliance within UNICEF of a sole professional staff member and a small national support team may limit expansion, especially if state-level databases take hold as these will require significant technical and managerial support. India remains a source of innovation in using DevInfo and is currently exploring village-level database use and also piloting an HIV thematic database. Lessons learned from these initiatives could be very useful for the global DevInfo programme.

Conclusions

India was the birthplace of DevInfo and the current major global products (the DevInfo India national database and CensusInfo database) have been developed and tested here.

Despite long-standing implementation of DevInfo in India, there is still limited use of DevInfo and its major application appears to be the display of statistical information. The use of DevInfo as an integrated database is limited. This is despite the fact that counterparts are expressing a need for this and are seeking various technical solutions.

The leadership role of the United Nations in India supporting DevInfo as a joint UN programme was important in the early stages of DevInfo development, with involvement in designing and developing the joint database for the first version of DevInfo, but it appears to have lessened since then. UNICEF has played the most active role recently in DevInfo development.

The potential for DevInfo in India appears to be around its role and use as an integrated database (DevInfo India) and in highlighting the differences between data from different sources to enable useful debate around harmonization and streamlining of data collection. There is an opportunity for the United Nations to revisit its normative role when it comes to data standards, as this appears to be of interest and concern to national authorities.

DevInfo India and the planned state versions would benefit from further national customization, in particular having relevant national and state-level plans identified as themes on the search bar with indicators grouped under these categories.

Support provided by the DSG and directly by Avalon is appreciated by counterparts and viewed as being technically of good standard. However the current model of extended classroom-based training should be reviewed. The launch of the next reportedly more user-friendly version, DevInfo 6.0, may provide a useful opportunity to do so.

There are requests from national counterparts at the state level to develop a DevInfo database tool for use at the village level. It is not clear how feasible this will be. Boundaries at the village level are subject to frequent change and will accelerate after the 2011 Census, and the conceptual framework is quite different. If this option is pursued, the first step should be a pilot project with careful review.

Liberia (country visit, 15-21 March 2009)

The Liberian context

The Government of the Republic Liberia, in partnership with multiple development agencies, is implementing several initiatives to support recovery, economic development and growth after the devastating effects of 14 years of unrest. In July 2008, a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (referred to as 'Lift Liberia Up Strategy') was developed, with support from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and UN organizations.¹³⁷ The Liberia Reconstruction and Development Committee, chaired by the President, is the coordinating body for the recovery and development programmatic framework of the government and monitors delivery against national objectives.

Through the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Government of Liberia has set a national strategy aimed at achieving growth, reconstruction and development over three years (2008-2011). Each of the 15 counties of Liberia has set its own development goals and priorities through the formulation of the County Development Agenda for a five-year period (2008-2013) in order to successfully monitor national progress towards Poverty Reduction Strategy goals and strategic objectives.

The County Support Team mechanism is a joint-UN initiative, started in 2006, aimed at building the capacity of local government to assume responsibility at the county level. The core elements of the project are: support to improving administrative infrastructure, including buildings, power supply, telecommunications and vehicles; capacity development including training in the basics of administration (reporting and running meetings), civic education, human rights, the MDGs and so on; and information management aiming to enhance field-based multi-sector information collection and compilation with analysis and use in the preparation of reports and proposals for priority actions at the county level.¹³⁸

Members of the county statistics offices received training on the use of DevInfo and a customized version of LiberiaInfo is planned to collect data at the county level.

A memorandum of understanding was signed on 19 March 2009, between the UN country team and national counterparts, extending the County Support Team Joint Programme until the end of 2010. The estimated budget for the project is USD 7.3 million. The project is aiming at providing capacity building at the sub-national level and strengthening data collection of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which directs the 15 counties, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, which is responsible for data collection for reporting on the Poverty Reduction Strategy deliverables, and the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS), which is responsible for carrying out national and sub-national surveys and reporting on MDG and national indicators.

Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services¹³⁹

LISGIS became an autonomous agency by an act of the Government of Liberia on 22 July 2004, which was subsequently signed into law. LISGIS effectively started operation in 2006.

During the 14 years of civil crisis that began in 1989, Liberia lost almost all of its statistical databases, comprising social, economic, demographic, population and housing census data. In the immediate aftermath of the war, the only available data was from secondary sources provided by humanitarian organizations. The United Nations set up a Humanitarian Information Centre that was responsible for collecting data and reporting on humanitarian assistance. The data files and spatial maps were subsequently transferred to an interim project by LISGIS with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) called the National Information Management Centre. The Centre's objectives included: building information management capacity within the government, in particular LISGIS; promoting common standards and best practices; and supporting monitoring and tracking of

¹³⁷ Government of the Republic of Liberia, 'Poverty Reduction Strategy', Liberia, 2008.

¹³⁸ UNDP, 'County Support Teams Programme', 2007.

¹³⁹ LISGIS Website, www.lisgis.org.

Poverty Reduction Strategy goals and MDGs. The National Information Management Centre supported implementation of DevInfo at LISGIS and the Development Assistance Database¹⁴⁰ at the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs.

In 2007, despite the financial and logistical challenges, LISGIS with the support of the Government of Liberia and its development partners, successfully conducted the Liberia Demographic and Health Survey, a Core Welfare Questionnaire Indicators Survey and a Participatory Poverty Assessment Survey. The Liberia Demographic and Health Survey preceded the Core Welfare Questionnaire Indicators Survey but the preparation and field work for both were conducted in 2007. As per a directive from the Government of Liberia, baseline data for the formulation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper was sourced from the results of these two surveys.¹⁴¹

In September 2008, the Government of Liberia launched a five-year (2008- 2013) National Strategy for the Development of Statistics with support from the Partners in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS 21), an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development organization, and other development partners as a framework for a system-wide rehabilitation of statistics in Liberia.

Overview of DevInfo

In 2007, UNDP and UNICEF supported the customization and deployment of DevInfo into LiberialInfo 1.0 as a national database and provided technical support to develop indicators and spatial data environment.¹⁴² A staff member of LISGIS, after receiving training, was able to customize DevInfo to meet national data requirements. The LiberialInfo database included a small percentage of data due to the post-conflict situation. The database has been partially updated since then. LISGIS is in the final stages of negotiating an agreement that will be funded by the European Commission and managed by UNDP to strengthen the data collection system of LISGIS, update the databases and launch LiberialInfo 2.0.

Training was also provided to county statistical information officers on the use of DevInfo. LiberialInfo is planned to be used for data collection at the county level. However, at the time of the evaluation visit to Kataka District in Margibi County, the LISGIS office was not yet equipped with computers and Internet connections.

Main findings

These are grouped according to the DevInfo Global Evaluation objectives

Objective 1: Assess relevance, effectiveness and impact of DevInfo at national and sub-national levels by governments and other partners in programme countries as well as by the UN system.

Relevance

LiberialInfo 1.0 was launched in 2007 by LISGIS with support from UNDP and UNICEF. Hundreds of CDs were printed and distributed by LISGIS. The LiberialInfo database was partially complete and data was not up to date at the time of the launch due to post-conflict conditions.

UNDP, through the County Support Team Programme, provided support to training LISGIS staff and 14 ministries on the use and administration of DevInfo.

UNICEF, as a member of the Poverty Reduction Strategy M&E Sub-working Group as well as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework M&E Cross-cutting Group, supported LISGIS in the

¹⁴⁰ The Development Assistance Database is an Aid Information Management System for use in national reconstruction and long-term development environments. The Development Assistance Database is a web-based information collection, tracking, analysis and planning tool for use by national governments and the broader assistance community and is used by many UNDP country offices around the world.

¹⁴¹ Liberty E (Dr.), 'Innovations in Official Statistics—Liberia's Story', LISGIS, Liberia.

¹⁴² UNDP, 'Annual Report 2007'.

implementation of LiberialInfo, based on the DevInfo platform. UNICEF also provided partial funding for the 2007 Liberia Demographic and Health Survey.¹⁴³

In 2008, LISGIS was occupied with the implementation of the census. Updating and disseminating the LiberialInfo database was not considered a high priority.

Effectiveness

On 20 March 2009, a ceremony was held to launch the 2008 MDG Report (the second Liberia MDG report). A speech was delivered by the Honorable Joseph N. Boakai, Vice President of the Republic of Liberia followed by a speech by the representative of Mr. Jordan Ryan, the UN Deputy Envoy. The report did not mention LiberialInfo and maps were produced using Humanitarian Information Centre maps dated from 2004. The report was prepared by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs with support from UNDP and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. The report revealed that Liberia's system for data collection and analysis remained weak, an aspect that severely undermines the use of statistics in policy analysis.¹⁴⁴

Impact

LiberialInfo 1.0 was launched in 2007 by LISGIS with support from UNDP and UNICEF. At this stage, there is no evidence that LiberialInfo is being used for any purpose.

Objective 2: Assess efficiency in terms of oversight, management and implementation of DevInfo.

Oversight, implementation and management structure

The UN country team and UNDP through the National Information Management Centre and the County Support Team Programme supported LISGIS in the implementation of DevInfo. Training and technical assistance were provided to LISGIS staff as well as ministries and counties. UNICEF provided funds to support training and launch of LiberialInfo 1.0 and also provided support to the implementation of different surveys.

Fund-raising mechanism

Funds to support implementation of DevInfo were provided primarily by the UN country team and UNDP in the form of training and technical assistance to LISGIS in the launch of LiberialInfo 1.0. UNICEF provided contributions to those activities as well as partial funding to surveys. A large number of computers, network equipment, software packages and peripheral equipment were supplied to LISGIS by multiple donors in 2008 to support the implementation of the census.

Frequency of updates

Since the launch of LiberialInfo 1.0 in 2007 using CDs, no updates have been released. However, a European Commission funded project, managed by UNDP, is expected to enhance the frequency of updates.

Objective 3: Explore options for institutional sustainability and possible opportunities for expansion of DevInfo.

Sustainability

As part of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics, a massive overhaul of the LISGIS infrastructure will take place at an estimated cost of USD 47 million over five years. The Government of

¹⁴³ UNICEF Liberia, 'Annual Report 2007', Liberia.

¹⁴⁴ Government of Liberia, 'Liberia MDG Report 2008', Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, Liberia.

Liberia as well as its development partners are committed to supporting LISGIS in implementing the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics. LISGIS is interested in continuing the use of DevInfo and other software packages as a platform for data collection and dissemination.

As a part of its 2009 annual work plan, UNICEF will continue to provide technical and financial support to ensure that tracking of Poverty Reduction Strategy deliverables that affect children is initiated promptly. Support to continuous update and decentralization of LiberiaInfo will continue. The 2009 Integrated Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Plan will be developed in line with the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics.¹⁴⁵

Developing a knowledge base to support policy formulation, strategy development, programme implementation and monitoring for children is a central objective for the UNICEF Liberia Country Office.¹⁴⁶

Conclusions

During the 14 years of civil crisis that began in 1989, Liberia lost almost all of its statistical databases, comprising social, economic, demographic, population and housing census data. In the immediate aftermath of the war, the only available data was from secondary sources provided by humanitarian organizations.

LISGIS was established in 2004 and effectively started operation in 2006. In the interim period to support LISGIS, the National Information Management Centre was established and managed by UNDP. The Centre's objectives included: building information management capacity within the government, in particular LISGIS; promoting common standards and best practices; and supporting monitoring and tracking of the Poverty Reduction Strategy goals and MDGs.

In 2007, LISGIS was able to manage multiple surveys and in March 2008, a National Population and Housing Census was conducted with support from UNFPA and other development partners.

In September 2008, the Government of Liberia launched a five-year (2008-2013) National Strategy for the Development of Statistics with support from the Partners in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS 21), an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development organization, and other development partners as a framework for a system-wide rehabilitation of statistics in Liberia.

LiberiaInfo 1.0 was launched in 2007 by LISGIS with support from the UN country team, UNDP and UNICEF. Hundreds of CDs were printed and distributed by LISGIS. The LiberiaInfo database was partially complete and data was not up to date at the time of the launch due to post-conflict conditions.

The 2008 MDG report, prepared by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs with support from UNDP and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, revealed that the statistics base in Liberia remained weak and did not refer to LiberiaInfo or use its mapping features.

Taking into consideration the complexity of the development agenda in Liberia—including the large number of ongoing initiatives, multiple donor programmes, high demand for information by multiple stakeholders for different purposes, and involvement of several government agencies in data collection and dissemination—a high-level task force that consists of representatives from the Government of Liberia as well as its development partners might be required to redefine the roles and responsibilities for data flow and integration of resources to support evidence-based policy decisions.

¹⁴⁵ UNICEF Liberia, 'Annual Report 2008'.

¹⁴⁶ UNICEF Liberia, 'Annual Work Plan 2008', 2009.

Malawi (country visit, 8-14 February 2009)

The Malawian context

In July 2007, the Government of Malawi launched the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy. The strategy built on the Malawi Economic Growth Strategy, which emphasized the need to create a conducive environment for private-sector investment to stimulate production of goods and services hence creating employment opportunities. The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy is the overarching operational medium-term strategy designed to attain the nation's Vision 2020 of transforming the country from being a predominantly importing and consuming economy to a predominantly manufacturing and exporting economy. The strategy clearly recognizes the role that the National Statistical Office (NSO) has to play in monitoring and evaluating progress towards realizing the goals set out in the strategy. The country is also committed to meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

National Statistical Office

NSO is located in Zomba, 300 kilometres south of Lilongwe, and is a division of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. NSO developed a strategic plan 2007-2011 with support from the Department for International Development (DFID). The strategic plan embraces three themes: to continue the process of organizational change and reform in order to more efficiently use resources to deliver improved statistical services; to ensure that the statistics required for designing, monitoring and evaluating the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy are delivered effectively; and to develop and implement a strategy for improving the management and organization of the National Statistical System, involving relevant government ministries and other producers and users of official statistics. The launch of the National Statistical System in November 2006 was an important milestone towards a comprehensive and well-coordinated production of official statistics that will ultimately benefit data users.

There are many challenges facing the NSO. Inadequate funding is the most critical one. The estimated budget to implement NSO strategy is USD 46 million. More than 90 percent of that is expected to come from donors. Thus far, donors have committed funds only to carrying out national surveys. The next challenge is filling vacant positions in the Statistical Common Service and regional offices, followed by lack of statistical coordination between different programmes and a pending decision to relocate the NSO office to the capital in Lilongwe.

The Malawi Socio-economic Database (MASEDA) is a section within the NSO. MASEDA is headed by a manager with two assistants. The MASEDA section manager, in addition to four other section managers, reports to the head of the Technical Services Division, who in turn reports to the Deputy Commissioner of Statistics.

Overview of DevInfo in Malawi

MASEDA is the first comprehensive socio-economic database on the situation of human development in Malawi. It uses the software provided by DevInfo. MASEDA has been adopted by the Government of Malawi for the monitoring of the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper indicators. It has been widely publicized inside and outside Malawi. MASEDA was created by UNICEF and the NSO in collaboration with Malawi's development partners.

MASEDA is a standardized software application that allows users to organize statistical data and present this information through a variety of tools including tables, graphs and maps.

In October 2001, MASEDA version 1.0 was launched based on ChildInfo 3.5 technology after a successful popularization among stakeholders from different sectors. In 2003, UNICEF supplied 15 computers to establish the NSO Lab, which supports MASEDA training activities. In November 2004, MASEDA version 2.0 was launched by the Minister of Economic Planning and Development. MASEDA

version 2.0 was based on DevInfo 4.0 technology, and it contains official statistics recognized by the Government of Malawi.

In June 2007, version 3.0 of MASEDA, built on DevInfo 5.0 technology was launched. MASEDA 3.0 is being distributed through CDs containing the uploaded data and the software tools to operate the database. The database of the web version of MASEDA 3.0 (www.maseda.info) is currently partially complete. In 2007, training was provided to 300 to 400 members of district assemblies in 11 sessions. No training was provided in 2008, as the MASEDA Master Trainer was engaged in conducting the 2008 census for approximately eight months. Funding of training activities carried out in 2007 was provided by UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA.

Main findings

These are grouped according to the DevInfo Global Evaluation objectives.

Objective 1: Assess relevance, effectiveness and impact of DevInfo at national and sub-national levels by governments and other partners in programme countries as well as by the UN system.

Relevance

MASEDA has fulfilled a need for statistic, social and economic information since 2001. Data have been regularly updated and reports prepared and disseminated. Since 2001, MASEDA has been perceived as a Government of Malawi tool to produce official statistics. MASEDA is mentioned as one of the sources in government publications, such as the report on the MDGs.

The release of MASEDA 2.0 in 2004 positioned Malawi as a leading country in Africa in using data to support decisions. The years 2004 and 2005 witnessed a wider dissemination by reporting indicators at the district level on a monthly basis that showed national statistics of Malawi depicted using MASEDA mapping features. After 2006, updates of MASEDA became less frequent. The Ministry of Economic Planning and Development therefore mobilized alternative resources to produce quality documents outlining the national vision, goals and reports.

MASEDA is also meant to be useful at the district assembly level. The Zomba District Assembly demonstrated competence in collecting data from local sections and compiling data into a database called the 'Data Bank'. The assembly was able to produce the Zomba District Social Development Profile 2008-2011 document, which included local indicators. The Planning Director of the assembly had been trained to use MASEDA and had access to CDs, but he indicated that he found it difficult to use the MASEDA database to store and present data. A Monitoring and Evaluation Officer at the District Assembly was also trained but left for a better position with an international non-governmental organization.

Effectiveness

Several hundred government and UN staff have been trained to use MASEDA. Hundreds of CDs were distributed to ministries, districts and UN organizations. However, there is no evidence that those trained applied what they learned and actually used MASEDA in their work.

Stakeholders mentioned several factors that contributed to this situation: some senior government officials attended DevInfo training outside the country; some of the participants in the training lacked basic skills to use computers; and others did not have access to computers. In addition, data for some indicators were not available. Although data from the national surveys and census were robust, data collection methods of routine data were rudimentary. Data quality verifications methods were lacking and there was insufficient awareness of the support available to users to import locally produced data. In addition, Internet connectivity and the general communication infrastructure in Malawi were weak for a long time, limiting sharing data. However, there are indications that this is starting to improve through the introduction of 'hotspots' by private operators in different parts of the country.

Impact

DevInfo database technology reached a mature stage of implementation in Malawi in 2005 through cooperation between the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, NSO, UNICEF and other partners. The database carried detailed indicators at district levels, was widely publicized, and several official documents were released using MASEDA for presenting statistical data.

However, insufficient continued commitment and allocation of adequate resources has led to the deterioration of the level of penetration and use of MASEDA by wider groups at the national, district and ministerial levels. Attention was focused on training by one person who was trained as a master trainer. No follow-up monitoring was performed to measure the impact of training on participants. In some cases, it was reported that users abandoned the use of MASEDA because they were not able to upload data into the database.

Objective 2: Assess efficiency in terms of oversight, management and implementation of DevInfo.

Oversight, implementation and management structure

Since 2001, NSO has hosted the MASEDA section. UNICEF provided support in establishing a training lab equipped with 15 computers, providing training to users and administrators, and printing CDs and other materials. Training for master trainers was provided by Community Systems Foundation (CSF) and infrequent visits were carried out to Malawi to review data quality and consistency prior to the launch of a new CD. The UNICEF country office funded the launch of three updates of MASEDA. Other UN organizations, mainly UNDP and UNFPA, contributed to funding of training. The NSO strategy includes supporting district assemblies in creating databases and enhancing coordination in the collection and handling of data on different sectors. Training has been provided to a large number of trainees from district assemblies to use MASEDA. However, very little application of this training has been witnessed.

Fund-raising mechanism

The UNICEF Malawi Country Office is supporting MASEDA activities in three ways: making contributions to the Global DevInfo Contract; funding local and international training of users and administrators; and making contributions to the Joint Programme to support Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E).

The Joint Programme to support Monitoring and Evaluation (2008-2011) is a follow up to the 2005-2008 Joint Programme Support for the National M&E Systems in Malawi. Estimated funding for the programme is approximately USD 5 million in four years. The three major contributors to the programme are UNDP (30 percent), the European Union (28 percent), and DFID (22 percent). UNICEF is contributing USD 200,000, representing approximately 4 percent of the total funding, to fund activities related to MASEDA support such as printing and distributing CDs of updated databases. MASEDA does not occupy a prominent position in the Joint Programme to support Monitoring and Evaluation and there is no attempt to use MASEDA to its potential as an integrated database for human development indicators. Non-UN partners are currently not participating in the funding of MASEDA, but the financing plan for the period until 2011 does foresee contributions from donors to MASEDA.

Frequency of updates

MASEDA has been distributed mainly using CDs. Updating data for replicating a CD in preparation for the launch of MASEDA 3.0 in 2007 required more than one year. A web-based version of MASEDA (www.maseda.info) was launched based on the 2007 database. Since then, the web version has not been updated; data on the web is incomplete and not up to date. An effort was made to launch a CD in 2008 that was not fruitful as the data was incomplete, metadata was missing and there were disagreements on the quality of data. A newer version is expected to be released in 2009.

Objective 3: Explore options for institutional sustainability and possible opportunities for expansion of DevInfo.

Sustainability

Currently, NSO has a large number of competing demands on resources making it difficult to dedicate more staff to the MASEDA section. NSO has limited capacity to update indicators on a regular basis. There is one person currently trained as a master trainer in MASEDA, which limits capacity for expansion and increases the risk of discontinuing further updates if this person decided to move to another position.

The computers supplied to NSO for training in 2003 are becoming out of date. The cycle to get CDs printed is taking too long. Only one CD was printed in 2007 using DevInfo 5.0 technology. MASEDA is almost entirely dependent on support from donor agencies. Discontinuing this support for any reason will probably make MASEDA not useable.

Conclusions

In October 2001, MASEDA version 1.0 was launched based on ChildInfo 3.5 technology after a successful popularization among the stakeholders from the different sectors. MASEDA has fulfilled a need for statistic, social and economic information since 2001. The release of MASEDA 2.0 in 2004 positioned Malawi as a leading country in Africa in using data to support decisions. The years 2004 and 2005 witnessed a wider dissemination of reporting indicators at the district level on a monthly basis. In June 2007, version 3.0 of MASEDA, built on DevInfo 5.0 technology was launched.

Several hundred government and UN staff have been trained to use MASEDA. Hundreds of CDs were distributed to ministries, districts and UN organizations. However, there is no evidence that those trained have applied what they learned and use MASEDA in their work.

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Serbia (country visit, 1-7 March 2009)

The Serbian context

Building on the democratic changes in October 2005, the Government of the Republic of Serbia started the country transformation and initiated design of a new strategic framework for country development. The key policy documents relevant to the status of children and women are: Poverty Reduction Strategy, National Plan of Action for Children, and the National Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

After the adoption of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for Serbia on 16 October 2003 and the election of the new Government of the Republic of Serbia, the Deputy Prime Minister formed the Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation Focal Point in September 2004. The Government of Serbia, recognizing the state of children in society, established the Council for Child Rights in May 2002. In February 2004, the Council for Child Rights drafted the National Plan of Action for Children, which was adopted by the government.

Addressing the need to improve the implementation of national strategies, the Annual Planning and Management Project was launched in 2005 at the initiative of central institutions of the Government of Serbia, under the title 'Joint Project: Towards the More Efficient Implementation of Reforms—Improving Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring and Reporting'.

Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia

Three significant processes at the national level have had crucial impact on shaping the 2006-2008 Strategy of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia: the process of the transformation of Yugoslavia; fast economic changes towards a market economy; and the process of joining the European Union and harmonization with international standards. International standards needed to be introduced in order to establish international data comparability and gain the trust of international organizations, such as the United Nations and others, and to fulfil other statistical requirements required in the process of joining the European Union.¹⁴⁷

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia manages 14 regional statistical offices. It issues several publications annually in English and Serbian, online and also on CDs, including an annual statistical yearbook of Serbia. The latest edition, 2008, is available on the office website.¹⁴⁸ The latest census was carried out in 2002,¹⁴⁹ and preparation is underway for the next census in 2011.

Overview of DevInfo in Serbia

The web version of the national DevInfo database, DevInfo Serbia 1.0,¹⁵⁰ available in Serbian and English, was launched in early 2009. The latest database on the site is dated 31 October 2008. This version has 328 indicators at the national level, 92 of which also have data at the municipality level (third sub-national level).

The national DevInfo database is used for updating indicators for the implementation of MDGs, the National Plan of Action for Children and the Poverty Reduction Strategy. Databases are also used for reporting on the progress of Local Plans of Action for Children in 21 municipalities in Serbia.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷ Statistical Office Strategy, 2006-2008.

¹⁴⁸ Statistical Year Book Website, <http://webrzs.statserb.sr.gov.yu/axd/en/god.htm>.

¹⁴⁹ 2002 Census Website, <http://webrzs.statserb.sr.gov.yu/axd/en/popis.htm>.

¹⁵⁰ DevInfo Website, <http://devinfo.stat.gov.rs>.

¹⁵¹ DevInfo Country Profile 2009.

In cooperation with UNICEF, a database on the level of settlements has been developed with data from the Population Census. Data for 62 indicators have been prepared and grouped into 6 databases. A map of settlements has also been developed for presenting data at the settlement level.

Main findings

These are grouped according to the DevInfo Global Evaluation objectives.

Objective 1: Assess relevance, effectiveness and impact of DevInfo at national and sub-national levels by governments and other partners in programme countries as well as by the UN system.

Relevance

DevInfo Serbia has fulfilled a need for statistic, social and economic information since 2004. Data have been regularly updated and reports prepared and disseminated. Since 2007, DevInfo has been perceived as a tool of the Government of Serbia for official statistical data for reporting.

At the local level, 21 municipalities have launched Local Plans of Action for children supported by the Council of the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Serbia and UNICEF. Those municipalities appointed project coordinators and were trained to use DevInfo. The municipalities had ambitious plans to introduce DevInfo to city schools. The city of Vranje is defining indicators and is aiming to collect data on children.¹⁵² The Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, with support from UNICEF and other donor agencies, has formulated a project to support implementation of Local Plans of Action at municipalities.¹⁵³

Effectiveness

Since 2004, when DevInfo was adopted at the national level as a main tool for reporting on the progress of the implementation of the National Plan of Action, until the end of 2008, 14 database administration and 21 user trainings have been held. A total of 246 persons attended trainings on database use and 129 persons were trained on database administration (both DevInfo 4.0 and 5.0).

Training has been provided to a team from the Ministry of Youth and Sport. With the help of a UNICEF consultant, the team is defining indicators, building a database, and setting up a system for collecting data on youth (ages 15 to 30 years) both inside and outside the Republic of Serbia.¹⁵⁴

Impact

DevInfo Serbia 1.0 is available online at the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia website (<http://DevInfo.stat.gov.rs>). An annual statistical yearbook is launched in October of every year in hard copy, on CD, and online. Several specialized databases have been created to track implementation of the National and Local Plans of Action for Children. A database was updated to enhance reporting on the progress of the Poverty Reduction Strategy and the second progress report was issued using data from that database in addition to other sources.

Objective 2: Assess efficiency in terms of oversight, management and implementation of DevInfo.

Oversight, implementation and management structure

At the end of 2006, after two years of direct UNICEF support, DevInfo was declared 'a tool of particular interest' for the Republic of Serbia and therefore became part of the regular programme of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia. A unit was established consisting of four people, paid for by the state

¹⁵² Interview with leaders of the city of Vranje.

¹⁵³ Use of DevInfo at the local level, June 2008.

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Ministry of Youth and Sport team.

budget, who have undertaken the task of further developing and maintaining DevInfo at the national level. At the local level, in 21 municipalities where a Local Plan of Action for Children is being implemented, each municipality nominated a DevInfo coordinator, who is responsible for development and maintenance of the database at the local level, paid for by the municipality.

Fund-raising mechanism

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia has formed a unit to manage DevInfo under the Social Standards and Indicators Division and is fully supporting the unit. The UNICEF Serbia Country Office has supported DevInfo Serbia activities since 2004. UNICEF is continuing its support through different programmes at national and sub-national levels.

Frequency of updates

There are several databases developed at national, sector and sub-national levels. The National Statistical Database is updated twice a year in May and October. The latest database was updated in October 2008.

Objective 3: Explore options for institutional sustainability and possible opportunities for expansion of DevInfo.

Sustainability

DevInfo was adopted by the Government of Serbia as an official tool for monitoring the MDGs and Poverty Reduction Strategy implementation. Since 2007, DevInfo was institutionalized in Serbia and became part of the regular programme of the Statistical Office, which is funded by the state budget.

The UNICEF Serbia Country Office is continuing its support to DevInfo. Planned activities in 2009 at the national level include the following: DevInfo database updated to report on progress of national MDGs, new National Plan of Action and Social Inclusion; set of indicators to monitor youth social inclusion incorporated into DevInfo database; key stakeholders responsible for child rights issues using DevInfo to follow up on the situation of children and plan; and DevInfo evaluation findings and recommendations used to improve DevInfo implementation. Planned activities in 2009 at the local level include the following: setting up a model database for local municipalities ready for scaling up; and introducing a model database in 13 municipalities of Southern Serbia. Estimated budgets are USD 30,000 at the national level and USD 150,000 at the municipality level.¹⁵⁵

Conclusions

DevInfo is a key tool for the National Plan of Action reporting, used primarily by the Council for Child Rights. Since 2006, DevInfo has been used for reporting on the progress of implementation of the national MDGs, including producing the National MDG Report. Officially, the Government of Serbia declared that DevInfo would be used for reporting on MDG progress. The Poverty Reduction Strategy unit has been using DevInfo for reporting, and the second Poverty Reduction Strategy Progress Report was prepared using Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) data and the DevInfo database. Line ministries were trained to use DevInfo for collecting data and presenting it in their respective sectors. As an example, a new study on mother and child health care, prepared by the Ministry of Health, is using DevInfo as a main source of data

The UN country team has been committed to the use of DevInfo in collecting and disseminating information. The DevInfo application has been used by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia to prepare the publication *Women and Men in the Republic of Serbia 2005*. UNDP has provided methodological and financial support.

¹⁵⁵ UNICEF Serbia Country Office, 'Annual Work Plan 2009', DevInfo Summary, Serbia.

However, new challenges are emerging that will need to be taken into consideration in the near to medium term:

- **National planning**—The evaluation observed that there are numerous strategies at different levels of the government as well as action plans. There is also no central national five-year plan that sets the direction for the country. In addition, high caliber, competent and skilled individuals were hired to work on the National Plan of Action, Poverty Reduction Strategy, the GOP project¹⁵⁶ and other initiatives using temporary organization structures in advisory roles. Challenges related to coordination and standardization among line ministries have repercussions for the design and implementation of a national system for statistics.
- **Social inclusion**—The Poverty Reduction Strategy Project is phasing out soon and it is anticipated that most of the activities carried out under the strategy will be continued under the Social Inclusion Initiative supported by the European Union. Some decision should be made on how to shift from the use of the DevInfo indicators, presently used in the Poverty Reduction Strategy, and the upcoming nationalized indicators to be used under the Social Inclusion Initiative. Lessons learned from implementation and reporting on Poverty Reduction Strategy activities should be reviewed and factored into the design of the new initiative, including the use of DevInfo. DevInfo could be a useful tool for documenting challenges related to Social Inclusion.
- **2011 Census**—The census is expected to include data down to the fourth territorial level (settlements), below the national level. The Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia is currently using a mainframe computer to host the 2002 statistics. Technological as well as logistical and financial resources need to be taken into consideration when planning for the 2011 Census. The Statistical Office is exploring the possibility of closer cooperation with CensusInfo.
- **Integration with Eurostat**—A task force was formed to review and refine indicators in preparation to join Eurostat. Other factors need to be taken into consideration including information and communication platforms, language support, coordination and flow of information between line ministries at the national level and to municipalities at the sub-national level, applicable international standards, and other factors. It needs to be clarified whether DevInfo is compatible or complementary with Eurostat.
- **Launch of web-based DevInfo 6.0**—An upgraded version of DevInfo is in the final stages of testing. Transition to the new version will need to be carefully managed. Extensive testing using real data will be required. Issues related to hosting a database on a website should be investigated, including security, reliability, accessibility and procedures for administering, uploading and updating data. Also, the challenge of monitoring the situation at the local level, and the challenge of more broad use of DevInfo by civil society, media, and professional organizations should be explored as well as how to deal with the new features added to DevInfo, which is becoming more complex and sophisticated.

¹⁵⁶ The “GOP” project of the Government of Serbia is a Joint Project with the official name Towards the More Efficient Implementation of Reforms – Improving Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring and Reporting.

Thailand (country visit, 22-27 February 2009)

The Thai context

Thailand is set to achieve most if not all of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the national level. It has set ambitious national goals that go beyond the global MDGs and has also elected to report on the MDGs at the sub-national (provincial) level. Thailand is in the midst of its tenth five-year National Development and Social Development Plan covering 2007-2011. The UN Partnership Framework 2007-2011,¹⁵⁷ developed jointly by the government and the UN system, is aligned both with the eight national priorities of the National Plan and the MDGs. It includes a programme to strengthen national capacity for monitoring. The current round of MDG reporting is coordinated nationally by the Thailand Environment Institute.

The National Statistical Office (NSO) was originally part of the Ministry of Interior, but in 2005 it was moved into the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology. The NSO is the core body responsible for Thailand's statistical activities including: the collection, compilation and dissemination of fundamental statistics; providing recommendations on statistical-related matters; organizing training courses in statistical methods; computer data processing; serving as the statistical databank of the country; coordinating with international organizations in terms of statistical techniques; and any other activities commanded by the Prime Minister or the Cabinet.¹⁵⁸ Provincial statistical offices report to the NSO. There are major efforts and investment underway to improve data quality and statistical capacity at provincial and *tambon* (district) levels.¹⁵⁹ The NSO has a mission to support information centres at the provincial level. Thailand has a high level of technical competence in both statistics and information technology. Line ministries maintain their own indicator databases, many of which are online. A government priority is to make data more accessible to the public and to provide data online to the *tambon* level.

Overview of DevInfo in Thailand

Since its launch in 2004, the main objective of the provincial-level DevInfo database, TPDInfo, was to introduce the DevInfo software to the provincial statistical offices in order to improve data management systems at that level and enhance the provincial planning process. The specific objectives were to: establish provincial databases by using DevInfo software; promote the use of databases for policies and planning; disseminate information to the public; compile and update provincial indicators; monitor both social and economic indicators; and build provincial statistical office staff capacity in managing the provincial information centre ensuring the sustainability of data.

There have been two releases of TPDInfo based on DevInfo 4.0 and DevInfo 5.0 (web-based). DevInfo 4.0 was adopted in Thailand in 2004. In 2005, TPDInfo was created, aiming to support reporting on national priorities using an offline system. It was rolled out at the provincial level from May to July 2006. During the first stage of DevInfo implementation, the NSO experimented with the DevInfo programme in three selected provinces then evaluated the applicability of DevInfo in these pilot provinces. The second phase occurred in 18 provinces and was based on the district-based approach of UNICEF. In the final stage, TPDInfo was rolled out to all 76 provinces of Thailand.¹⁶⁰ In 2007, TPDInfo was upgraded to DevInfo 5.0. Two staff from each provincial statistical office were trained to use DevInfo 5.0 and the

¹⁵⁷ UN Country Team, Office of the Resident Coordinator, 'Well-being, Sufficiency and Equity: United Nations Partnership Framework, UNPAF Thailand 2007- 2011', ISBN 974-94481-2-X, Thailand, 2006.

¹⁵⁸ Government of Thailand, 'Guide to the National Statistical Office for the Public', Statistical Forecasting Bureau, the National Statistical Office, ISBN 974-339-960-7, Bangkok, 2005.

¹⁵⁹ National Economic and Social Development Board, Faculty of Economics Thammasat University and UNICEF, *Decentralized Budget for Social Services at Tambon Administrative Organization (TMO) Level*, (English and Thai), Thailand, in press March 2009.

¹⁶⁰ Government of Thailand, 'Implementation of TPDInfo in Pilot Provinces', (Thai only), TPDInfo Technical Team, National Statistical Office, Thailand, 2005.

TPDInfo portal is now online¹⁶¹ with four linked databases: MICS (Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey) Thailand, CLS (a Thai acronym for a database in TPDInfo), MDGInfo and Poverty Maps. TPDInfo is in Thai with some minor text in English.

UNICEF has provided funding via the Thailand Country Office. Community Systems Foundation (CSF) via the DevInfo Support Group (DSG) provides technical support. However, Thailand has organized itself independently in terms of technical implementation, rollout and training.

Main findings

These are grouped according to the three DevInfo Global Evaluation objectives.

Objective 1: Assess relevance, effectiveness and impact of DevInfo at national and sub-national levels by governments and other partners in programme countries as well as by the UN system.

Relevance

DevInfo is not directly used at the national level but has proved to be directly relevant at the provincial level. TPDInfo is populated with sub-national data from a variety of government and national survey sources and has been directly assessed by the NSO and by UNICEF as improving data collection and sharing by provincial government agencies and offices. It has been used for provincial-level reporting on a range of topics and is present in the information centres in each provincial statistical office. These are open to the public and to other government departments.

National MDG reporting in Thailand has been conducted separately by the Thailand Environment Institute. The first report pre-dated TPDInfo,¹⁶² but there is some use of TPDInfo data for MDG reporting including for one of the three pilot provincial MDG reports (Trang Province). This use of TPDInfo is not formally cited. Data from TPDInfo has also been used for a variety of Thailand Country Office reports and presentations including MICS presentations. MICS data at the national level can be easily imported using the data exchange module. It is more complicated to do so for the provincial level, which contains 26 provincial databases. Use by UNICEF staff of TPDInfo is limited, but the MICS database has been used extensively among staff. There is little evidence of any DevInfo database use in the wider UN family.

Effectiveness

With more than 500 indicators, TPDInfo is a powerful tool for presentation of data to show disparities, especially at provincial, district and sub-district levels. The database now consists of indicators related to the MDGs, poverty reduction targets, national planning and provincial performance. Metadata of individual indicators are defined in the template to ensure a standardized and quality database system, with data available both at national and local levels. In addition, TPDInfo has further added value for NSO staff. For example, the software has been customized to store data from the national census as well as other surveys. Data from the provincial statistical yearbook are also stored in TPDInfo. Data availability at all levels is still a challenge, but the database has been regularly updated. According to the first MDG report, inconsistent data quality and data non-availability are major issues. TPDInfo has provided the opportunity for provincial NSO branches to review data availability and data quality systematically both at national and sub-national levels and to highlight gaps.¹⁶³

In terms of duplication of effort, there is a national Data Exchange Project also administered by the NSO that uses a different software platform. Discussions are underway about harmonizing these two efforts.

¹⁶¹ TPDInfo Portal, available at <http://app.nic.go.th/tpdInfo>, accessed 24 February 2009.

¹⁶² Government of Thailand, 'Thailand Millennium Development Goals Report', Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board of Thailand, Bangkok, 2004.

¹⁶³ UNICEF Thailand, 'Annual Report', chapter on innovations and lessons learned, Thailand, December 2006.

Impact

DevInfo has made significant progress in supporting the development of a provincial-level monitoring system (TPDInfo) for development. This has positively supported government plans to decentralize decision making and has also strengthened data collection and use at sub-national levels. TPDInfo has triggered a debate in Thailand within the statistical services on the harmonization of indicators and data, and this debate has extended to line ministries and their offices at the sub-national level. South-South Cooperation has been enhanced with a study tour from Lao officials who have used the Thai experience to inform development of their own system. There has been a useful example of provincial-level MDG reporting in one province. There has been a measurable effect on data quantity and availability but less of an effect on data quality, which remains problematic in places, including the statistically incorrect display of rates and ratios at the provincial level.

Objective 2: Assess efficiency in terms of oversight, management and implementation of DevInfo.

Oversight, implementation and management structure

There is strong national ownership of DevInfo in Thailand, although it still lacks formal endorsement at the highest level in the NSO. TPDInfo is based in the NSO, where the Director has acted as a champion of this initiative. There has been progress, despite changes in policy and other initiatives within the hosting Ministry of Information and Communications Technology. An NSO committee, to which UNICEF contributes, provides guidance. The NSO directly manages and hosts TPDInfo, develops indicators in coordination with line ministries, enters data, maintains the databases, organizes and implements a national training programme, and has produced an impressive range of locally translated books covering all aspects of the programme. UNICEF has supported adaptation of the software and some training costs, assisted with coordination, and supported the publication of a range of documents including the metadata guides^{164,165,166,167} and a guide for the public on TPDInfo.

Data from the provincial level is sent electronically to the NSO where the data is cleaned and entered into TPDInfo. The NSO is testing more direct ways of uploading and managing the transfer of data. The NSO manages the administration of the site, provides a helpdesk and coordinates the entire network of provincial statistical offices. Three pilot provinces provide peer-to-peer regional support and function as provincial technical focal points supported by the technical team in the NSO. A national training plan is developed each year, and training is held and coordinated by NSO staff. TPDInfo requires considerable additional work by the NSO and provincial statistical offices. Integration of provincial-level data into TPDInfo is a challenge and the NSO is testing different ways of completing this task. Metadata are currently absent from TPDInfo. During migration from DevInfo 4.0 to DevInfo 5.0, the NSO was unable to import their metadata files. The DSG assisted in incorporating metadata into existing database files, however since NSO expected the mathematical formula signs they routinely use for some indicators would be available in the metadata, the NSO has decided not to use the provided metadata from CSF until this issue can be fixed. The extensive printed materials on metadata have allowed work to continue.

TPDInfo implementation has provided significant opportunities for building capacity of NSO staff at all levels to enhance their knowledge on indicator development, data analysis, reporting and data presentation. Since 2004, almost 300 staff have been trained to use TPDInfo with at least two staff per province functioning as TPDInfo 'champions' at the provincial level. These trained staff are expected to transfer knowledge to their peers. A self-learning CD has been developed to give non-trained staff a learning opportunity. The use of the software has been incorporated in the annual work plans of various

¹⁶⁴ National Statistical Office of Thailand and UNICEF, 'Booklet 1: Meta Data, Thailand Millennium Development Goals MDGs, Thailand Provincial Development Information: TPD Info', Thailand, 2006.

¹⁶⁵ National Statistical Office of Thailand and UNICEF, 'Booklet 2: Meta Data, Thailand Provincial Development Information: TPD Info', Thailand, 2006.

¹⁶⁶ National Statistical Office of Thailand and UNICEF, 'Booklet 3: Meta Data, Poverty Maps of Thailand, Thailand Provincial Development Information: TPD Info', Thailand, 2006.

¹⁶⁷ National Statistical Office of Thailand and UNICEF, 'Booklet 4, Meta Data, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Thailand Provincial Development Information: TPD Info', Thailand, 2006.

NSO departments to ensure that statistical data is stored systematically. Trainings on these topics have been conducted in parallel with the training on using DevInfo software. These training activities have laid the foundation for NSO staff to improve their technical support for government agencies and key decision makers at sub-national levels. The training approach taken has been wider than just the implementation of database functions. In addition, all training materials have been translated into Thai and a set of audio recordings produced to form self-training manuals.

Fund-raising mechanism

The UNICEF Thailand Country Office has provided funding of USD 420,000 from other resources and Tsunami funds between 2004 and 2008 for software customization, training and publication of materials. All other in-kind and direct costs have been covered by the NSO.

Objective 3: Explore options for institutional sustainability and possible opportunities for expansion of DevInfo.

Sustainability

TPDInfo is expanding based on well-documented annual management and training plans. The amount and range of indicators are expanding with a growing emphasis and interest in indicators relating to the elderly—a government data priority. Documentation to support rollout is extensive. The national team is thinking and planning ahead. The NSO is not planning to upgrade to DevInfo 6.0 until they are certain that the version is stable, as their experience in upgrading from DevInfo 4.0 to DevInfo 5.0 was problematic and required extensive communication with their provincial counterparts. The stated priority is to engage line ministries and provincial-level offices in debate around selection of further indicators and better use of data. The challenges for such lateral extension are that data exchange is poor and standardization of indicators is needed.

Change in leadership within the key department of the NSO could be a challenge to sustainability. TPDInfo is mainly an NSO project. The team is aware that they need to extend this project to include a wider range of line ministries and other stakeholders, and they have plans to do so.

Conclusions

With more than 500 indicators, TPDInfo is a powerful tool for presentation of data to show disparities, especially at provincial, district and sub-district levels. The database now consists of indicators related to the MDGs, poverty reduction targets, national planning and provincial performance indicators.

2006 MICS data is partially presented in TPDInfo. The software has been customized to store data from the national census as well as other surveys. Data from the provincial statistical yearbook will also be stored in TPDInfo. Data availability at all levels is still a challenge, but the database has been regularly updated.

TPDInfo has the potential to become the main software for data collection and administrative use at the provincial level, but there are unresolved issues around longevity of the software, ongoing technical support from the DSG, and site maintenance. In the case of Thailand, the country has a planning horizon further than DevInfo itself.

There are issues with data quality, including incorrect use of indicators at the provincial level. These can be easily addressed in consultation with the NSO. The harmonization and standardization of indicators across line ministries and topic areas is seen to be important and requiring more time and effort. This may be an important contribution of DevInfo in the future and the UN system may be able to contribute in a practical way to this discussion.

Specific conclusions are the following:

- **Need for a strong organizational set-up and support team**—The NSO DevInfo Working Team was set up to organize and oversee the project, consisting of high ranking officials and key staff members. In addition, a national technical team was formed to assist in addressing general technical issues. Trained staff were requested to support their neighbouring provinces. The involvement of staff at all levels ensured provincial ownership of the process. A TPDInfo web board proved an effective communication channel between the central support team and provincial branches.
- **Ensuring that the database responds to the needs of data users**—With more than 500 indicators, TPDInfo is a powerful tool for presentation of data to show disparities especially at provincial, district and sub-district levels. The database now consists of indicators related to the MDGs, poverty reduction targets, national planning and provincial performance indicators.
- **Improving data quality and availability at all levels**—According to the first MDG report, inconsistent data quality and data non-availability are major issues. Entering data into the TPDInfo template provides the opportunity for provincial NSO branches to review data availability and data quality systematically, both at national and sub-national levels, and to highlight gaps.
- **Customization to reach local users**—Customization of DevInfo into Thai language in order to meet the specific requirements of local data administrators and the main users was found to be very important. TPDInfo is now available in Thai, including its manuals and other learning materials.
- **Staff capacity development and sustainability of the TPDInfo database**—Since 2004, almost 300 staff have been trained to use TPDInfo with at least two staff per province functioning as TPDInfo ‘champions’ at the provincial level. These trained staff are expected to transfer knowledge to their peers. A self-learning CD has been developed to give non-trained staff a learning opportunity. The use of the software has been incorporated in the annual work plans of various NSO departments to ensure that statistical data is stored systematically.
- **Disseminating results to policy makers**—Dissemination strategies including development of public information materials have been planned and prepared in order to reach public users, particularly provincial governors and other line ministry officials who need to use TPDInfo results for their decision making.