

Data and Metadata Standards for Monitoring Human Development Indicators

Overview

DevInfo is a database system that harnesses the power of advanced development. In particular, the system has been endorsed by the UN Development Group to assist countries in monitoring achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). DevInfo provides 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 and user-friendly features that produce tables, graphs and maps for inclusion in reports, presentations and advocacy materials.

The software supports both standard indicators (the 48 MDG indicators) and user-defined indicators. DevInfo is compliant with international statistical standards to support open access and widespread data exchange. DevInfo is distributed royalty-free to all Member States and UN agencies for deployment on both desktops and the web. The user interface of the system and the contents of the databases supported by the system include country-specific branding and packaging options which have been designed for broad ownership by national authorities.



Highlights

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 is enabling the UN system in realizing this vision as a general purpose database system designed for the compilation, dissemination, presentation and advocacy of human development indicators. By serving as a common database, DevInfo is being used to add value to national statistics systems by complementing existing databases and bridging data dissemination gaps. DevInfo is also being used as an advocacy platform to engage all stakeholders in policy choices for human development.

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DevInfo 5.0 has evolved from a decade of innovations in database systems that support informed decision making and that promote the use of data to advocate for human development. A major innovation of DevInfo 5.0 is the introduction of data and metadata standards to encourage open access and use of data across multiple organizations, platforms, and systems. DevInfo has adopted international standards in the areas of **indicators** (SDMX ISO/TS 17369:2005), **data sources** (DDI/Dublin Core) and **digital maps** (ISO 19115:2003).

Scaling Up the Use of Data and Metadata Exchange Standards

The DevInfo initiative is being implemented under the endorsement of the UNDG in collaboration with more than 20 UN agencies. More than 10,000 professionals have been trained in the use of DevInfo for improved statistical literacy and database administration (approximately 60% government and 40% UN professionals). More than 80 national statistics organizations and other agencies have officially launched an adapted DevInfo database with their user-specified requirements. There are a number of UN Agencies that have published adaptations of DevInfo - namely ILO, UNHCR, UN Habitat, UNHCR and UNFPA. For the second consecutive year, the UN Statistics Division has published the official UN data on MDGs indicators in an adaptation of DevInfo, called MDG Info. MDGInfo 2006 has been prepared to accompany the Millennium Development Goals Report 2006, presenting the most up-to-date country-level statistics available in the UN as of July 2006 for the global monitoring of progress achieved towards the MDGs since 1990.



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