



DevInfo Featured in Beirut MDG Monitoring Workshop (January 2010)

The Workshop on Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Monitoring was held in Beirut, Lebanon from 7-10 December 2009. Organized by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the workshop drew representatives from 14 national statistics offices across West Asia and North Africa and four international agencies. The objectives of the workshop included informing countries of helpful information technology tools to improve MDG data reporting to international agencies and identifying and addressing discrepancies between national and international MDG data.



In the session on improving MDG data reporting, Sara Duerto Valero, UNSD, spoke about the decision of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators (IAEG) to adopt the Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX) standard as the common format for data exchange among UN agencies. Ms. Valero also emphasized that the IAEG was encouraging countries to adopt this same data exchange standard as well.

Following her address, Sameer Thapar, DevInfo Support Group, demonstrated how the DevInfo database system allows users to easily import and export data and metadata files in SDMX-compatible format. Mr. Thapar also showcased the new online SDMX-MDG registry developed by the IAEG, available online at <http://www.devinfo.info/Registry/SDMX-MDG/>. This registry contains the data and metadata structures used to exchange data and metadata on MDG indicators.





As an example of how DevInfo is being used to ensure a common statistical platform for MDG data and metadata exchange at the national and sub-national levels, Mostafa Bouabdellah, High Planning Commission, Morocco, presented MarocInfo, a customized national adaptation of the DevInfo database system. MarocInfo contains data and metadata on key socio-economic indicators for Morocco, including both MDG indicators and country-specific indicators. The Statistics Directorate of the High Planning Commission of Morocco recently established committees with regional partners to discuss and agree upon a list of common indicators. To ensure a common statistical platform at the national and sub-national levels, the regional partners will receive training on the use of DevInfo for sub-national monitoring. (Visit www.devinfo.info to view the latest available MDG data for Morocco and other West Asian and North African countries.)

The workshop concluded with various recommendations on how to strengthen statistical capacity throughout the region. These include requesting the DevInfo initiative to conduct training workshops on how to prepare MDG data files in compliance with SDMX standards and translating the data structure definitions of the SDMX registry into Arabic for use in DevInfo.