



Orissa State, India Prepares to Use DevInfo for Disaster Preparedness (July 2010)

Over the past two decades, India has borne the brunt of several major natural disasters – earthquakes, floods, cyclones and tsunamis – affecting the lives of tens of millions of people, mostly from the poorest strata of society. Planners and aid workers working in relief and recovery operations have consistently been thwarted by the lack of sound data required to identify gaps in aid coverage and to link available resources with needs.

In a positive step in the right direction, India's eastern state of Orissa has decided to move ahead with the development of a new management information system customized for in-state emergency situations. The Orissa State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA), in partnership with UNICEF and the Inter-Agency Group comprised of various NGOs working in Orissa, is preparing to introduce and pilot a new pre-prepared rapid assessment system (PRAS) dubbed **EmergencyInfo India PRAS**. Adapted to the Orissa context, EmergencyInfo India PRAS will enable the government to conduct post-disaster rapid assessment using standardized tools and collect reliable data in a coordinated and consistent manner on affected populations following an emergency.



Signing the MoU in Orissa state, India on 16 July 2010 to launch EmergencyInfo India PRAS

The objective of EmergencyInfo India PRAS is to help the government and other humanitarian agencies generate evidence for timely decision making, which will benefit affected populations by reducing the lead time required for rescue, relief and rehabilitation responses. Built on DevInfo database technology, this rapid assessment system will rely on a variety of data collection methods adapted to the emergency context, including hand-held PDAs and paper-based surveys, with the information eventually being fed into a central database in the State capital. Once uploaded, the data will serve as a common information source for government ministries, aid agencies and development partners to assess needs, perform situation analyses and formulate effective responses. For more information on EmergencyInfo India PRAS, please contact Sarbjit Singh Sahota, Emergency Specialist, UNICEF India at ssahota@unicef.org.

DevInfo is a powerful database system for monitoring human development endorsed by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) to assist countries in monitoring achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). To learn more about how DevInfo can be adapted as an emergency response tool, please visit <http://www.devinfo.info/emergencyinfo/>.

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<http://www.osdma.org/newsdescptn.aspx?status=N&vchqlinkid=GL017&vchplinkid=PL021&newsid=N072>