

DevInfo in Action

Panama: Using DevInfo to Strengthen UNDAF Implementation

When Carlos Acosta, Coordination Officer, Office of the UN Resident Coordinator - Panama, joined the country task force to monitor the current Panama UNDAF 2007-2011¹, he quickly realized that the task set before him was nearly impossible.

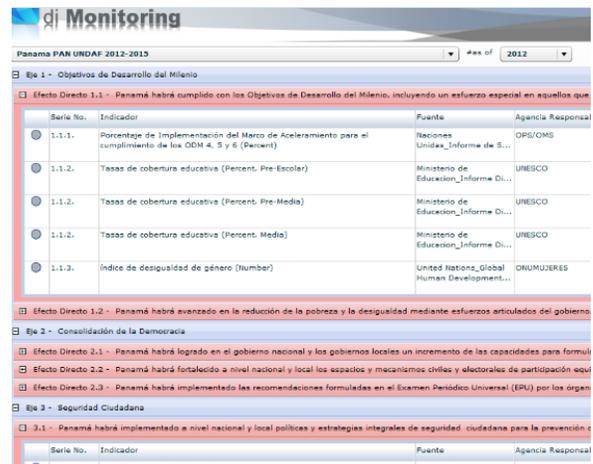
“The Results-Based Management (RBM) movement has made us all recognize the importance of better programme monitoring. For the team in Panama, it has been very difficult to monitor the current UNDAF, because some of its indicators are not measurable at all,” lamented Acosta.



Carlos Acosta

“In fact, an independent evaluation of the current UNDAF demonstrated that most of the indicators are vague and unclear,” he continued. “And there are many indicators that we wish we had information on, but for which the data simply do not exist.”

When Acosta was subsequently assigned the responsibility of heading the task force to draft, monitor and report progress on the country’s next UNDAF 2012-2015 cycle, he knew that things needed to be done very differently. This time, the new indicators identified would need to be measurable. Moreover, there needed to be an easy way for all inter-agency stakeholders to track country progress towards meeting the new UNDAF targets.



Serie No.	Indicador	Fuente	Agencia Responsal
1.1.1.	Porcentaje de Implementación del Marco de Aceleramiento para el cumplimiento de los ODM 4, 5 y 6 (Percent)	Naciones Unidas_Informe de S...	OPS/OMS
1.1.2.	Tasas de cobertura educativa (Percent. Pre-Escolar)	Ministerio de Educación_Informe Di...	UNESCO
1.1.2.	Tasas de cobertura educativa (Percent. Pre-Media)	Ministerio de Educación_Informe Di...	UNESCO
1.1.2.	Tasas de cobertura educativa (Percent. Media)	Ministerio de Educación_Informe Di...	UNESCO
1.1.3.	Índice de desigualdad de género (Number)	United Nations_Global Human Development...	ORNUMJERES

At the suggestion of a colleague, Acosta agreed to attend a [global training workshop in Turin, Italy](#) held in September 2011 that focused on the use of DevInfo technology for UNDAF monitoring. There, he learned for the first time about [di Monitoring](#), a web-based data management tool designed to facilitate the tracking of development plans.

¹ The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is a joint programme document between a government and the United Nations Country Team that describes the collective actions and strategies of the United Nations to achieve national development.

“The training came at exactly the right time!” explained Acosta, who during one of the morning workshop sessions was able to create by himself a customized online Panama UNDAF 2012-2015 framework within di Monitoring. Within a couple of hours, he had also finished entering details for the 28 new Panama UNDAF indicators which had recently been endorsed at the country level.

Acosta left Turin tremendously excited about the take-away value of what he had learned. “Until now, there was no system in place to monitor our UNDAF commitments, and we had thought of creating such a system from scratch. But now, with the customized Panama UNDAF 2012-2015 framework already entered into di Monitoring, we don’t need to look for any other solution.”

Upon his return home, Acosta put together a country protocol on how to monitor the next UNDAF cycle, beginning in 2012. Focal points from different agencies will be assigned responsibility for updating the various UNDAF indicators twice a year, using di Monitoring as the common online platform for entering, tracking and reporting data.



Trend graph in di Monitoring

Beyond UNDAF, Acosta believes that di Monitoring can be applied in many other country contexts. “I think this system can be used to monitor any outcome-level or project-level framework, including government strategic plans. We are in the midst of starting an MDG Acceleration Framework in Panama, and I think this software can be used there as well.”

“I’ve already spoken to seven UN agencies in Panama about di Monitoring,” he added. “Once they start using it, they will realize how easy it is to use, and how it can help them accomplish many things.”

Data making a difference.

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