

DevInfo in Action

St. Vincent and the Grenadines: Using DevInfo to Consolidate National Data

From a data management perspective, it was clearly a situation in need of improvement. The various ministries and departments of St. Vincent and the Grenadines lacked any standard procedures for maintaining data records. Some data was kept in publications, other in registers, and still other at various officials' desks. Not surprisingly, data retrieval was tedious at best and impractical most of the time.



Enter VinInfo, a customized adaptation of the DevInfo database system. The Statistical Office of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in partnership with various government ministries and the UN Country Team, successfully launched the VinInfo database in December 2009. This victory represented the culmination of efforts to standardize data compilation and dissemination practices for the country comprised of 32 islands in the Caribbean Sea.

The main impetus for developing a national DevInfo database lay in the state of the data: many government ministries and departments were not applying standardized data management procedures in maintaining their official records. At the same time, the country was facing increasing demands from data consumers for data in an easily accessible, electronic format.

Eventually, the Statistical Office concluded that a consolidated database to facilitate country tracking and reporting of data related to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was essential. After considering various options, it was decided that the DevInfo database system would be the ideal tool for evidence-based planning, results-focused monitoring and advocacy.



A committee was formed to jointly plan for the new country database, consisting of officers from various social ministries and departments. The committee assigned a small team from the Statistical Office to capture existing data stored in-house as well as from other ministries and departments. The data gathered through these efforts served as the basis for populating VinInfo, the first standardized socio-economic database for the country.

Included in the database are the standard MDG indicators as well as country-specific indicators related to monitoring national programs and activities. Currently, the Statistical Office is continuing its efforts to source data in order to populate the database and fill data gaps.

Even though the database is far from complete, the country can still celebrate the crossing of a critical development milestone: the launch of a consolidated socio-economic database enabling stakeholders – for the first time ever - to easily track the nation's human development progress.

Data making a difference.

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