

## *DevInfo in Action*

### **ACEH, INDONESIA: Using DevInfo for Post-Tsunami Recovery**

PIPIT WILL NEVER FORGET THE DAY THE OCEAN SWALLOWED HER VILLAGE, wiped out her family, and swept her through churning waters past lifeless bodies.

The brunt of the devastation wrought by the December 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami fell upon Indonesia's special territory of Aceh, located closest to the quake epicentre. For the approximately 230,000 who died, the nightmare was short-lived. But for the survivors, including tsunami orphans like Pipit, it had just begun.

The tsunami also unleashed a nightmare for government officials, tasked immediately with the herculean responsibility of overseeing relief and recovery operations. Particularly daunting was the absence of reliable and accurate data sources to guide policymaking amidst the chaos. How many survivors were there? Where were they located? Which communities were overlooked? What were their needs?

In this context, the development of AcehInfo played a major role in assisting the Government of Aceh (GoA) with data management and recovery policymaking. Launched as an initiative of the United Nations Office of the Recovery Coordinator for Aceh and Nias (UNORC) and the Government of Indonesia's BRR (Agency of Rehabilitation and Reconstruction), AcehInfo was released in 2007 as powerful and influential recovery database adapted from the DevInfo database system.



Irwandi Yusuf (at front right), Governor of Aceh, at the launch ceremony of AcehInfo 4.0, April 2010

Since its release, the database has proven to be a great help to post-tsunami and post-conflict recovery stakeholders in the planning and monitoring of such key areas as housing reconstruction, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and local planning frameworks. The annual TRIP (Tsunami Recovery Indicators Package) report released by UNORC was produced from AcehInfo data and used heavily by post-tsunami recovery stakeholders as a reliable source of information for planning, monitoring and policymaking.

Now, with the tsunami behind them, the Government of Aceh has taken over full management of AcehInfo and established it as the central data management system for BAPPEDA, the government's regional body for planning and development. All BAPPEDA staff have been trained in AcehInfo, and it is being regularly used as the chief information source for budgeting, policymaking, planning and presentation-making.

And although few tsunami survivors like Pipit, now 18 years of age and enrolled in the local university, may have ever heard of AcehInfo, they continue to benefit from its key stabilizing role in guiding the continued recovery and long-term development of Aceh.

*Data making a difference.*

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