



Observatorio Tucumán: Saving Children in Argentina by Facilitating Access to Key Information (22 June 2012)

The fourth target of the Millennium Development Goals is a 66% reduction in the under-five mortality rate between 1990 and 2015. Considerable progress has been made in reducing child deaths (the global under-five mortality rate has decreased by at least a third according to the [latest MDG Report](#)), even though substantial regional and geographical disparities still persist. In Argentina, child mortality decreased to 11.9 per thousand live births (from 12.1 in 2009) and the gap between the provinces with the highest and lowest rates narrowed down (253% versus 340% in 2009).



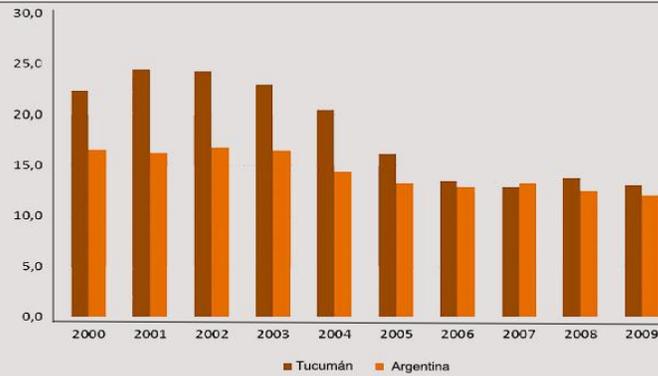
Welcome to Tucumán, located in the Northwestern region of Argentina. The province, in which 492,000 children represent 34% of the population, possesses the fifth highest child mortality rate in the country with 14.1 per 1,000 deaths in 2010 – 2.2 points higher than the national average, despite efforts over the last years to adopt game-changing measures. One key element to deepen these efforts is accurate and updated information.

“Analytical information regarding children in Argentina is lacking, or more precisely, it is invisible,” says Manuela Thourte, a Consultant for UNICEF Argentina. “It exists, but not in a unified and easily accessible way.”

This observation resulted in the development over the past two-and-a-half years of the Observatory of Children and Adolescents, which launched this March. A joint effort of [UNICEF](#) and the Provincial Government through the Coordination and Public Management Secretary, Observatorio Tucumán was developed using DevInfo technology and is now publicly available on the [official website](#) of the province. “DevInfo has allowed us to compile relevant information in one unique space,” says Ms. Thourte. “This enables organizations such as the Secretariat of Children to share information on issues relating to parental care, social planning, or education.”



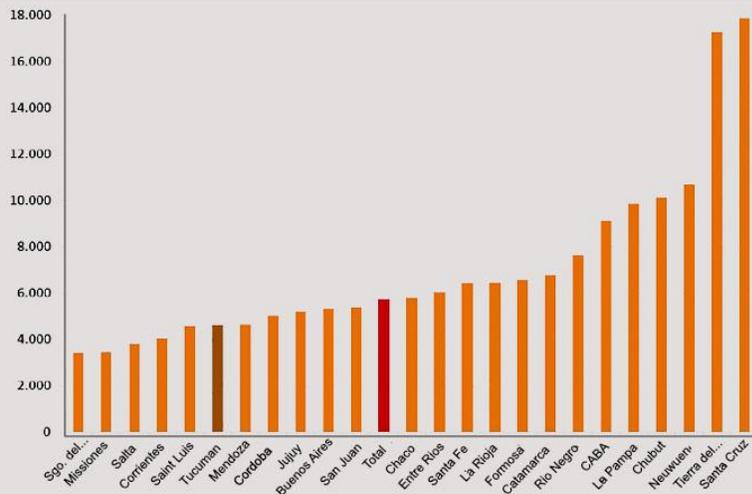
Evolution of the Child Mortality Rates in Tucumán, Argentina. 2000-2009



Source: Observatorio de la Situación Social de la Niñez y la Adolescencia en Tucumán, en base a Dirección de Estadística de Tucumán / DEIS.

How can access to information on the situation of children strengthen efforts to reach Millennium Development Goal 4? "DevInfo-based disaggregated and complete data will make a big difference for government officers to take more accurate decisions on investment and policy design," says Sebastian Waisgrais, UNICEF Argentina M&E Specialist. "It will represent a positive impact for the children of Tucumán".

Childhood spending, per children. Argentinian provinces. 2009 (in pesos per children)



Source: Dirección de Análisis de Gasto Público y Programas Sociales (fecha de última actualización: junio de 2011)



Of course, one of the major advantages of disseminating information publicly is that any concerned individuals, and not just government officials, can access and use the data for their work. Julio Saguir, Secretary of Coordination and Public Management of the Province of Tucumán, says that the system would not only serve public policy-makers, but “all institutions and NGOs that work with children and adolescents.” For Spanish readers, a newly released public report highlighting the situation of children and adolescents in the Province of Tucumán can be downloaded as a .pdf by clicking [here](#).

UNICEF is currently working in seven provinces using DevInfo information systems to gather data on children; last month, the Argentina National Secretary of Children and Adolescents authorities announced that work with all 24 provinces in the country would start in the near future, making the road to 2015 a little brighter.

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