

DevInfo in Action

Tanzania: Using DevInfo to Monitor Development Progress in the Transportation Sector

Since 2000, unprecedented local, national and international efforts have focused on the achievement of the eight Millennium Development Goals.¹ As a result, marked improvements can be seen in many countries in the health, education and economic sectors.

However, an often unmet need is in improving the existing infrastructure, through which this progress can occur. Transportation plays a crucial role in a country's economic growth and prosperity: strong transportation infrastructure improves access to good and services, decreases local production costs, and opens markets for growth – all of which can translate into positive human development.

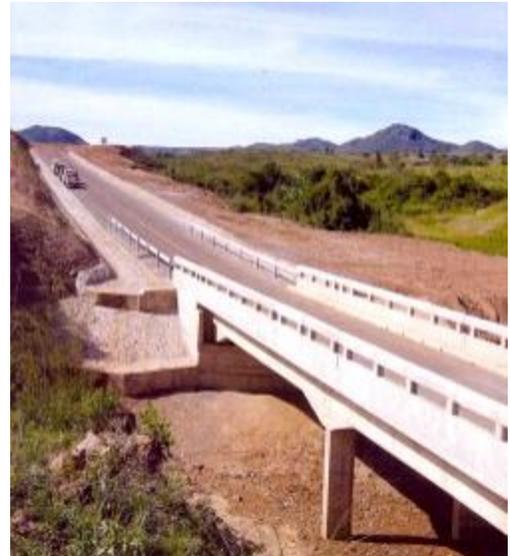
The Government of Tanzania stands out in its pioneering use of [DevInfo](#) database technology to support monitoring of development progress in its transportation sector. This is the result of concerted efforts over several years to institutionalize a results-based management approach within the government ministries which oversee the nation's transportation sector.

Applying national level technology to the transportation sector

DevInfo database technology has a long, impressive [history of use in Tanzania at the national level](#) with the launch of the [Tanzania Socio-Economic Database \(TSED\)](#) by the National Bureau of Statistics in 2002.

Its specific application to the country's transportation sector, however, has its roots in a TSED training workshop in 2007 for sectoral focal points. There, Paulo Stepheno Laiser, then a statistician with the Ministry of Infrastructure Development (MOID), noted that the ability of the TSED database to easily organize, monitor and disseminate data at the national level could also be applied to his own sector. Inspired, Laiser returned from the workshop determined to use the power of DevInfo technology to help monitor progress within the country's transportation sector.

The first step was to determine exactly what MoID needed to be monitored, at the national level as well as across the ministry's 24 sub-sectors. MoID started in 2007 by identifying key indicators from across all transport sub-sectors that would be monitored during the government's annual Joint Infrastructure



Mpui bridge, Tuduma Sumbawanga Road, Tanzania (courtesy TransportInfo)



TSED home page

¹ United Nations Millennium Declaration, <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>.

Sector Review. Notably, these indicators also conformed to those included in the National Strategy for Growth and Poverty Reduction and the Millennium Development Goals.

This process of agreeing upon sector monitoring indicators involved extensive dialogue with numerous focal points across the sprawling MoID network. But the hard work paid off: a comprehensive list of transport sector monitoring indicators requiring annual tracking was compiled and entered into a newly-created MoID database, which later became the TransportInfo database after MoID was split into the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Works in 2010. Currently the Ministry of Transport is working hard to make the database more accessible to a wider range of global stakeholders through its online deployment at www.transportinfo.go.tz.



TransportInfo home page

Building capacity in 24 sub-sectors

The next step was training key individuals within each of MoID’s 24 sub-sectors how to use and populate the database. During the training, each of the sub-sectors (Aviation, Maritime, Railway and Road, etc.) was provided assistance in developing its own sub-sector database, which would then be used to feed data annually into the main TransportInfo database. Since 2007 MoID has organized annual training workshops, equipping more than 40 individuals across all 24 sub-sectors in the creation, management, and use of DevInfo databases.

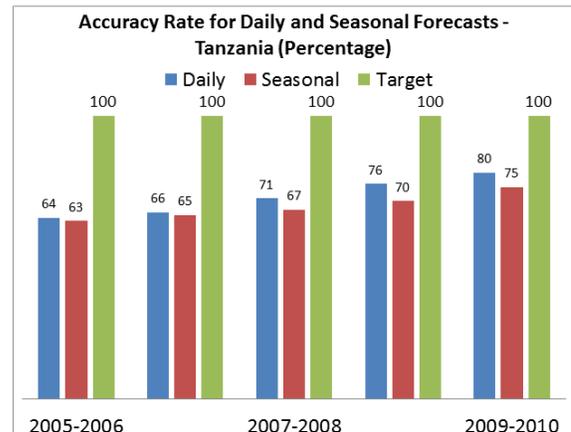
As a result, all of these sub-sectors are now able to maintain and use their own customized databases, to support both internal and external monitoring efforts.

States Laiser, who is now with the Ministry of Transport, “With these trainings, all sub-sectors now have both the access to DevInfo technology and the capacity to manage it, which improves their daily tasks as well as their planning for future performance.”

“Everyone involved with national planning is concerned about transportation”

The benefits of building capacity in DevInfo database management across MoID have been significant. Accuracy, timeliness and efficiency of data reporting have greatly improved, translating directly into better monitoring and tracking of progress and gaps. Whereas previously information was relegated to dense annual paper reports, now MoID officials can readily access the data from their computers and share it via tables, maps and graphs in just a few clicks.

According to Msafiri Mbwana Mziray, DevInfo consultant in Tanzania, the significance of institutionalizing DevInfo technology in the country’s transportation sector cannot be overstated.



Sample TransportInfo graph highlighting wide scope of relevant transportation sector indicators

“Everyone involved with national planning and development is concerned about transportation. MoID is constantly under pressure to deliver, because the rest of the social sectors are linked to its deliverables. For example, any discussion about improvements to socio-economic welfare - health, water or education – requires inputs and contributions from the transport sector. This pressure has convinced MoID to apply a rigorous monitoring framework to support evidence-based planning at the national level.”

With DevInfo firmly entrenched within Tanzania’s transportation sector, decision-makers and other stakeholders can rely on access to data and evidence to inform programming towards the achievement of transport-related development targets. The hope is that this will in turn translate into overall improvements in human development for all.

Data making a difference.

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