

DevInfo in Action

Timor-Leste: Using DevInfo and CensusInfo to Support Equitable Development

Editor's note: This is the first in a two-part series highlighting DevInfo Implementation in Timor-Leste.

One of the newest countries on the world stage, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste faces a number of development challenges. Basic services are still being rebuilt after civil unrest crippled the nation's educational and health infrastructure in 1999.¹ In addition, the country faces the so-called "resource curse" as it attempts to manage significant oil resources while crafting equity-based development policies.²

In such a context, implementing targeted development policies is more important than ever. The Government of Timor-Leste has recognized the paramount importance of providing sound disaggregated socio-economic data to all national and international decision-makers and partners. To this end, the Government has taken key steps forward through the adoption and application of [DevInfo](#) database technology to meet these objectives.



Image courtesy of UNICEF Timor-Leste

Disseminating data using DevInfo, CensusInfo

The National Statistics Directorate (NSD) of the Government of Timor-Leste, with UNICEF support, first began using DevInfo database technology in 2006 to develop Timor-Leste DevInfo, which contains data on key socio-economic indicators for the country. With its third version already launched, Timor-Leste DevInfo has been adopted by the country's Ministry of Finance as the official national socio-economic database for purposes of human development reporting and decision making. Plans are underway in 2012 to make this database available on the websites of the NSD and the Ministry of Finance.



¹ UNDP, Timor-Leste Human Development Report 2011, p. 11, accessed on 4 January 2012 at http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/national/asiathepacific/timorleste/Timor-Leste_NHDR_2011_EN.pdf.

² Ibid., p. vii.

In addition to continuous efforts to update Timor-Leste DevInfo, the NSD with UNICEF support has also developed a beta version of Timor-Leste CensusInfo containing data from the country's 2010 census. Built on [CensusInfo](#) technology, the Timor-Leste CensusInfo initiative sprung out of a [government commitment](#) to make the results of the latest census available to all citizens.

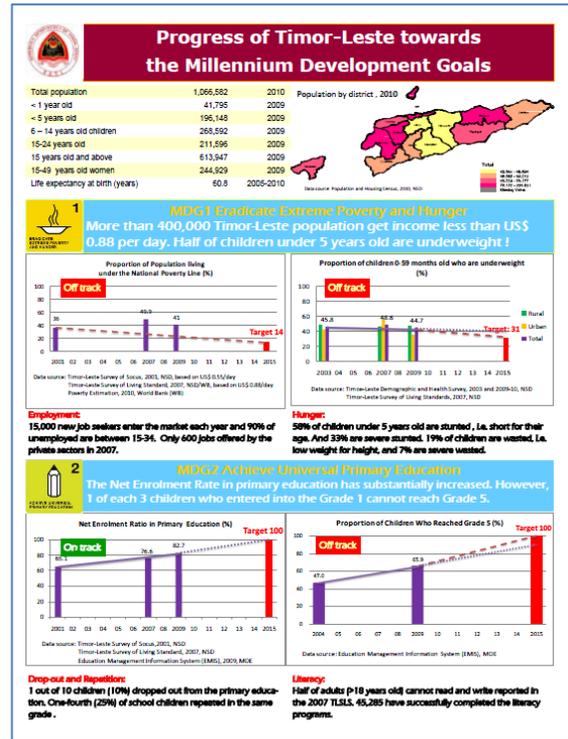
Putting data to good use

The NSD, with UNICEF support, has undertaken an extensive programme of continuous training and capacity building in the use of DevInfo and CensusInfo for evidence-based decision-making, targeting monitoring and evaluation focal points within line ministries.

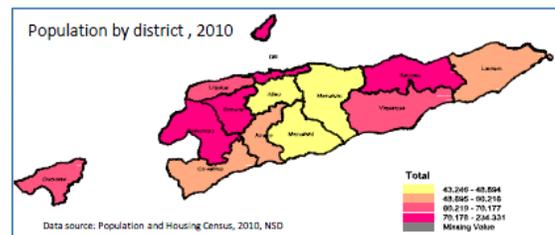
As such, it comes as no surprise that the DevInfo Timor-Leste database has already been used to support cross-sector development reporting and planning. For example, the national MDG Steering Committee is using the database to monitor country progress towards achieving the MDGs as well as to prepare MDG reports and factsheets. The database also proved to be the inspiration for the Ministry of Education to develop an EMISInfo database, in which the software's user-friendly features for customizing tables, maps, and graphs are being used to generate the first national Education Yearbook.

Similarly, the Timor-Leste CensusInfo database has also already been put to good use. According to Min Yuan, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, UNICEF Timor-Leste, "The CensusInfo database was used to provide the Ministry of Finance with key evidence to support its 2012 budget planning process, particularly in identifying coverage gaps in infrastructure, water and sanitation. In addition, the Minister of Finance has presented maps and graphs generated from CensusInfo during various important occasions, including the Council of Ministers' meeting in 2011."

With DevInfo and CensusInfo strategically in place at the highest levels of government, Timor-Leste is much better equipped to move ahead in addressing the manifold challenges of fostering equitable development for all its citizens.



MDG Factsheet, Timor-Leste



Data making a difference.

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