

DevInfo in Action

Liberia: Using DevInfo to Further Post-Conflict Recovery

Situated on the west coast of Africa, the Republic of Liberia continues to recover from the effects of two civil wars spread out over fourteen years. A nation still in the midst of post-conflict recovery, Liberia faces numerous challenges in rebuilding its devastated country. With an unemployment rate of 85 percent¹ and an estimated 2011 GDP per capita of USD 260², Liberia ranks as one of the world's poorest countries in need of effective human development interventions.



©UN Photo/Eric Kanalstein

Chief among the current government's priorities is promoting constructive strategies for national development. Supporting this effort is the country's national statistics office – the Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) – which had previously identified the vacuum of reliable statistical data in Liberia as an obstacle to national rebuilding, along with the limited use of data in policy decision-making.

To address these challenges, the Government of Liberia with assistance from LISGIS launched the LiberialInfo database system in 2007. An adaptation of the UN-endorsed DevInfo database system, LiberialInfo was developed to manage and disseminate data on the nation's counties, districts, clans, cities and villages, as well as to track progress towards achieving the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).



Currently in its second version, LiberialInfo contains up-to-date data on over 200 demographic and socio-economic indicators drawn from the 2008 National Population and Housing Census, the Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire Survey and the 2007 Liberia Demographic and Health Survey, as well as other sector-specific data compiled by line ministries and other agencies.

The Liberia Ministry of Health conducts annual malaria surveys to assess malaria prevalence rates, in support of one of the PRS goals related to reducing the incidence of malaria. Data collected from these surveys are made available to decision makers through LiberialInfo, facilitating comparisons of different areas and analysis of trend data to determine whether adequate progress is being made. Explains Lewis M. Marwolo, Database Manager and Webmaster, LISGIS, "Besides the health sector,

¹ UNICEF Revised country programme document – Liberia (2008-2012), 22 October 2007, accessed at [http://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/07-PL42-Liberia\(2\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/07-PL42-Liberia(2).pdf) on 22 July 2011, p. 4.

² World Economic Outlook Database – April 2011, International Monetary Fund, accessed at <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2011/01/weodata/weorept.aspx?sy=2008&ey=2011&scsm=1&ssd=1&sort=country&ds=.&br=1&c=668&s=NGDPD,NGDPDPC,PPPGDP,PPPPC,LP&grp=0&a=&pr.x=38&pr.y=12#cs2> on 22 July 2011.

LiberiaInfo is also being used to monitor education sector initiatives. For example, several years ago the President of Liberia introduced free and compulsory education for primary school children. School enrolment and other literacy-related data available in LiberiaInfo can help measure the real success of such initiatives.”

According to Robert S. Toweh, National Coordinator, LISGIS, “With respect to the Poverty Reduction Strategy in Liberia, there is currently a lot of data available, but it has not been made accessible to data consumers. We plan to use LiberiaInfo to promote evidence-based decision making by making this data available to policy makers, donors and the general public. We believe decision makers would benefit from using reliable information available within LiberiaInfo to get the real picture and come up with relevant interventions.”



©UN Photo/Eric Kanalstein

With LISGIS actively working towards increased awareness of data and promoting evidence-based decision making, LiberiaInfo is being positioned as a key tool for development and nation building in postwar Liberia.

Data making a difference.

For more information, please contact Robert S. Toweh, National Coordinator, Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services (LISGIS), at robertstoweh@yahoo.co.uk, Lewis M. Marwolo, Database Manager and Webmaster, LISGIS, at lewis.marwolo@lsgis.org, or Tata F. Turay, Assistant Statistician, LISGIS, at mtamode78@yahoo.com.