

# Chapter 1

## Support to the National Development Process: Achieving the MDGs

Since the adoption of the Millennium Declaration in 2000 by the member states of the United Nations, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) — and the internationally agreed development goals from which the MDGs derive — have become the internationally shared framework for development. As a follow-up to that commitment, at the 2005 World Summit member states resolved to prepare comprehensive national development strategies by 2006 to achieve the MDGs and other international development goals. In the UNDG Action Plan on the Development Outcome of the 2005 World Summit, UN agencies committed to “assist countries to prepare or revise their national development and/or poverty reduction strategies.”

Throughout the MDG process the UN’s role has been to foster national ownership, strengthen national analytical processes and products, and develop lasting national analytical and planning capacities. In 2007, the midpoint between the adoption of the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs target date of 2015, the UN has a critical opportunity to re-energize the international community in support of the goals, to raise public awareness, and to create ever greater momentum for success.

In 2005, UNCTs worked to support the MDGs through advocacy and campaigning, monitoring and reporting, analysis, capacity development, integration and implementation of the goals into national development plans or poverty reduction strategies, operational activities, as well as through the common country programming process.





## UN Core Strategy on the MDGs

**Campaigning & Mobilization:** Supporting advocacy for the MDGs and working with partners to mobilize the commitments and capabilities of broad segments of society to build greater awareness of the MDGs.

**Analysis:** Researching and sharing best strategies for meeting the MDGs in terms of innovative practices, policy and institutional reforms, means of policy implementation, and evaluation of costing and financing options.

**Monitoring and Reporting:** Helping countries to track progress and report advancement towards the MDGs.

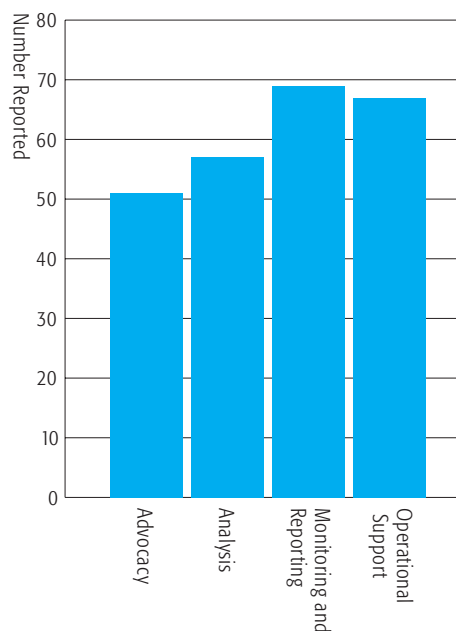
**Operational Activities:** Goal-driven assistance to support governments to tailor MDGs to local circumstances and challenges, and to address key constraints to progress on the MDGs.

## UN Support to the MDGs in the National Planning Process

As part of the Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs), the eight Millennium Development Goals provide a unifying framework for coherent UN system programming. The MDGs are unique in their ambition, concreteness, and scope. Proportionately, they have emerged as one of the most important points of reference in the international-cooperation landscape, guiding policy-making, advocacy, and measurement of progress by stakeholders at every level.

Guided by the UNDG Core Strategy and in support of the implementation of the UNDG *Action Plan on the Follow-up to the Development Outcome Document (2006-2008)*, UN Country Teams (UNCTs) have worked with national partners to support the achievement of the MDGs. The below graph demonstrates the number of UNCTs that reported work in the various areas of the UN Core Strategy in 2006.

UNCT MDG-Related Areas of Collaboration



## Advocacy, campaigning, and mobilization

In 2006 the UN system sought to further devise new and innovative ways to create greater MDG awareness. UNCTs continued to raise awareness, building political will for the achievement of the goals that would enable national governments, civil society organizations, and the general public to take action. Some countries developed their own MDG icons to promote greater local and national recognition of the goals and to facilitate mass mobilization towards their realization; and numerous national and international celebrations and conferences were carried out along MDG themes.

UNCTs also supported strategic communications and parliamentary measures to ensure the MDG indicators were properly integrated into national planning and budgeting. For instance, the UNCT in Costa Rica supported the issuance of a Presidential Directive and provided technical assistance to ensure Millennium Declaration commitments would be integrated into the National Development Plan. In India, the UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC) office established a system for monitoring parliamentary debates on the MDGs.

## Analysis

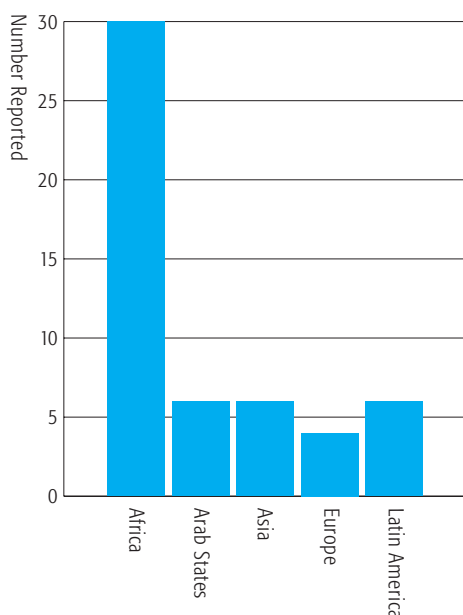
In 2006, UNCTs continued to provide support to address country demands for technical assistance throughout the development planning cycle: diagnosing development challenges and needs, formulating policies and strategies, and implementing them. Specifically, analytical support included providing national governments with tools and methodologies to adapt the MDGs to a country-specific context, to support MDG needs assessments, to build

capacity, and to strengthen policies in support of the goals — including macro-economic and budgetary analyses.

To ensure planning was MDG-based, 57 UNCTs provided substantive technical support in 2006 to countries in the formulation, revision, and implementation of National Development Strategies (NDSs) and Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSs). The plans identified the required interventions and resources for each priority sector (rural development, urban development, health systems, education, gender equality, environment, technology, cross-national infrastructure, and public sector management) in order to achieve the MDGs. Moreover, in lead-up to the PRS period, UN agencies applied MDG needs assessment and costing mechanisms. Appropriate training on need assessments and costing models were also provided to key government officials.

Of the 57 UNCTs that reported in the area of analysis, 52 assisted national governments in conducting MDG needs assessments and costing. Many countries carried out MDG needs assessments as a first step towards preparing MDG-based strategies.

#### UNCT Assistance to Government with MDG Needs Assessments and Costing



#### Egypt – Joint ‘Sailing the Nile for the MDGs’ Initiative

‘Sailing the Nile for the MDGs’ was undertaken as a joint effort among UN, government, NGO, and private sector partners. Eight feluccas, representing each MDG, sailed down the Nile, stopping in eight governorates. The purpose of the project was to promote community participation in local and national MDG efforts; build active, caring communities (especially among youth and the deprived) that are sensitive and responsive to ongoing developmental needs; and ensure that these communities can be mobilized to act swiftly and effectively towards the achievement of the MDGs. The UN family and youth made significant contributions by passionately coordinating and investing in activities, engaging project partners, and devoting themselves to the steering and communications committees.

A successful communications strategy ensured strong media coverage, the production of eight documentaries prepared by youth trained as reporters, and advocacy efforts that trickled down to the local level. The Annual World AIDS Campaign, bringing together the UN and international and national partners, was further tied into the ‘Sailing the Nile’ initiative. Through training and technical and financial support, HIV/AIDS activities were mainstreamed throughout seven of the stops, and World AIDS Day celebrated in one of them. Considering the stigma and misinformation often surrounding this issue, the initiative also highlights a courageous confrontation with an often neglected issue. The project furthermore celebrated International Day against Violence toward Women, International Volunteer Day, UN Day as well as the launch of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The project won the UNDP Administrator’s Award 2006 for Innovation and Creativity.

#### Nicaragua – Politicizing the MDGs During an Election Year

2006 was an election year in Nicaragua and the UNCT promoted a series of activities “politicizing the MDGs,” i.e., aimed at achieving ownership and political will among the presidential candidates and their respective technical and political teams. UN sector expertise and technical assistance on MDG issues were made available upon demand to the political parties, and technical briefings were provided. The specific demands for policy advice were discussed, assessed, and coordinated on an ongoing basis by the UNCT — an essential factor in ensuring that agencies coordinated their work within a coherent system. It also demonstrated the scope of capacity that the UN can offer when it succeeds in jointly engaging in policy dialogue with key national partners. In addition, culture and gender sensitive MDG icons were developed in the framework of the ongoing MDG communication campaign, and these will be used by all agencies in their MDG advocacy efforts.

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## Nepal – The Millennium Development Goals Needs Assessment Report 2006

The Millennium Development Goals Needs Assessment Report 2006 for Nepal was prepared jointly by the government and the UNCT on behalf of all development partners and citizens of Nepal. The report was launched in October in an attempt to provide a strong analytical basis for future national development strategies and efforts. This work identifies the necessary interventions and resources required for the priority sectors (agriculture, irrigation, food security, roads and other rural infrastructure, drinking water and sanitation, health, and education) to achieve the MDGs by 2015. The tool is timely as the government is currently preparing to develop its next interim National Plan/PRS (2007-2010), which will be based on the MDGs in the spirit of the Millennium Declaration. The Nepal UNCT is helping the government prepare the strategic framework for the national plan by providing technical advice/inputs to the full process.

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## Gambia – MDG Based Needs Assessment and Costing Conducted for the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)

During 2006 the UNCT supported the government in mainstreaming the MDGs into all of its planning processes and frameworks. Planning instruments and structures were developed to ensure that instruments such as the PRSP are MDG based. Assistance involved technical editing and reviewing of the draft PRSP document and the development of an Action Plan for PRS implementation. An MDG needs assessment and costing was conducted for the PRS period (2007-2011), and almost all UN agencies represented in Gambia participated. Training was also provided to key government officials on the use of Millennium Project models. Efforts are presently underway to develop this unified costing mechanism, which will be an essential component for developing a fully costed MDG needs assessment up to 2015.

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## The Millennium Village Initiative

The Millennium Villages initiative seeks to demonstrate how the eight Millennium Development Goals can be met in rural Africa within five years through community-led development. By working in 12 sites located in 10 African countries (Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda), the Millennium Village initiative works directly with the respective communities, nongovernmental organizations, and national governments to show how rural African communities can lift themselves out of poverty and achieve the MDGs if they have access to proven and powerful technologies that can enhance their farm productivity, health, education, and access to markets.

To cite just one example, the Millennium Village Initiative in Ghana officially commenced activities in March 2006 following its official launching by senior government ministers and the UNCT. The initiative now has a full complement of staff and village committees, which serve as focal points for community mobilization. Core areas of interventions include adoption of new technologies for agricultural production, education (secondment of teachers, construction of physical facilities, advocacy in communities, and increases in school supplies), tackling malaria (supplying bed nets), provision of basic clinical services (training and capacity building at community level, construction and rehabilitation of health facilities, and recruitment/secondment of health staff), and rehabilitation of broken pumps in safe water points. The UNCT, through UNDP, is responsible for policy and strategic support, procurement, human resources, and financial and administrative oversight.



To assess and suggest ways in which UNCTs can reposition themselves to maximize their comparative advantages to assist effectively and strategically the national development process, the UNDG Working Group on MD/MDGs has contracted the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) of the University of Sussex. IDS will conduct a study in 2007 on the involvement of UNCTs in NDS/PRS and provide a set of recommendations and lessons learned to assist UNCTs to improve their effectiveness. The study should provide inputs to update the guidance note to UNCTs on their involvement in PRSs.

### *Operational activities*

In 2006 the UN system offered targeted operational support to tie the MDGs to national development strategies. Of the 67 UNCTs that assisted countries last year through operational activities, 12 supported 'quick impact initiatives' and seven assisted the government in 'localizing' the MDGs. In addition, 25 UNCTs implemented or formulated joint MDG programmes, and 24 provided support towards strengthening national capacities in the areas of monitoring, statistical literacy, local development, pro-poor budgeting, and capacity assessments. UNCTs also supported 12 Millennium Villages in 10 African countries in cooperation with national governments and nongovernmental organizations (see box, left).

### *Quick impact initiatives*

Besides signing up to support MDG-based national development strategies, UNCTs also assisted countries to adopt quick-impact initiatives, or 'quick wins', designed to bring vital well-being gains to millions of

people in a short amount of time. Examples of such quick wins in 2006 included:

- In **Burundi** the UN system supported a government initiative to waive fees for primary education nationwide (UN helped mobilize \$13 million).
- In **Namibia** a national Polio and Measles immunization campaign was undertaken in response to Polio outbreaks, reaching more than 95 percent of the population.
- In **Sao Tome and Principe** more than 40,000 free bed nets were distributed to pregnant women and children under 5; and school meal programmes were expanded in 79 primary schools and 77 pre-schools.

### *Localizing the MDGs*

Adapting the MDGs to the country context is an integral part of the national ownership process for countries assuming responsibility for MDG achievement. Only when ownership is established — notably when targets are agreed upon — can the MDGs become a valuable tool for integrating different national development and planning frameworks. Ownership creates a meaningful link between global target-setting and national priorities. In 2006, UNCTs supported the localization of the MDGs in several countries:

- In **Guinea** the UNCT is working with local, regional, and government partnerships, focusing on localizing the MDGs and fostering economic and social development in a particularly vulnerable region, forested Guinea. The four targeted areas are: food safety, fighting HIV, access to basic social services, and governance.
- In **Kenya**, the UNCT has supported the government in the development of an Action Plan to mainstream the MDGs within planning, budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation within the framework.

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### **Joint Programme: Implementing the Ukraine Millennium Development Initiative**

The Ukraine MDGs initiative was jointly implemented by the Ukrainian Ministry of Economy and several UN agencies, including UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO, and WHO. The initiative helps to develop and adapt new methods and approaches for effectively translating the MDGs into operational targets for improved policy. To accelerate progress towards realizing the MDGs in Ukraine, the initiative has worked on fostering national policy debate on MDGs-related issues. It has also sought to raise government capacity for policy-making; adapt the MDGs formulation to the sub-national level; and incorporate the MDGs into key government strategic planning documents. In the area of strategic MDG-linked capacity development, workshops were organized for provincial and district administrations and the heads of economic departments and central authorities.

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### **Building Capacity in Tunisia: MDG Task Force Supports Strategic Pilot Project**

The recently established MDG Task Force supported the development of a strategic pilot project in Tunisia, 'Regionalizing the MDGs'. Established in partnership with the Ministry of Development and International Cooperation, the project will result in 2007 the production of the first report on regional disparities using the MDG framework and will build national capacity for using DevInfo — the software program developed by the UN for reporting on the MDGs. Involving UNDP, UNICEF, and UNFPA, it is a first step towards a longer-term joint programme to build national capacity in MDG-based regional planning.

- In **Ghana** various districts were supported in the preparation of District Medium-Term Development Plans. This included workshops on goals formulation, which led to the generation of localized MDGs targets. The main objective was to enable district planning staff to document, monitor, and track progress made on the localized MDGs targets.
- In **Philippines**, UN agencies worked closely with some 20 MDGs Resource Cities that had adopted and demonstrated their capacity to meet local MDGs targets. Ten local government units were awarded for their outstanding performance and innovation, and these best practices have been documented as a basis for up-scaling around the country.
- In **Uruguay** an international meeting on cooperation and local development brought together more than two hundred participants, representing national and local government authorities, civil society, and donor agencies. Along with substantive debates on strategic planning to implement MDG-based local development, key topics included cooperation strategies and good practices.

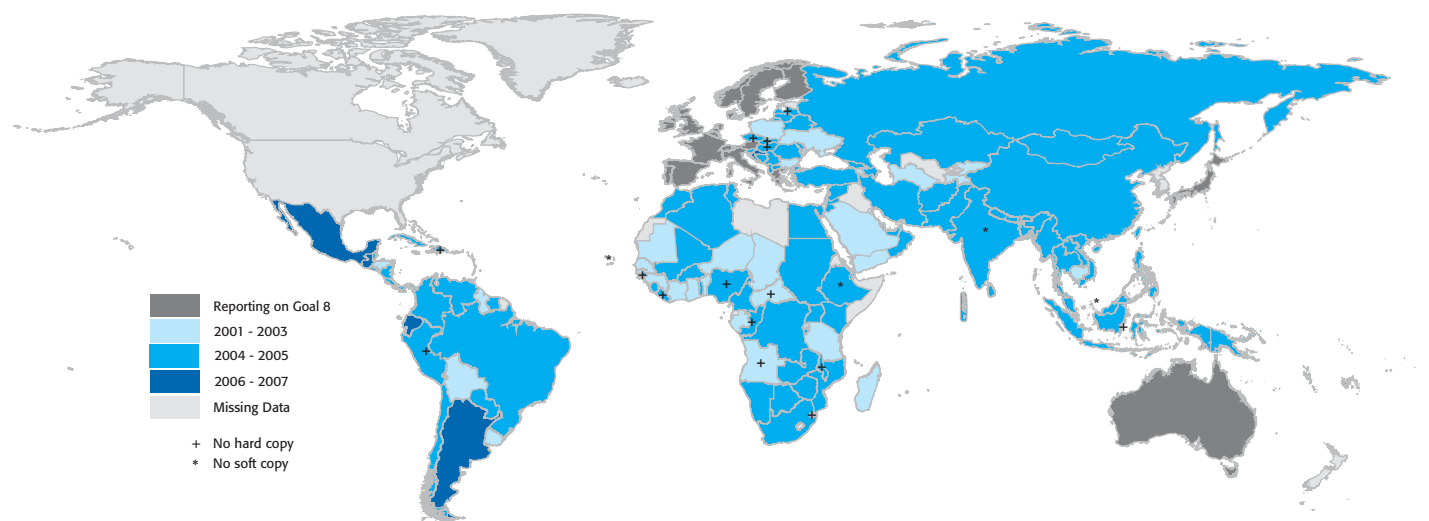
To respond to a growing demand from UNCTs for technical support around design and implementation of MDG-based national development strategies, UNDG launched a Policy Network in 2006. The UNDG Policy Network is composed of key experts from across UN agencies — at headquarters and in regional and country offices — and will provide integrated on-the-ground support to UNCTs and governments on matters concerning preparation and implementation of MDG-based strategies. During 2007 the UNDG Policy Network will concentrate on seven countries, with a possibility to provide its services to a larger group of UNCTs and governments at a later stage. Lessons learned from these countries will be consolidated and made available to other programme countries using MDGNet and other knowledge sharing systems.

### Monitoring and reporting

By assisting national governments in the preparation of Millennium Development Goal Reports (MDGRs), UNCTs sought to ensure that countries aligned their development planning with MDG objectives. These reports provide brief statistical summaries on progress towards the MDGs. From 2001 until April 2007, 179 MDGRs have been published in 132 countries. In addition, 20 countries have independently reported on MDG 8.

In 2006, UNCTs supported access to more reliable statistics and information for policy formulation and decision-making. UNCTs recognized that they can play an instrumental role in supporting governments in tailoring reporting systems to particular national circumstances, enhancing local statistical capacity, aggregating sectoral data, highlighting indicator and data disparities, and providing analyses within the MDG framework. While governments were encouraged to take the lead, UNCTs focused particular attention on coordinating national planning and drawing budgetary linkages.

### Overview of Millennium Development Goal Reports



Note: The boundaries and the names shown and the designations used on this maps do not imply official endorsement by the United Nations

### Conclusion

- While some progress has been achieved, there are several countries that are off track in achieving each goal. Therefore, UNCTs should redouble efforts to support capacity development and technical assistance provided to countries as they prepare and implement comprehensive MDG-based strategies at country level.
- In order to achieve the goals, the MDGs must be incorporated into nationally-owned development strategies and budgets. UNCTs can move beyond the preparation of strategy and support translation into annual plans and budgets.
- The RC Annual Reports show how UNCTs can take practical steps to support the scaling-up of efforts for the MDGs by

advocating for quick impact initiatives and identifying implementation bottlenecks and ways to overcome them.

- Although an unprecedented effort has been made to support countries in improving the availability, quality, and gender-disaggregating of MDG data, more needs to be done. UNCTs can assist countries to strengthen their statistical systems and advocate for their financing as part of national MDG strategies.
- To best support partner countries, headquarters and regional structures need to maximize their technical support and increase their resources to assist UNCTs in these efforts.

### Syrian Arab Republic – Supporting Quality and Reliable Statistics and Analysis

Collectively, the UN has been supporting the Syrian Arab Republic in the production of and access to quality and reliable information, statistics, and analyses for policy formulation and decision-making in several areas: e.g., population, gender, and employment (UNFPA); children and women (UNICEF); women's political participation (UNIFEM); and human development (UNDP). Efforts have focused on building the national capacity for collecting and analyzing statistical data, especially in partnership with the Central Bureau of Statistics.





## Nigeria – Preparing for UNDAF Development in 2007

During 2006 there has been an effort in Nigeria to increase awareness of common country processes, UN reform, and the competence areas (human rights-based approach [HRBA], results-based management [RBM], gender, and conflict analysis) required to produce a CCA/UNDAF. An ad hoc UNCT meeting on UN reform in March 2006 drew attention to the current situation regarding the UNDAF and elections. It also drew attention to the need to promote UN reform and coordination issues throughout the UN system. Five sensitization workshops on UN reform, common country processes, and the roles of Resident Coordinators (RCs), UNCTs, and RC offices (RCOs) were held for 90 national staff, with a particular emphasis on the concept of “One UN system, One leader, and One programme.” In addition, a one-week training session on developing CCA/UNDAF was held for the UNDAF Technical Working Group staff, comprised of 25 members from all UN agencies working in the country. The outcome of the High-level Panel on System Wide Coherence was shared with UNCT and the UN working groups on operations, UNDAF, communications, and the Theme Groups. Due to this intensive preparation, agency ownership and awareness about the UNDAF process has improved even before the actual beginning of the drafting process.

## UN Positioning for Support to National Development – 2006 UNDAFs

The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) remains the central programming instrument for UN agencies working together at country level. By the end of 2006 nearly all UNCTs were following the common country programming process through UNDAF. The exceptions were a few special circumstance countries. These included countries in crisis/post-crisis situations or those with too small an UN presence to justify an UNDAF. Several countries, including Central African Republic, Liberia, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Uruguay, and Venezuela, for the first time agreed upon and initiated a harmonized programming cycle among UNDG Executive Committee agencies. Others, such as Mozambique and Zambia, prepared for their third UNDAF cycle.

In 2006 and the beginning of 2007, 39 UNDAFs were finalized, with seven more country teams finalizing their UNDAF by spring or early summer 2007. Five countries started their UNDAF process in 2006 but for various reasons postponed the development of their document until 2007. For 2007, eleven more countries are expected to develop their UNDAF (see box on Nigeria, left).

One country, Papua New Guinea, undertook an innovative process in drafting a UN Country Programme (UNCP) instead of an UNDAF. The UNCP incorporates a level of operationalization that is usually done through agencies’ programming documents, such as Country Programme Documents. Several other country

teams adapted the UNDAF to their specific country situations. The Fiji and Samoa country teams began development of the first regional UNDAF for some 14 Pacific island states. Kosovo, although not required to prepare an UNDAF due to its international status, developed the UNKT Strategic Plan 2005-2006. The plan identifies common principles and borrows the MDGs as a framework to develop four joint programme proposals. Bahrain is undertaking an ‘UNDAF light’ process in view of a limited in-country UN presence. And Somalia is developing a transitional plan for 2008-2009 to initiate the UNDAF in 2010.

As many UNCTs report, the Common Country Assessment (CCA)/UNDAF process — often guided by a working group or steering committee — functions as a driving force for increased inter-agency cooperation and coordination. UNDAF progress revolved around: (1) quality, (2) implementation, (3) alignment with national development planning, (4) common assessment and analytical work, (5) reviews and evaluations, and (6) UN agency country programming.

### Quality

The UNDAFs developed in 2006 show a slight tendency towards fewer UNDAF outcomes, as recommended by the CCA/UNDAF guidelines. UNCTs are encouraged to focus on areas where the UN has an advantage compared to other international partners in the country. However, most of the 2006 UNDAFs still have very broadly defined outcomes.

The new 2007 guidelines include a clearer message for identifying comparative advantages prior to determining UNDAF outcomes. UNDAFs are becoming more focused, but country teams still struggle

with strategic positioning. In 2006, UNCTs increased efforts to strategically focus the UNDAFs on a more limited number of fields where the UN can make a difference. For instance, the India UNDAF promoted inclusion for the most disadvantaged, particularly women and girls (see box, right). While the new guidelines provide enhanced information, UNCTs often still require practical guidance on how results-based management should make UNDAF results matrices more focused and measurable.

Cross-cutting issues are increasingly being integrated into the new UNDAFs. As detailed in the gender and human rights chapters, numerous 2006 UNDAFs are formulated in terms of capacity building and a rights-based and gender perspective. A number of UNDAFs also include disaster-risk reduction efforts as one of the core outcomes (e.g., Bhutan, Maldives, and India). Environmental sustainability is also increasingly found in the UNDAF outcomes, both as a separate outcome and mainstreamed in other outcomes (in particular employment, income generation, and economic development).

### Revised CCA/UNDAF Guidelines

In 2006, UNDG undertook a revision of the 2004 programming guidelines for CCA and UNDAF. Published in February 2007, the revised guidelines reflect new policies adopted by the UNDG since 2004 and bring programming guidance in line with recent developments in the aid environment. They underline the need for UNCTs to enhance coherence and coordination at country level, and stress full agency inclusiveness (including specialized and non-resident agencies) in the common country programming process. They provide greater flexibility to UNCTs to tailor their interventions to fit country needs and national processes. For example, UNCTs are no longer required to do a CCA if available analytic work can be used for the development of the UNDAF. Instead, they are urged to focus on supporting national analytical efforts. The revised guidelines also provide more practical guidance on cross-cutting issues, such as the human rights-based approach, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. In addition, they emphasize capacity development as the overarching goal; provide more detailed guidance on defining the UN's comparative advantage and on applying results-based management; clarify accountabilities; and include more resources on conflict prevention and disaster-risk reduction.

### India – UNDAF Promoting Inclusion of the Most Disadvantaged

The overarching objective in the UNDAF's support to the government's national priorities is promoting social, economic, and political inclusion for the most disadvantaged. Particular focus is on women and girls, with four UNDAF outcomes and seven focus states. The first outcome is to support the large centrally sponsored schemes, especially on aspects of implementation. The second outcome focuses on contributing to strengthening elected and administrative governance systems at the district level. The third outcome focuses on convergence at the district level – mechanisms to create and maximize synergies (among government departments, agencies, and other partners) so that achieved outcomes are greater than the sum of their parts. In order not to lose development gains in the event of a disaster, the fourth outcome pays attention to reducing the vulnerabilities of the most disadvantaged to future disasters, such as environmental changes and public health threats.

### 2006 UNDAFs



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## Cameroon – Addressing Difficulties in Implementing UNDAF

The UNCT pondered whether a long or a short UNDAF provides a better basis for implementation. While a detailed UNDAF is difficult to implement due to the different business processes of UN agencies, a short and concise UNDAF does not allow close collaboration and adequate follow-up, as it provides agencies too much flexibility and too little accountability.

To enhance results monitoring, the UNCT decided to dismantle the Thematic Groups as they did not produce proper agency ownership and effective results-monitoring (UNDAF was considered as parallel to their own programmes). The UNCT decided to replace the groups with a Programme Coordination Group under the supervision of programme heads. Advantages were fewer meetings and procedures, clearer authority lines, simpler coordination mechanisms, and easier follow-up for resource mobilization.

## Implementation

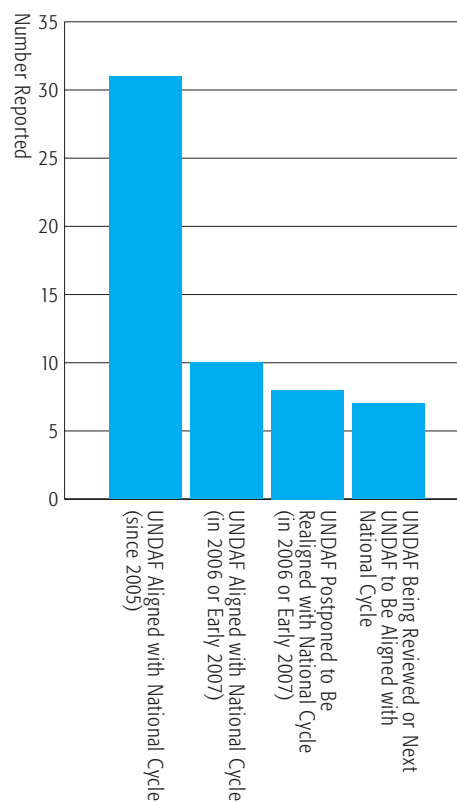
Most UNCTs in 2006 reported the existence and often central role of Thematic Working Groups or UNDAF Theme Groups in both UNDAF development and implementation. Many indicated that the close cooperation and effectiveness achieved during the UNDAF development process has been an inspiration to continue such coordination structures. Others indicated that enhancing active agency participation around joint priorities was problematic.

In 2006, UNCTs recognized the importance of ensuring and implementing effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks, although these efforts at times also encounter difficulties (see box on Cameroon, left). A number of other country teams reported specific measures in this field. Bhutan, for instance, reported that the UNCT will formulate a two-year rolling plan, which will enable the Theme Groups to plan over a longer term and undertake activities that have a greater impact.

## Alignment with national development planning

An ever growing number of UNCTs are changing the UNDAF cycle so as to better align the UNDAF with national planning processes and national development frameworks. UNCTs across the board report close involvement of the government in the drafting of UNDAF outcomes based on national priorities. They indicate that this process stimulates closer cooperation and

## Reported Temporal Alignment with National Cycles



understanding between UNCTs and government agencies. Where possible, UNCTs have further aligned UNDAF timing with the national planning process. In 2006, 10 out of 39 countries that developed an UNDAF specifically reported that their UNDAF was fully aligned in timing (Bhutan, India, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leon, Syria, Togo, and Zambia). Others had reported on alignment in 2005 (China, Kazakhstan, Moldova, and Viet Nam). Seven countries specifically reported that existing UNDAFs would be reviewed to align better or are planning alignment for their next UNDAF. Eight country teams in 2006 requested to postpone the start of their UNDAF cycle in 2006 or 2007 to align with national planning cycles (see box, right). In post-crisis situations, efforts were made by five country teams to align (see box, right), and three countries in 2006 requested extension or postponement of UNDAF cycles due to other reasons such as political uncertainty (Cote d'Ivoire, Haiti, and Lebanon).

Since the adoption of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005 a little over 30 UNCTs have changed their cycle to align the UNDAF with the national planning cycle. Another 20 country teams are expected to fully align in the near future. Even in instances where timelines were non-aligned, UNDAF alignment took place in terms of substance and was based on national priorities.

### *CCA and other analytical work*

The effort to use national analytical work rather than a separate CCA has continued and is now captured in the revised CCA/UNDAF guidelines. In Benin, for instance, the government survey on root causes of poverty will serve as analytical input for the 2007 UNDAF development,

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### **Bridging to Align**

- **Botswana** extended its current UNDAF by two years to align the new UNDAF in 2010 with the national development plan.
- **Bosnia & Herzegovina** requested bridging for 2007 to align.
- **Burundi** requested one year bridging for 2008 and revised its UNDAF to align it with the national peace-building priorities as presented in the finalized PRSP. The revised UNDAF, renamed "UN Strategy for Support to Peace Consolidation in Burundi," is the programmatic framework until 2009.
- **Mauritania** UNCT decided to undertake a transitional UNDAF for 2009-2010 in order to align with the new national development plan for 2011-2015. The existing UNDAF cycle (2003-2008) was also aligned from its inception to the national strategic framework against poverty, but the national plan was extended until 2010.
- **Mexico's** UNDAF process, started in 2006, was delayed until 2007 to align with the new government's National Development Plan.
- **Niger** requested one year bridging for 2008 to align in 2009 with the revised national framework.
- **Nigeria** extended the UNDAF to 2008 to align.
- **Pakistan** decided to extend the UNDAF for two years to align in 2011.

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### **Aligning Post-Crisis**

- **Afghanistan:** UNDAF country team outputs were realigned with the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and the Afghanistan Compact. Focus is on how the UNCT can support national benchmarks on security, governance, rule of law, and human rights.
- **Iraq:** The UN Assistance Strategy (2004-2007) was realigned to the Iraqi National Development Strategy (NDS), which covers the period 2005-2007 through its update in 2005 and 2006. The UN Strategy constitutes the UN's response through the cluster system to the national priorities as identified by the NDS.
- **Maldives:** In support of the National Recovery and Rehabilitation Plan, the UN-Maldives Strategic Framework for Recovery (SFR) was drafted to guide the operationalization of UN development assistance for the recovery process in the Maldives for the remainder of 2005 through to the end of 2007, thus superseding the first UNDAF (2003-2007).
- **Somalia:** UN Transitional Plan 2008-2009 is fully aligned with the National Reconstruction and Development Framework (RDF). (For more on Somalia, see the section on Post-Conflict Needs Assessment.)
- **Sudan:** The country is bridging 2007-2008 to start its first UNDAF in 2009.

### Comoros – Developing UNDAF Without a CCA

The UNCT did not elaborate a CCA since the interim national plan, the PRSP action plan, was recently updated, highlighting key areas of development cooperation.

The UN undertook:

- A desk review of the PRSP to identify national priorities and determine the comparative advantage of the UN system.
- A thematic survey on mortality rates, health, and access to drinking water to determine priorities and vulnerable groups.
- The setting up of a Steering Committee consisting of a National Representative, UN resident agencies, and UN Working Groups on the MDGs. The committee was expanded to civil society and academics to ensure political and technical support.

### Costa Rica – Including Internal Training in the CCA

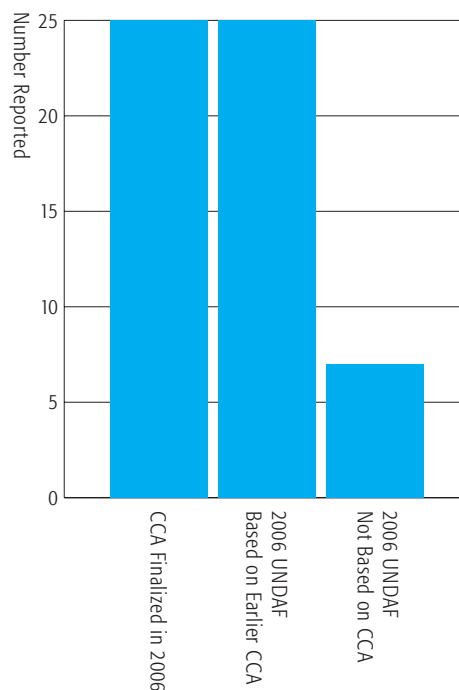
The CCA was completed in October 2006 after broad consultation and participation of government officials and civil society.

Reviewed by the peer support group, the document was highly rated and the formulation process has been suggested as a good practice. It involved: (1) Methodological training and preparation to support the joint programme team in strategic conceptual and methodological aspects for the CCA. (2) Internal analysis (UNCT with no consultants) of the 16 national problems affecting country development and inhabitants' quality of life in which the UN system can contribute significant value added. Working groups were set up to study and present a more detailed analysis of at least three of these problems. The analysis included a problem statement, an analysis of causalities, a problem tree, a rights analysis and capacity gap, a proposal on possible areas of cooperation, and other recommendations. (3) Workshops and feedback with government and civil society (participation of 120 people).

along with existing data analysis and the national strategic policy. In 2006 seven UNCTs (Central African Republic, Comoros, Malawi, Mali, Togo, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) indicated that they did not use a separate CCA.

Still, the majority of UNCTs did use the CCA for the basis of their 2006 UNDAF. Twenty-five CCAs were finalized in 2006, while 25 other countries based their UNDAF on CCAs undertaken in 2005 or 2004. CCAs now often have a strong focus on human rights, gender and other inequalities, and capacity gaps. While the human rights-based approach has been successfully adapted in numerous countries, it can create misunderstandings if the CCA is adopted without extensive government consultation. Some UNCTs are including training for UN staff in the CCA process (see box on Costa Rica, left). CCAs can be highly participatory exercises, including UN agencies, civil society, and national/sub-national government, as exemplified by Costa Rica, Jamaica, and Nicaragua.

Basis for 2006 UNDAFs



## Reviews and evaluations

Eleven annual reviews and five Mid-Term Reviews (MTRs) were reported by UNCTs in 2006. Seven UNCTs were planning MTRs in 2007, and a few country teams are currently undertaking a final review of their UNDAF ending in 2006 (Egypt, Lao PDR, and Panama — see box, right).

MTRs, written in close cooperation and consultation with government, were often done in preparation for an UNDAF process or to refocus an UNDAF. In some instances, the UNDAF was considered too broad (e.g., Armenia) or needed to be better aligned with (new) national priorities (e.g., Azerbaijan). In Nigeria an annual review did not take place in 2006, but the UNCT decided to create a programme management team to review the UNDAF implementation process, ensure alignment, and develop an M&E calendar.

Some countries noted that the annual review improved the M&E framework, while others expressed that the M&E framework was weak or difficult to implement.

### Panama – Conducting a Final Review

The Resident Coordinator Office is currently assessing UN cooperation interventions for UNDAF 2002-2006. In order to provide a high quality analysis of cooperation interventions, the review compiled and systematized all relevant programme, project, and cooperation information.

Although the UNDAF document included a section on the monitoring and evaluation framework, no sustained M&E process was implemented. Despite problems, the UN system development assistance was aligned with national priorities in consonance with the MDGs, human rights, and other relevant commitments. It is estimated that overall resources (core, mobilized, and administered by UN agencies) involved in UN system cooperation interventions between 2002 and 2006 amounted to approximately \$640 million. The various sectors and/or purposes included poverty reduction and employment generation, education, health, human rights protection and promotion, food security, HIV/AIDS, gender equality, and state and public sector reform.

### Kenya – Embarking on a Preparatory Process for an UNDAF Review

In 2006 the UNCT collectively embarked on preparatory processes for an UNDAF review for the period 2004-2006. A primary goal was to facilitate a more strategic focus on UN support of national goals and development priorities. The exercise will be completed in 2007. The Executive Committee (ExCom) agencies' mid-term reviews of the Country Programme Action Plans (CPAPs) conducted in 2006-2007 will inform the collective UNDAF review. The UNDAF Review Committee held a planning retreat at which: (1) a work plan for the review process was developed; (2) M&E tools for the review process were developed; (3) ToRS for the review committee and consultants were developed; (4) a structure for UNDAF review was developed; (5) a first in-house UN newsletter on UNDAF review was produced; and (6) retreat report and briefings were provided to each theme group.



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### Thailand – Offering Recommendations on Operational Documents

Despite stronger incentives and tools put forward to “deliver as one,” discrepancies are still perceived between the global UN agenda and individual agency corporate policy. Harmonization of CPAPs/Annual Work Plans (AWPs) among ExCom agencies is a welcome development, praised by national counterparts. However, stronger linkages with the UNDAF results matrices are still needed. At present, each agency’s corporate format fails to show the direct flow of results from the UNDAF and CP outcomes to the specific programme outputs. As such, joint accountability for results can not be tracked. Further incentives and tools might also be provided to facilitate the development of joint programmes. At present, although good collaboration exists among agency programme staff, the tendency is to shy away from full-fledged joint programmes. This may be because of perceived extra administrative burdens due to different reporting systems and only modest encouragement received by respective corporate hierarchies.

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### Mozambique – UNCT Ensuring Unity of Action

A third generation of UNDAF was seen as an ideal opportunity to demonstrate how the UN family can ensure unity of action. The UNCT supported internal UN harmonization by ensuring that individual agency priorities and the UNDAF are aligned with national goals as set out in the PRSP (PARPA in Portuguese). A number of principles were agreed upon from the outset:

- Alignment of the UNDAF cycle (2007-2009) to PARPA II (2006-2009). The UNDAF Results-Based Matrix should be extracted directly from PARPA II. UNDAF should be complementary to what other donors and development partners are doing in Mozambique.
- All UNDAF outcomes/outputs involve at least two, preferably three or more, UN agencies. Single UN agency activities are not included.
- All UNDAF outcomes/outputs are based on tangible/measurable results, including baseline data and indicators.

These strict guiding principles forced the UNCT to adopt a much wider UN perspective and abandon the agency-specific UNDAF approach of the past. The UNDAF document was therefore a strategic programming framework that UN agencies utilized in full when developing individual CPAPs. To ensure consistency between the UNDAF and the CPAPs, both in formulation and in implementation, a joint UN workshop was organized in August 2006. An UNDAF M&E Reference Group was established to monitor progress in implementation of the UNDAF and agency programmes of cooperation.

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### Viet Nam – Harmonizing Programme Management

As part of One UN Initiative, Viet Nam is developing harmonized programme management guidelines among UNICEF, UNFPA, and UNDP. The guidelines should also enhance greater alignment with government systems while simplifying current business processes, reducing transaction costs for government counterparts and key partners. The guidelines also include the capacity development tasks for rolling out the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers to Implementing Partners (HACT). A Joint UN/government workshop was organized in January 2007 to review the draft guidelines that could be finalized by mid-2007.

### *UN agency country programming*

An increasing number of UNCTs reported efforts to ensure consistency and coherence among the separate programming and operational documents of various agencies. These include CPDs and ExCom agency CPAPs (e.g., Brazil, Ethiopia, Gambia, Jamaica, Lao PDR, Mozambique [see box, left], Senegal, and Thailand). Joint submission of CPAPs for government signature was also increasingly reported (e.g., by Ghana, Guinea, Mauritania, Mongolia, Namibia, and Senegal). UNCTs have been flagging the need for consistency in view of effective implementation of the UNDAF.

### *Conclusion*

#### **Accomplishments**

- In driving inter-agency cooperation and coordination, the new round of UNDAFs highlighted increased synergy and focused UN activity in fewer areas.
- UNDAFs were increasingly formulated in support of capacity development — as well as cross-cutting and core themes (e.g., HIV/AIDS, gender, human rights-based approach, and environmental sustainability).
- Government involvement in drafting UNDAF outcomes ensured that UNDAFs were aligned with national priorities and planning processes and development frameworks — both in terms of timing and substance.
- The trend towards using national analytical work, where it exists, rather than a separate CCA continued and is now captured in the revised CCA/UNDAF guidelines.
- UNCTs reported increased efforts to ensure consistency and coherence between separate agency programming and operational documents.

#### **Challenges**

- While UNDAFs were considered more focused, UNCTs struggled with strategic positioning and the right balance between focus and inclusion. Enhancing agency participation around a limited number of joint priorities remained a struggle.
- The implementation of effective M&E frameworks was valued but still faced limitations; some UNCTs expressed that M&E frameworks were too weak or difficult to implement, partly due to a lack of agency commitment.
- When governments took a strong position, coordination was expedited. For this reason, one UNCT suggested that governments should be empowered to take on a more robust coordination role.
- UNCTs require on-going guidance on how RBM can make UNDAF results matrices more focused and measurable to enhance accountability.
- UNCTs struggle to ensure a consistent link between UNDAF and agency specific programming documents. Agency incentives and corporate policies do not yet fully support this.

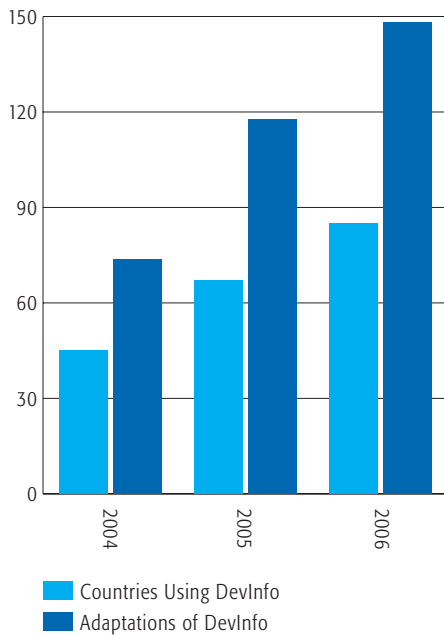




## Monitoring Progress – DevInfo

DevInfo represents a valuable tool in the UN reform process at country level, where it is often used as a common UN repository for CCA data or a device to monitor national plans. DevInfo also serves increasingly as an MDG monitoring system. For example, Niger’s adaptation of DevInfo, NigerInfo, is being developed in partnership between the UNCT and the government as a response to the need for a harmonized framework for monitoring the country’s UNDAF, PRS, and the MDGs. Since its inception in 2004, DevInfo usage at country level has grown steadily. In 2006, DevInfo v5.0 was released, an upgraded and web-enabled version. The cumulative number of customized versions of DevInfo surpassed 150 in 2006; and several UNCTs reported successful launches, including Honduras (ChildInfo Honduras), Macedonia (MakeInfo), and Swaziland (SwaziInfo).

DevInfo Usage



### Roll-out activities and trainings

As part of the roll-out activities for the new DevInfo v5.0, regional workshops for UN staff and national partners were carried out in nine locations around the world. In these workshops, approximately 65 percent of the professionals trained were national counterparts and 35 percent were UN staff members. In addition, various activities were held at country level: introductory briefings in Malaysia, orientations in Yemen, sensitization workshops in Namibia, and national training work-

shops in the Dominican Republic, India, Kosovo, and Mauritania. In Papua New Guinea, as a way of introducing the system to stakeholders, demonstrations were held for participants from various government departments and research institutes. In Ghana, 250 Ghana Statistics Service and M&E regional staff were trained, thus significantly promoting GhanaInfo.

### Monitoring & capacity building

As a result of UNCT efforts, DevInfo was successfully incorporated into wider projects to support and strengthen statistical systems. DevInfo was part of data analysis trainings, MDG monitoring, data management, and reporting exercises. In Morocco, for instance, training and MDG sensitization were carried out as part of the DevInfo project. In Brazil the UN worked to enhance national institutional capacity to use DevInfo for MDG monitoring at the municipal level. In Bulgaria government officials were trained in statistical literacy, social development indicators, and DevInfo for monitoring human development and the MDGs. In North Korea training events were organized to strengthen government and UN staff capacity to use KorInfo and statistical analysis for evidence-based policy.

### Cost-sharing

Agency cost-sharing and UNCT funding of DevInfo activities is a common practice, as reported for example by Fiji’s PacificInfo and Lesotho’s MalutiInfo. Some UNCTs, such as Armenia, Venezuela, and Viet Nam, reported the development of joint DevInfo projects. When agency roles are clearly defined, the expected outputs and resources for joint projects provide a strong inter-agency basis for the implementation of DevInfo at national level.

### Conclusion

- DevInfo, a common UN repository for CCA data and device to monitor national plans, represents a valuable tool in the UN reform process at country level.
- In 2006 the cumulative number of customized versions of DevInfo surpassed 150.
- As a result of UNCT and national efforts, DevInfo support now includes strengthened statistical capacity, data analysis trainings, MDG monitoring, data management, and reporting exercises.
- When agency roles are clearly defined, joint activities and measurable results provide a strong inter-agency basis for the implementation of DevInfo at national level.



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### Serbia – DevInfo Developed for Monitoring Purposes

DevInfo Serbia was developed for monitoring the PRS, the national MDGs, and a number of national strategies on HIV, youth health, etc. The database contains over 400 indicators on human development, some with data up to the third sub-national level. The UN has actively supported the Statistical Office in Serbia to take over the management of the DevInfo Serbia database starting in 2007. To this end, individual and institutional capacity building (national and international) has been provided and a well-trained DevInfo team has been established within the Institute. The UN has provided additional support for the web-enablement of the database, which will dramatically increase access to the information. In addition, local DevInfo databases have been installed in 16 municipalities to monitor indicators for children that have been identified through local plans-of-action for children.

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### Timor-Leste – UN-Government Partnership Sees DevInfo Launch

As a product of close collaboration between the UN and national authorities, in 2006 Timor-Leste launched Timor-Leste DevInfo v1.0. This database contains approximately 90 indicators on demography, economy, education, environment, health, nutrition, and protection, and serves as a monitoring tool for the MDGs and the National Development Plan 2003-2007. The database collates data from various sources, including the most recent population and housing census, the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), the suco (village) survey, statistical publications, and health and education management information systems. The system includes a total of 21 indicators for regional, district, and sub-district levels. The wealth of data contained in the system makes it a key instrument for strategic decision-making. In order to serve the needs of different users, Timor-Leste DevInfo is available in three languages: English, Portuguese, and Tetun.

Timor-Leste DevInfo is a good example of UN-government partnership. A Timor-Leste DevInfo Task Force composed of technical staff from the government and UN agencies oversees the database development activities. The Director General of the National Statistics Directorate is the chair of the Task Force, and the Vice-Minister of Planning and Finance provides valuable guidance for the development of the database. Various UN agencies also provided financial and technical support for the design of the system.