

Developing an UNDAF database in DevInfo: the experience of Mali

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Ségou was the location this month of a retreat organized by the UN System in Mali with the objective of developing a database containing the UNDAF indicators and based on Malikunnafoni, the country's national DevInfo adaptation. Wide participation included the National Statistics Institute, the Health Sector's Planning and Statistical Unit, the Executive Secretariat of the National High Council against AIDS, the Strategic Framework for Poverty Reduction Unit, the Program on Coordination and Strengthening of National Execution, World Bank, and UN (RCO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO).

The retreat was organized with the aim of reviewing the UNDAF M&E indicators and developing the georeferenced UNDAF monitoring database. It also gave the opportunity to draft work plans for database maintenance, updating and capacity building on database use.



Participants at the retreat were grouped into three teams and covered different UNDAF themes. Each team prepared an inventory of the indicators in the UNDAF matrix and compared it to the list of indicators already available in Malikunnafoni. They found considerable overlaps between both sets of indicators: 81 of the 135 UNDAF indicators matched. Some of the suggestions for improvement were to include

new indicators, to delete existing indicators, to reword indicators, and to split nested indicators. A database template was also built.

A presentation of the Malikunnafoni database and its structure was followed by a discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of having the UNDAF as part of this database. The joint decision was to include the UNDAF classification in Malikunnafoni, thus taking advantage of the existing national system.

Some of the next steps are to conduct a workshop with the participation of specialists to prepare the metadata for the new indicators and draft a users' manual; to finalize and validate the database; and to implement the necessary measures to ensure the sustainability and promote the feeling of national ownership of the expanded database.

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Some noteworthy features in the way this process was carried out include:

- Bringing together statisticians and a range of important partners from government and UN agencies who work on national priorities.
- Submitting indicators to a thorough review for statistical quality before entering them in the database.
- Improving the list of indicators as necessary.
- Including all metadata.
- Capitalizing on existing national systems and minimizing the duplication of efforts.

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