



Press Release

IraqInfo

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The Government of Iraq Launches First User-friendly National Database of Key Social Indicators

BAGHDAD, 24 November 2008 - IraqInfo, a new user-friendly national database that provides wide-ranging recent information on social development in Iraq was formally launched today by the Government of Iraq at an official ceremony in Baghdad.

"This is a first of its kind for Iraq, and it will enable government and partners to organize and analyze information from various sources, locations and points in time in the country", said Dr. Mehdi Al-Alak of the Central Organization for Statistics and Information Technology (COSIT). "It comes at an important moment in our recent history as the country moves forward allowing us to spend more time and effort focusing on how to better plan for Iraq's future", he added.

IraqInfo is a web-based database system using DevInfo software developed by the United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF) to be endorsed by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) to assist the UN and Member States in tracking progress toward the Millennium Development Goal's (www.devinform.org). Work on the database began in early 2008 when COSIT and the Kurdistan Region Statistical Office (KRSO) signed an agreement with UNICEF, the United Nations development programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of the Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

"The database is a work in progress," said Dr Jamal Ameen, Head of KRSO. "Currently data contained in Iraq Info is at national and governorate level but we plan to include district and/or sub district level data, as well as all major surveys on Iraq since 1990 next year."

The database currently contains all major official surveys conducted from 2003 by COSIT and KRSO with collaboration of other UN agencies including the Iraq Living Conditions Survey 2004, Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey 2006, Iraq Family Health Survey 2007 and the Food Security Vulnerability Analysis from 2003 and 2005.

"IraqInfo will be very useful to support national and sub-national development planning. IraqInfo allows for the disaggregation of economic, social and demographic data by region and sector, rural versus urban and by gender enabling performance to be monitored at both national and governorate levels and allowing comparisons on progress among regions. Such information will allow for efficient decision making, policy development and resource allocation", said Mr. Paolo Lembo, Country Director, UNDP Iraq.

The UNICEF Representative Sikander Khan commended efforts to date and pledged the agency's support to expand the use of IraqInfo to all government institutions at all governorates in the country. "It is essential for each governorate to have their own data to help determine the challenges and respond accordingly to deliver tangible results and positive change for the people of Iraq."

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IraqInfo, is available on-line (www.iraqinfo-online.org), for anyone requiring access to official national statistical and survey data on Iraq including government departments, planning ministries, UN agencies, institutions, NGOs and media.

(See attached fact sheet)

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