

EDITORIAL

The Coronavirus outbreak in 2020 has challenged people and institutions globally. The commonly used response measures to the pandemic – such as physical distancing, quarantine and travel restrictions – profoundly changed the way we think and collaborate. This global crisis has forced all of us to explore new ways of working while it accelerated digital transformation. Supporting our clients, we specifically focused this year on offering innovative digital solutions for the management of projects and funds in international development cooperation.

This included the development of DACOTA, a flexible and fully customizable remote monitoring system based on open source modules.

In the area of financial management, the combination of our Financial Management System with the blockchain based workflow

application TruBudget, developed by the KfW, offers an innovative approach to the management of multi-donor trust funds.

Finally, we developed a web based workplan application for Global Fund projects in order to replace project management templates based upon Excel.

I believe that these digital solutions shall assist our partners in managing their respective projects more efficiently, and that their application will remain highly relevant in the future.

From GFA B.I.S. we wish good health to all, both during and after the Corona crisis.

Harald Litterscheid
Managing Director, GFA B.I.S.



DACOTA: REMOTE PROJECT MONITORING SYSTEM

As a consequence of the global pandemic, travel restrictions and physical distancing severely limit project monitoring facilities. Switching to standardized remote management tools however reduces the variety of monitoring and quality control. The increasing data complexity and geographically dispersed project activities also pose additional challenges for default tools.

In response to the need for a powerful and flexible remote monitoring system, GFA B.I.S. developed DACOTA. The system's modular architecture permits users to import and manage decentralized project data – while visualizing KPIs and trends on a customized dashboard and map. The integration of overlapping layers, (i.e. national park boundaries, country borders), enables project managers to place location data into different contexts. Being made up of interchangeable open-source components, DACOTA can be individually tailored to the needs of the specific project free of licensing costs.

In 2020 GFA B.I.S. was commissioned to apply DACOTA to a variety of project settings, ranging from:

- The design of a digital mapping system of solar photovoltaic electrification (GIZ, Ethiopia)
- The monitoring of sustainable land management (KfW, Ethiopia)

- The management of construction work on school buildings (KfW, Togo)

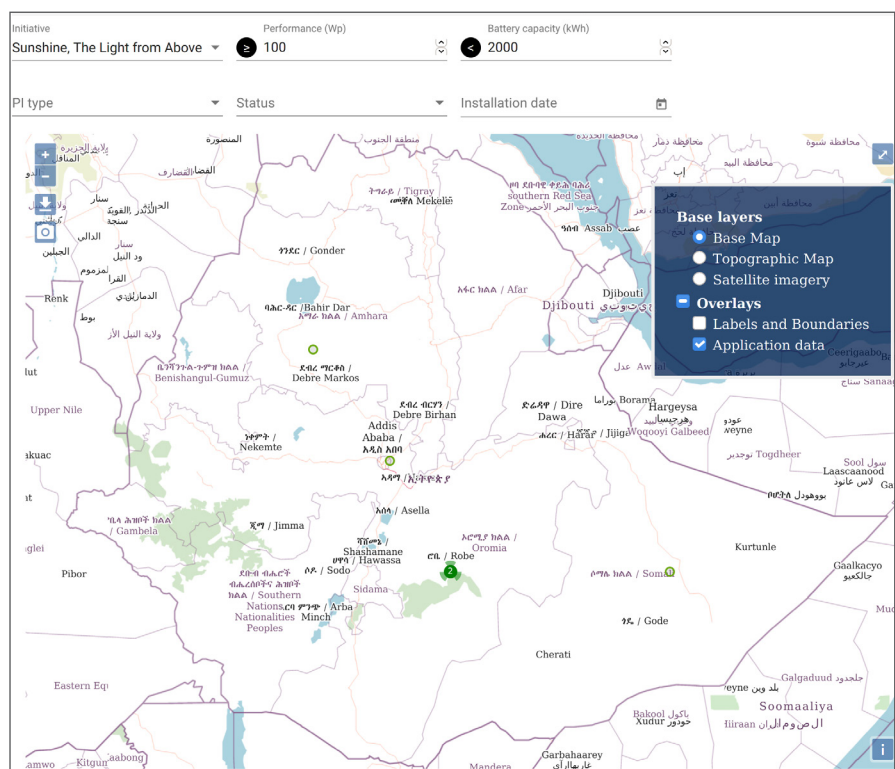
To date, DACOTA has also been tailored in order to monitor project activities in regions with fragile security contexts, (GIZ, South Sudan Portfolio), as well as the preservation of the biosphere reserve in Albania (KfW). Via integrating a customized map-view and dashboard, DACOTA

can generate various reports, analysis and data (dis-)aggregations.

A demo version showcasing one possible adaptation is accessible as video here:

<https://rb.gy/temwvn>

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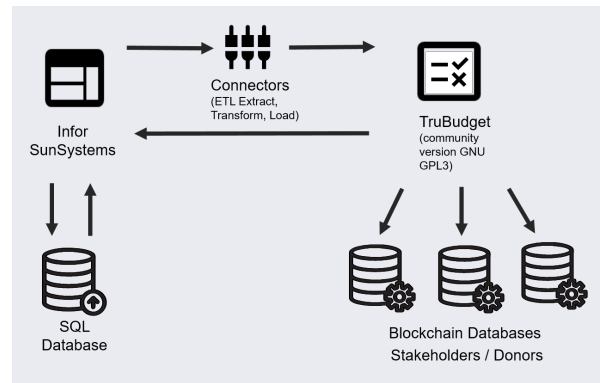


INFOR SUNSYSTEMS AND TRUBUDGET: IT SOLUTION FOR MANAGEMENT OF MULTI-DONOR TRUST FUNDS

Ambitious multi-donor trust funds are becoming more important within international development cooperation. They frequently involve several independent funders who implement activities in various countries and currencies. Such complex project settings reinforce the need for a transparent and secure management of collective donor funds. The challenge is not only about the management of complex budgeting and reporting processes on the part of each participant, but also for a transparent management of the joint funds and the integrated workflows from all participants.

Together with the GFA Consulting Group, GFA B.I.S. was recently contracted by KfW to set up an innovative IT solution for the management of a stabilization fund, (piloting phase), for fragile regions within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Taking into consideration the ECOWAS' multi-stakeholder structure, the applied solution is tasked with tracking the finances of individual project inter-

ventions, as well as integrating the results into an overall accounting system. Additionally, defined request and authorization procedures have to be managed and monitored by all partners in a transparent way. To ensure a sustainable management of joint funds with high audit standards, GFA B.I.S. implements a tailor-made solution based on INFOR SunSystems. This powerful financial management software makes it possible to efficiently track the utilization of funds and to report in line with donor requirements. In addition, INFOR SunSystems enables the generation of both statutory financial reports as well as project reports in formats defined by the stakeholders. The monitoring of ECOWAS' overall project progress, key milestones, management and authorization procedures will be documented and tracked in the blockchain based workflow tool,



TruBudget. Developed by the KfW, TruBudget provides a real-time collaborative environment and enables each participant to document and monitor the project's progress - while eliminating prior transaction costs that emanated from complex parallel structures. The integration of INFOR SunSystems with TruBudget therefore permits transparent monitoring and high quality control within complex multi-donor fund settings.

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WORKPLAN: WEB-BASED MANAGEMENT OF PROJECTS

The outbreak of the Coronavirus impedes Nigeria's challenges in the provision and financing of health services. Financially supported by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (TGF), local Nigerian partners implement health activities throughout the country. TGF's Fiscal Agent is contracted to monitor these activities as well as to manage and control the supplied funds.

In response to the Fiscal Agent's demand for a digital and user-friendly project management tool, GFA B.I.S. developed the web-based WORKPLAN. It turns MS Excel-based project management templates into a single transparent overview platform - easily accessible for all users via web-login. WORKPLAN's modular structure flexibly enables to monitor the scope of project activities while continuously tracking the implementation progress. The status of the activity can be visualized in an integrated

Gantt-chart, providing a quick overview of key criteria such as planning, progress and delay. Meanwhile in TGFs projects in Mauretania and Chad, GFA B.I.S. implemented an enhanced web-based WORKPLAN to further meet the client's requirements. These included the monitoring of predefined milestones, specific budgets

and staff time-sheets. Based on the integration of open-source modules, the effort in customizing WORKPLAN to specific project requirements is minimal.

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