Projects Using DDI

- California Digital Library's "Counting California" Project
  countingcalifornia.cdlib.org/

- Census Bureau's DataFerrett
  dataferrett.census.gov/TheDataWeb/index.html

- Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS)
  Denominator File Project — www.resdac.umn.edu/

- CESSDA Integrated Data Catalog
  www.nsd.uib.no/cessda/IDC/

- Cultural Policy and the Arts National Data Archive (CPANDA)
  www.cpanda.org/

- DAIS Nesstar System at Health Canada
  www.hc-sc.gc.ca/

- Data Liberation Initiative Metadata Collection at Statistics
  Canada — www.statcan.ca/english/Dli/dli.htm

- Documenting the Survey Lifecycle Using DDI – Canada
  Research Data Centres and GSS

- Harvard-MIT Virtual Data Center — www.thedata.org/

- ICPSR Data Catalog — www.icpsr.umich.edu/

- ICPSR Social Science Variables Database (SSVD)
  webapp.icpsr.umich.edu/cocoon/SSVD/basicSrch

- National Historical Geographic Information System
  www.nhgis.org/

- National Survey of Family Growth, Wave VI
  webapp.icpsr.umich.edu/cocoon/WebDocs/NSFG/public/
  index

- Nesstar Ltd. — www.nesstar.com/

- Social Science Research Services (SSRS) and Social
  Science Libraries & Information Services (SSLIS) at
  Yale University — ssrs.yale.edu/
  www.library.yale.edu/socsci

- Survey Documentation and Analysis — sda.berkeley.edu/

- World Bank International Household Survey Network
  (IHSN) and Survey Data Dissemination Toolkit
  www.internationalsurveynetwork.org/home/

Annual Report of the
Data Documentation Initiative

Highlights and Accomplishments

In its second year of operation, the DDI Alliance welcomed two new members and made significant progress in developing a data model for Version 3.0 of the specification. This report briefly describes some of the year's highlights.

Meetings Held

Expert Committee. The full Expert Committee of the Alliance met in Madison, Wisconsin, in May 2004 as part of the annual IASSIST conference. Topics of discussion included reports of the Working Groups and specifically a new proposal from the Complex Files group. This proposal would extend the DDI specification to cover a system of files, such as a time series, and it provides a new "file group" mechanism.

Structural Reform Working Group. This group met in October 2004 in Ann Arbor, Michigan, with 12 individuals in attendance. The agenda for the group was to begin to formulate the data model for DDI Version 3.0. The group reviewed various metadata models that overlap with the DDI in order to discover which might have promising features. The group then turned to refining the conceptual model for Version 3.0, which moves the DDI in the direction of a modular lifecycle model, focusing on the life of a dataset from conception to archiving and use.

New Products Created

DDI Lite. The Usability and Outreach group prepared a new version of the recommended DDI element set, called "DDI Lite." A corresponding table showing the DDI Lite ele-

ments and their relationships to elements in other meta-data standards is also available.

DDI Schema and Tag Library. During the year the Usability group, with help from the Structural Reform Group, merged the descriptive text for DDI elements and attributes from the DTD with text from the Tag Library. The resulting information was used by the Structural Reform Group to generate the official Version 2.0 XML Schema.

Membership and Finances

In its second year of operation, the DDI Alliance had 27 paid memberships, providing a funding stream to support the administrative structure, some meeting costs, and XML consultants. The balance sheet of the Alliance shows that revenue for the fiscal year totaled $67,413 (roughly 27 members x $2,500 membership fee). Revenues exceeded expenditures for the year and a positive balance will carry forward into the next fiscal year. The fund balance for 2004 (July 1, 2003-June 30, 2004) was $25,947. The fund balance forecast for 2005 is $30,919. This positive balance will carry forward into the next fiscal year, which begins on July 1, 2005.

Why Join the Alliance?

Through membership in the Alliance, you and your organization can have a vote in the development of this important social science standard. Membership means that you have the opportunity to participate with colleagues in shaping the format, content, and delivery of social science information.

Because the DDI is a project of the larger social science research community, we all need to play a role in moving it forward to become an official standard. Members can lend their unique talents and expertise to the Working Groups, ensuring that the standard meets the needs and expectations of the community.

"The DDI…Increases the depth of access to your collection…Allows sharing of discovery tools…Allows functional sharing of all metadata materials…Encourages cooperative metadata collection development…Encourages FULL documentation of data."

Wendy L. Thomas and William C. Block, University of Minnesota

"The DDI is a very end-user oriented metadata standard, allowing a rich amount of semi-structured information to travel along with the data on their way from the production line to the secondary analysts."

Jostein Ryssevik, Nesstar Ltd.

Become a Member

To join, complete a membership form (online at www.ddialliance.org, "About the DDI Alliance") and obtain appropriate signatures at your institution. Please send the form to the DDI Secretariat at:

ICPSR
PO Box 1248
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248
Fax: 734.647.8200

Benefits of the DDI Approach

- **Interoperability.** Codebooks marked up using the DDI specification can be exchanged and transported seamlessly, and applications can be written to work with these homogeneous documents.

- **Richer content.** The DDI was designed to encourage the use of a comprehensive set of elements to describe social science datasets as completely and as thoroughly as possible, thereby providing the potential data analyst with broader knowledge about a given collection.

- **Single document — multiple purposes.** A DDI codebook contains all of the information necessary to produce several different types of output, including, for example, a traditional social science codebook, a bibliographic record, or SAS/SPSS/Stata data definition statements. Thus, the document may be repurposed for different needs and applications. Changes made to the core document will be passed along to any output generated.

- **Online subsetting and analysis.** Because the DDI markup extends down to the variable level and provides a standard uniform structure and content for variables, DDI documents are easily imported into online analysis systems, rendering datasets more readily usable for a wider audience.

- **Precision in searching.** Since each of the elements in a DDI-compliant codebook is tagged in a specific way, field-specific searches across documents and studies are enabled. For example, a library of DDI codebooks could be searched to identify datasets covering protest demonstrations during the 1960s in specific states or countries.