



DATA IN ACTION

**NATURAL RESOURCES DISCLOSURE
FOR PEOPLE AND PROGRESS**

January 2020

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

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These are key highlights from the publication “Data in Action” which consolidates the findings of the natural resources data assessments conducted in: Colombia, Ghana, Mongolia, and Peru by the From Disclosure to Development (D2D) program. It describes key challenges and makes recommendations to industry, governments, and civil society that help bridge the existing data gaps and unlock data-enabled opportunities in the natural resources sector. The report aims to help better understand 1) the most pressing information needs of communities, 2) available datasets that can help address their concerns, and 3) the concrete entry points for multi-stakeholder collaboration that that can facilitate disclosure for development impact.

The publication is part of a series of knowledge products by IFC’s From Disclosure to Development program. Two other publications in the series are [Unlocking Data Innovation for Social License in Natural Resources](#) and [Transparency for Impact](#).



USING OPEN DATA TO REDUCE DISPARITIES AND BUILD TRUST BETWEEN OWNERS OF ASSETS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Revenue from oil, gas, minerals, metals, agricultural land, and forests accounts for almost half of all wealth in low-income countries. But the benefits they yield are not widely shared, leaving local communities poor and leading to social and economic conflict.

Open data—data that anyone can freely use, reuse and redistribute, for any purpose, without restrictions—on license allocations, contracting, beneficial ownership, royalties, and environmental and social impacts, has the potential to reduce disparities and build trust between owners of assets and the communities where these are located. Equipping stakeholders with the information they need to make fact-based decisions about investments can improve accountability, curb corruption, and increase equitable benefit sharing.

For open data and information to be useful, companies, governments, and communities must acknowledge that transparency is not the ultimate goal but rather a means to an end in which all parties involved are better informed; ensured mutual benefit; have relevant, timely, and accurate information;

and can begin to (re) build trust and maintain sustained engagements throughout the lifetime of the investment. Governments and companies that efficiently disclose, share, and use data can improve service delivery across sectors, catalyze innovation and support job creation.

IFC’s “From Disclosure to Development” program was established in 2017. The program facilitates the disclosure and use of information and open data in support of broader benefit sharing from investments in natural resources.

BECOMING PART OF A DATA ECOSYSTEM

Companies, governments, and civil society increasingly recognize that to meet the information demands and expectations of diverse stakeholders, they have to become part of a broader data ecosystem rather than operating in data silos. They need to provide datasets that respond to end-user’s demands—by, for example, revealing production totals by resource type and site; total revenue collected; royalty payments and allocation; taxes; public investments of natural resources revenues; job

opportunities for local communities; procurement opportunities for local vendors and other measures that affect people's lives. To be useful, data must be provided in reusable formats (Excel files, for example, rather than PDFs).

D2D works with companies, governments, and civil society to enable access to and the use of relevant, timely, and accurate information on natural resources investments. As data becomes digitized and connectivity continues to expand, companies and governments face a paradigm shift in the cycle of information. The dramatic change of pace and tools used to drive and push information forward means that companies and governments must adapt to fulfill the information demands of investment projects while ensuring that this new change is inclusive of civil society and communities.

IDENTIFYING THE DATA CHALLENGES IN COLOMBIA, GHANA, MONGOLIA AND PERU

To better understand the natural resources data landscape, IFC developed a sector-specific data assessment approach, which D2D tested in four pilot countries. The assessments identified five challenges:

1. The data and information provided often fail to match the needs of end-users, including communities, civil society, media, companies, and investors.
2. The quality of the data is poor. Data is not timely, accurate or in usable formats.
3. Access to data is limited. Datasets are not digitized or open, or they are stored on complex and difficult to access dashboards.
4. The capacity of data users is limited.
5. Communities mistrust the private sector and the information they disclose.

MAKING BETTER USE OF OPEN DATA

Stakeholders can address these challenges in a variety of ways:

1. **Deliberately assess community information needs to inform data collection strategies and disclosure.** The most useful disclosures are those designed with the end-user in mind. Understanding the concerns of communities (which may not always be related to mining operations) helps governments and companies engage with communities and design interventions that address the challenges they are facing.
2. **Prioritize disaggregated and project-level data for disclosure.** Communities are most interested in specific insights about their municipality, district, or mining project site. Granular data on local development investments, social and

environmental impacts, job creation, and local procurement opportunities help address communities' primary concerns.

3. **Create feedback mechanisms** (via an open data portal or company data dashboards) through which users can request datasets and information of interest to them. These platforms can also be used for participatory data collection and verification, allowing citizens to provide missing data, particularly for implementation of investment projects in their communities.
4. **Mandate the design and implementation of open data initiatives in the natural resources sector**, under the umbrella of national open data policies. Initiatives can include institutional mechanisms to guide data collection and disclosure standards for agencies and industry, identify the types of data that must be collected, and establish the level of disaggregation required.
5. **Establish natural resources data disclosure standards through cooperation agreements with governments, companies, and civil society.** Agreements can establish guidelines for data collection, reporting frequency, and format, in order to ensure consistency.
6. **Design simple platforms with end-users in mind.** Governments and industry have invested significant resources in public data platforms. The return on these investments has not yet been realized. Search functionality, one-click download buttons, and feedback mechanisms are low-hanging fruits that can change the user experience and make these datasets accessible.
7. **Engage digital entrepreneurs to transform company data and reports** into interactive apps that share data in a readily consumable way.
8. **Partner with the technology sector to provide capacity building to data users.** Governments and companies can partner with tech companies to provide trainings and skills transfer in digital transformation, data visualization, and data literacy. Design participatory data collection and validation initiatives.
9. **Design participatory data collection and validation** initiatives. Companies, governments and civil society can use data to engage with local communities in new ways including, co-creation of data, collaborative action plans for public investments and monitoring.

Read the full publication [here](#).

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