

FROM DISCLOSURE TO DEVELOPMENT (D2D)

Open Data to Help Address Challenges in Sierra Leone's Mining Communities

Home to large deposits of minerals, including diamonds, rutile, bauxite, iron, and gold, Sierra Leone has a rich trove of natural resources that accounts for 67 percent of total exports. Benefits to local mining communities include jobs and small business development along with infrastructure and public service improvements. Data-driven community investments can further boost sustainable economic growth and environmental governance in natural resource operations. This requires making more data available for public use.

Challenge

Many communities yearn for benefits from mining revenue flows. These communities face complex social problems, such as poverty and lack of access to health care, education, and economic opportunity, especially for women and youth. Mining safety and environmental degradation are also significant concerns. Despite institutional and administrative reforms to improve transparency in the natural resources sector in Sierra Leone, some governance challenges still stand in the way of the sector's ability to deliver on its development promise. A root cause of these challenges is the lack of information about mining revenue flows to communities and how these revenues are used. With more information, communities can become better-informed and more involved in the management of revenue flows to ensure that these revenues are well managed and contribute to inclusive and equitable development. In addition, greater operational transparency and more data disclosure can enhance environmental stewardship and mining safety.

Solution

The D2D Sierra Leone project is designed to address this lack of information, ultimately improving sector governance, by working at multiple levels—government, company, and community—to increase the flow of natural resources data, enhance digital data analysis capabilities, and catalyze the development of innovative data-driven solutions to the issues faced by residents of mining communities. Primary targets of these activities include the government agencies with oversight for technology initiatives and for the natural resources sector, along with young people from mining communities who have digital skills and an entrepreneurial mindset.



Data Competition Milestones and Coming Events

All events held at: Sensi Tech Innovation Hub, 31B Spur Road, Freetown, Sierra Leone

► Hackathon

Participating teams brainstormed ideas during this September 2022 event

► Digital boot camp

Top five teams from the hackathon receive deep-dive learning, coaching, and mentoring to build their digital and open data skills, October–November 2022.

► Pitch night

Top five teams compete for a prize package, which includes the equivalent of \$2,000 (first prize) and \$1,000 (runner up) in the form of a business start-up toolkit, featuring services, infrastructure, equipment, and other support materials, November 30, 2022

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



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Partners in the Sierra Leone D2D Initiative

Sierra Leone Department of Science, Technology, and Innovation (DSTI): The nation's leading data-driven digital innovation entity.

National Minerals Agency (NMA): Sierra Leone's mining industry regulator, responsible for sector oversight and implementing mining laws such as the 2009 Mines and Minerals Act, which calls for enhanced natural resources sector accountability, increased transparency, local mining community protections, and environmental safeguards to mitigate mining impacts.

Project Details

The D2D Sierra Leone initiative features concurrent and complementary technical assistance to DSTI and NMA, with a focus on digital skills and open data.

Activities with DSTI

- **Hackathon and data competition** for young people to prototype data-driven ideas for digital solutions that will benefit mining communities, with a path to creating viable start-ups. Participants make use of open data to address challenges. [Sensi Tech Innovation Hub](#), the implementation partner on the ground, is coordinating the events.
- **Eight-week digital boot camp** for a select group of young entrepreneurs, students, and representatives of civil society organizations, preferably from mining communities, to boost their digital skills and showcase ways that digital data can inform innovative applications that help solve societal problems.

Activities with NMA

- **Data inventory and prioritization** to identify datasets useful for public engagement on mining sector challenges.
- **Open-data capacity building** for mining agency officials to increase the flow of public mining data and information.
- Technical assistance to develop **a user engagement strategy and action plan for data reuse** based on international good practice.

D2D Experience Track Record

- ▶ **Ghana:** IFC supported tech-savvy young entrepreneurs to unlock the potential of data from the natural resource industry and build solutions to address social challenges. The initiative brought together companies, communities, and civil society as well as individuals with digital skills to work collaboratively on supporting local economic development in the areas of oil, gas, and mining projects.
- ▶ **Colombia:** IFC partnered with government, private sector, and community stakeholders to strengthen the monitoring of mining company royalties to communities and decision-making on local royalty investments.
- ▶ **Mongolia:** IFC is working with mining companies, the local innovation hub, and universities to deliver capacity-building activities for local intermediaries with the goal of improving the use and public sharing of subnational mining revenue and water data.

About From Disclosure to Development (D2D) Program

D2D is a global initiative that helps governments and companies improve data sharing and use practices to enhance engagement with mining communities. Led by IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, in partnership with the BHP Foundation, the initiative leverages digital technology and publicly available digital data, known as open data, and includes support for communities on how to make use of the information shared.

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For more information about the global D2D program please visit:

<https://commdev.org/work/transparency-data-voice>



About IFC

IFC—a member of the World Bank Group—is the largest global development institution focused on the private sector in emerging markets. We work in more than 100 countries, using our capital, expertise, and influence to create markets and opportunities in developing countries. In fiscal year 2022, IFC committed a record \$32.8 billion to private companies and financial institutions in developing countries, leveraging the power of the private sector to end extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity as economies grapple with the impacts of global compounding crises. For more information, visit www.ifc.org.

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