

Module 2

Assessing in-country
potential for data sharing

**Cheat
Sheet**

Assessing in-country potential for data sharing

This cheat sheet gathers key points from eLearning on **assessing in-country potential for data sharing**.

Factors that contribute to an enabling environment

The environment in which data is collected, accessed, used and shared is shaped by the policies and processes that exist in-country, the communities of people and the level of access to technology available. Together these are factors that contribute to an enabling environment, that promotes and supports widespread data sharing:

- **Policies, legal and regulatory frameworks** provide a context within which data access can be moderated. Open data or data sharing and access policies, data protection and competition laws are just some of the ways the rights and freedoms of citizens in a data sharing environment are established.
- **Community norms and practices** work together with formal policies to form the wider environment that exists around data sharing. These might include the ways legal terms and regulation are enforced, cultural considerations, as well as narrower, more specific policies, like professional codes of



conduct, standards and common practices, or ethical codes of practice.

- **Access to technology**, namely the availability, reliability or affordability of the internet and technology within organisations and in the country as a whole, will inform the practicalities of data sharing.

Factors that could disrupt the enabling environment

The same factors that contribute to the enabling environment are the same as those which could disrupt it:

- **Politics** – For example, Tensions over land and borders restricting data collection.
- **Cultural norms** – For example, mistrust in the collection and use of data by others.
- **Technological capacity** – For example, or civil unrest resulting in internet outages.

Stakeholders influencing the enabling environment

The enabling environment is influenced by a range of stakeholders, in particular, the organisations and communities that set the laws, policies and social norms. This includes:

- Regulators – governments and funding organisations – who create policies and legislative frameworks
- Advocates that encourage particular behaviours, such as think tanks and civil society organisations
- International bodies and experts who advise on best practice
- Companies and departments that supply technological tools and services for working with data

- Research and academic institutions providing evidence to support and develop arguments and approach
- Citizens and local communities, like business owners and smallholders, for whose benefit laws and policies are shaped.

The **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**

supports the enabling environment by investing in initiatives that promote data literacy and skills, facilitate engagement with communities and service providers, and support the creation of policies, processes and standards to support FAIR and safeguarded data practices.

Evaluating the enabling environment

Conducting a broad landscape review of data policies and regulatory frameworks in a particular country or region can provide insight into the feasibility of an investment involving FAIR and safeguarded data. An effective landscape review will:

- Highlight any major legal or regulatory barriers to the use of data
- Identify cultural considerations and norms
- Maximise impact by ensuring investments are designed in respect to the enabling environment
- Identify opportunities for investments that directly support the wider enabling environment.

A template guide and sample documents to help conduct such a landscape review and create a 'Country Data Profile' is available in the Data Sharing Toolkit. It can be completed by a program officer, grantee, the foundation in-country team or a third party.

Be aware of the enabling environment at all stages of an investment

Awareness of the in-country context and any changes in the political, legal, social and technological landscape will help maximise the impact of the investment and even help identify new areas for investment. You should:

- **Evaluate and monitor** for any changes in the political, legal, institutional and technological landscape, during proposal development and when the grant is active.
- **Engage and support** strategic interventions like engaging and supporting government may be needed.
- **Enable investments** it may be possible to amend the proposal so it works within the constraints of the enabling environment.

Next steps

If the in-country environment is not compatible with the needs of data access use and sharing in your investment, consider any or all of the following actions:

- Pause the proposal until the enabling environment is suitable.
- Amend the proposal so it works within the constraints of the enabling environment.
- Engage relevant stakeholders to consider how to overcome the challenges.
- Highlight where there are structural issues that may need more strategic interventions.

Who can help?

Specific stakeholders can help you understand the enabling environment. These are the regulators, advocates, international bodies and experts, companies that provide services, researchers, citizens and local communities.

The Data Sharing Toolkit contains key resources that can help everyone deliver fair and safeguarded investments. You may also need to access specialist support from the foundation in-country team or a third party to help evaluate the enabling environment.

- Guide: Country Data Profile – Template
- Guide: Country Data Profile – Ethiopia
- Guide: Country Data Profile – Kenya
- Guide: Country Data Profile – India
- Guide: Country Data Profile – Tanzania

Data Sharing Toolkit



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 **CABI Data Sharing Toolkit**



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