



**SDG
ACCELERATION
ROADMAP**
UNLEASHING THE POWER OF
PRIVATE-SECTOR DATA IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Demonstrating the Power of Private Sector Data for Sustainable Development

This project information note was produced by Cepei, an independent think tank founded in 2002 in Bogota, Colombia. Through robust evidence and multi-stakeholder engagement, Cepei empowers people and institutions to find pathways toward sustainable development.

This note describes the 'Exploring the private sector's role in the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development' project, funded by the International Development Research Center (IDRC), based in Canada. It is designed for companies that provide support to the public sector through data-related actions such as data sharing or digital systems-strengthening in areas that target ESG and sustainable development issues. Its aim is to provide companies with an introductory overview of the project and to invite private sector participation.

*For further information about this project, or to express an interest in collaborating with Cepei, please contact our **Partnerships Manager, Luisa Cordoba** at l.cordoba@cepei.org*



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Why we are running this project

There is a significant shift taking place within the world of business. In recent years, environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) has risen in prominence among an increasingly socially and environmentally-conscious consumer base. ESG investing has attracted substantial interest with reporting on environmental, and sometimes social, metrics becoming a must-do in many companies' annual reporting and shareholder meetings. Viewed from a public policy perspective, the turn towards more socially and environmentally conscious capitalism creates opportunities for alignment between business and government; for instance, between ESG metrics and political targets such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that center on people, planet, and prosperity as the three pillars of sustainable development.

One area of alignment is in the field of data and digital transformation. Whether framed as ESG, the SDGs, or corporate social responsibility (CSR), companies around the world are providing support to public sector institutions in ways that help to improve their capacity for evidence-based decision-making. Activities - or data actions - being taken range from the transfer of actionable data to the public sector directly, through to the provision of tools or services that help improve the public sector's ability to capture and utilize insights from data repositories.

Examples of public-private data interactions abound. For instance, in Sri Lanka and Colombia, business-generated call detail records (CDRs) have been used to predict population-level socioeconomic characteristics and displacement after natural disasters. In Africa and India, social media data have been used to map the population and provide alternative data to predict credit scores to expand financial inclusion.



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With just eight years remaining to achieve the SDGs, we are interested in understanding just how extensive the private sector's data-related contributions to public policy objectives in the Global South really are - what has worked, and what hasn't. To this end, we are undertaking research that seeks to capture and examine examples of business support to public institutions across Latin America and the Caribbean, MENA, Africa, and Southeast Asia.

Who we are

The project involves a consortium of five partners, led by Cepei and LIRNEasia.

Cepei: Cepei is a Colombia-based think tank. For 20 years, Cepei has advanced multi-stakeholder dialogue, generated evidence for decision-making, and expanded the production and use of qualified open data across sectors and regions with partners like multilateral organizations, the private sector, academia, government, and civil society. More information about Cepei can be found here: <https://cepei.org>

LIRNEasia: LIRNEasia is pro-poor, pro-market think tank working on digital policy issues in the Asia Pacific. LIRNEasia has extensive experience in the field of digital access, data, ethical use of data, AI and algorithms, and policy. LIRNEasia conducts research, disseminates research to policy makers and provides capacity building for policy makers. More information about the LIRNEasia can be found here: <https://lirneasia.net>

Research partners: Mona School of Business & Management at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica; Local Development Research Institute (LDRI) in Kenya; and, the Center for Continuing Education (CCE) at Birzeit University in Palestine.

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