

Summary report Mali-DEX

"Data is the raw material for informed decision making. Without high quality data, the right information source, on the right parameters, at the right time, the design, monitoring and evaluation of effective policies becomes almost impossible."

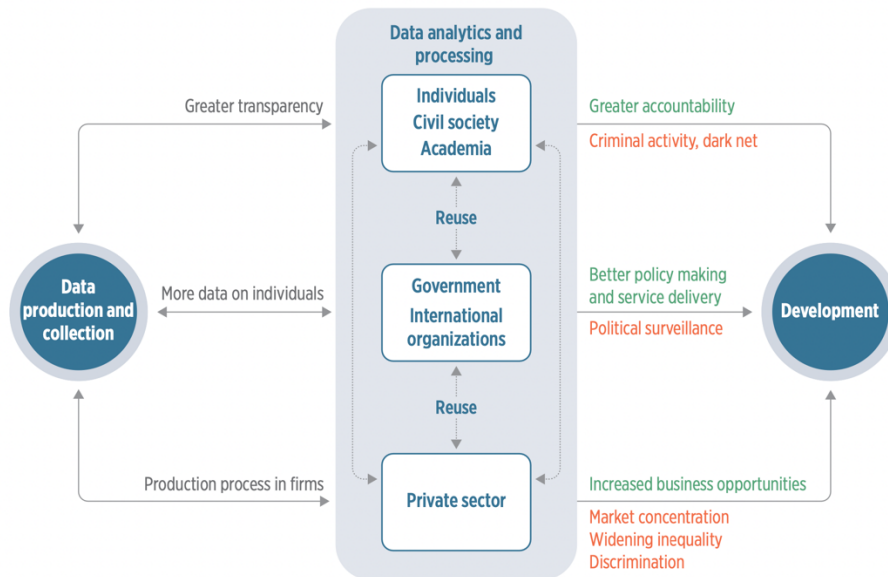
United Nations Report, A world that counts ¹

Data alone cannot improve the wellbeing of people and their environment. But when used consistently and responsibly to generate information and create knowledge, it can transform development. Companies have long recognised the importance of data. However, in many countries, data is of limited quality or not available at all. Under the influence of donors and for the sake of transparency and accountability, we have observed a renewed interest in data for decision making in the development sector, but unfortunately without much effect so far.

The recent flagship report of the World Bank Group on World Development, "Data for Better Lives" (April 2021), presents the analyses and conclusions of around 100 experts on the subject of data as a common good. The figure below recalls how data can drive development while highlighting possible negative repercussions. This report details how to advance development goals using data, align data governance with the social contracts, and move towards integrated national data systems.

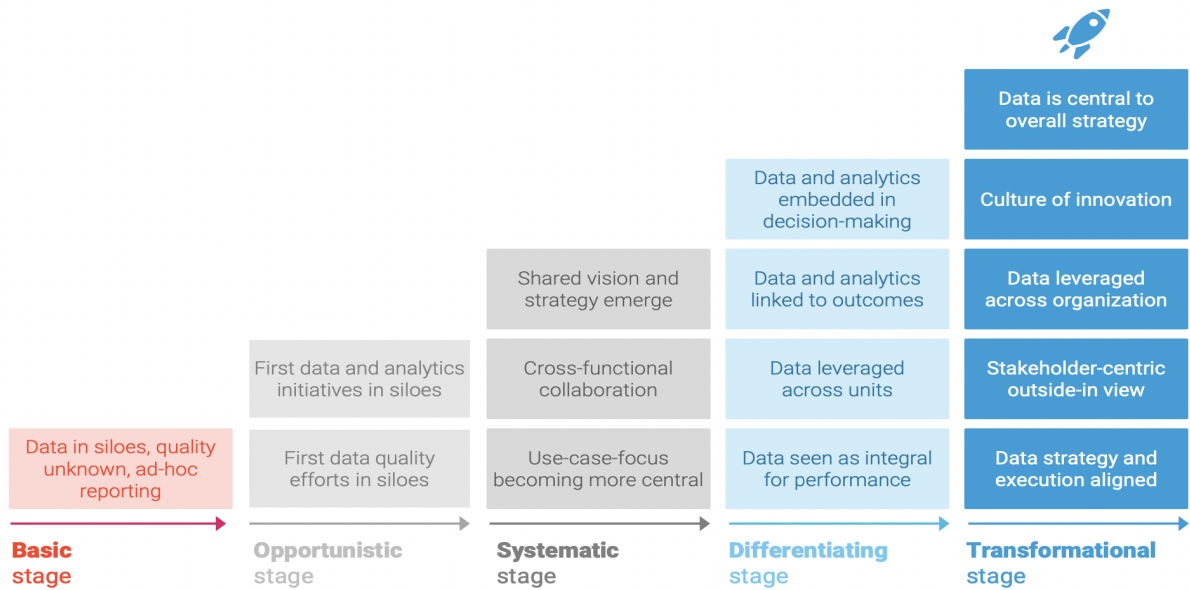
The feasibility study of the business model of the Mali-DEX platform proposes actions for a better use of data in Mali. This platform is aligned with the content of the World Bank report and can be seen as an innovative preliminary pragmatic step (following the maturity model presented hereafter), toward putting data at the service of development in Mali. During the feasibility study, it was noted that most organisations in the development sector in Mali are, institutionally speaking, still at the basic stage of data use.

¹ [UN Data Revolution Report - "A World that counts"](#)



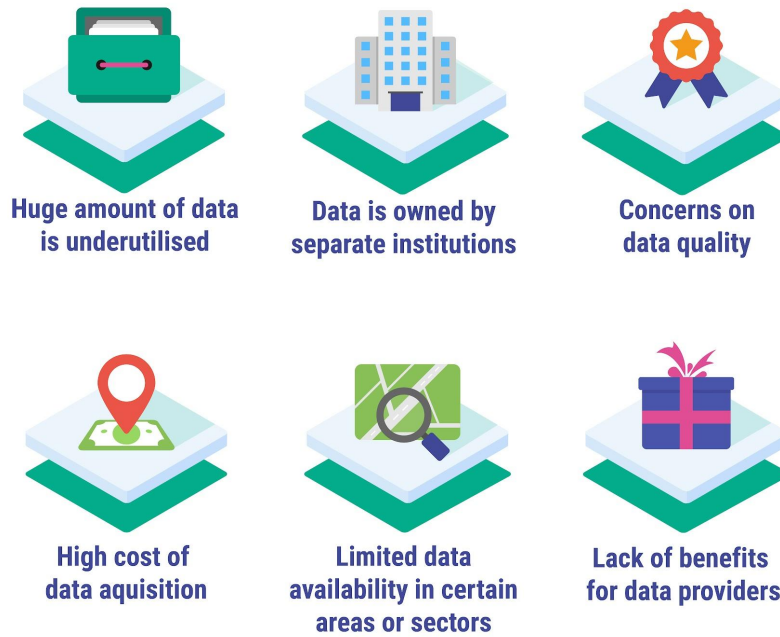
Source: WDR 2021 team.
 Note: Positive impacts are shown in green; negative impacts are shown in red.

MATURITY MODEL: STAGES IN ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

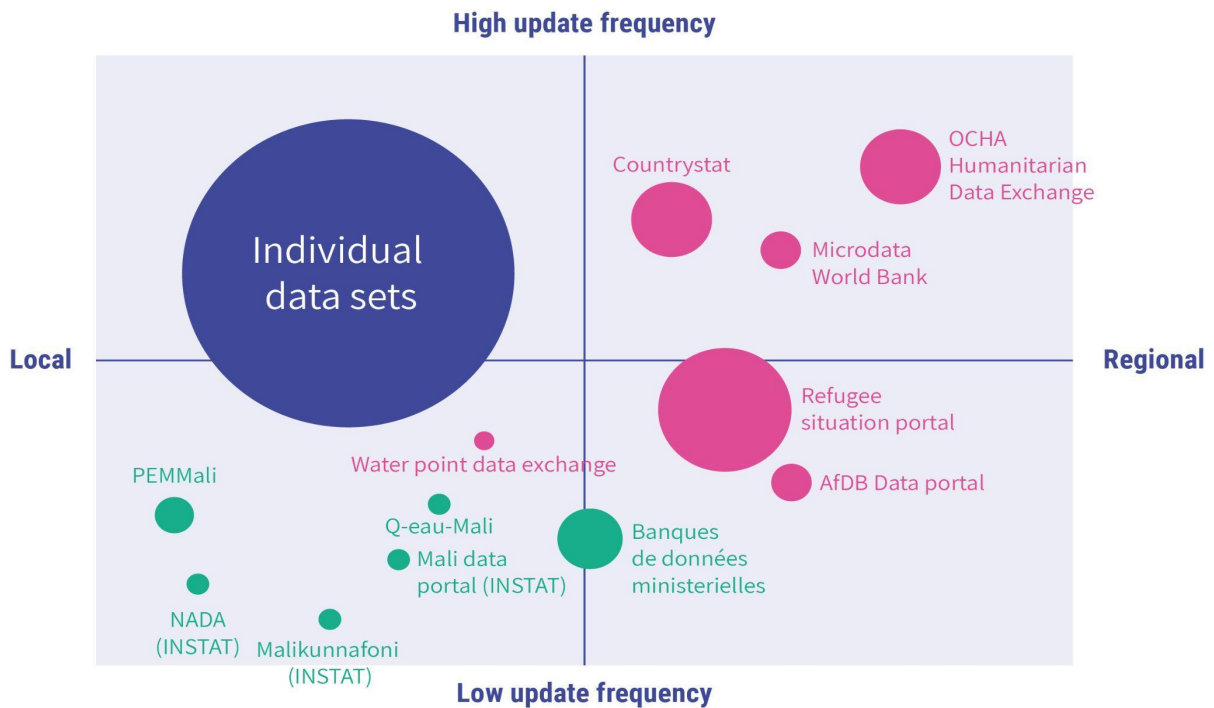


Adapted from Gartner, IBM, United Nations

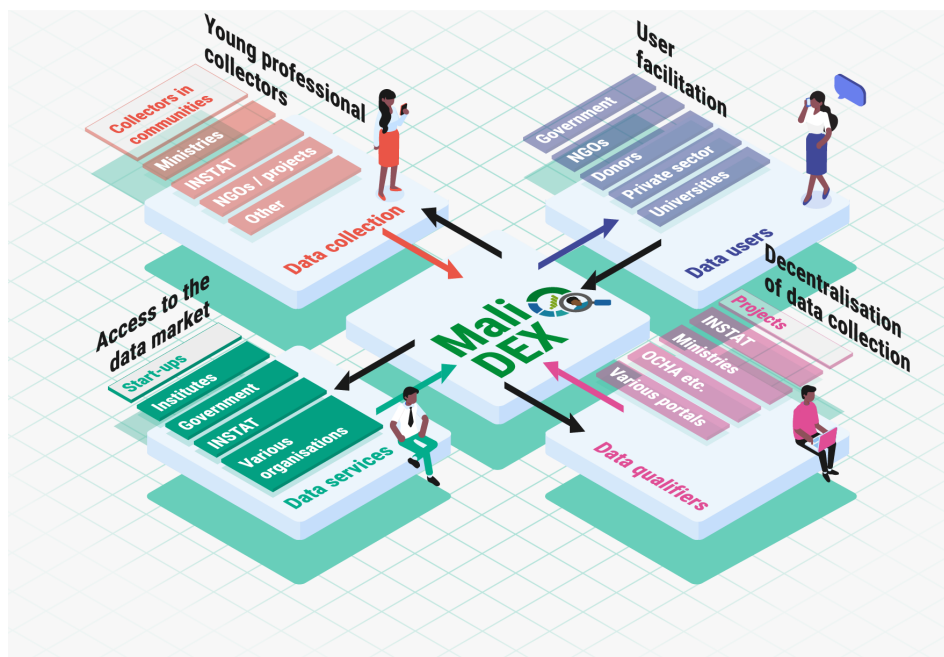
They face six major challenges that must be addressed together to ensure that data can actually be used for better lives for all.



The study identified a number of national and regional open data portals, in particular for the development sector in Mali, that vary in depth and quality. The study also observed that much of the development data is neither available nor accessible because it is stored in individual project databases and therefore permanently lost at the end of a project. This data is at the heart of the Mali-DEX platform. Through the platform, we can unlock the value of this data for the sector, as desired by several actors in Mali.



The Mali-DEX “marketplace” has been designed to contribute to solving the challenges mentioned above, by facilitating exchanges between applicants and suppliers of services and products using existing and future data in an efficient and responsible manner.



The essential functions of the Mali-DEX solution are as follows:

- Access to quality data and services for users (data as a common good for responsibility and accountability)
- Data collection by developing a decentralised network of young people / women
- Storage (avoid loss) and reuse of data (efficiency, savings)
- Creation of added value through products and services using data, developed by SMEs and start-ups
- Validation, security, data confidentiality

Even if the platform approach proposed by Mali-DEX may seem very technological, it is essential to note that technology, as robust or sophisticated as it can be, depends on designers and users, on human beings and on their interactions. Capacity building is therefore essential for the proper development of Mali-DEX in allowing the emergence of a data culture and improved accountability.

Mali-DEX is a process of social innovation supported by technological innovation

The feasibility study has shown that an initial subsidy contribution would allow the implementation of this market approach, making it possible to develop supply and demand for data in parallel. After five years, it will be possible to have a non-profit structure that is functional and self-supporting. Such a structure relies on an essentially Malian team with ad hoc international expertise on topics less well mastered locally. The

management team is made up of five parties whose contribution will grow over the five years (following the increase in sales). The composition of the technical team will decrease over the five years (during the first two years the team will be dedicated to the development of the necessary functionalities of the platform, while the following years will be devoted to operation and maintenance). A grant of five million Euros (for five years) will help develop and operate Mali-DEX by bringing it to a financial balance, therefore ensuring its viability.

Finally, it is important to say that this platform approach will allow replication and regional scaling (Sahel) because the data related challenges are similar. Replication is the reuse and adaptation of platform functionality for specific organisations (e.g. cities like Bamako). The same platform can serve as the basis for a regional approach, with adaptation of functionalities for Burkina Faso and Niger, for example. In both cases, we will benefit from an economy of scale for the initial investment in the platform.