The Data Ecosystem Mapping tool is for anyone who wants to understand and visualise a data ecosystem. It aims to help you map the actors, data infrastructure and value exchange across a data ecosystem, so it can be communicated and improved.

**What is a data ecosystem map?**

A data ecosystem map illustrates the different actors in a data ecosystem and how value is exchanged between them. It identifies the data, data exchanges and value that different stakeholders bring to and receive from the ecosystem.

**Why use this tool?**

Creating a data ecosystem map helps to understand how data creates value. It identifies the data, data stewards and data users; the different roles they play; and the relationships between them. You can use your map as a practical tool to plan and visualise a data ecosystem, or show opportunities for increasing value to particular parts of a data ecosystem.

**How to use this tool**

**Materials**
- Sticky notes
- Coloured pencils or pens

**Method**
- Use the other side of this paper (overleaf) to draft your ecosystem map.
- You can either work on your own, or in a group with other actors in the data ecosystem. It may be useful to use a workshop setting with a facilitator.
- Ideally, you will spend one to two hours drafting the ecosystem map, and gather two or three rounds of feedback afterwards to ensure a shared understanding of the data ecosystem.
- Once you are happy with your draft map, take a photograph for reference and recreate it in the space above, which you can then display or post.

**Background information and further resources**

You can use your data ecosystem map to communicate the shared understanding of the actors and value exchanges in the data ecosystem. Drafting the map may reveal areas for improvement. You can also photograph your map and share it on social media using #OurDataEcosystem.

This tool is part of the ODI’s wider data toolkit. You can find all the tools and resources at theodi.org/tools

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1. Map the actors

- Intermediaries: Use this side to experiment, organise or services that are linked in some way to the data. You may want to discuss and make mistakes.
- Creators (or data users): Those who create and enforce regulatory frameworks.
- Regulators: Responsible for collecting, a dataset?
- Policymakers: Those who create and enforce principles and measures.
- Beneficiaries: People or organisations that benefit from the data ecosystem because it enables them to make decisions.
- Contributors: The people who contribute to the dataset, either knowingly or unknowingly through use of a service.
- Data stewards: Those who create and enforce regulatory frameworks.

2. Map the ‘formal’ value exchanges

- Data: Which datasets you are mapping?
- Source:
- Physical goods: Are there physical goods associated with the data ecosystem?
- Services: What services are relevant to the data ecosystem? Eg transport, bank accounts etc.
- Certificates: Below are examples of ‘formal’ value exchanges you could add to your map. Eg data licences, operating licences or safety certificates.
- Reports and documents: Are there relevant reports and documents that support the data ecosystem?

3. Map the ‘soft’ value exchanges

- Data supports decision-making with insight and knowledge. Organisations can support each other with advice or financial or structural.
- Advice: What advice do actors within the ecosystem provide?
- Feedback: Add these less tangible types of value exchange to your map. It will help you understand more about the connections and relationships between organisations.
- Support: What support is required to help maintain the data infrastructure? This could be financial or structural.
- Network: Is there a wider network associated with the data ecosystem?
- Insights: The insight gained from the data ecosystem, eg when to travel, or how to assign budget.
- Knowledge: Are there knowledge networks that would be useful to note?

4. Find opportunities

- Future actor:
- Future ‘formal’ value exchange:
- Future ‘soft’ value exchange:

Once you're happy with your draft map, take a photo for reference and recreate it on the other side, ready to display.