



Photo Credit: Ian J. Connors

# Nexleaf's Position on Countries and Data Rights

*The following statements apply to any of Nexleaf's work gathering objective data using sensor technologies for systems run by national governments. Currently, our position pertains primarily to our work in the vaccine supply chain sector.*

## DATA BELONGS TO THE COUNTRY

### Ownership

The country is the owner of the data. All opportunities to utilize, apply, analyze, extract meaning from, leverage\*, or collect revenue from the data belong to the country.

### Access

Countries have full access to their data via any Nexleaf tools (including secure web dashboards or direct downloads). Countries also control access to the data. If multinationals or NGOs want to view or download any country data, the country must first give permission\*\*. Nexleaf will not share country data or authorize access to a non-country individual or entity without prior country authorization. Countries and other global stakeholders must work together to determine who can access country data, when, for how long, and at what level of specificity. Aggregated and/or anonymized findings must be shared in ways that preclude inference of the underlying data's provenance.

### Storage and Security

Nexleaf uses best practices for data storage and security. Nexleaf can consult expert partners with country approval and/or country co-participation to ensure planned and ongoing data storage and security practices are appropriate. If countries have concerns or questions about the storage and security of their data, they are encouraged to raise them with Nexleaf as early as possible.

### Data Should Never be Punitive

In order to improve any situation, accurate information about the current conditions must be available. If countries are concerned about losing funding tied to specific objective expectations, incurring penalties for unmet targets, or any other negative impact that could result from accurate data, this dis-incentivizes the maintenance and improvement of their data-gathering apparatus.



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With the understanding that consistent, quality data is a necessary means to achieve desired outcomes, Nexleaf urges countries, funders, and other entities to support the gathering, reporting, and maintenance of accurate data.

Incentivizing transparency, instead of solely focusing on outcomes, encourages collaboration and innovation to find solutions that actually achieve shared goals.

## **DATA WILL ONLY BE SHARED PUBLICLY WITH THE PERMISSION OF COUNTRIES**

We at Nexleaf have heard Ministry of Health partners talk about the frustration they feel when data from their country is shared publicly, in reports or at conferences, before any representatives of the country have even seen it, and without their prior knowledge that it would be circulated. We will never do this, and we encourage other stakeholders who have been authorized to access country data to respect the practice of obtaining country permission before sharing data publicly, even when it is anonymized. Further, we look for opportunities to co-present and co-author with countries when appropriate, and we encourage other stakeholders to take the same approach.

## **WHY IS NEXLEAF A TECH NON-PROFIT**

As the monetization model that dominates global tech demonstrates, data is a valuable resource. We at Nexleaf do not seek to extract or capture data from countries, especially low- and lower-middle-income countries that already contend with a history of resource depletion and extraction by foreign interests. We believe that countries always own their data, and scale of data systems should always be informed by countries' data rights.

We believe ample available data helps build consensus and align incentives. For this reason, we want data to flow and proliferate within the countries we work with, and throughout the sectors we support. Any barriers to the flow of data within the country could hinder the end goal: improving outcomes for life-saving interventions (such as immunization) that require specialized equipment (such as vaccine fridges) to function optimally. Our model motivates us to build the best, most robust and affordable technologies we can to support humanitarian and environmental projects without a profit motive influencing our sensor designs or our data sharing principles.

*\*Example of leveraging data: A country could put pressure on a commercial telecom provider if objective connectivity data shows poor service in areas where that provider is responsible for maintaining coverage.*

*\*\*Permission to share data with a direct philanthropic funder (payer) is generally specified in the initial MOU.*