

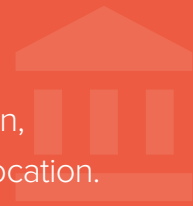
# OPEN DATA'S IMPACT

A REPOSITORY OF CASE STUDIES

OPEN DATA IS CHANGING THE WORLD IN FOUR WAYS

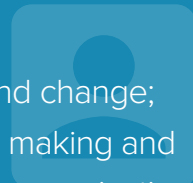
## Improving Government

Open data is improving government, primarily by helping tackle corruption, increasing transparency, and enhancing public services and resource allocation.



## Empowering Citizens

Open data is empowering citizens to take control of their lives and demand change; this dimension of impact is primarily mediated by more informed decision making and new forms of social mobilization, both in turn facilitated by new ways of communicating and accessing information.



## Creating Opportunity

Open data is creating new opportunities for citizens and organizations, by fostering innovation and promoting economic growth and job creation.



## Solving Public Problems

Open data is playing an increasingly important role in solving big public problems, primarily by allowing citizens and policymakers access to new forms of data-driven assessment of the problems at hand. It also enables data-driven engagement producing more targeted interventions and enhanced collaboration.



*Open data is publicly available data that can be universally and readily accessed, used, and redistributed free of charge. It is structured for usability and computability.*

THE LEVEL OF IMPACT DEPENDS ON 4 ENABLING CONDITIONS

**STRONG PROBLEM  
DEFINITION**

**RIGHT  
INFRASTRUCTURE**

**WORKING  
PARTNERSHIPS**

**CLEAR POLICIES  
AND METRICS**

YET, THERE ARE CHALLENGES THAT MUST BE OVERCOME  
FOR OPEN DATA PROJECTS TO REACH THEIR HIGHEST POTENTIAL

### **READINESS**

Low technical and human capacity often pose inhospitable environments for open data projects

### **RESPONSIVENESS**

Success is limited when projects are unresponsive to feedback and user needs

### **RISKS**

Major challenges arise from the tradeoffs between the potential of open data and the risks posed by privacy and security violations

### **RESOURCES**

Inadequate resource allocation is one of the most common reasons for limited success or outright failure

Despite global commitments to and increasing enthusiasm for open data, little is actually known about its use and impact. What kinds of social and economic transformation has open data brought about, and what is its future potential? How—and under what circumstances—has it been most effective? How have open data practitioners mitigated risks and maximized social good?

Even as proponents of open data extol its virtues, the field continues to suffer from a paucity of empirical evidence. This limits our understanding of open data and its impact.

To address these shortcomings, in collaboration with Omidyar Network, the GovLab has conducted 19 detailed case studies of open data projects around the world and developed a key findings paper describing lessons learned across the projects examined. Find out more and read the case studies at Open Data's Impact ([odimpact.org](http://odimpact.org)).