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.
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).