



**WORLD WIDE WEB
FOUNDATION**



ODDC
Exploring the Emerging Impacts of
Open Data in Developing Countries

ODDC Process and Outcome Evaluation: Management Response

This document sets out responses and action points from the World Wide Web Foundation based on the independent process and outcome evaluations of the [Exploring the Emerging Impacts of Open Data in Developing Countries \(ODDC\) project](#), carried out by Diogo Pereira da Silva and Elise Montano between January and August 2014.

Overview

We welcome and greatly value the detailed feedback offered by the evaluation, which we believe offers a fair and accurate account of the strengths and weaknesses of the first year of the ODDC project. We are proud of the vibrant research network that has developed over just 12 months, and are committed to continuing to support researchers from across the developing world to develop academic insights and practical actions on open data through research. We are pleased to see the impacts both of the research that has been produced, and of the research process on the partners who have been involved.

We are particularly happy to see the way in which the investments through the ODDC project have catalysed spin-off and sustainable activities, such as the creation of Open Data Research Groups at a number of Universities. We recognise the value of flexibility in funding arrangements to support these spin-off activities, whilst also noting the need to continue to strengthen our processes of grant and project management to ensure all funded projects have the best chance of delivering outputs on time.

Areas for action:

As a result of the evaluation we have identified the following areas for action.

- **Project management and reports.** At the time of the Output Evaluation our only unmet target related to the publication of one case study report for each of our first-year partners. We have continued to work with partners to edit and publish their reports, and as of 22nd September 2014 we now have 14 of 17 target reports published, and are on track to publish all 17 reports by mid-October.

Whilst many delays in report publication were due to local circumstances of partner projects, we were also responsible for a bottleneck in our ability to provide editorial review

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of draft reports. We have identified the potential need for more flexible editorial support to help projects with formatting and presentation of research results, and the need to identify key research skills relating to report writing and data presentation earlier on in mentoring processes.

We note the outcome evaluation suggestion of introducing formal reviews with partners into the project management process, with a discussion of milestones at these points. We will investigate incorporating this into grant agreements in the coming phase of the project.

- **Mentoring.** We recognise the great value that mentoring has brought to the ODDC project, and note that the majority of mentoring relationships have worked well. However, we didn't get it right all the time, and we missed opportunities to better set expectations of both projects and mentors, and to regularly check-in on how mentoring relationships were working.

We are committed to continued use of mentoring in future projects, but will be looking to invest more time in developing packages of support for each funded partner - putting into place clear written agreements that detail the role mentors should play, and that outline to partners what they can expect from their mentors.

We will look to continue to grow our network of partners who can act in a mentoring role.

- **Collaboration and network.** One year is enough time to lay the foundations for a network, but it is only now, following at least two face-to-face meetings, and with initial research outputs complete, that partners find they are able to really deepen their engagement with, and connections through, the network. From discussion with partners we recognise the need to carefully manage growth of the network, and to avoid both stagnation if no new members enter, and over-diffusion if membership grows too rapidly.

Through the dissemination, synthesis and project funds in the second phase of the ODDC project we will support more collaborative interaction between different network partners, and will seek to give greater ownership of the network spaces (Google Drive, Website, LinkedIn Group, Web Meetings, etc.) to network members over the coming year.

- **Communication.** The evaluation notes that there has not always been clarity around the different 'brands' involved in the project: Web Foundation, ODDC and Open Data Research Network, and that we have not made the most of the ODDC brand. It also notes the opportunity for most work on roll-out of each partners research.

As we move into a new phase of the project we will be working with other IDRC funded open data efforts to develop common branding and communication strategies.

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At the Web Foundation we will also look at how to secure greater communication resources to support dissemination of central, and partners, research within the ODDC project.

- **Shared learning.** We are committed to open and collaborative learning. We have held a web meeting to share learning from the evaluation internally within the Web Foundation, and with other research network projects. We will continue to seek opportunities for both internal and external learning to improve both our ways of working, and the impacts of our work.

Jose Alonso,
Program Manager
World Wide Web Foundation
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