

# Understanding How open data could impact resource allocation for poverty eradication in Kenya and Uganda

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## Introduction and Background

While the open data movement is relatively new in East Africa, the issues that it seeks to address are age-old. They include transparency, accountability, equity, relevance and responsiveness to community needs, and effectiveness and efficiency of governance systems and processes. A key purpose of this increasingly popular approach is to make local, regional and national data, particularly publicly acquired data, available, accessible, and useable for a wide cross-section of development actors.

**The study set out to answer two broad questions:**

1. How are open data initiatives contributing to poverty eradication through impact on resource allocation, and
2. How could the contribution of open data initiatives to poverty eradication and resource allocations be strengthened?

The study also sought to develop knowledge and action that would enhance the potential of open data to foster greater transparency and accountability, better economic efficacy and efficiency and greater inclusion and empowerment of marginalised groups

## Evidence and findings

### A. Drivers of Open data in Kenya and Uganda

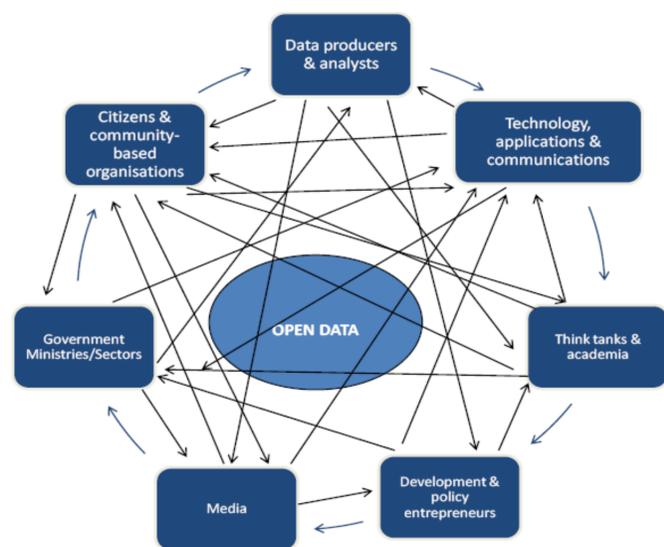
Category	Description of drivers
Legislative	Legislative drivers provide a legal framework within which open data can exist and operate. Uganda has legal frameworks in place to potentially drive open data initiatives, the most important of which is the Freedom of Information Act, 2005. In Kenya, the Freedom of Information Bill is in parliament.
Political	Political enablers compliment on the legislative framework for open data. Government champions are important. The Kenya Open Data Initiative was successfully pushed by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Communications.
Technical and capacity drivers	For open data to gain momentum there has to be an increase in innovation in ICT technologies. There has been an increase in the scope and coverage of ICTs, even to the rural and underserved areas.
Demand and Supply drivers	Open data exists because of supply and demand of data. Absence of either distorts the open data ecosystem. Increased awareness of the availability and accessibility of data will increase the demand and use of data at various levels in future.

### B. Barriers

Barriers to the supply of data	Barriers to the demand and use of data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Political barriers – political reluctance stifles the release of data and delay in open data initiatives</li><li>➤ Financial barriers – Dedicated resources are vital for the implementation of open data initiatives</li><li>➤ Legislative and institutional – lack of an legal environment, or weak/contradictory laws legislative implementation will not provide a conducive environment for operation</li><li>➤ Technological – technology is important for making data available and usable</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Lack of adequate quality data – This discourages usage of data if it cannot be relied on</li><li>➤ Lack of interest and capacity to access data – data is important for as long as people have interest in making useful information out of it, and have the capacity to do so</li><li>➤ Limited technology – users may sometimes lack the appropriate technology use the data, data maybe in a format that is not user friendly, or the technology to host data may be lacking</li></ul>

## Methods and approach

In order to assess the role of open data in resource allocation for poverty eradication in Kenya and Uganda, we adopted a holistic “ecosystem” analytical framework which avers that in order for open data to yield effective outcomes for citizens it will on one hand be interlinked with key nodes and actors in the data-information-analysis-policy value chain. **Semi-structured interviews with major stakeholders and desk reviews were the main data collection tools.**



## Conclusions & recommendations

In both countries, there was no clear link between open data and resource allocation as allocation tends to be driven more by political consideration than by evidence adduced from open data. The potential however, was greatly evident from robust legal and policy frameworks, rapidly growing ICT sectors and a gradually shifting attitudes of both governments towards open data. There is need for open development pioneering institutions and stakeholders to work closely with governments and leverage these possibilities.



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