2nd OECD Expert Group Meeting on Open Government Data: Capturing more public value

20 April 2016

The 2nd OECD Expert Group Meeting on Open Government Data was held on 20 April 2016 with the participation of 19 OECD countries and delegates from Colombia and Peru. This edition provided an opportunity to present the assessment and policy recommendations of the Open Government Data Review of Mexico to high-level public officials from the Office of the President of Mexico and to the Ambassador of Mexico to the OECD and discuss them with all the delegates. The meeting discussions addressed also key policy subjects such as the use of open data for the development of territorial indicators, and its potential to capture new aspects of public sector performance. Finally, the Secretariat presented the new version of the OECD Open Government Data Survey 3.0, which paves the way towards a more sophisticated way to explore synergies between open data and other policy areas.

Session 1: Open Government Data Review of Mexico

As the second OECD review of its kind, the Open Government Data Review of Mexico highlights the efforts made by the Mexican Government to develop and implement an ambitious national open data policy.

Mexico has demonstrated its commitment to OGD through its active involvement in international open data initiatives, However, it faces challenges in effectively implementing OGD domestically in a way that delivers impact on the Mexican economy and society.

This would require, notably, further institutionalizing open data to ensure the sustainability of its governance for sound long-term results, strengthening the understanding of the demand for government data, engaging more actively the stakeholders of the national ecosystem to crowdsourcing data and foster data re-use to create public value, and working more closely with local governments. Additionally, to fully realise the potential of open data, it is crucial that public bodies understand the benefits, are fully behind the project and actively participate in its implementation.

The review provides an analysis of Mexico’s policies and formulates policy recommendations to help the Government achieve its national policy objectives and make the most of OGD. It is meant to contribute to the implementation of successful open data initiatives by the Mexican Government and to inform the preparation of the 3rd Open Government Partnership Action Plan.

Country delegates had the opportunity to react to and discuss the main assessment and recommendations for action of the review presented by the OECD Secretariat. Several delegates underlined the relevance of a key issue that emerged from the review: developing digital skills across user communities as a requisite to create value through open data re-use.

The creation of the Open Data Squads to build data-literacy and capacities across the Mexican public sector was acknowledged by country delegates as a key practice. They recognised its relevance to foster a pro open data institutional environment, and to address challenges regarding the organisational culture and resistance to change. The intervention of France and Korea (peers for the review) were instrumental to share important efforts, and unveil persisting challenges that governments face in engaging communities, implementing data crowdsourcing mechanisms, and reaching out and collaborating with local administrations.

1 https://www.flickr.com/photos/notbrucelee/8016200072/in/photolist

- **What for?** As a joint meeting with the OECD Working Party on Territorial Indicators, the session was useful to shed light on the potential synergies between the work of National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and open data emphasising the role of NSOs as both data producers and consumers.

- **How?** Fostering data crowdsourcing is crucial to increase NSOs' use of open data from two main sources: local OGD portals and local non-traditional open data sources (e.g. local Civil Society Organisations producing sector-specific open data) examining NSOs' role to standardise data definitions (e.g. to promote data reuse and interoperability).

- **Opportunities?** Cities are key players. Efforts happen at all levels of government but impact is always local. This work could be framed within the OECD open data project to contribute to the achievement (and measurement) of the Sustainable Development Goals, through the development of a common framework for the use of local open data by NSOs and innovation at the city level across OECD countries.

- **Challenges?** Discussions were useful to underline further areas of work. For instance, the development of data certification and quality processes in order to reduce risks related to data accuracy, tackle challenges associated with NSOs' capacity to reuse open data (e.g. technical, literacy), and to address resistance to change within NSOs (i.e. NSOs' aversion to embark on using open data based on their need to access accurate and reliable data from non-traditional sources).

Session 3: OECD OGD Measurement: Policy priorities and data gathering.

- **What for?** The open data movement is dynamic and constantly evolving. For this reason, the OECD has developed the third version of the Open Government Data survey aimed to capture these changes and that should support an updated version of the **OECD OURdata Index**.

- **How?** The 3.0 version of the survey incorporates new components drawing upon the availability of new international instruments such as the International Open Data Charter and the G20 Open Data Principles for Anti-corruption, and building on the work countries and OECD Directorates are doing to open data for the creation of sector-specific policy values, e.g. in innovation, climate change, health and transport.

- **Opportunities?** Further areas of assessment could include a) use of live data connection tools (APIs), data crowdsourcing, data-driven public sector; b) practices to manage technical matters (e.g. data interoperability, quality); c) OGD reuse tracking, d) open data publication by the private sector; e) assessment of open data initiatives at the local level; f) enforcement of open data publication by private sector organisations managing public funds; and g) national practices to measure impact.

- **Challenges?** Delegates highlighted that obtaining information on sector-specific data could prove complicated due to multi-level governance arrangements and decentralisation policies. Tackling such scenario would require further coordination with local governments, in addition to expanding the areas of analysis of the survey in order to assess the mechanisms and initiatives put in place by central governments to increase collaboration with local governments.

Session 4: Future directions for measuring the impact of OGD on public sector effectiveness

- **What for?** OGD has the potential to capture new aspects of public sector performance, thereby offering governments innovative ways to measure and improve their efficiency and effectiveness to create greater public value.

- **How?** The OECD will develop indicators to measure the performance of the public sector in key areas drawing upon open data as a source of knowledge for public sector institutions that could provide further insights for improved policy impact.

- **Opportunities?** Government at a Glance, one of OECD's flagship publications, offers a platform to embed open data as a structural component for policy impact across policy sectors.

- **Challenges?** Open data should be seen as one of many data sources that can contribute to improved policy making as it offers key insights to support foresight, implementation and foresight activities. One of the main challenges is to build **data-driven public sector institutions** capable of internalising data (open or not) from internal and external sources and use it as to measure policy impact. Reaching consulting, and engaging stakeholders at the local level will remain crucial in order to get first-hand feedback data on the effectiveness and efficiency of public policies across different policy sectors.

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