Reimagining and Reinventing Open Data Policy within Local Government Environment

Open Data Policy Principles Adoption Workshop

South Africa
Centre for the
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Revolution

Introduction:

C4IR South Africa is currently involved in an open data initiative titled "Reimagining and Reinventing Open Data Policy within the Local Government Environment". This project is focused on implementing open data policies for municipalities in South Africa. The project's objectives, duration and funder are as follows:

1. To evaluate the current implementation status of open data policies in South African cities.
2. Identify regulatory gaps that may hinder the widespread adoption of these policies.
3. Collaboratively develop a practical open data policy framework and associated tools. This framework will encompass a set of guiding principles and a comprehensive guideline to assist local governments in formulating specific data policies and strategies. Additionally, we plan to establish a network of early adopters to facilitate knowledge exchange and peer learning.
4. The duration of the project is from Jan '23 to Mar '24.
5. The project is currently funded by the British High Commission.

The purpose of this document is to provide the British High Commission, C4IR South Africa Centre Head, prospective adopters (municipalities and cities) with an overview of the planned Open Data Policy Principles Adoption workshop and to gain support.

Objectives of the workshop

Considering the evolving landscape of smart city initiatives in South Africa, as evidenced by prominent national frameworks such as the South African Smart Cities Framework and the SALGA Smart City Development Maturity Framework, there is a recognized need for a comprehensive approach to data governance. The SMART CITIES PAPER SERIES by the South African Cities Network (SACN) further underscores the importance of establishing a coherent data and information sharing structure within SALGA municipalities.

These frameworks collectively advocate for transparency and openness as pivotal components for the success of smart city projects. The focus extends beyond local collaborations, emphasizing the necessity for a broader exchange of relevant information on a national scale. However, the current implementation of open data policies reveals regulatory gaps that impede large-scale adoption.

The project sought to address this gap by conducting a rigorous assessment of existing open data policies, with a specific focus on their implications for transparency and openness in municipalities. The goal was to identify regulatory hindrances and establish a robust set of principles that local governments across the nation can adopt.

Below is a list of policy principles that municipalities can adopt when implementing their own open data policies.

1. Open By Default
2. Timely and Comprehensive
3. Accessible and Usable
4. Comparable and Interoperable
5. For Improved Governance & Citizen Engagement
6. For Inclusive Development and Innovation
7. Policy
8. The fundamentals of open data
9. Relationship to wider city policy, strategy and initiatives
10. Governance and process for accountability and compliance
11. Ecosystem engagement for trust and value creation
12. Relationships with principal data stakeholders
13. Technical measures to underpin open data practice
14. Platform and data infrastructure

These principles are based on the best practices adopted from Open Data Charter, World Economic Forum's Open Data Policy, Open Government Data and The C4IR Colombia project moonshot.

Scope and Focus:

1. Principles Adoption Framework:

- Share a list of identified principles Identification: Propagate awareness and understanding of the identified set of open data principles crucial for municipal governance.
- Best Practice Integration: Infuse principles derived from renowned sources such as Open Data Charter, World Economic Forum's Open Data Policy, Open Government Data, and the C4IR Colombia project moonshot.

2. Workshop Objectives:

- Principles Customization: Engage participants in the customization of the principles to suit the unique needs and contexts of their respective municipalities.
- In-Depth Exploration: Systematically explore each policy principle, providing insights into their significance, implications, and practical implementation strategies.
- Interactive Sessions: Foster interactive sessions to encourage active participation, questions, and discussions around the adoption and adaptation of these principles.

3. Stakeholder Engagement:

- Ecosystem Engagement: Discuss strategies for engaging with wider data ecosystems to build trust and create value.

4. Continuous Learning and Scaling:

- Documentation and Sharing: Document outcomes from collaborations and prepare for the scaling of successful practices to additional cities.

Goals and Expected Outcomes:

- Goal 1: Empower participants to customize the principles, making them relevant to the unique needs and contexts of their municipalities.
- Expectation: Municipalities will develop tailored approaches to the adoption and adaptation of open data principles.
- Goal 2: Collaborate on the development of customized work plans for municipalities to guide the adoption of open data principles.
- Expectation: Municipalities will leave with actionable plans for the adoption and adaptation of the open data framework.
- Goal 3: Emphasize the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration and engagement with wider data ecosystems.
- Expectation: Participants will recognize the value of diverse partnerships and engagement in the open data initiative.

Methodology:

Methodology for the Open Data Policy Principles Adoption Workshop

1. Introduction and Context Setting
2. Interactive Sessions on Open Data Principles
3. Stakeholder Engagement and Ecosystem Building
4. Continuous Learning and Scaling Strategies
5. Closing and Next Steps

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Agenda:

Refer to attachment.

Stakeholder Engagement:

key stakeholders

- City of Ethekwini
- City of Ekurhuleni
- City of Tshwane
- City of Johannesburg
- SALGA
- SACN
- FCDO

Logistics:

Venue selection and details.

WHEN: 27 March 2024

TIME: 08:30 – 16:00

WHERE: CSIR, ICC, Pretoria, South Africa

Facilitation Team:

To be confirmed

Appendix:

Reimagining and Reinventing Open Data Policy within Local Government Environment Insights Report.

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