

OPEN DATA TUTORIAL

Opening and promoting use of budget data

A budgetary transparency policy must incorporate open data and its usability as one of its pillars.

What is needed to build a budget transparency policy that incorporates open data?

Intro

Will, commitment and a lot of teamwork. The consolidation of a budget transparency policy should consider a multidisciplinary team comprised of **technical staff** who are experts in the information to be published, and **experts in technology**, as well as in the **latest trends of data communication and visualization**.

Technical staff

The technical team should include experts in the information to be published and data analysis. In this team, the usual profiles are professionals in economics, public finance, public policy analysis, political science, administration, etc.

Their activities are related to the analysis of the format and sources of the information, as well as data processing, modeling and standardization.

They also participate in national or international events led by civil society organizations to listen to their demands, learn about best practices, identify people and organizations interested and work on collaborative agendas with other communities or organizations.

All of the above while remaining in constant communication with the technology teams.

Technological staff

The technological team is made up of software developers, programmers, experts in information technologies and data scientists.

Thanks to these experts it is possible to link various data sources, extract information from computer applications through technological tools and data mining, analyze the volume of data to be hosted in databases or storage clouds, implement alternatives for update information in an automated way, and ensure the sustainability of budget transparency through technological tools.



Communication and visualization trends

The opening of budgetary data must be directly informed by communication trends, that means, it will incorporate research on how people find about budget information, what similar information they receive, and which is the most efficient mechanism to enhance its use. Is it through social networks? Newsletters? Internal communications of institutions or organizations? Groups of professionals organized through mailing lists or applications for such purpose e.g. [Meet up?](#), etc.

It is also essential to take into account, that most of human communication is visual, so bear in mind that the optimal visualization tools for your data is key to ensuring the information is actually used once it is opened. These visualizations may include maps, infographics, videos, search engines, etc.

What is the purpose of all this? To reach the public by facilitating effective access and promoting the use and reuse of data.

How to incorporate open data to a Budget Transparency policy?

Achieving better budget transparency while incorporating the opening of data may sound complicated, but it is indispensable to have more transparent and open governments.

In this tutorial, consisting of videos, review documents and a webinar, you will not only find information about the what and how of open data, but also about the why; you will be introduced to success stories and the benefits of opening budget data, as well as to conceptual and practical tools to start the opening process.

The topics we will review in this tutorial are the following:

1 What is open data?

This document explains what is open data and its distinction with other concepts such as open government and transparency. Likewise, it provides detail on the levels that serve as a reference regarding data openness.

2 What is open data for?

The publication of budget information in open formats increases the inputs available to the public. This document will introduce some successful cases of open data use to influence the improvement of public policies, analysis of public spending and fostering of administrative efficiency in the governmental sector.

3 Data opening process

Here you will find the minimum steps to bare in mind while in a budget data opening process. These will be detailed in short videos, review documents and a webinar.

3.1 Listen to the demand

Data only has value to the extent it is used. This document presents recommendations to identify people and organizations interested in your information, the target audience, with the purpose of facilitating decision-making on budgetary data.

3.2 Identify the source and format

This section explains aspects to take into account regarding the origin of the data and its format, how to identify the areas involved in the process, analyze the starting point of the quality of the information, etc.

3.3 Debugging and cleaning

Details of some common errors during the processing of the information and how to correct them.

3.4 Verify national and/or international standards

This section explains what a data standard is, the advantages of using them and some strategies to standardize budget information.

3.5 Think about sustainability

This document explains factors that, when not taken into account, can jeopardize the medium and long-term success of the openness process, such as updating, periodicity, technological infrastructure, temporal and human costs, among others.

3.6 Licenses of use

In this section you will know what to consider to open budget data with a license that allows both its commercial and non-commercial use and reuse without restrictions.

3.7 Spread and promote the use of your data

The webinar will address how to guarantee effective access to open budget data, facilitating the interaction, linkage and civic participation.

The concepts, examples and recommendations to be detailed in these review documents constitute a reference and support for the consolidation of a budget transparency policy with a greater data openness perspective.

Welcome to the tutorial!

