OPEN GOVERNMENT

OPEN GOVERNMENT IMPACT & OUTCOMES

Mapping the Landscape of Ongoing Research

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**World Bank Open Government
Global Solutions Group**

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WORLD BANK GROUP
Governance

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This report summarizes the findings of a mapping exercise commissioned by the World Bank and designed to map the general landscape of research focused on the impact and outcomes associated with open government. It was conceptualized and overseen by the recently created Open Government Research Consortium, which is comprised of the Bank's Open Government Global Solutions Group, the Open Government Partnership, New York University's Govlab, Global Integrity, and Results for Development (R4D). While development in close collaboration with all Consortium members, the report does not purport to represent the views of these organizations.

The purpose of this report is to inform the research strategy of the Bank, as well as of the Consortium, on open government and its impact. The findings should also be useful for open government stakeholders interested in further understanding the current "state of play" in this quickly evolving field. Based on information from 20 respondent organizations from across the academic-practitioner spectrum, the report maps a selection of open government interventions currently under study, as well as the outcomes and impact associated with each. Looking ahead, and with this landscape in mind, the Bank can contribute to understanding of open government in several ways.

First, research on the impact of open government remains relatively nascent. Given the vast opportunity for research in this area, **the Bank could focus on narrow questions that build upon its own expertise and added value**. Specifically, research on access to information laws, and social accountability would be particularly welcome.

Second, the majority of current research projects focus on outputs and outcomes, not impact. The research identified **an opportunity for the Bank to leverage its convening power to help connect the causal chain from intervention to outcomes and impact**. This causal chain might be illustrated by a relatively abstract theory of change and/or a set of loosely connected hypotheses about open government and its impact.

Third, research on ICTs and "open data" is well-represented. Investments in this area are large. But a large portion of this research focuses on testing ICT tools rather than measuring impact or outcomes. **The Bank could help to hone a focus on the benefit (or not) of these tools to society, building on its 2016 World Development Report**.

Fourth, this landscape reveals a relatively large amount of experimental research on open government. But for practitioners, including the Bank's clients, the usefulness of such research is not always self-evident. **The Bank could contribute to experimental research by bridging what is academically interesting and what is practically useful**.

Finally, the significance of the Open Government Partnership is reflected in the number of research projects that connect to it either directly or indirectly. **Respondents recommended that the Bank could consider how to leverage its relationships with govern-**

ments and its loan portfolio to enhance understanding of the ways that OGP reforms lead to concrete change on the ground in contextually specific ways.

In sum, the Bank, as well as the Consortium, can play an important role in helping to advance this nascent field of research. Ultimately, as understanding of open government improves, the Bank's investments can become a catalytic vehicle for more systemic change that can contribute to shared prosperity and the elimination of extreme poverty.

Open Government Result Chain

OUTPUTS	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Did the intervention or reform work as intended?	Did the intervention or reform lead to greater transparency, citizen engagement/ participation or responsiveness?	Did the intervention or reform lead to greater governmental accountability and effectiveness?	Did the intervention lead to improved social, economic, or environmental conditions?
Law implemented; intervention carried out successfully.	More information publicly available, enhanced public engagement with officials	Improved service delivery, reduced corruption, discipline of public employees	Improved health, education, economic indicators

Illustrative outputs, outcomes and impacts