# Measuring success for open data

Successful open data initiatives do more than simply put data on the Web. The most data-savvy organisations also put in place frameworks and policies to support and incentivise innovation. Open data communities need to be built and success stories communicated. Together, these will help more people understand the benefits of open data.

**In this module we’ll explore the following:**

Measuring success

Being demand-focused

Keeping on track

# Comparing open data initiatives - in 2 minutes

ODI International Development Manager Liz Carolan explains key ways to measure the success of open data initiatives, what a demand-focused approach to open data is and how performance indicators add value to open data initiatives.

# Measuring success

When evaluating the success of an open data initiative, it is important to look beyond the quantity of data published and focus on demand for the data.

The Open Data Barometer provides a global measure for comparing countries' progress. It uses three key indicators: readiness, implementation and impact. [Take me to the Open Data Barometer](http://barometer.opendataresearch.org/)

# Criteria for measuring success

There are three key performance indicators to compare and measure successful open data initiatives. The Open Data Barometer provides further details on all these indicators.

## Open data readiness

To what extent is an organisation or country ready to support an open data initiative?

The following are important indicators of readiness:

Open licences supported

Policies and procedures established

Investments made

Educational support available Wider engagement undertaken

## Open data implementation

Data is now as important to our national infrastructure as roads or internet access. For public bodies and governments, there are certain datasets that should be open as a way to support innovation, generate value and grow the economy.

Commercial organisations should also consider which datasets could be most useful to enhancing their business and finding new market opportunities.

## Open data impact

What are the tangible, real-world benefits of the open data for users?

Without evidence of impact, communities are less likely to grow around the data and innovation can be less widespread. The following are important indicators of impact:

Increasing efficiency and transparency of government

Economic growth driven by open data

Social and environmental benefits

# Focusing on demand for open data

A demand-focused approach prioritises the needs of the data user over the data publisher. Demand-focused open data also enables a range of additional benefits -

## Open data as an educator

Data, not just open data, is now a core aspect of many people’s jobs. However, not everyone has the skills required to manage, clean and interpret data.

Open data creates opportunities to increase the level of data literacy in the workforce by raising public awareness of data skills.

## Enabling innovation with open data

Open data is a key enabler of open innovation.

Opening data can encourage people within an organisation to communicate with each other and with external groups.

Plume Labs, a French startup, combined open data on air quality with advanced monitoring and visualisations to provide the latest air pollution indicators for 18 European cities

[Take me to Plume Labs](https://www.plumelabs.com/)

## Enhancing business with open data

For businesses, opening data can improve relationships with consumers and open up new customer channels.

Thomson Reuters has opened up its identifiers data to make the data it holds discoverable, easy to access and use.

[Take me to Thomson Reuters site](http://innovation.thomsonreuters.com/en/labs/data-identifiers.html)

## Open data as an agent of change

Open data has the ability to bring about change within societies.

For example, the Swiss government found that opening up their transport safety data gave people greater clarity around accidents. The mapping of this information gives people a more interactive way to engage with the data.

[Take me to the Swiss crash map](http://unfallkarte.ch/en/)

## Open data as a community supporter

Open data helps communities to communicate with each other.

mySociety created FixMyStreet, which allows residents to share problems with their local area as open data and create shared solutions.

[Take me to FixMyStreet programme](https://www.fixmystreet.com/)

# Keeping on track

Key performance indicators help keep open data initiatives on track.

## Managing progress

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) help to manage the process of open data initiatives.

KPIs should be set to measure open data readiness, implementation and impact.

## Staying user-focused

The most successful open data initiatives focus on all Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) at the same time. It is best to avoid delaying engagement with users by getting policy and supply ‘right’ from the outset.

Successful initiatives focus on users first to build communities, educate and streamline supply so that even imperfect open data can get into the hands of users quickly, to maximise its value.

Sweden has an established open data programme with strong process management and user focus.

[Take me to the Swedish open data barometer results](http://theodi.github.io/open-data-barometer-viz/)

**Are you ready for open data success?**

Can you recall the key indicators of a successful open data initiative?

# Measures of success

**The 3 key criteria for comparing and measuring successful open data initiatives are...**

validity, openness and usefulness readiness, implementation and impact relevance, functionality and consistency

**That’s right!**

The 3 key criteria for comparing and measuring successful open data initiatives are the capacity to implement a successful initiative and derive benefits from it, which important data is available and what variety and type of new value is being created.

**Are you sure?**

The 3 key criteria for comparing and measuring successful open data initiatives are the capacity to implement a successful initiative and derive benefits from it, which important data is available and what variety and type of new value is being created.

# Focusing on demand

**What are three indicators of a demand-focused approach to open data?**

Open data as an educator

Open data as an innovation enabler

Large quantities of data

Open data as a community supporter

Enabling a big data agenda

**That’s right!**

A demand-focused approach improves data literacy, enables innovation and supports communities.

**Are you sure?**

A demand-focused approach improves data literacy, enables innovation and support communities.

# Keeping on track

**Key performance indicators (KPIs) are a good method of...**

maintaining a balance between supply, demand and usage calculating the size of datasets hitting milestones in the process

**That's right!**

KPIs offer a great way to maintain the balance between the supply and demand side of an open data

initiative.

**Are you sure?**

KPIs offer a great way to maintain the balance between the supply and demand side of an open data

initiative.

# Comparing and measuring success

When comparing and measuring open data initiatives, it is important to use a broad framework and focus on demand.

These methods help your initiative to stay on track and emulate the success of other open data initiatives.

KPIs also help drive the changes that organisations require to participe effectively in the open data community.

In the next module, we explore how to find sustainable sources of open data.

Next module

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# Module 6 – video

So my name is Liz Carolan and I’m the International Development Manager. So it’s probably best to avoid a narrow focus on the quantity of the data published and instead to think about three broader areas when we’re measuring success of initiatives. The first one is readiness. So, to what extent is there the capacity to take on this project, and to deliver it? The second one is implementation so to what extent are the key datasets being published and made available? And the third one is impact so, are we seeing some of the tangible real-world results of the project in the creation of new products new services, or new insights out in the world? A demand-focused approach is one that prioritises the needs of data users over those of the data producer. So it’s one which encourages, seeks out and responds to feedback and it’s one which judges itself on the quality of the outputs, the quality of the impacts of the project and not on the quantity of data published. So key performance indicators help us to stay on track with the implementation of our initiative. They help us to identify and communicate about our successes they help us flag up maybe areas where we need to put a little bit more investment and they help us to refocus if perhaps along the way we find that we’re over investing in one part of the implementation and ignoring other parts.