

Enacting critical civic education through the Open Government Partnership commitments



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Abstract

The publishing of Open Government Data (OGD) supposedly provides the public with unprecedented access to information. Yet this potential can only be realised in conjunction with an understanding that this openness of data affords an opportunity for its utilisation as Open Educational Resources (OER) (Atenas et al. 2015). The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is premised on the principles of transparent, accountable and responsive government (OGP 2016). Its objectives include upholding the UN Convention Against Corruption and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and achieving better public service outcomes through open governance. In embracing the OGP, participating countries commit to implement policies that place government information in the public domain. This involves promoting the use of digital technologies to enhance access to government data and resourcing the development of portals, repositories and analytical tools to enable these data to be used effectively. Although partnering nations share similar democratic foundations, they enact their OGP commitments to foster political engagement, create mechanisms for achieving accountability and quality assurance, and encourage innovation, in a variety of different ways. While many commitments recognise the importance of both access to public information and data and civic education and participation, strategies to enhance these are not necessarily 'joined up', and notwithstanding some exemplary initiatives, this potential appears to be thus far underutilised. We will evaluate the OGP national commitments relating to civic education and public participation with a view to promoting an effective model for developing an engaged, critical and active citizenship. Although there are some OGP initiatives which are directed specifically towards Open Education (e.g., production of OER, Open Textbooks), our concern in this paper is therefore focused at the larger question of how the opening of public data and educational initiatives can be mutually supportive. Our key objective is to present an Open Pedagogy of Citizenship, informed by critical pedagogy and social justice, to support the development of action plans of OGP nations, and civic education more widely. This model seeks to empower learners and members of the open education community to become cognisant of the rhetorical and influential techniques used by governments, the media and corporations, so that they can become more effective information gatherers (detectors) and influential agents (effectors) in society (Davies 2010; Hood and Margetts 2007). We will highlight the benefits of scaffolding statistical, political and media literacies as the basis for curricula aimed at citizenship training. We promote Civic Monitoring as an open educational practice for educating engaged democratic citizens who become better able to construct their own political visions. Finally, we provide practical recommendations to guide OGP nations in the development and implementation of policies that utilise Open Data as OER, so as to assist in the realisation of an education that is consistent with a commitment to transparent governance and active participatory citizenship.

References

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Session page and recording

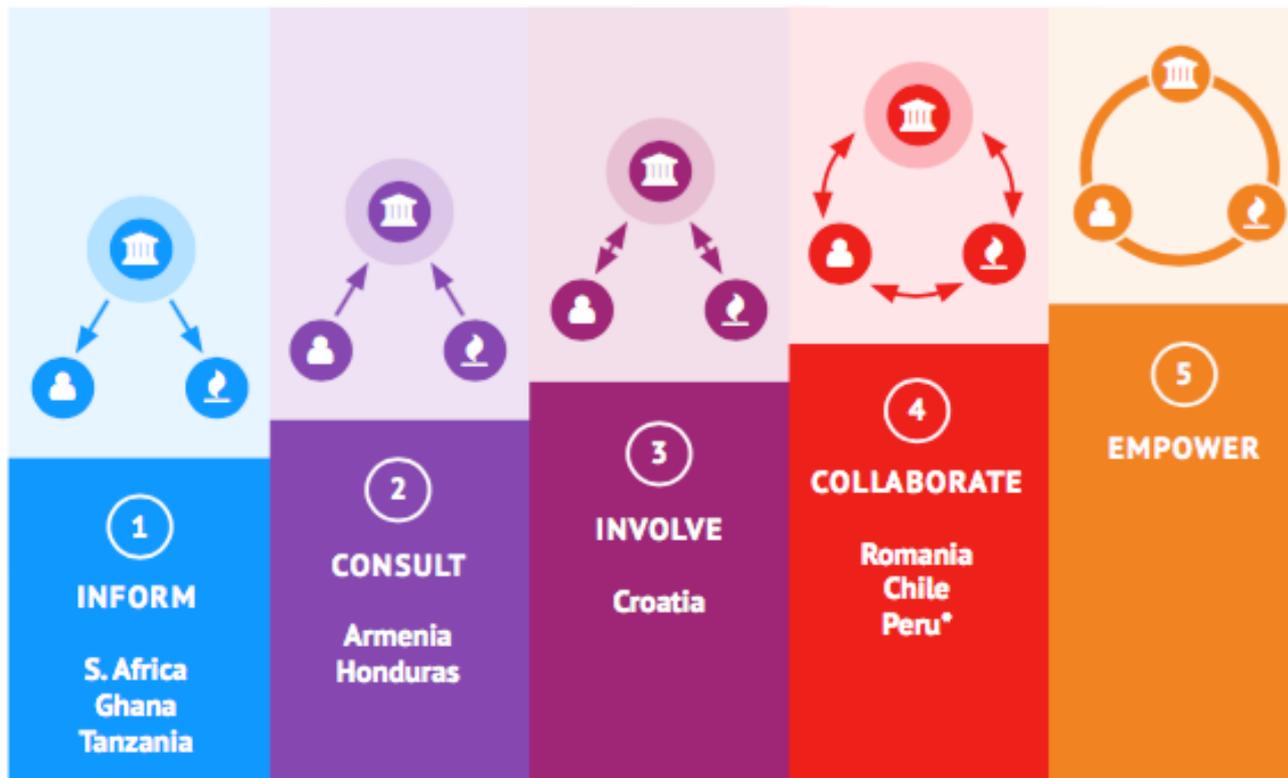
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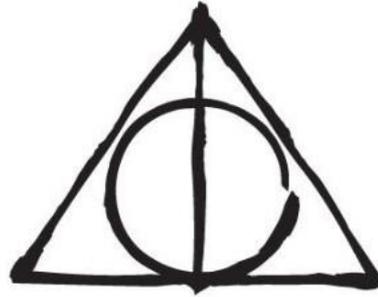
Open Government Partnership

Coalition of 70+ countries
advocating – fostering for
transparency, accountability
and participation

OGP core components

- National Commitments
- **Open Data**
- Public Documents





We live in a **datafied** society where almost everything is transformed into data, quantified and analysed (Schäfer & Van Es, 2017). From birth to death - studying, voting, buying, establishing relationships, getting a job or travelling - practically every activity we do leaves a **digital footprint** behind, and this data can be used as a political tool.

Model of Hood & Margetts (2007) Davies (2010)

Detectors gather information
(and data) from individuals and
society

Effectors seek to influence
people



To understand how **governments** and the **media** affect and **manipulate** our habits, conducts, political views and the way we establish relationships within society, we need to develop certain skills comprehend how data is portrayed, to rationalise how information is depicted, towards making informed decisions as **citizenship** and **individuals**



Core **educational** challenges of the **datafied** society



Key literacies: Statistical, Political and Media.

OGP members must **commit to citizenship education** to foster participation by developing and supporting policies that promote **OEP** towards developing a literate citizenry, as an upright commitment to **democracy** requires a commitment to citizen education

Bridging education and participation

Educational and citizenship programmes should form a bridge between **civil society**, **industry**, **research** and **politics**, promoting the development of a critical and **informed citizenship**, fostering effective and efficient use of information, allowing citizens to **critically participate** in the democratic and **social dynamics**.



Open Pedagogy of Citizenship

Empower learners and Open Educators and Advocates to become cognisant of the rhetorical and influential techniques used by governments, the media and corporations, so that they can become information gatherers (detectors) and influential agents (effectors) in society

Open Pedagogy of Citizenship

- 1) Embed **political, media** and **statistical literacies** to develop transversal skills for lifelong and lifewide learning;
- 2) Enable people to understand and **critically analyse information** and **data** from media and government sources;
- 3) **Empower** people to become critically engaged data intermediaries who are empowered to act as social detectors and effectors in the service of **social justice and democratic values.**

Fostering participation

Using OD to foster citizenship in education require to establish connections between learning and **socio-political problems**. So individuals can learn to check and evaluate the information presented in the media and in social networks, to make **politically responsible decisions** through the understanding of democratic and social processes, using the **same raw materials** used by the civil society, scientists, the press, the industry, the government and NGOs in their efforts to develop policies and research

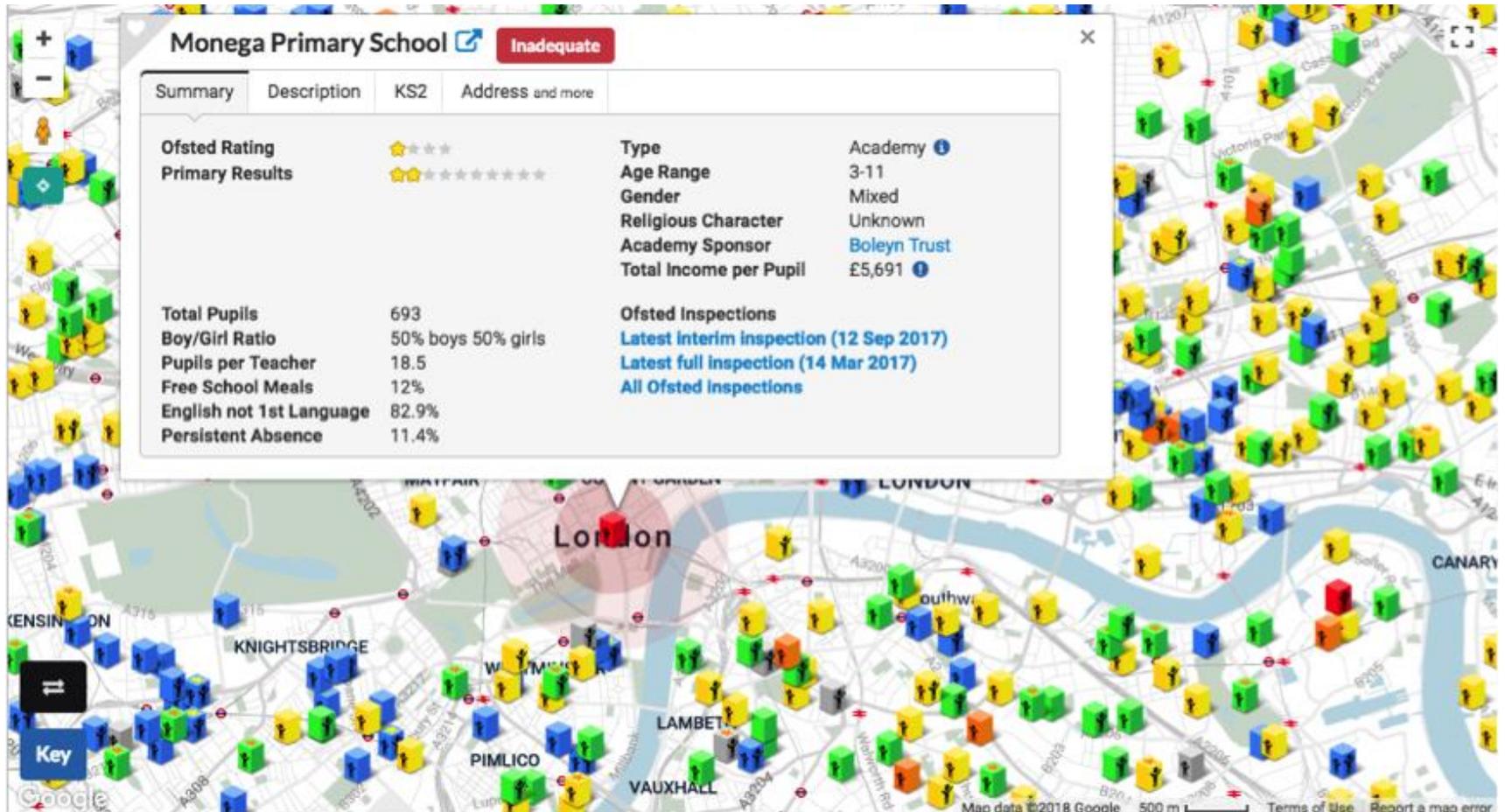
Fostering Social Justice

Open Data alone does not promote social justice, as it can easily marginalise and exclude people from the interactions produced by **those who know how to use data effectively**, hindering them from participating in the decisions of society by making them **merely objects of study**

Johnson (2014)



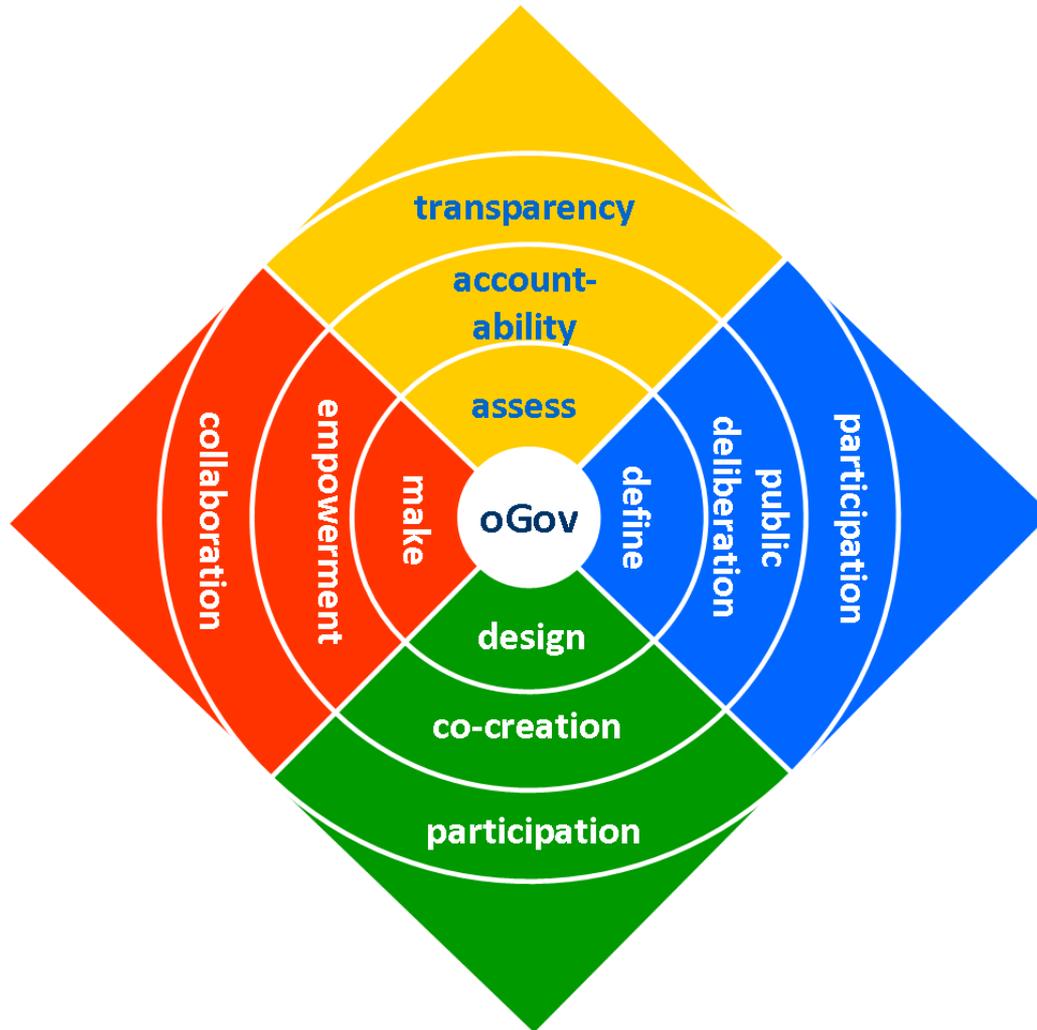
Fostering Social Justice



Fostering Civic Monitoring

Civic Monitoring as OEP promotes active citizenship by training people in controlling the governmental activities (Buttiglione & Reggi, 2015). This model of **civic participation** must be acknowledged by **OGP** members when developing commitments and action plans in relation to: **Access to Information; Anti-corruption; Capacity building; Education; Civic Education; Public Participation Open Gov Data; Participatory budgeting; Transparency and Accountability**

Fostering co-creation



List of spells

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