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Samenvatting The Open Data movement has assumed that that accurate data is available to demonstrate government expenditure and actions. However, in many countries, the records of government policies, activities and transactions that should provide the basis for a large proportion of government data are incomplete, inaccurate or inaccessible. This will result in inaccurate data. This paper suggests that alongside the enthusiasm for Open Data, there needs to be parallel attention to ensuring that government records are managed as the evidence base for Open Government. The paper explores key records issues that will affect Open Data and draws attention to the value of international records management standards.

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Overview

The success of Open Government, in terms both of proactive disclosure (Open Data) and reactive disclosure (Freedom of Information/ Right to Information) rests ultimately on governments' ability to create and maintain reliable, trustworthy and accurate information (records and data) and on people's ability to access it. Public authorities need to know what information they hold, to be able to retrieve the information efficiently and to be accountable through this information. Citizens and investors need to know that they can trust the information that governments provide. When datasets are released through Open Government portals, citizens have the right to expect that the data will be accurate and that privacy will be protected. Similarly, citizens, journalists and others who make requests under access legislation have the right to expect that they will be provided with accurate and authentic information.





Aantekeningen

There is a growing and widely held assumption that Open Data will provide the basis for openness in the future. This paper suggests that real openness must ultimately build upon a foundation of reliable, high quality source records that document government policies, activities and transactions. While it is very valuable to have data flow freely on to the web, the reality is that most government information lies submerged as part of the larger iceberg below and that unless this information is managed, openness is limited and governments cannot be held accountable. Alongside the enthusiasm for Open Data, therefore, it is important to take a deeper look at the factors that make information, both records and data, trustworthy. There is an opportunity to make a more substantial contribution to transparency, accountability, anti-corruption and citizens' rights and economic development by linking Open Data to accurate, reliable, trustworthy records.

This article identifies key records-related issues that threaten the success of Open Government and Open Data initiatives, and it highlights the value of the internationally agreed standards and solutions developed by the records profession². It relates principally to Open Data, but many of the issues it raises are also critical for Freedom of Information/ Right to information, which remains vital as means of accessing the large areas of government information, for instance internal email communications, that are unlikely to be part of Open Data.

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