



**OPEN
DATA**

FOR EVERYBODY

USING OPEN DATA FOR SOCIAL GOOD

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It all started in a Council Estate in Dudley, England

We depended on the charities to get by and that always stayed with me, from activism to my career and even now in the peacebuilding field.

**PROTECT
THE CIVIL AND
VOLUNTARY
SECTOR AT ALL COSTS:
LEARN HOW OPEN DATA CAN HELP!**





OPEN DATA

FOR EVERYBODY
A LOVE LETTER
TO OPEN DATA
AND ITS TRANSFORMATIVE
POWER FOR
SOCIAL GOOD!

OPEN DATA FOR EVERYBODY
AVAILABLE FROM ALL GOOD BOOK STORES

Open Data for Everybody: Using Open Data for Social Good

*Out now via all good book stores via CRC Press /
Routledge Publishing*



What is in the book.....

Open data isn't just for technologists — it's a tool for activists, NGOs, and communities to build stronger, more resilient societies. Written in simple easy to understand and non-technical language, the book has 22 chapters that aims to give grassroots organisations practical ways to use open data for funding, campaigning, advocacy, and community

Open Data for Everybody — the 22 Chapters at a Glance:

- What open data is — and why it matters for communities
- Closing the digital divide & building grassroots capacity
- Fundraising, advocacy & campaigning with open data
- Human-centered outreach & inclusive engagement
- Data compliance, governance & sovereignty
- Security, misinformation, bias, AI & cyber risks
- Open-source tools, DIY digitalism & taking a „punk“ ethos
- Community activism, civic engagement & participatory models
- Data journalism, storytelling & evidence-based narratives
- Real-world case studies, workshop guides & training templates



The book primarily took research samples from two groups:

Charity, community, and voluntary staff:

The majority of staff members felt that they struggled to grasp the concept of open data due to the language surrounding it, which seemed too corporate and unfamiliar to them. Mixing this with trust issues between the third sector and local government, they felt a lot of digital narrative was just jargon, and have often dismissed digital outreach as nonsense and have ignored government outreach entirely on this issue.

Government Officers:

While it is true that many employees have a solid grasp of open data, a significant number among them find themselves hesitating to seek clarification or raise questions due to a self-imposed expectation that they need to be the expert, especially for senior staff or heads of department. This can result in miscommunication of strategy and muddies the waters with outreach, as sometimes, it is an interpretation of what they perceive open data to be or the difference it can make.



From my research and workshops, what did I learn that made sense to the third sector?

Capacity Building

You do not have to be an expert on open data to use it, you just need to figure out what you need it for and go from there - it's a bit like going on vacation and you want to learn a little bit of the native language to get by, you do not need to be fluent to ask for the bill, do you?

Funding Applications

NGOs can strengthen funding applications with credible, verifiable facts. This makes proposals more convincing to funders who require solid justification for allocating limited resources.

Impact Measurement

Open data allows organisations to track and demonstrate the real-world impact of their work. This strengthens accountability, helps report back to funders, and supports future funding bids with clear, data-driven success stories.

Let's deep dive in some of the chapters.....



Chapter 3: From the Ground Up: Using Open Data to Help Close the Digital Divide

Chapter take outs:

Technology as a Human Right:

Digital access is essential for exercising economic, social, and political rights.

The Digital Divide is Local:

Access gaps exist even in wealthy nations; NGOs see the real frontline impact.

Open Data as a Storytelling Tool:

Data helps visualize community needs, build evidence, and advocate for support.

Grassroots Empowerment:

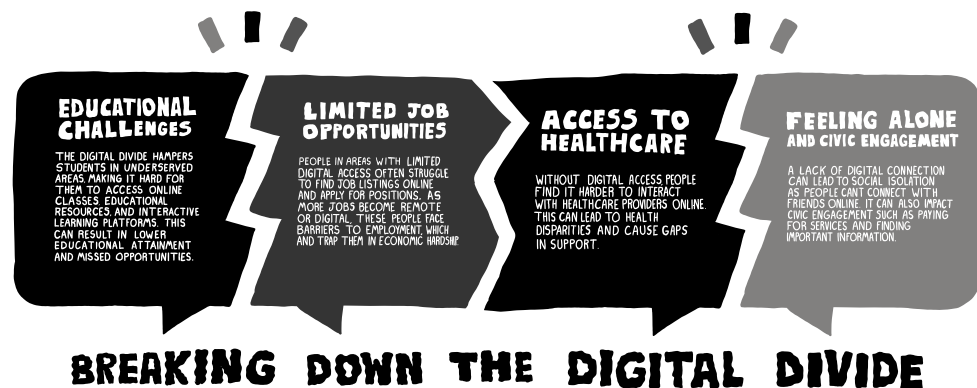
Equip NGOs with basic data literacy, ethics, analysis, and visualization skills.

Community-Driven Solutions:

Shared learning spaces, mentorship, and collaborative projects build digital confidence.

No One-Size-Fits-All:

Every community needs its own tailored open data approach based on local realities.



Chapter 6: The language around open data and adding public value to our narrative

Chapter take outs:

Open Data's Identity Crisis:

Corporate & technical language alienates grassroots organisations.

The Power of Language:

Use simple, relatable storytelling to engage NGOs, charities & communities.

Public Value as the Core:

Frame open data as a tool to empower communities, support funding, and enable advocacy.

Inclusive Outreach:

Focus on small towns & high-deprivation areas; not just big cities & tech hubs.

Disruptive Change:

Activists & community developers must lead narrative shifts, not wait for policymakers.

Practical Approach:

Build capacity through accessible training, partnerships & clear narratives.

WHAT CAN YOU DO...

FIND A DATASET THAT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO MAKE AN IMPACT

DEVELOP NARRATIVES TO EXPLAIN THE DATASET IN A WAY THAT RESONATES WITH SOCIAL ACTION

DEMONSTRATE PRACTICAL WAYS TO USE THE DATA, SUCH AS FOR FUNDING OR CAMPAIGNING EVIDENCE

ESTABLISH METRICS FOR MAPPING IMPACT. IT CAN BE AS SIMPLE AS USING A SPREADSHEET

SHARE YOUR LEARNING, FOR EXAMPLE, BY WRITING A BLOG



Chapter 7: Open Data for Fundraising: Is it More Important Than Ever? Building Capacity and Learning from the Covid-19 Aftermath

Chapter take outs:

Covid-19 Exposed Capacity Gaps:

Many grassroots NGOs lack skills to collect & use evidence for funding applications.

Open Data as Evidence:

Using public data helps build stronger, fact-based grant proposals.

Community Resilience:

Small charities are vital for hyper-local support; data strengthens their sustainability.

Practical Use Cases:

NGOs worldwide can use crime data, climate data, health data, and conservation data to support funding bids.

AI Chatbots as Tools:

Chatbots can assist NGOs in drafting applications, analyzing trends & writing reports, easing the workload.

Stay Focused, Stay Practical:

Don't get lost in technical jargon — start simple, find useful data, build the narrative.

SMART FUNDRAISING WITH OPEN DATA

S **SPECIFIC
TRANSPARENCY** CLEAR AND
WELL-DEFINED
TRANSPARENCY
GOALS.

M **MEASURABLE
DATA-DRIVEN
DECISION MAKING** DATA-DRIVEN
OBJECTIVES THAT
CAN BE QUANTIFIED.

A **ACCOUNTABILITY
FUNDRAISING** ACCOUNTABILITY
MEASURES FOR
FUNDING.

R **RELEVANT
TARGETED
CAMPAIGN** CAMPAIGNS THAT ALIGN
WITH DONOR INTERESTS
AND ARE DATA-DRIVEN.

T **TIME-BOUND
COLLABORATION
AND INNOVATION** COLLABORATION AND
INNOVATION WITH
DEFINED TIMELINES
AND DATA-DRIVEN.



Finally.....

Chapter 22: Outreach Recommendations

Remember to keep it simple: Whether you're a government official, community organization member, or activist, use language that everyone can understand. Complicated jargon only creates barriers.

Embrace a learning culture: Don't be afraid to admit when you're unsure about something. Take the time to research and seek support from your colleagues. Building an environment that fosters learning and support will eliminate unnecessary competition.

Training is your best ally: If you're a non-technical person looking to use open data for social good, invest in training. This applies to government officials, community organizations, NGOs, volunteers, and activists alike. Expand your skills and empower yourself to leverage open data effectively.

Engage with local partners and local actors: Have conversations with your frontline colleagues and local actors about the data you need. Keep them informed about your strategies and organize activities and events that go beyond the usual corporate sphere. Collaborate with third-sector organizations and fellow activists to make a bigger impact.

Frame open data as beneficial: When organizing events, emphasize the benefits of open data. Highlight how it can positively impact governance and empower NGOs. Demonstrate the value it brings to the community and encourage participation.

Establish collective ownership: Forming a steering group ensures collective ownership of the open data agenda. This not only fosters collaboration but also ensures continuity and legacy, even if individuals transition out of their roles.





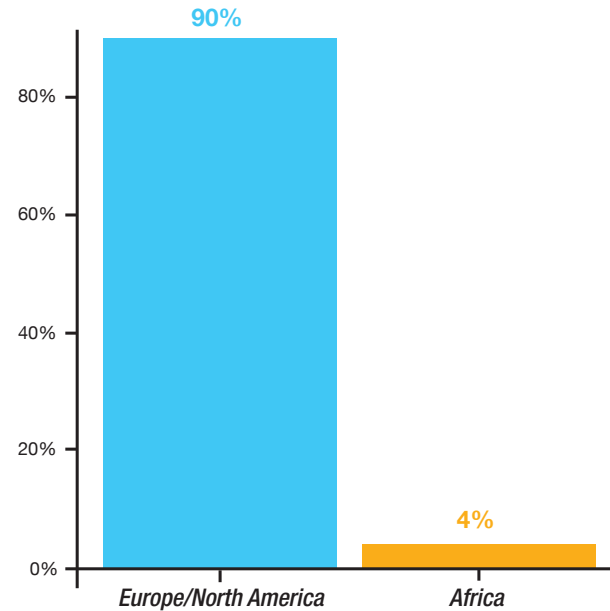
PeaceTech Alliance

Austria's Global Hub for
Peace Technology

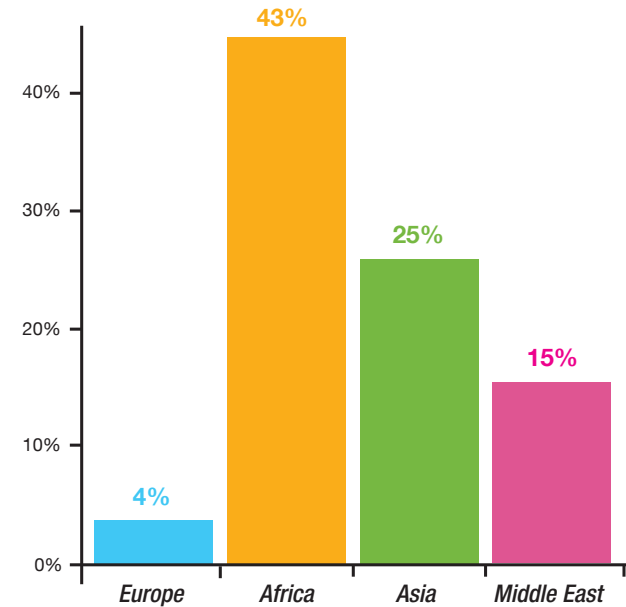
**And peace has its
own problems with data...**

What is PeaceTech?

Peace Tech refers to the use of technology to address conflicts, reduce violence, and promote peace and social cohesion. It encompasses various fields such as communication, information sharing, data analysis, and community engagement



Research from The Data Provenance Initiative, An analysis of nearly 4,000 public datasets finds that over 90% of AI training datasets come from Europe and North America, while fewer than 4% come from Africa as reported by MIT Tech Review



Global Conflict Distribution, a detailed report based on figures published in 2024 by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), sheds light on the geographical distribution of conflict around the world, offering crucial insights into ongoing security challenges.

Policy Driver:

As part of our recent work at the PeaceTech Alliance, we developed a policy guide to help organisations make open data more accessible, usable, and responsibly shared for peace and security work. The guide was shaped through a hackathon and expert consultations at the Austrian Forum for Peace in 2024, bringing together peacebuilders, technical experts, and international organisations.

A few key principles we developed:

Know the Source: clear transparency on who publishes data.

Limits of the Data: disclose limitations & uncertainties.

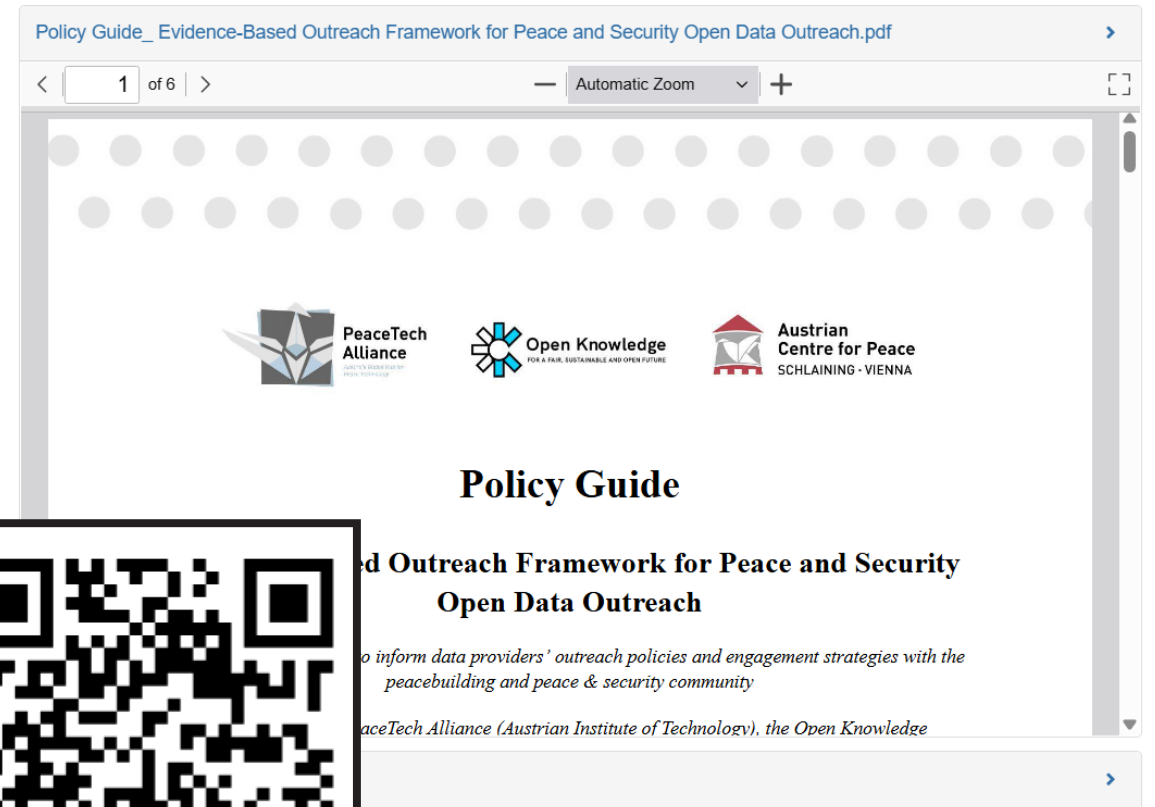
Bias Assessment: structured tools to check data bias.

Ethical Guidelines: 'do no harm' approach to prevent misuse.

User Toolkits: practical guides, trainings & open-source tools.

Sustainability: include environmental impact of data work.

Peer Review: independent quality checks before data release.



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www.peacetech-alliance.com

PeaceTech Alliance Snapshot of Austria's Human-Centric PeaceTech Platform

What is it?



Dialogue & Events

A space for exchange through workshops, events, and hackathons organised by the PeaceTech Alliance — with additional supporter-led events where appropriate.



Research & Policy Papers

We publish policy papers and research drawn from PTA event feedback, emerging PeaceTech trends, and the digital needs of peacebuilders.



Accessible Media

Quick-read blogs, vlogs, and podcasts focused on human-centred PeaceTech — made for peacebuilders, not just technologists.



Ethical Coalitions

Working across Austria and the EU to co-design ethical projects, joint bids, and funding proposals. PeaceTech Alliance supporters contribute to shaping priorities — ensuring alignment with shared values, peacebuilding needs, and digital innovation goals.



Shared Governance

A collaborative model: bi-monthly steering group meetings with supporters help guide the Alliance's direction — aligning activities with national strategies, ethics, and field-informed priorities.



Gaia-X Compliant Dataspaces

Building shared, decentralised digital spaces where peace-relevant data is securely stored, ethically governed, and easily accessed — without commercial misuse or loss of local control.

The PeaceTech Alliance is a new platform hosted by the Austrian Institute of Technology (AIT) to promote ethical, inclusive, and human-centric technology for peace. Supported by partners including Gaia-X Austria, the Austrian Centre for Peace, the Open Knowledge Foundation, and leading Austrian universities, the Alliance connects peacebuilders and technologists to co-create open, trusted digital tools. Through shared governance, accessible research, and Gaia-X-compliant data spaces, it supports Austria's growing role in PeaceTech and contributes to broader European efforts on data sovereignty and ethical innovation.

Why It Matters



Access to Digital Training

67% of local peacebuilders lack access to training on digital tools.

Source: CSPPS – Building Back Better in the Digital Era



Unreliable Internet & Infrastructure

Over 50% of peacebuilders report unreliable internet or digital infrastructure.

Source: UN General Assembly (2023) – Digital Divide



Local Input in Tool Design

Only 1 in 10 digital tools involve local peacebuilders in their design.

Source: Berghof Foundation & USIP – Digital Inclusion in Mediated Peace Processes



Peace AI and the Conflict Mismatch

Over 90% of AI training data comes from Europe and North America, while 83% of conflicts occur in the Global South.

Source: MIT Technology Review (2024); SIPRI Yearbook (2024)

www.peacetechnology.com



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Thank you