WORKSHOP MANUSCRIPT

Orange:
This text is if you need more input. It will help you answer any questions that come up. In past workshops, for example, participants asked the facilitator to say more about these topics.

Blau:
These are notes to the facilitator that can help with interactive slides and applications.

Rot:
These are suggestions and helpful information you can use during the workshop to activate the participants.

Slide 1:

Hello and welcome. Today we will be learning about what open data is in a non-jargony manner, and how you can use it. We'll also do a few activities that will help us take a snapshot of how you already use data.

Can we just ask that if you are on Twitter, please tweet your progression through your day via the #ODFA hashtag.

Slide 2: I am...

Note to facilitator: please use this slide to explain who you are and your role.

Slide 3: Icebreaker - What does openness mean to you?

Now it is time to get to know each other, on your tables you will see an A4 piece of paper, using a marker pen, we would like you to sum up in one word what openness means to you.

In a few minutes, we are going to ask you to stand up, tell us your name and who you work for, and then tell us the one word you have written and why.

We will give you a few minutes and don't worry about being too serious if you don't want to, feel free to have fun.

Facilitator notes: you may want to say while people are thinking "so again, what does openness mean to you in one word, it can positive or negative, so anything from accessibility, restrictions, decisions, community, people, disruptive, transparent and so on, there is no wrong or silly answers, it's just what you think."

Once you feel like enough time has passed, go around the tables or room and ask people to stand up.

This is an opportunity to gather a little more information from your workshop, you can either ask if participants would feel comfortable holding up their sheet of paper for a photo as it always looks good on social media or collect the pieces of paper to create a word cloud, you can find plenty of these kinds of sites on any search engine, input the words and then either download or screenshot the image of your word cloud to share on social media or use in your report.

Slide 4: What is #ODFA?

“Offene Daten Für Alle” or “Open Data For All” in English, is a set of materials available for free for anyone to use. The aim is for local authorities to get an idea of how non-profit organizations can use open data. The materials were funded by the Bertelsmann Stiftung in Germany and designed in cooperation with British civic innovation organization New Union.

This toolkit has German origins so some of the examples may reflect that. We have kept some of it in as we felt you may find it interesting. The way our German colleagues work may offer a different perspective that people have not considered before.

If there are questions about today’s workshop that we can’t answer for you, ask on Twitter and the team behind this toolkit will answer it for you. Just use the #ODFA hashtag.

Slide 5: Background

The Bertelsmann Stiftung’s “Smart Country” project has been addressing the topic of “Open data in communities” for several years. There has not been much demand from community organizations in regards to open data. But why? What is the data that the third sector seeks out, and would it actually prove valuable to them?

That is why we piloted the #ODFA workshop with the local government in the city of Münster. The goal was to test it out and, if successful, to turn it into a toolkit that other cities across Germany can download and use for themselves.

As you can probably guess, the participants really liked it and that is why we are here today. If you look on the screen you can see some of pictures of that workshop.

After the launch in Germany, we decided to create an English version.

Slide 6: What is the goal of this workshop?

For citizens and NGOs: to learn about open data without any of the hype. The workshop explains in simple terms what open data is and what you can do with it, in the hope that afterwards you will begin using it in your work. Maybe we can even encourage you to collaborate with other NGOs in using open data.

For government workers: this workshop can be used to form an open data outreach strategy that is relative to community organizations. That means all of the information from today’s event could be used to form policy. It is also worth noting that if an open data agenda is not yet in place, what you learn today can be used for create it from a community perspective.

Slide 7: Open data is not rocket science – even though at times, it may seem like it is.

You do not have to be a computer programmer or scientist to understand what open data is and what it can mean for you.

There is something highly complicated about the topic of open data when it is marketed, and the language is highly technocratic. All of this is not very helpful in getting new people and target groups excited about open data, as it makes them feel it is not for them.

But if you consider it from the perspective of NGO workers, you can understand why open data does not resonate with them. We should therefore rethink the way we communicate open data to third-sector organizations if we want them to start using it.

Let's put it this way: if you talk to someone who works at a non-profit organization and you say that open data is crucial for a successful smart city or an Internet of Things project, you can be sure you'll get some very confused looks. On the other hand, if you say that using open data is a great way to justify grant applications or write organizational reports, you are more likely to pique their interest.

Open data should be widely usable by all. Why? Because usability is the fundamental principle behind open data. And that's why this workshop was created: to have a conversation about how we can make open data more understandable for non-profit staff and changemakers – which is exactly why we are here today. So your contributions are very welcome!

Open data shouldn't be a closed club. I mean, the name says it all.

Slide 8: And that leads us to the reason why we are here today.

Today we will learn about open data together, in clear and simple terms, and how local authorities can use it.

We will also spend quite a bit of time on how we can communicate our open data agenda to our community groups and how we can bring them on board going forward.

Why? People in our area who are more tech savvy already know what open data is and what they can do with it. Our third-sector people don't and it's important they do, because they are the ones who can use it to make our lives easier, e.g. through engagement with local residents.

These groups can easily be left behind if such agendas come across as too academic, something that is also true of local government staff. But open data isn't academic and, after today, you'll understand why.

When local governments and institutions publish data, we need an idea of what data is useful. This is the only way to ensure that the data will actually be used. Otherwise, the question arises as to what is even the point of publishing data. The most successful and effective way for a municipality to publish data is to have an idea of what data is needed.

Open data shouldn't be a closed club, i.e. just for those who are in the know, it should be open to everyone. I mean the name says it all, doesn't it?

Slide 9: What is open data?

Now, let's look at what open data actually is – using clear and simple language.

Slide 10

Open data is data that may be used, disseminated and reused by anyone for any purpose.

Open data is the idea that some data should be freely available for everyone to use and republish as they wish, without restrictions from copyright, patents or other controlling mechanisms.

Restrictions on use are only permitted in order to safeguard the origin and openness of the knowledge, for example by naming the author. The demand for open data is based on the assumption that freely usable data leads to more transparency and collaboration. (Wikipedia)

Slide 11

Open data can provide insights into many different areas that affect our lives.

From traffic and environmental issues to health information, from figures and data on the population in a municipality to geo-based information, such as locations of schools, playgrounds or electronic charging stations for cars.

Slide 12

So, what can I do with open data?

Open data can be used for many projects that increase transparency. For example, open data can be used to visualize a city's budget so citizens can easily see how their money is being spent.

www.offenerhaushalt.de

Open data on traffic accidents, on the other hand, can be displayed on a map to shed light on danger spots in a town.

www.crashes.codeformuenster.org

Individuals can use open data released by the local government to monitor crime in their neighborhood and then present those statistics to their local Neighborhood Watch group. A social activist with digital skills can even create an app using open data to help NGOs map outbreaks of diseases and organize relief efforts, as was the case in Sierra Leone with malaria.

We will go into more detail about positive examples later.

Slide 13: Why is open data important?

There are a variety of reasons why open data is important. Here are just a few...

Slide 14

Transparency and democratic control

Civic participation

Economic added value

Innovation

Empowerment of citizens – Improved efficiency and effectiveness of government services

Measurement of policy impact

Slide 15

Let's look at some examples of what activists and non-profits can do with open data.

Slide 16

It's a great way to measure the impact of your work.

What we mean by that is: let's imagine you're selling oranges and you introduce a brand-new orange in Germany. Let's say, for example, it's blood oranges. So now you introduce blood oranges in five stores. After a week, you find out how the blood oranges have sold compared to regular oranges. You may find that the blood oranges have sold better in certain areas and worse in others – and so you see a social trend in the data.

Slide 17

This is more an example for programmers and you tech-minded people.

Sometimes we talk about "civic tech" or "civic hacker." This refers to a person who is a social activist and who also has programming skills. These people will combine the mapping and monitoring of social trends and develop digital projects that raise social awareness. For example, say there is a street in the neighborhood where traffic accidents are particularly common. A civic hacker could use the traffic data and develop an app or a website to present the case publicly, to highlight it for a larger audience, and in this way increase public pressure and get the local government to do something about it.

Slide 18: How can the third sector use open data?

- As an evidential basis for funding and commissioning applications

- Journalistic work, such as writing articles and blogs

- To measure the impact of their work and social trends

Remember the blood orange example? You could use the data discussed earlier to start serving more blood oranges in local schools. Or perhaps you could write an article about how much the local community can't stand blood oranges, based on the available evidence.

In the real world, you'll probably look at crime data or housing or health information to add weight to your cause (depending on the organization). And also just to get you thinking!

Slide 19

How might open data be used in an application?

Slide 20: Mundraub

Mundraub, which roughly translates as "mouth robbery" in English, gives local people the opportunity to explore where they live by identifying where they can pick fruit and vegetables in their local area. It is a German website that is powered by citywide open data, and by citizens uploading their own information.

Let's take a look at a quick demonstration.

You can either do this live or follow the examples on the screen. Since the platform is in German, it is probably easier to stick to the example in the slides, but it's your choice.

Slide 21: Mundraub (2)

When you zoom in, the map looks something like this. The different pins represent different fruit trees. Click on one of them.

Slide 22: Mundraub (3)

Now you have some information about where to find the tree and how to get to it.

Slide 23: Mundraub (4)

You also have information about the tree itself at your fingertips (e.g., what fruit it bears) and maybe even a recipe, if you've clicked through the links at the end of the tree information.

All of this information is openly available, and anyone can participate by tagging locations, posting photos, or commenting on other entries.

Slide 24: Let's take a look at more examples of projects using open data.

Let's now take a look at other examples of applications that are being implemented on the basis of open data – in Germany and in other countries. This will give you an idea of what is possible using open data.

What we are showing you is mostly very technical and advanced in its implementation. Working with open data does not necessarily require a professional, technical background to build sophisticated apps. The following examples are simply meant to show you what is possible.

Slide 25: TheyWorkForYou

In this screenshot, you can see the voting behavior of the former leader of the UK Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn, and Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

The United Kingdom is a parliamentary democracy. It is divided into constituencies. Each constituency elects a Member of Parliament, an MP who represents that constituency in Parliament.

The website TheyWorkForYou brings together the voting record of each MP and allows people to see exactly how MPs voted. Activists have used this to compare campaign promises and announcements with actual voting behavior, among other uses.

This is a good example of how open data can be a powerful tool in a democracy.

www.theyworkforyou.com

Slide 26: Poverty in NYC (Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity)

In the right screenshot you can see a heatmap visualization of poverty in New York City. The application is based on data from the city's excellent open data portal and aims to convey in which parts of the city poverty is a particular challenge. It also aims to guide better anti-poverty measures.

This is a good example which shows how open data can be communicated to people with a less technical background.

www1.nyc.gov/site/opportunity/poverty-in-nyc/poverty-in-nyc.page

Slide 27: ParkenDD

The city of Dresden publishes its data on municipal parking spaces as open data. For the layman, this data in raw form is not immediately comprehensible. A group of people from the city therefore got together and created an application that allows interested parties to find out about free parking spaces in the city in real time. The app can be found in both Apple's App Store and Google's Play Store.

This is a good example of how engaged citizens can develop something based on open data that benefits the entire city.

In the meantime, the app not only provides information about free parking spaces in Dresden but also in some other municipalities.

www.parkendd.de/index.html

Slide 28: Trinkwasser

What's in my tap water? People in Heilbronn who have asked themselves this question can now get a quick answer. Dedicated volunteer programmers have developed an application that shows what is in the city's tap water – calcium, potassium and sodium – and how much of it. In addition, the numbers can be compared with some commercially available mineral waters.

The application has been adapted by some other municipalities in Germany.

Orange: More on this next page

Slide 28: Trinkwasser (cont.)

Have you ever heard of the water crisis in Flint, Michigan?

In 2014, the city government changed its source for drinking water, thereafter obtaining the water from the Flint River in order to save costs. However, this resulted in citizens ingesting far too much lead. Many people became ill and 12 even died.

The water crisis in Flint was a truly dramatic event. One positive outcome, however, was that awareness of data and its importance to an informed public increased.

Based on the belief that informed citizens can better prepare for future health risks, local academic institutions and non-profit organizations formed the Healthy Flint Research Coordinating Center, which launched an Open Data Flint project.

www.opendatalab.de/projects/trinkwasser

Slide 29: Farmshops.eu

Do you like to support smaller, local suppliers? Farmshops.eu visualizes where you can find independent farm shops in your area, along with weekly markets.

Slide 30: Open Legal Data

This is a platform that uses open data by making legal texts and judgments freely and easily accessible to the public in Germany. It is especially useful for those people who do not have a legal background and who, for various reasons, are looking for documents or information.

www.de.openlegaldata.io

Slide 31: Open Street Maps

Open Street Maps is probably already known to some of you. It is a popular tool in the open data community. Users can add new interesting localities to the maps, e.g. information about barrier-free accesses at bus and train stops and at facilities for leisure activities.

The screenshot shows some maps that highlight wheelchair-accessible entrances as well as routes for horseback riding and routes that can be safely traveled by bicycle.

Slide 32: Adopt-a-Hydrant

Some areas in the US have pretty harsh winters, and that means a lot of snow, especially in cities like New York. That's why Code for America has developed an app that allows residents to "adopt" a fire hydrant. That allows them to keep it accessible when the weather turns bad.

A spokesperson for the Brooklyn Fire Department has explained, "A fire could break out at any moment, and if a hydrant is buried by snow when firefighters need access to it, it could cost lives." So you can imagine how important it is to the city to keep the hydrants accessible. The app even motivates residents to maintain their efforts by giving the hydrant a name. If you want to stop, you have to "disown" the hydrant, so to speak. You then get a little crying hydrant sent to you.

This example could be applied to other things – like a park that's not in great shape anymore. Residents could take care of trees or, if there are lots of untended plants in a city, one could well imagine a digital project for a city in full bloom.

Red: More on next page

Slide 32: Adopt-a-Hydrant (cont.)

Municipalities do pay to use this service. But it's still a good example of what can be developed from open data (in this case, the location of hydrants). On the slide, you can see the Adopt-a-Hydrant platform of Chelmsford, a city in the state of Massachusetts in the US. Green means that someone has already "adopted" a hydrant. Red means that the hydrant is still up for grabs.

www.adoptahydrant.org

Slide 33: Now it's time for our first activity together.

We are going to look at where you find data in the region. When you're researching and looking for facts for reports, funding applications or articles, where do you look online?

Slide 34

When you are looking for information or data for your work, where do you search?

Perhaps you simply read the news, go to your local government website or a data portal like govdata.de, or simply Google. There are no wrong or silly answers.

Using the sheets of paper in front of you, brainstorm together and then write your answers down as a group. You will have about 20 minutes.

The reason for this short group activity is to take a moment to have a conversation on non-profit organizations in your city that have obtained data that is relevant to their work.

Facilitator's Note:
Go around the room and encourage sharing and debate at the tables. If a participant is struggling, outline a specific scenario for them, such as a tree-planting project in a local park or creating a safe traffic zone in their neighborhood, and where they would find information about it.

Driver: Give everyone at the tables some time to get started. However, if they are having a hard time, you could say:

"So, imagine you are writing a report on the housing situation in.... You could look for the going rates in the area, look at real estate sites. Then you could research what homelessness is like or the number of apartments with lower rents. You could look at official sites with public data. You should be able to get a quick picture. And then, what would you do to find traffic and environmental data, or discover what free entertainment is available for kids? Where would you look?"

Slide 35: Your feedback

Facilitator's Note:
Ask one person from the group to give feedback and encourage participants to say something about their search results. Highlight commonalities between the groups – if there were any.

Slide 36: Examples of good practice with open data portals

Where is a good place to find open data and what does a good databank look like? Here, we are going to look at what was presented to German audiences, even though the data may not be as relevant to us as it is to them. Still, it gives us a snapshot of good practice that perhaps could inspire our work moving forward.

Slide 37: The data portal for Germany

Pretty much all official data published as open data in Germany at the federal level can be found here. But there is also data from numerous federal states and municipalities.

For the example on the screen, we entered Münster and got everything related to the city in the data archives.

Many other states have separate open data portals on different subjects, such as health and policing. In the UK, for example, the National Health Service has its own portal, as does Police.uk. In Germany, open data at the federal level can all be found on govdata.de.

Slide 38: Deutsche Bahn data portal (German Railways)

If you are looking for Deutsche Bahn travel connections as open data, use the Deutsche Bahn open data portal.

There is also a section on the site where you can look at examples of what other people have developed with this data.

www.data.deutschebahn.com

Slide 39: Destatis

Also, take a look at the website of the German Federal Statistical Office. Here you will find an overview of the German economy, as well as societal, ecological and social trends.

In addition to destatis.de, there is also a direct link to the Genesis data portal. You will find it at the top right of the slide: www-genesis.destatis.de/genesis/online.

www.destatis.de

Slide 40: European Union open data portal

The European Union makes an extensive amount of data available. This is quite helpful, as it allows, for example, the differences in quality of life between Germany and other EU member states to be presented and compared with other countries in the world.

www.data.europa.eu

Slide 41: World Bank Open Data

World Bank Open Data provides an extensive repertoire of data on numerous indicators for all countries of the world. It is an indispensable source of open data when comparisons are to be made between countries in terms of health, housing, water supply or debt

www.data.worldbank.org

Slide 42: Where can we find data on our region?

Use this space to inform the group of open data portals from your region that will be of interest to them (perhaps you may have handouts).

Slide 43: And now, you...

We have now seen some examples of where you can find open data. We would now like to involve you by asking: What would you like to have easy access to? What data would help you in your work?

The answers will help us as a municipality to determine what data is needed. They could also help us prioritize certain data sets for release.

Slide 44

On your tables you should see different colored post-it notes which we are going to ask you to write your thoughts on. The colors stand for:

Pink: Very important and needed immediately
Yellow: Important, should be considered
Green: Not overly important, but still something that would be quite good to have

In the room, you will see three blank sheets of paper on the wall that have three columns. Put your post-it notes containing your answers on the corresponding column.

Please fill in at least one of each color – but there are no limits to how many you can write. The more suggestions you give us, the better our open data strategy could potentially be when either pushing out data or encouraging communities to use it.

You have 15 minutes.

Slide 45: Your feedback

Facilitator Note: Go around the room and look at the post-it notes on the sheets. Read a few of them aloud and ask for feedback from the entire group, allowing them to share their thoughts and ideas and stimulating debate.

Slide 46: Who can use open data?

As we are now nearing the end of the workshop, let's take a closer look at which individuals or organizations can benefit from using open data.

Today, we have focused on the perspective of the non-profit sector. In the corporate sector, people want to use open data for their own products, to help them with their operations, marketing, etc.

But our goal is for open data to be used for social change in our communities and at neighborhood level.

In recent years in Germany, to give you a good example, a community has emerged that voluntarily develops applications based on open data. This trend has been driven primarily by the OK Labs of the Open Knowledge Foundation. In many large cities, there are regular meetings where people come together to develop apps with data or advocate for more datasets to be made public. These groups are active in cities from Hamburg to Munich and Münster to Dresden. These are obviously tech-minded people, but it may be the kind of thing you as an activist could set up or encourage.

Slide 47: Turning the idea of collecting data into a collaborative effort

Collecting and using data is an activity that some non-profits already do – and others should consider doing.

But it doesn't necessarily have to stop at each organization collecting data for itself and then keeping it off-limits to everyone else. (Unless it's personal data, of course!)

Imagine if non-profit organizations from all over started to compile their non-personal data and make it available for free. This could add a lot of value to the entire city and make it easier to monitor social trends, encourage collaboration and, of course, strengthen tendering power in the area.

Slide 48: Our city and open data – A discussion

It's time for one last activity. Do you feel that many non-profits in our area have the skills and are already able to use open data? And if not, what could we do collectively to change that?

We've already talked about the fact that the goal in publishing open data should be that it actually gets used. If it isn't, the question will always arise of what the point is of publishing the data in the first place.

Non-profit organizations could fill a lot of gaps in this way by using open data for their work. We are therefore very interested in how we as a city can encourage these kinds of activities. Do you have any ideas? What do you think the city should do to upskill local third-sector organizations to use open data?

We are now going to have a short discussion about this. Here is your opportunity to tell us all about some of the issues we face at community level and how you feel we could overcome these barriers together.

Driver: If you have not yet developed an open data strategy in your city, you can also let participants know that you will include their suggestions in a future strategy.

You can let this discussion go on as long as you think it makes sense. We recommend that you spend about 10 minutes on it.

Please make sure that there is a colleague who takes some notes on this discussion point and the responses, or that you document the suggestions in some other form.

Slide 49

Thank you for being here today. Your feedback is very important to us, as we believe that non-profit organizations can achieve a greater positive impact through open data – especially for citizens who live and work in our area and at neighborhood level.

We would therefore be delighted if you would continue to join us. We would like to look into setting up a steering group that keeps the dialogue or community outreach on open data going.

What is a steering group? Something like this is quite common in the UK, for example, which is where the idea for this workshop originated. Steering groups there are designed to make sure that public sector projects are compatible with what non-governmental organizations and charities are doing.

The steering group meets regularly – for example, every two months. An exchange takes place there on new developments impacting open data in the municipality. Participation in the steering group meetings provides an opportunity to help shape the municipal open data agenda and ensure there is a chance to influence decisions.

Participation in the open data steering group is not only a way to get involved in our city's development and ensure that an important building block on the way to a smart municipality is shaped according to local needs. By participating, you are also demonstrating that your organization is committed to greater transparency at the local level.

If you would be willing to participate in an open data steering group, please mark "yes" on the feedback sheet we will distribute in a moment, and then we will look into the possibility of setting one up.

Slide 50

What happens next?

We'll take all your suggestions and ideas from today's workshop and publish a blog post which will include the activity feedback. We will use that input for our work – but, of course, you can, too.

If you answered "yes" to the question about participating in an open data steering group, we will contact you soon. We will also be part of the steering group to ensure that your suggestions are taken on board. However, it would be best if the steering group were chaired by someone from your side.

Slide 51

Thank you for your participation and active involvement today. Please do not forget to fill out the workshop feedback forms.