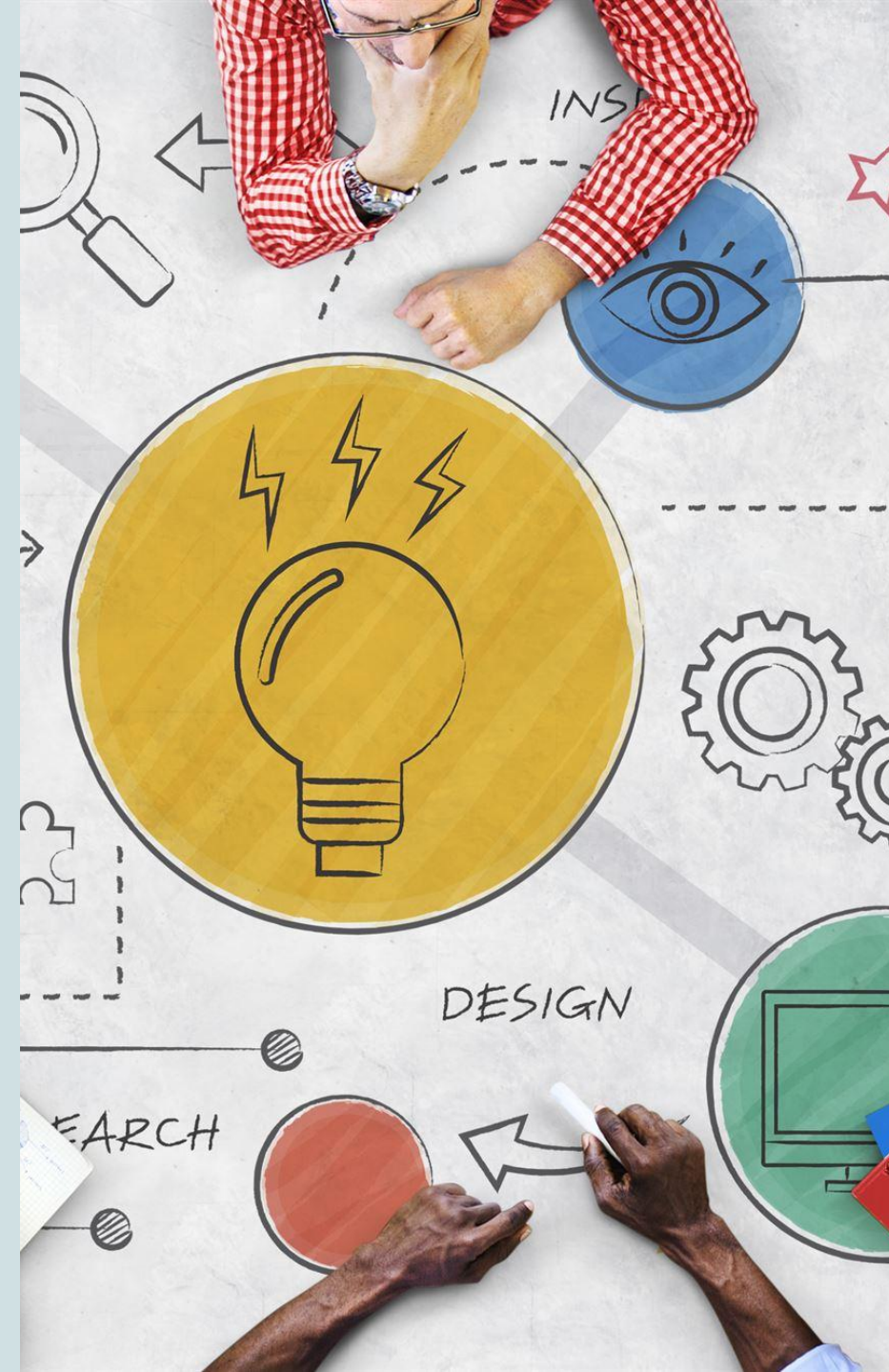


Rethinking Open Data Implementation in Vietnam

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Regional Dialogue on Open Data in the Mekong Countries
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OPEN DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE
A PROJECT BY EAST-WEST MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE, INC



Vietnam's Open Data Progress

Widespread Open Data Adoption

87%

75 public agencies and localities have issued open data plans by 2024.

Open Data Portals

30

open data portals and pilot initiatives launched to enhance data sharing mechanisms.

National Databases

10

key national databases developed across critical sectors like population, finance and health.

Published Datasets

10,000+

datasets published across platforms nationwide.

Ref: IPS at AODP conference 2025.

Vietnam's Unique Context

Vietnam has adopted a highly centralized approach where core datasets are managed almost entirely by the public sector—unlike neighbors where data is scattered across private entities

100%

National ID data

~95%

Health Insurance data

~90%

Land Registry data

**Many
others....**

This creates both unprecedented opportunities and unique risks!

The background features a digital theme with binary code (0s and 1s) in blue and white, arranged in a perspective that creates a tunnel-like effect. On the left side, there are several rows of blue, semi-transparent spheres or capsules, each containing a smaller, darker blue sphere, arranged in a similar perspective. The overall color palette is dominated by blues and whites.

CHALLENGES IN OPEN DATA IMPLEMENTATION IN VIETNAM



Centralization vs. Innovation

Centralized Data Governance

Vietnam's data is mainly managed by the public sector:

- Ensures consistency and broad coverage
- Single standards can cascade rapidly
- Unified quality control possible
- Reduced fraud and enhanced trust

Innovation Bottlenecks

- Limits access for private sector and CSOs
- Slows innovation and experimentation
- Creates single point of failure
- Risks lock-in to suboptimal systems

Need for Collaboration

Balancing central oversight with collaboration promotes dynamic data sharing and innovation growth.

Open Data Access Gap



Data law 2025 mandates:

- **National General Database:** Integrates data from administrative procedures and public databases
- **Government Access:** Agencies can access for official duties
- **Individual Access:** Data subjects can access their own personal data
- **"Open Data" Mentioned:** Others can access "for open data" purposes

Critical Gaps remain:

- **No definition of "open data"** in the Data Law—what qualifies? Which datasets?
- **No mandate on WHICH data must be opened** to the public—left to agency discretion
- **No technical standards required** for format, metadata, or accessibility
- **No CSO consultation requirement** in determining what data to open or how
- **Access requires "consent from National Data Centre"** for non-open data—creates bottleneck

Implication:

- Strong infrastructure for government-to-government data sharing, but weak framework for government-to-public transparency. Ministries still control what opens, when, and how
- CSOs can't access cross-sector data for advocacy
- Researchers face delays for National Data Centre approval
- No legal grounds to challenge data access denials

The Policy Gap CSOs Must Address: Vietnam needs specific open data requirements—what, when, how, and for whom—not just "open data" as an afterthought

Policy-Technology Mismatch

Evolving Legal Framework

Vietnam is introducing new laws to regulate the entire data lifecycle by 2026. These laws are comprehensive, fast paced and ambitious.

Institutional Capacity Challenges

Many agencies/provinces lack technical capacity and infrastructure to comply with new data regulations effectively.

Need for Capacity-Building

Extending consultations and improving guidelines are essential to align technology capabilities with legal mandates.



Data Usability Crisis

The problem

10,000+ datasets published but remain underutilized due to poor accessibility and format issues.

~70% +

Non machine-readable formats (PDF, scanned excel, image files)

~very little

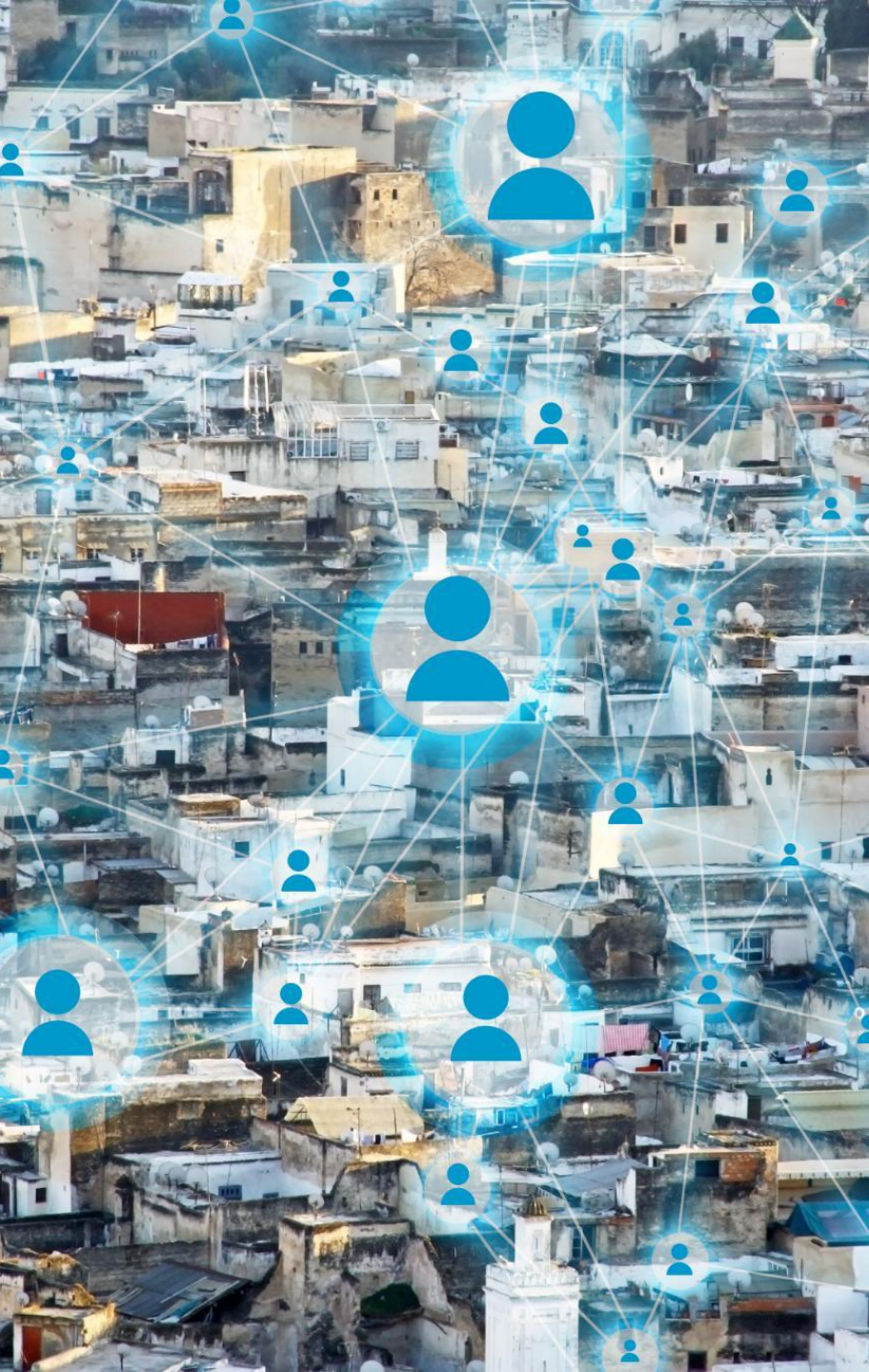
Have standardized metadata or open API access

60% - 80%

CSO time spent cleaning data vs analysis

Solution Path

Adopting mandatory technical standards and improving data quality can unlock economic and innovative potential—viewing data as infrastructure transforms sectors



Access Without Empowerment

Urban Users

- Technical capacity
- Digital infrastructure
- English proficiency

→ **Dominate open data use**

Rural/Marginalised groups

- Limited tools and training
- Connectivity barriers
- Language obstacles

→ **Excluded from benefit**

Equity-Focused Policies

Designing open data policies with equity ensures capacity-building, user-friendly platforms, and legal access for CSOs.

The background is a light gray with a pattern of thin, parallel diagonal lines. Scattered across this background are various geometric and abstract shapes in white, black, orange, and blue. These include circles, squares, triangles, lines, and some more complex shapes like a cube and a sphere. Some shapes are connected by lines, suggesting a network or a path. The overall aesthetic is modern and minimalist.

APPROACHES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

From Data Supply to Data Ecosystem

Current approach

- Focus on publishing datasets
- One-way data flow
- Compliance-driven
- Government-centric

Ecosystem approach

- Building capacity and partnerships
- Feedback loops with users
- Value-driven innovation
- Multi-stakeholder governance

Key Components of Data Ecosystem

- **Capacity building**—investing in CSO and local government skills to use data effectively.
- **Collaborative governance**—where producers and users shape policy together, not in isolation.
- **Ethical practices**—embedding privacy protection, community consent, and data sovereignty into every decision.

Strategic Recommendations for Vietnam



Mandate Open APIs

Mandate open APIs and metadata standards to enhance data usability and interoperability.

Create Sandbox Environments

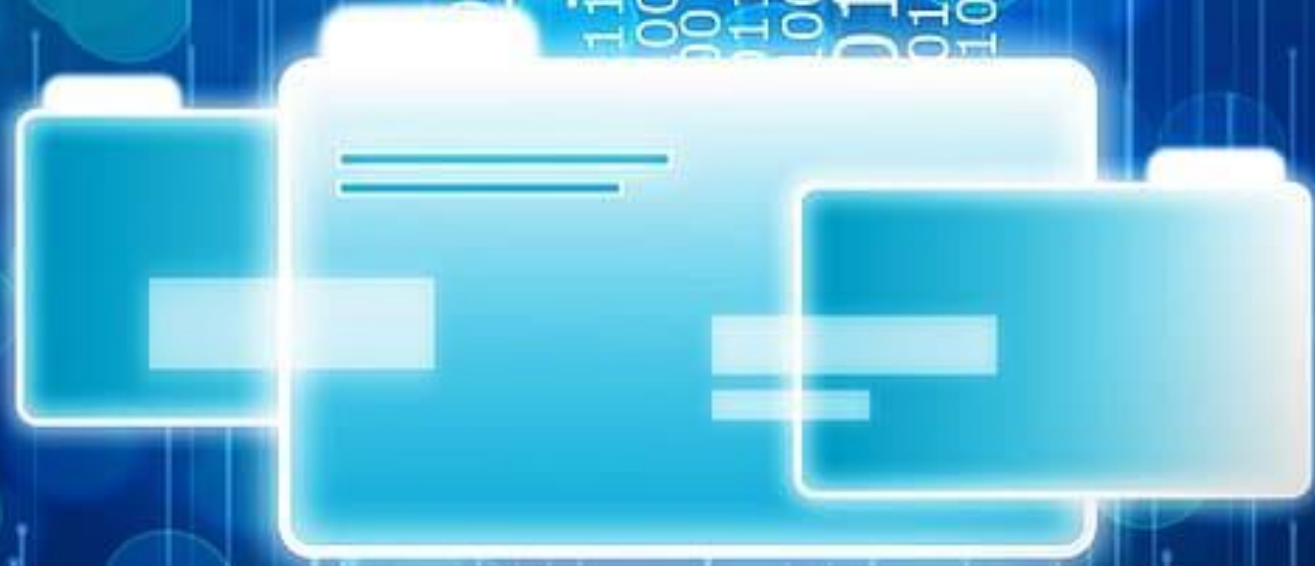
Establish sandbox environments for CSOs and small enterprises to experiment with data solutions.

Institutionalize CSO Role

Formalize the role of CSOs in data governance using legal mandates and partnerships.

Align with Digital Economy Strategy

Align open data policies with Vietnam's digital economy strategy to maximize public value.



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Thank you!