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Mary Francoli* and Noella Edelmann**

*School of Journalism and Communication, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada
mary.francoli@carleton.ca
**Department for E-Governance and Administration, Danube University Krems noella.edelmann@donau-uni.ac.at

Welcome to JeDEM Volume 11, Issue 2 – a special Open Government Data issue!

On May 27, 2019 open government enthusiasts from around the world convened at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada for the second OGP Academy, an international conference dedicated to open government.

The theme of OGP Academy 2019, 'Participation, Inclusion, and Impact', mirrored that of the OGP Summit held in Ottawa and hosted by the Government of Canada May 29 - 31, 2019. Participation, Inclusion, and Impact were identified as priorities by the Government of Canada and Nathaniel Heller, the 2018-19 co-chairs of the Open Government Partnership, in an effort to work toward improved collaboration between citizens and governments (Co-chair vision for OGP). Participants of the OGP Academy were invited to submit their revised work to this special edition of JeDEM.

The five articles and three reflections in this special edition explore the themes of participation, inclusion, and impact through a variety of lens and case studies. While each touch on the themes of this special edition to varying extents, Edgar Alejandro Ruvalcaba-Gomez focuses in-depth on participation and inclusion in his research paper "Open Government and Citizen Participation: Perceptions between Civil Society Organizations and Government." Looking specifically at the State of Jalisco, Mexico, Alejandro Ruvalcaba-Gomez contrasts civil society and government perceptions of participation and open government. Using a survey method, the paper demonstrates a notable gap in perceptions resulting in a significant barrier to, not only open government, but to the advancement of public policies more generally.

Renato Berrino Malaccorto and Maricel Lonati, and Tatia Nikvashvili, also examine the themes of participation and inclusion in their respective reflections. In "Local Open Government: Opportunities and Challenges in Terms of Impact and Participation," Berrino Malaccorto and Lonati argue

that local governments, and municipalities in particular, have unique potential for civic engagement given their proximity to citizens. They propose that an investigation of open government policies in the local dimension, must focus on the impact generated by open government initiatives in terms of the improvement of processes, delivery of public services and quality of life of citizens, the potential of these tools to advance in opening policies and the possibilities offered by closeness in local governments to encourage and diversify citizen participation. But they also point out the need to consider the challenges and lessons learned from the implementation of these tools.

Looking at the case of Georgia in "Open Governance as a Tool for Strengthening the System of e-Democracy in Georgia", Nikvashvili highlights the importance of cooperation between government and civil society organizations in advancing open government initiatives. She also highlights the potential of open parliaments to serve as additional venues, or mechanisms, for civic engagement.

Three of the research papers in this edition focus on the impact, and potential for improved impact, of open government initiatives in the region of the Americas. In 'The Codes of Ethics in the Public Sector and the Incorporation of Values that Promote Open Government: The Chilean Case,' Magdalena Calderón and Rafael Araya-Bugueño demonstrate the failure of codes of ethics in Chile to effectively integrate the principles of open government. Carlos Aguilar Volta's research paper also focuses on Chile. In 'Local Open Government Model for Rural Municipalities: Opportunities and barriers from the experience of Calle Larga, Aguillar explores the visibility of open government in rural areas, looking specifically at the municipality of Calle Larga. In the research paper 'Politics, Technology, and Accountability: The transparency façade of open government data reforms in Paraguay,' David Riveros critically analyzes the impact of government driven open data initiatives in Paraguay.

Ruth Angelie B. Cruz and Hong Joo Lee also take a critical look at open data. In their research paper "Open Governance and Duality of Technology: The open data design-user disconnect in the Philipines', a disconnect between government and data users is illustrated hindering effective open government. Cruz and Lee propose a two-way open governance model based on Orlikowski's structurational model of technology as a means of improving the future development of open government.

As Renato Berrino Malaccorto and Maricel Lonati are careful to point out, the ability to evaluate and measure the impact and success of open government initiatives is vital to continued progress. This is also at the crux of Manuel Zometa's reflection "Outcome Indicator Matrix (OIM): a tool to assess National Action Plans.', where he describes how the OIM has been adapted by the Universidad de El Salvador (UES) to monitor commitments in the country's national action plans (NAPs). But, as Tatia Nikvashvili points out in her reflection, this is what "*will strengthen the practical assessment of open governance in the development process*" (p.137).

While each paper and reflection in this edition is unique, they all underscore the complexity of open government, and the need for open government by design. In thinking of design, and the role of technology in open government, it is vital to remember that these things are not neutral. As Langdon Winner demonstrated in his 1980 article 'Do Artifacts have Politics,' and as Riveros argued in his article, the decisions made in developing open government reforms, in engaging in the collection

and dissemination of data, and in using technology, all influence the effectiveness of open government, its impact on citizens, and the ability for civic engagement.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and hope to see you at the next OGP Academy!

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References

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About the Authors

Mary Francoli

Mary Francoli is Associate Dean of the Faculty of Public Affairs, and Associate Professor of Communication and Media Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Her research explores the relationship between digital media and issues related to politics and governance, focusing largely on open government, transparency, and civic engagement. Currently, she is a member of the Open Government Partnership's International Expert Panel. She is also a member of the Government of Canada's National Security Transparency Advisory Group.

Noella Edelmann

Noella Edelmann completed her Psychology Degree at the University of Strathclyde, UK and Masters' Degrees at the University of London, UK and the Danube University Krems, Austria. She received her PhD from the Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia where she focused on the importance of online lurking in the context e-participation. Currently she is a senior researcher at the Department for Governance and Administration at the Danube University Krems. Her main research interests are the digital transformation and the use of social media in the public sector, e-participation, Open Access and scholarly communication. She is involved in the EU-funded projects such as Gov 3.0, Cap4City, and national projects funded by the Lower Austrian Regional Government, the Austrian Ministry of Digital and Economic Affairs (BMDW) and the Ministry of Civil Service and Sport. Noella is the Managing Editor of the international Open Access eJournal for E-Democracy and Open Government (JeDEM), Chair of the Social Media Track at the EGOV-CeDEM-ePart Conference and a member of IFIP WG 8.5.