

# Open Data and Emerging Technologies: Connecting SDG Performance and Digital Transformation

Larissa Galdino de Magalhães Santos,  
United Nations University Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance (UNU-EGOV), Portugal  
CyberBRICS project, Center for Technology and Society, Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV) Law School, Brazil  
[larissamagalhaes@unu.edu](mailto:larissamagalhaes@unu.edu)

Soumaya Ben Dhaou,  
United Nations University -Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance (UNU-EGOV), Portugal  
[bendhaou@unu.edu](mailto:bendhaou@unu.edu)

## Abstract

This brief aims to clarify the critical links that must be created between adopting emerging technologies in digital transformation strategies, open data, and data governance to strengthen the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Governments, especially in the Global South, can establish more sustainable data governance based on participatory and citizen-centric processes, multi-stakeholder business models, and performance management. Data governance has become a pillar of digital transformation. This document supports policymakers and public managers, particularly in the Global South, in the complex task of digital transformation and adoption of emerging technologies to better integrate open data and establish data governance to promote sustainability.

The Covid-19 Pandemic has exacerbated the challenges of economic, social, and environmental sustainability, deepening the problems of public trust in the Government. This unprecedented situation has highlighted the genuine need for data, digital government transformation, and the deployment of emerging technologies to address these complex challenges of sustainable development and progress on achieving sustainable development goals.

Governments worldwide recognise the power of Digital transformation and the adoption of emerging technologies to advance and transform the public sector and its service delivery capabilities. This brief aims to provide research-driven policy recommendations on How open data could play a significant role in aligning the Digital transformation, the potential uses, adoption, and implications of emerging technologies, and appropriate data governance for advancing the SDGs and the UN 2030 agenda.

### Key Recommendations

- **Building a sustainable data Governance framework based on structured governance and monitoring for digital transformation, emerging technology, and open data for an inclusive society.**

- **Define a clear data governance framework that ensures compliance with the regulation.**
- **Promote sustainable data governance, supporting a data culture, transparency, and accountability.**
- **Define a strategy to engage users of open data and support them with policy and regulatory framework.**
- **Enforce and update regulations for data privacy.**
- **Support the development of Digital and data-related skills.**
- **Establish an open data policy for sustainable development.**
- **Monitor progress on SDG by ensuring efficiency and effectiveness**

The Word report “Open data for sustainable development” highlights that open data played a critical role in achieving the SDGs through different types of use in the healthcare sector, financial inclusion, urban planning, and others. It resulted in harnessing economic growth, job creation, efficiency in the public sector, transparency, accountability, citizen participation, and better sharing of information within the Government, among other benefits.