



Introducing Open Cities Lab

OUR VISION

A city where every resident regardless of income, identity, or location can access the essential services they need with dignity and ease. In this vibrant thriving urban space, digital and physical infrastructure at both local and national levels work together to deliver equitable, efficient, and human-centred services that improve everyday life and empower African communities to participate fully in shaping their future.

We believe better cities start with people.

That's why we

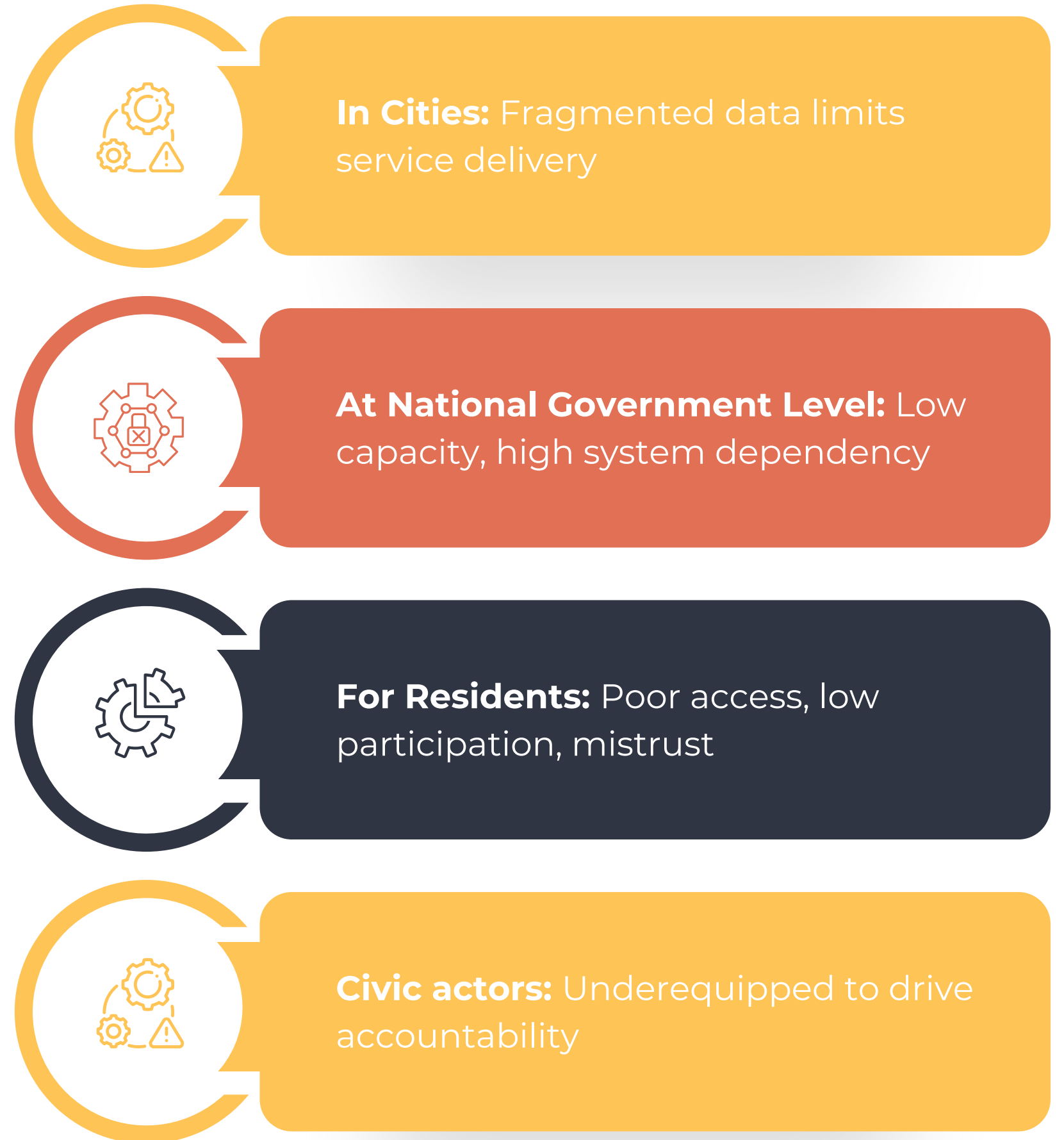
- Bridge the gap between service design and lived experience
- Build local capacity through open data and co-designed tools
- Equip officials, residents, and storytellers to drive change
- Work with governments at all levels to embed lasting systems
- Always human-centred, inclusive, and built to last





The Problem We Solve

Too many residents in African cities - especially those marginalised by income, identity, or location - struggle to access basic services. Poor design, weak delivery systems, and underdeveloped digital infrastructure leave governments without the data or capacity to respond, while communities lack the tools to engage, participate, or hold power to account.



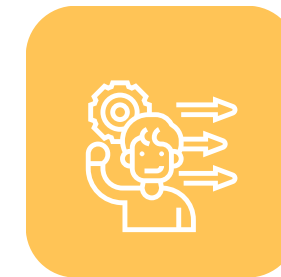
Why Work with Open Cities Lab

OCL is not just another civic tech implementer. We are specialists in co-developing digital and data systems with local governments across Africa - systems that are designed for real-world uptake, built with modular, open-source technologies, and grounded in a deep understanding of how public institutions, residents, and service delivery systems interact.



Local Government Expertise

Deep experience in designing digital tools and processes that work within the complexities of local government systems - especially where data capacity is low.



Human-Centred, African-Centred Design

We specialise in design methods that centre real users - from frontline officials to underserved residents - and adapt to African realities.



Not a Consultancy – A Co-Creation Partner

We embed with institutions to build lasting capacity and trust, not one-off tools. We don't deliver and disappear - we build together.



Built for Scale, Rooted in Context

Every implementation is grounded in local needs, but designed with scale in mind—linking local delivery to regional systems and digital public infrastructure ambitions.



Modular, Open Source Tech

Preference for open standards and composable infrastructure that aligns with the goals of interoperability and reuse across countries and contexts.



Shaping Data Culture, Not Just Tools

After 10 years in the field, we know it takes more than an app. We work to shift institutional mindsets around data value, use, and governance.

OCL's Core Initiatives



Africa Data Hub

A pan-African platform that empowers journalists, civil society, and communities with open data, tools, and support to tell impactful stories and drive evidence-based accountability across the continent.

[More about ADH](#)



A collaborative platform helping African cities unlock bold, people-centred digital solutions through Communities of Practice, accessible Toolkits, and tailored Technical Assistance for collective urban transformation.

[Explore MijiBora](#)



African DPI Facility

An African-led delivery hub helping governments move from digital strategy to implementation, with local teams building sustainable, interoperable public infrastructure like digital ID, data exchanges, and payment systems.

[Learn more](#)

OCL Products

CityCollect

A mobile survey tool for easy and reliable field data collection.

DigiStrat

A customised support service that guides government through digital transformation

FlowManage

A tool that supports the planning of water provision.

MyCandidate

A tool to help voters find out more information about who's running for local office.

VoltManage

A tool for managing & maintaining electricity infrastructure.

LocalLoop

A tool for collecting public feedback quickly and easily.

CivicView

A data management platform that lets cities share data in one place.

MyRep

A tool that tracks how councillors perform between elections

SystemLink

Tools for connecting city systems without starting from scratch.

RateManage

Tariff modelling tool helping cities design pricing structures for water and electricity

FileScout

Leverages AI to collate and analyse information from lengthy documents.

DataStrat

A hands-on, guided process to help cities roll out a practical data strategy.

CityManage

Custom simulation tools that help cities plan & improve infrastructure and service delivery.

From policy to product, our tools turn strategy into action.

Open Cities Lab develops practical, open-source products that help governments, communities, and civil society use data and technology to deliver more inclusive, accountable public services.

Contact Us for more information & demos of our products

Get in Touch



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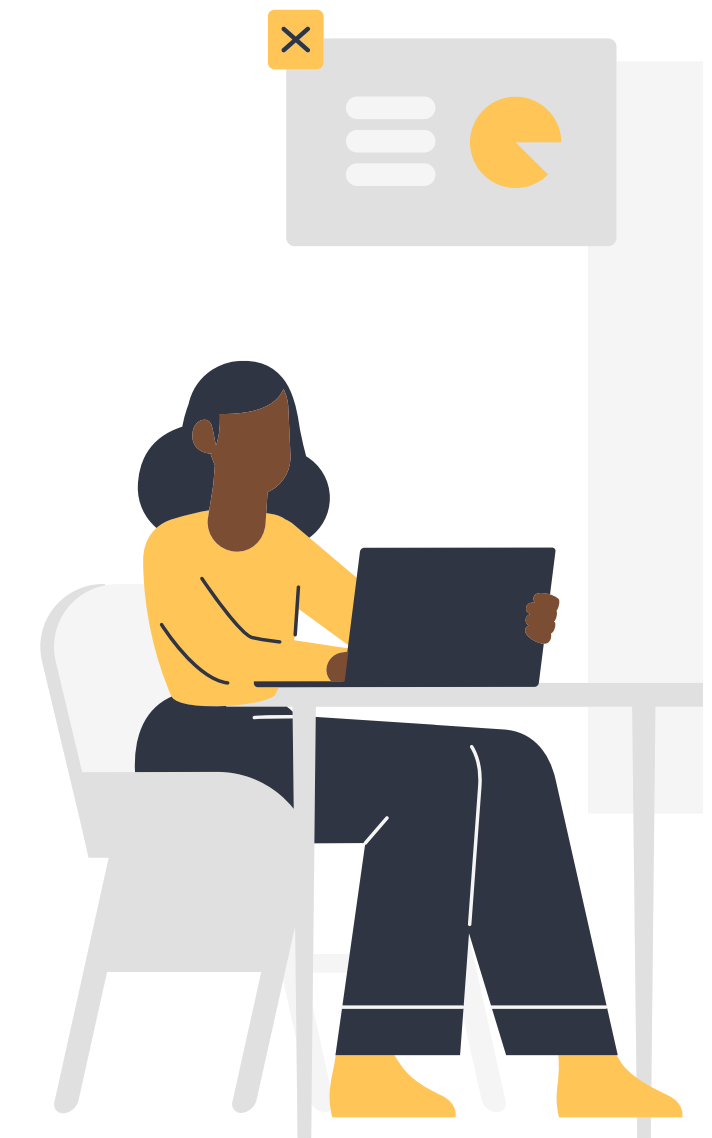
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Appendix: Selected Projects Summary

Project Title	Description
SA-Integrated Data Lake (renamed to MzansiXchange)	Design and initiation of pilot for MzansiXchange – the South African national government data exchange.
DCoG Service Delivery Simulator	Developed a mapping and data management interface and system for DCoG in 10 months that helps municipalities optimise service delivery using scenario modelling and data-driven planning.
CPT Informal Settlements	Supported the Human Settlements department to digitise data collection and integration for informal settlements.
Informal Settlements Info Mgmt System	Co-designed an informal settlements data system for eThekweni Municipality
CoJ Service Delivery Dashboard	Built real-time dashboards for City of Johannesburg to track service delivery performance.
GWOPA	Supported eThekweni Water in tariff modelling and smart meter integration through the UN's GWOPA.
Asivikelane TAP	Built a scalable backend for IBP to automate data handling and compensation tracking for CSO partners.
eThekweni Inclusive Economic Recovery (EIER)	Researched informal economic activity and developed data strategy inputs post-unrest in eThekweni.
South African Cities Open Data Almanac	Developed SCODA: a city-centric open data portal for decision-makers and residents.



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Alt Advisory	Supported ALT Advisory to manage, visualise, and tell stories using the Data Protection Africa dataset.
Open Data Portal (CPT)	Proposal development for a City of Cape Town employee and public-facing open data portal.
SALGA Unrest Scale	Created a tool to map communities at risk of unrest to support municipal conflict-sensitive planning.
InTacT Open Data Toolkit	Toolkit on open data and good governance developed with CSP & National Treasury.
CoJ Data Strategy	Developed Johannesburg's first citywide data strategy through engagement and co-creation.
MD360	Built a central repository of community complaints for mining-affected communities
My Candidate	An open platform that helps voters understand candidates in elections—used in SA, Kenya, Nigeria.
CPT Electricity Asset Management	Built a Python-based cloud tool for City of Cape Town to manage substation assets.
CPT Water & Sanitation Asset Management	Data integration and dashboards for the W&S directorate to improve asset management in Cape Town.
The Durban EDGE Open Data Portal	Built and maintained an open data portal for eThekweni's Economic Intelligence Unit.