



OPEN CITIES LAB

What we're learning about data,
governance, and shared
decision-making

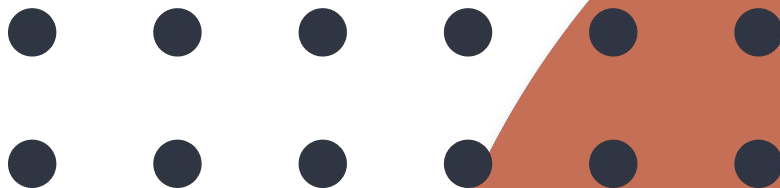
8 October 2025

OUR VISION



“To build African cities where every resident
regardless of income, identity or location can
access essential services they need with dignity
and ease”

opencitieslab.org



OUR TEAM

.....



Urban governance, policy, and economics



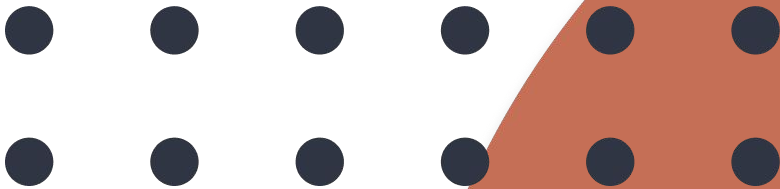
Civic technology, product design, and data science



Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI)



Advocacy, communications, and systems change

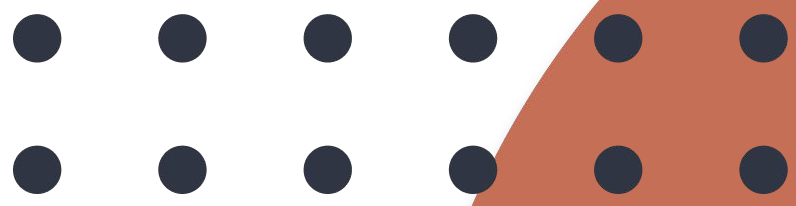


INTRODUCTION



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- Reflections on
 - civic data infrastructure and co-created urban governance.
 - building usable, context-aware, and collaborative data platforms,
 - the role of open data in enabling inclusive, civic-driven city ecosystems
- Challenges and opportunities for digital urban infrastructure in the Global South – and how they relate (or differ) from Global North contexts.



ERA 1: OPEN DATA & ANALYTICS





South African Cities Open Data Almanac

SCODA is a city-centric data portal that provides

Evidence, Analysis & Insight

Of current and comparable information

About South African cities

To help inform evidence-based decision-making and reporting.



We learnt:

- If specialised data scientists and developers are required in the data pipeline, it is likely not sustainable.
- Supply side open data provision is far less effective than working with users to solve a problem



The latest Data Story



[Read this data story](#)

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
(DURBAN)

27%
(Q2 2025)

[View our Dashboard](#)

GDP GROWTH RATE
(DURBAN)

0.02%
(Q1 2025)

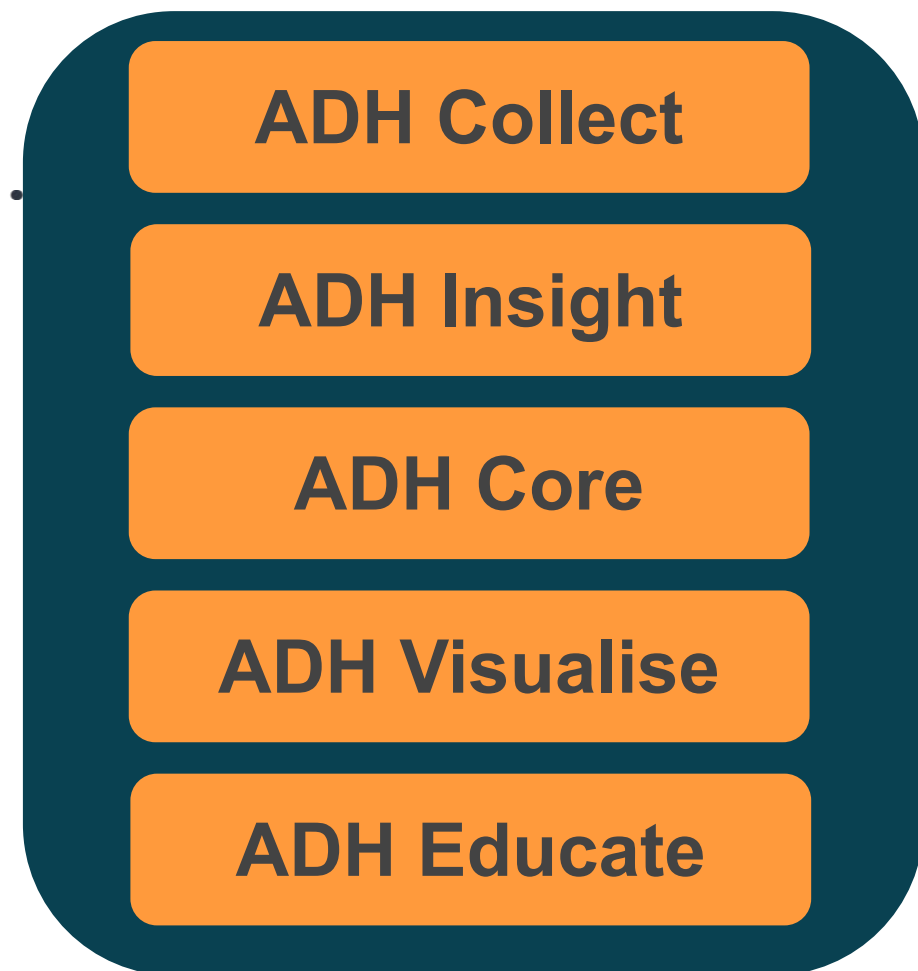
[View our Dashboard](#)



We learnt:

- Validation :)
- The value of a 'champion' and aligning with organisational targets





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Unlock the power of Nigeria's Primary Health Center Data

A central hub to discover, share and leverage Primary Health Center Data - Uncover and amplify the unseen

Filter by State ▾

Type the name of state

Search

#endfemicideke #endfemicide

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Watch on TikTok

@Vybecast

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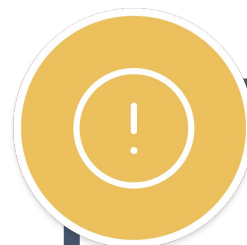
ADH Amplify

Publish

Example Use Cases

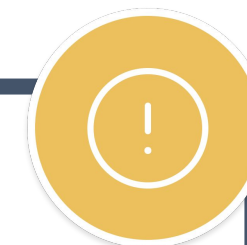
Vybecast

Check MyPHC



We learnt:

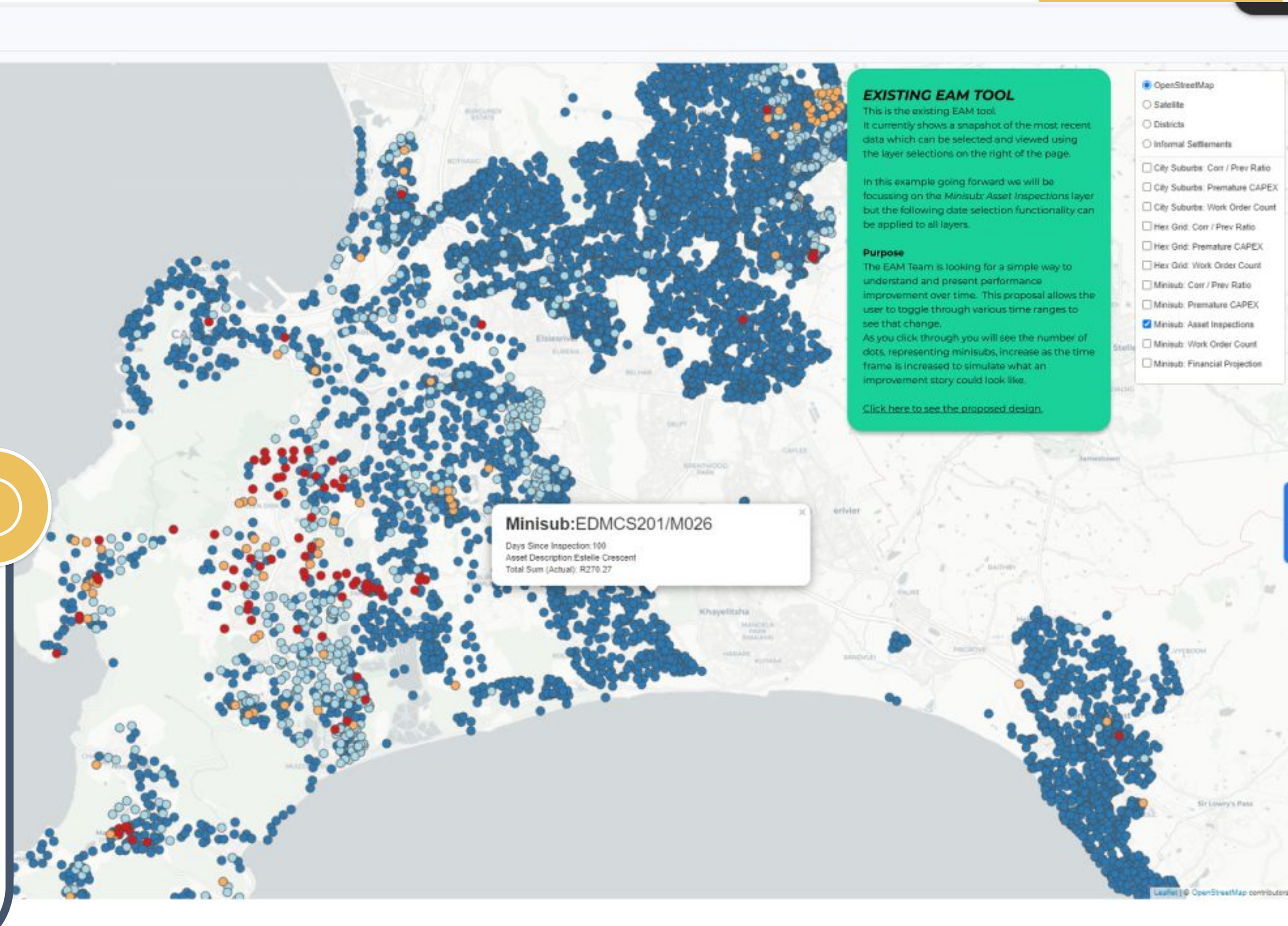
- To partner for impact
- To look for home ground advantages
- Open data is an asset and we can't rely on altruism



The Elections Cycle

(How MyCandidate & MyCouncillor Work Together)





We learnt:

- Trinity of MANDATE, TECH CAPABILITIES, & SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE
- Technical sprints & monthly reporting

We learnt:

Successful use cases can't scale
across an organisation without an
org-wide data culture

ERA 2: STRATEGY & COMMUNITY

Data Strategy Toolkit


OPEN CITIES LAB - BUILDING GUIDES FOR SOCIAL GOOD



Home Page

Welcome to the OCL Data Strategy Toolkit. This free resource is aimed at people working in the government space to help you build and own your own contextual guide on how to responsibly



We are learning:

- Our own team is the perfect pilot audience
- Offer a combination of content, guides and templates to meet users where they are

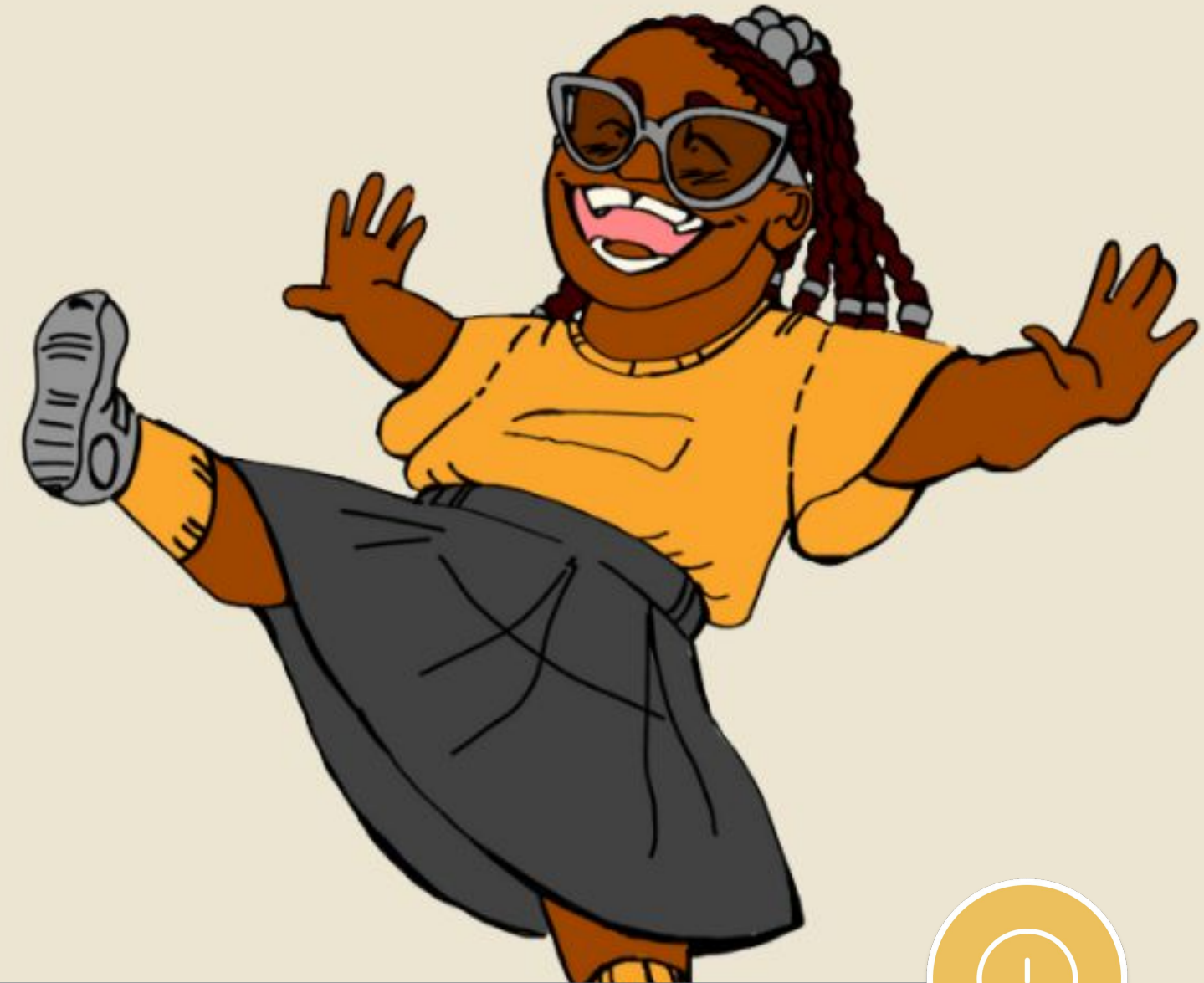


Better African Cities

Do you want to see what a caring, data-savvy, African city looks like?

Join our Hero, Pendo to explore better African cities.

Explore Pazuri City



We are learning:

- Consistent gathering, peer learning and coaching is vital alongside toolkits

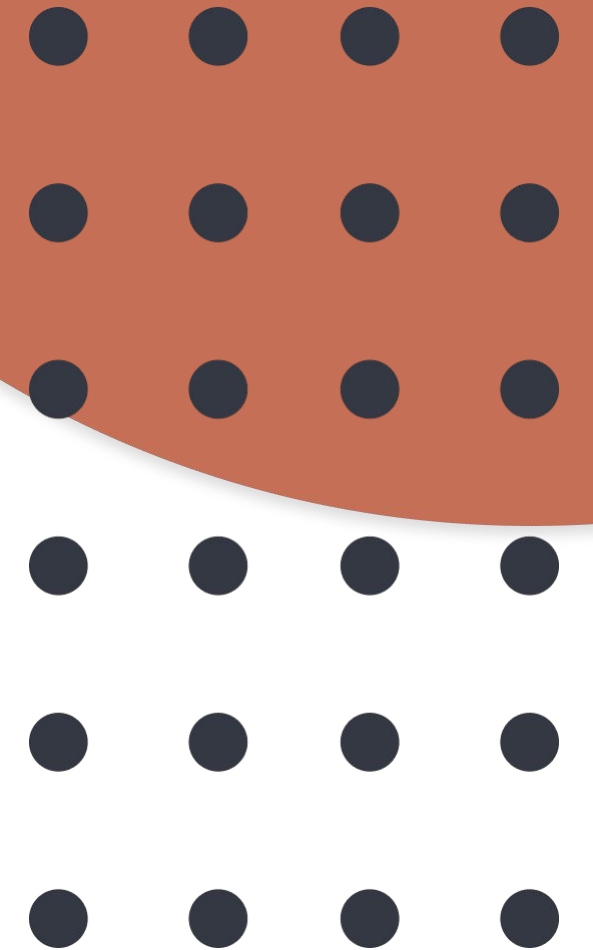


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We learnt:

Impact is still blocked by a lack of interoperability & extensibility

ERA 3: DIGITAL PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE



USE CASE

The above background is included as it sets the scene for the decision on the use case scenario that is being submitted for support

Problem Statement: _____, lity needs to consolidate data from five SQL databases to create a unified view of its customers and areas.

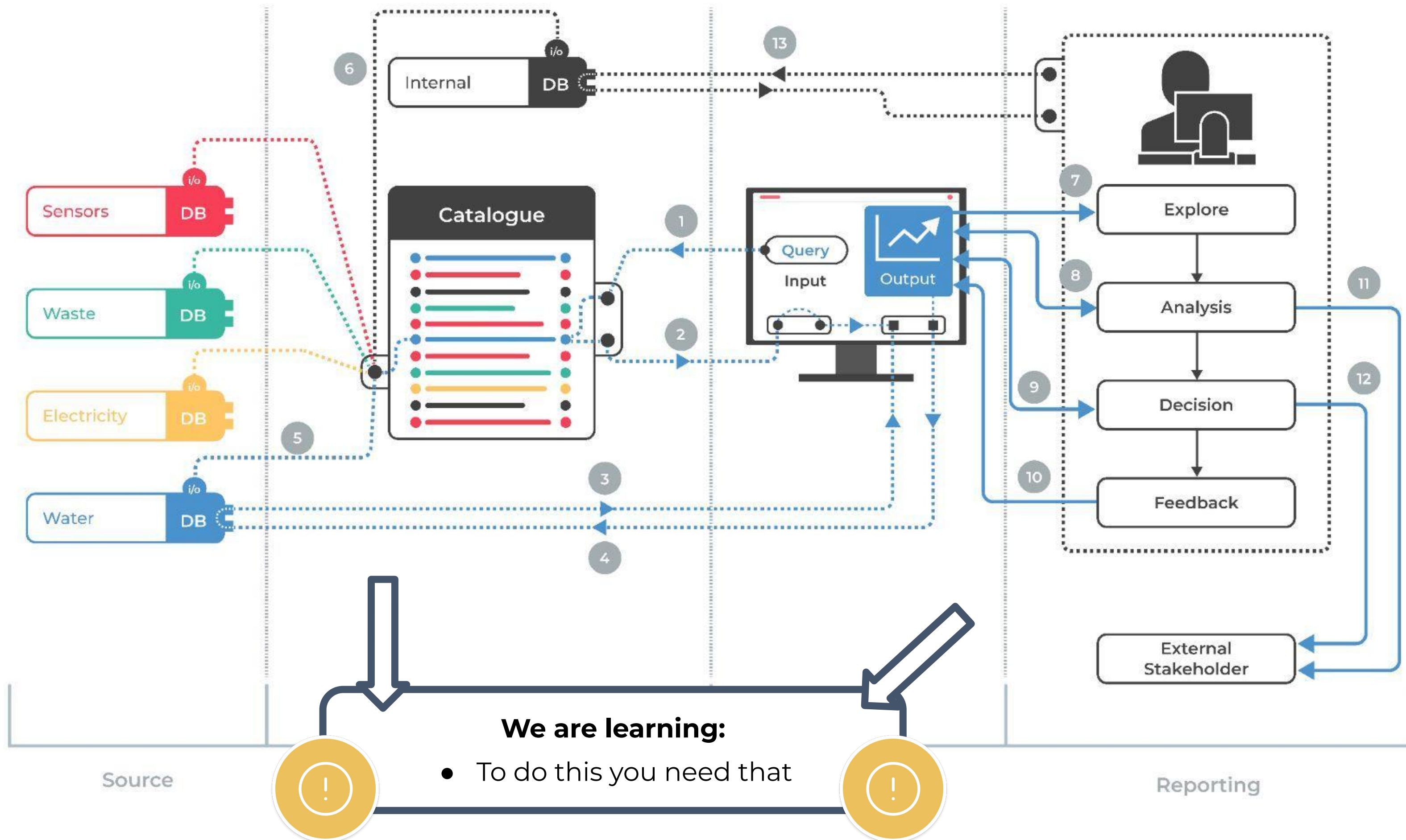
Assistance in identifying the points of data collaboration between 5 data sources:

- 1. CRM (Citicall)
- 2. SCADA (Adroit)
- 3. GIS (ESRI ArcGIS)
- 4. Meter reading (Routemaster)
- 5. Revenue (Sage)

Example:

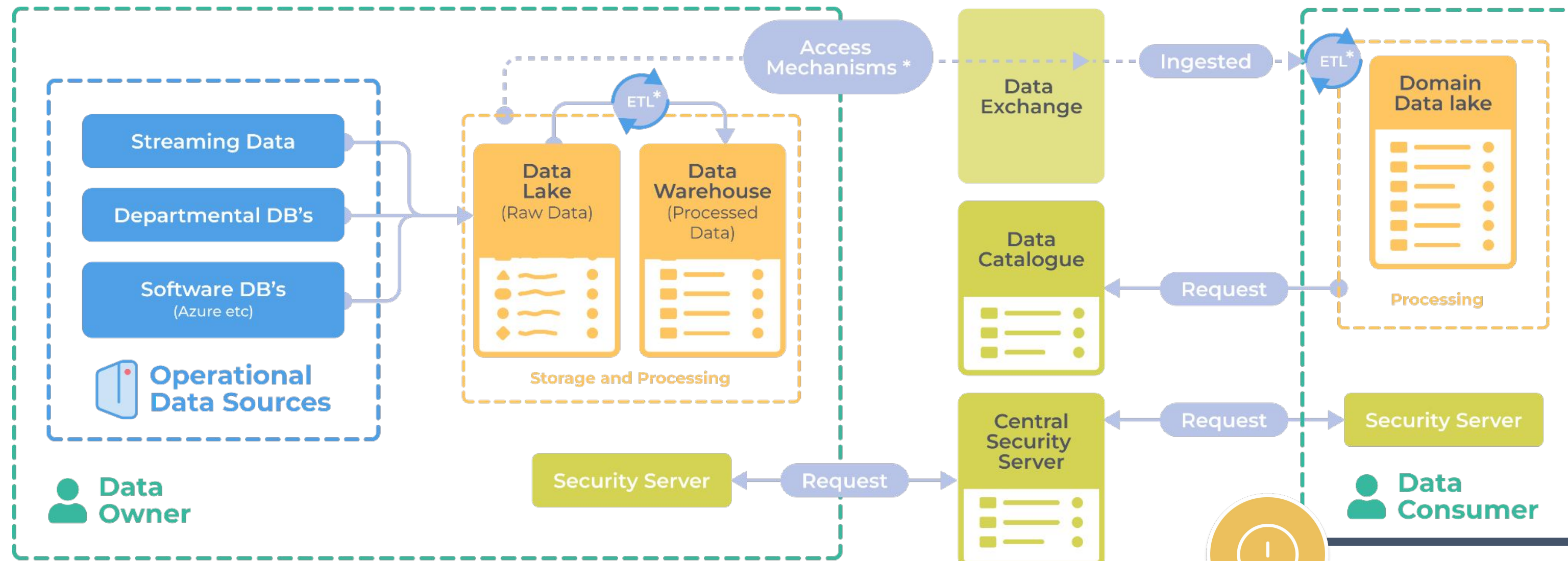
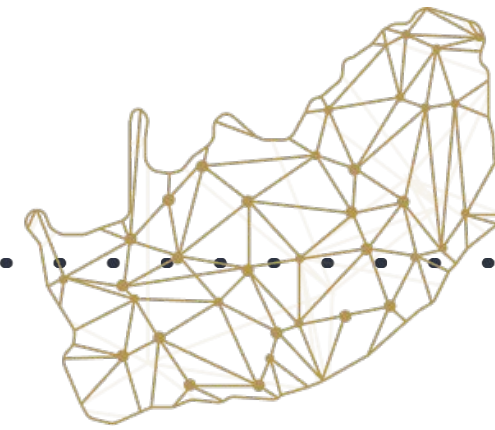
- _____ling Customer x lives in Lot x Area X and has a meter X, with a co ordinate, a bill, meter reading history and payment history – Revenue system Sage and Meter Reading system Routemaster
- Customer X lot x resides in a Local Municipality within the District and Ward X – ESRI GIS and RouteMaster
- Customer X has logged x amt of incidents of service delivery or complaints on Citicall in x months – for lot x where they live – Citicall CRM
- _____lunteers log all incidents they work on in the CRM, for burst pipes or meter changes etc in the Citicall CRM
- And Customer x is fed from Reserve _____ in _____ area / – Adroit SCADA





MZANSIXCHANGE

Unlocking the Power of Data for Public Good



Access Mechanisms * = Bulk, API and Real Time

ETL* = Extract, Transform & Load is a type of data integration that blends data from multiple sources when building a data warehouse.

We are creating:

- An enabling environment

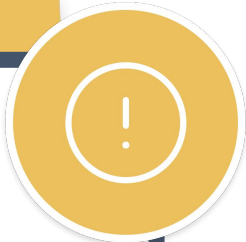
Inputs DB Components X-Road Component Actions Domain Boundary — Data Flow Data Usage

AFRICA STACK

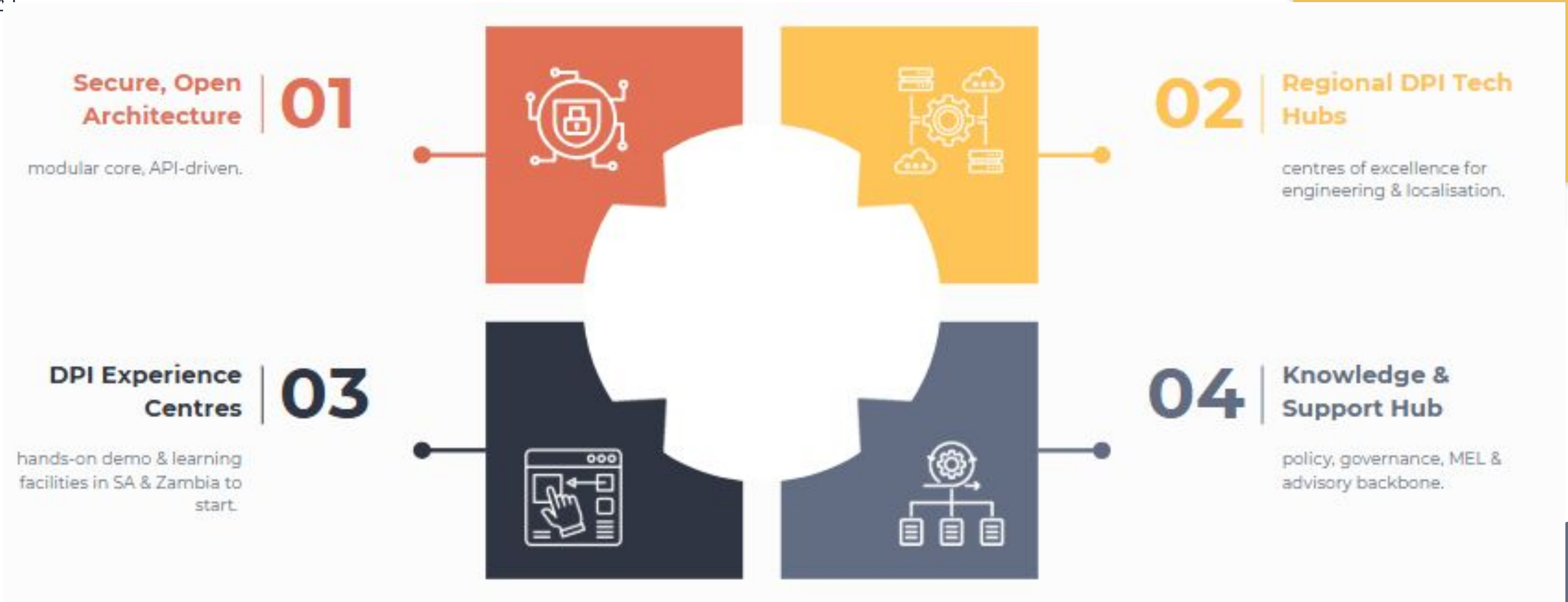


We are applying:

- All our lessons!



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Thanks!

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t: @opencitieslabza

i: opencitieslab



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OPEN CITIES LAB

Open Cities Lab is a non-profit company (2019/253293/08 | 930067929 (PBO 18A) established by a group of founding members who desire to serve the common good through the advancement of transparency.