

Exploring Data Science for public good in South Africa: evaluating factors that lead to success

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Abstract:

In the pursuit of public service, governments have to oversee many complex systems. In recent years, data-driven methodologies have been adopted as tools to oversee and enhance service delivery. In this paper we discuss some of the ways that the government of South Africa, and its agencies, has utilised data tools, how it can improve other services by developing products that address those specific needs as well as how it can begin to develop a more enabling ecosystem for the development of these tools and processes. We discuss the current data landscape from the lens of data policy readiness, human capital development and ethics. The paper is a summary of our observations, our successes, aspirations and challenges as we endeavour to contribute to a more data-driven governance.