

Exploring Africa's open data

By [Erik Hersman](#)

5 Apr 2011

I recently discovered Afrographique, a site that does data visualisations on African data. It's done by Ivan Colic, a South African designer, as a "small contribution to assist the changing perception of Africa..."

What Ivan does is brilliantly delve into the data that's freely open on the internet to show patterns and information in ways that we might not have noticed if looking at the data in its raw format. The problem that Ivan has, is there's not always that much information about Africa to use - in fact, some of his maps show big blank spots for countries on the continent with no known data for them.

Getting African data

In Kenya, Ushahidi is working on a project about public service delivery and the companies and government entities responsible for them. I've become painfully aware of just how inaccessible Kenya's government data is.

The entities that hold the most public and infrastructure data are always government institutions. Getting information from them, no matter where you are in the world can be difficult. In Africa it can be very hard indeed. For good reason too, the fact is that there are decisions made for and by politicians for themselves or their constituencies that they don't want you to see. Having that data open, and visualised, can be damning.

Read the [full article](#) on www.memeburn.com.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Erik Hersman is the founder of AfriGadget and is a contributor on [\[\[www.memeburn.com\]\]](http://www.memeburn.com).

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