



Urban Agenda Platform

The global platform for sharing progress, action and knowledge on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve sustainable urban development.

Monitoring urban prosperity and sustainability in 153 municipalities in Mexico

Region

Latin America and the Caribbean

Award Scheme

Dubai International Award

Summary

Infonavit, the largest social mortgage company in Latin America, has implemented a national strategy to measure the prosperity and sustainability of Mexican Municipalities. The first stage has covered 153 municipalities in the 32 states of the country (recently starting a second stage with 152 additional municipalities), encompassing more than half of the total population of the country and placing this effort as the most comprehensive of its kind in the world.

Background and Objective

The three levels of government in Mexico (Federal, State, and local) did not have a mechanism to allow the analysis and comparison of urban agglomerations and their municipalities with reliable data so that specific action plans and recommendations could be made to impact the quality of life of their inhabitants. There was also no clearly reliable mechanism to measure the impact of government actions and public policies. Infonavit, for its part, through this project has provided a monitoring system that allows us to infer the impact of large-scale housing programs in the country's urban centers.

Actions and Implementation

Methodologically the project was divided into the following phases: PHASE 1: Institutional framework, review of needs, risks, capabilities, and scope. Establishment of mechanisms to ensure Institutional sustainability. PHASE 2. Adaptation of the CPI methodology to the Mexican context for its calculation. Creation of a monitoring system appropriate for the needs of the cities in the country and in response to the New Urban Agenda. The variables, indicators and methods of calculation of the basic CPI were analyzed to adapt it to the reality of the Mexican municipalities and the type, scope and characteristics of the information available in Mexico to construct it. As a result, a methodology and guideline document was generated which served as a basis for the calculation of the CPI and its analysis to prepare the 153 reports. Review of the CPI to adapt it to the policies and needs of Infonavit and the Mexican Government. PHASE 3. Design of a first phase of replicability and expansion of the proposal. In addition to the fact that the CPI served as a methodological guide, conditions were created to replicate the exercise in its first phase in other cities. The most important elements of the Index were revisited, readings of the learning process were reviewed, mechanisms, processes and scope were revised and established to be replicated in other cities of the country, and work was done to enrich the CPI at the international level. PHASE 4. Collection and systematization of information. Inter-institutional teams were created at different levels of government and research was carried out to obtain all the information available for the construction of the basic CPI of the 153 municipalities. To accomplish this goal there was a thorough review of official sources (INEGI, SEMARNAT, INECC and CONAPO, among others), research, publications, planning instruments, programs and public projects, and private and social sector initiatives (particularly urban development, mobility and risk atlas plans and programs). The information was systematized and standardized to obtain the greatest possible homogeneity among the indicators of the municipalities, thus facilitating their comparability and analysis. We worked with academic institutions to standardize and refine information. PHASE 5. Establishing spatial indicators adjusted to the CPI methodology and country needs for territorial analysis. Infonavit and our associates created a strategy to survey space indicators that was homologated with international standards. Interdisciplinary work was carried out in the realization of the 153 base maps for the revision of the sources of cartographic information that offer the most current relevance for each of the municipalities selected in the first phase of the project. Once this base map was obtained, we worked with the Geographic Information System to standardize layers of information and define the criteria to determine the urban area of each city and municipality. From this, the territorial analysis was done to extract the information that conforms the basic CPI and the contextual information of each one of them. This work is in itself a source of transfer and replicability for other projects in Mexico as in other countries of the world. PHASE 6. Calculating the Basic CPI for 153 Municipalities. The calculation of the basic CPI was built upon the six dimensions of urban prosperity and was estimated according to the established methodology. As an initial result of the project, a preliminary report was prepared for each municipality on the quantitative result of this calculation, which was in turn submitted to the municipalities for validation. Meetings were organized to review and validate the results in a process characterized by the open participation of different partners and participants. This process is quite innovative from the social and institutional perspective, while being a source of replication and extension. PHASE 7. Formulating 153 studies based on city reports. From the validated partial report, the analysis of results was carried



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out to extract strengths, weaknesses, trends and conclusions for each Municipality. The final report takes the form of a diagnosis that was systematized to obtain a high degree of comparability at national and international level. PHASE 8. Compilation of good practices in sustainable urban development. On the basis of the results and recommendations obtained, a catalog of best practices was integrated at national and international level that allows the enrichment of guidelines for action plans in the cities. The use of best practices allowed us to internalize what works well in other parts of the world, in this respect the Dubai Prize database was very useful in this process. The results were communicated to each Municipality and discussed in round tables and working meetings. PHASE 9. Building the National Trends Report (synthesis document). In addition to the work at the Municipal level, an integrated analysis of the CPI results for the country and its regions was carried out to generate the National Trends Report of the state of prosperity of Mexican cities. This is an innovative document that summarizes the current state of the cities analyzed in the country. The nature of this study will be of great utility to give a conceptual basis to the monitoring system for subsequent analysis and to ensure the transfer of the system to other cities and levels of government. PHASE 10. Dissemination of results and delivery to Municipalities. The strategy to socialize and disseminate the results was designed and implemented to support to the different levels of government and actors to articulate efforts and create the appropriate conditions to implement action plans aimed at addressing the diagnosed areas of opportunity so that Cities can achieve a prosperous urban future. PHASE 11. Definition of a long-term monitoring system. Infonavit designed a strategy to appropriately evaluate, monitor, and analyze Municipalities' actions. The monitoring system on the CPI platform is the best guarantee of continuity and transfer of experience, and in itself constitutes a good practice, recognized nationally and internationally, which has inspired several cities and countries of the world to adapt similar systems.

Outcomes and Impacts

Prosperity as a source of socio-spatial equity and as a process to be consolidated derives from the interrelations between the sub-dimensions analyzed in this initiative which highlights the correlation between productive processes and attention to social needs (education, health), so that as cities evolve socially, the positive impacts on the economy and their productivity are appreciable. Additionally, the project articulates different dimensions of prosperity and sustainability where the environmental issue is central considering that cities account for 40 to 70% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and offer the opportunity to mitigate and adapt cities and the society in the face of global climate change. As Mexico is located in one of the most sensitive environmental zones in the world, the principle called "the prosperous city and its environmental responsibility" takes on a strategic dimension in urban public policies, particularly those associated with mobility, city form and land use. The active and coordinated participation of various sectors propitiate institutional and financial sustainability of this project. Sustainability is reinforced by the active participation of other social and private sectors such as universities and research centers that also participate with in-kind resources, and make this project an inter-institutional success that is more likely become a monitoring mechanism that will have long term sustainability.

Gender and Social Inclusivity

The success of this project is verified in first instance by the replicability of the operation in a second phase that includes a number of 152 municipalities. The transfer at the institutional level is also clearly measured by the adoption of the CPI by several states of the Republic, such as Mérida, Jalisco and Sinaloa, among others, as their monitoring system. The large number of cities that have adapted and developed the monitoring and tracking system shows the high-grade transfer of this project. At the international level, Infonavit's work has inspired other cities and countries to adopt similar systems, such as San Salvador, Guatemala and recently Maceio and Pará in Brazil. In these countries, the housing-centered approach to the measurement system has been highly influenced by this project. The presentation of the methodology, scope and results of the project in various forums such as the Thematic Meeting "Financing Urban Development: The Millennium Challenge" in Mexico City; The Regional Meeting of Habitat III Latin America and the Caribbean in the City of Toluca, the meeting of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom-3) of Habitat III in Surabaya, Indonesia and the Habitat Conference in Quito confirm the demonstrative effects of the project, and may generate significant transfers to other countries and institutions. On the technology side and the use of indicators, Infonavit has presented and influenced several institutions in the use and adaptation of spatial analysis. This project has served as a sample and good practice in the development of metadata linked to the calculation of spatial indicators of the SDG.

Innovative Initiative

The lessons learned through this project are as follows: 1. The lack of information almost always refers to a lack of policies. A general finding corresponds to the limitations of the information regarding the socio-spatial phenomena in the country and some specific indicators. Although there is information in Mexico to estimate most of the indicators of the CPI, there are important gaps that need to be addressed, not only in order to strengthen the present exercise, but also because they are fundamental for public, social and private decision-making regarding the development of cities. Therefore, strengthening of information generation systems at the local level, focused on refining information and generating it on a regular basis, should be a priority. 2. Prosperity is not tied to the size of cities. The results clearly show that cities do not have to be too big to aspire to be more prosperous. This is important because it shows that prosperity is derived from clear and forceful actions and requires the development of capacities at the local level, such as those that this project puts into practice. 3. The monitoring system produces a critical mass of information necessary for decision making. The project clearly shows that decision-making must be based on scientific evidence, which has the power to define the most important actions to be undertaken. It is



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this information at the local level that is necessary to understand the urban dynamics, potentials and challenges of cities. 4. Urban prosperity is multidimensional. The Project raises the need for a balance between the 6 dimensions of prosperity, so that none of them progress without attending to others, affecting or limiting the most harmonious growth and jeopardizing the sustainability of cities. 5. The urban form plays a determining role in prosperity. The form of the city, planning, urban design and structure of the city are elements that can play for or against shared prosperity and sustainability. 6. The articulation of the different levels of government and their associates are critical for the prosperity of urban centers. The study shows clearly that prosperity cannot be achieved in isolation, and the concurrence of levels of government is fundamental in this process. 7. Best practices are a major component of prosperity. The analysis of policies and actions that work and the elements that integrate them are a central element of prosperity. The success of this project is verified in first instance by the replicability of the operation in a second phase that includes a number of 152 municipalities. The transfer at the institutional level is also clearly measured by the adoption of the CPI by several states of the Republic, such as Mérida, Jalisco and Sinaloa, among others, as their monitoring system. The large number of cities that have adapted and developed the monitoring and tracking system shows the high-grade transfer of this project. At the international level, Infonavit's work has inspired other cities and countries to adopt similar systems, such as San Salvador, Guatemala and recently Maceio and Pará in Brazil. In these countries, the housing-centered approach to the measurement system has been highly influenced by this project. The presentation of the methodology, scope and results of the project in various forums such as the Thematic Meeting "Financing Urban Development: The Millennium Challenge" in Mexico City; The Regional Meeting of Habitat III Latin America and the Caribbean in the City of Toluca, the meeting of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom-3) of Habitat III in Surabaya, Indonesia and the Habitat Conference in Quito confirm the demonstrative effects of the project, and may generate significant transfers to other countries and institutions. On the technology side and the use of indicators, Infonavit has presented and influenced several institutions in the use and adaptation of spatial analysis. This project has served as a sample and good practice in the development of metadata linked to the calculation of spatial indicators of the SDG. y. 8. Socializing information and creating open channels of participation is central to the development of shared prosperity. The project has clearly shown that when there are clear channels of participation, the possibility of a more general acceptance of the proposals that emanate from it and the approval of the lines of action is greater.

Resources devoted to delivery

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Conclusion

The Infonavit Project has been instrumental in redefining the policy of the Government of Mexico at various levels. At the national level, the project has been programmatically adopted by the Secretariat of Agrarian, Territorial and Urban Development (SEDATU) as the system of measurement and monitoring to be implemented in national urban policy. Also at the national level, the Institute of Statistics (INEGI) and the National Population Council (CONAPO) have adopted indicators used by the project to measure some urban aspects. Perhaps the most important impact of the project has been within Infonavit itself that has revised its policy towards the credits it grants, and has also influenced the National Housing Commission in a review of the impact of housing developments on the whole Urban and city planning. At the municipal level, municipalities have used the monitoring system as inputs for the development of their local plans that have been approved by local legislation.