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2021

PERCEPTION IS THE REALITY

INFODEMICS AND OTHER
"PARA-PANDEMICS".

BIG DATA CMIC ANALYTICS

E-PARTICIPATION,
TECHNOLOGY, AND
THE NEW RULES OF
THE GAME.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION and identity

a need to measure
the new reality.
Experiments with AI.

WEAK PLANNING
IN EFFECTIVE CITIZEN
PARTICIPATION.
LESSONS LEARNED.

MILLION-DOLLAR BUSINESSES

and its link with the
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To the more than 18,214,780 million citizens who shared their perceptions and concerns online, giving us the chance to ascertain and comprehend reality from citizen's perspective. .

To Ivan Caballero, Cristian Pi Martin, Harry Wilson, Laura Kirchner, Darío García de Viedma, and Natalia Grau from Citibeats, for their commitment and ethical use of IA data, teaming up and jointly promoting [CivicLytics](#).

To Phillip Keefer and Carlos Scartascini from the IDB Research Department for all the exchanges, work, and results regarding the experiments on behavioral economics in citizen participation, trust and public governance issues.

To Cristina Giraldo from the IDB, as well as Frederick Wherry and Mihir E. Kshirsagar from Princeton University for the inputs to begin identifying stable civic indicators.

To Graham Watkins, Lourdes Gallardo, Andrea Ruy Sanchez De Orellana, Eugenia Sofia Valdez Tamayo, Gerard Drenth, Gustavo Pérez Ara, Juan Carlos Lozano, Andrés Falconer, Merrick Hoben, Cynthia Hobbes, Elizabeth Ann Nicoletti, Jose Luis Irigoyen, Diego Cortes Arce, Francesca Castellani, Kyle S. Strand, Luben Petkoff Chirinos, Carolina Marcela Piedrafita, Cristina Pombo, Pablo Picon, Maria Baron, Edgardo Mosqueira Medina, Pablo Riba, Julian Austin Belgrave, Jacopo Gamba, Leonardo Mazzei, Roberto de Michele, Lorena Ordoñez, Susana Sitja, Pablo A. Bachelet, Mariana Alfonso, Carmen Albertos, Astrid Wynter, Ana Santiago, Michelle Marshall, Paulette Desourmaux, Vicky Tongue, Juan Manuel Casanueva, Marieke Vegeer, Lindsay Mayka, Natascha Marzoff, and Guillermo Correa, for contributing their time, experiences, perspectives and inputs to elaborate the 2035 scenarios from organizations like the IDB Group, World Bank Group, Universidad Pública and Pontificia Católica de Chile, International Civil Society Centre, Colby College, University for International Cooperation, Innpectia, Normann Partners, RACI, Open Government Partnership, Consensus Building Institute, Legislative Board.

To the 26 IDB [Civil Society Liaisons](#) in Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay for their ongoing responsibility and efforts in planning for effective citizen inclusion.



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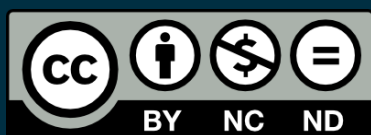
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Polarization: Identity vs. Inequality

If inequality was the trigger of the social demonstrations of 2019, why did people express their discontent then and not before? Citizens seem to perceive reality in a manner traditional indicators can't.

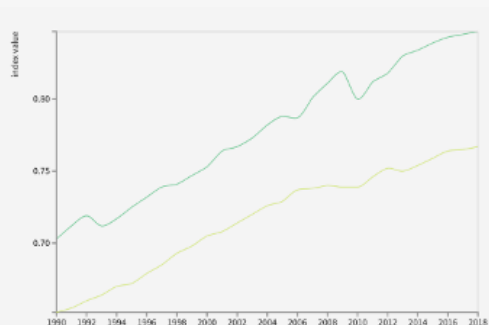
Delving into the sense of inequality before the law, the public institutions and the government, and the changes in identity variables (visibility, empowerment, trust, and dignity) may help to identify trends in areas such as social polarization and discontent.

In late 2019, the region was hit by a wave of social unrest, with widespread demands for more and better public services and greater opportunities for social mobility. The case of Chile, where the rise in public transport fares sparked massive protests, was perhaps the most visible one.

In Chile, demonstrations [1] began in October 2019 and were considered the worst since the 1990s [2]. In this scenario, the media, academia and opposition leaders rushed to point at inequality as the main culprit of social unrest. Although this is undeniably true, a deeper, more technical analysis of citizen participation suggests that this is not the only plausible explanation, or at least that it is insufficient to account for the full magnitude of the phenomenon.

For example, in countries of comparable development levels like Mexico and Chile, the Gini index of inequality [3] for 2018 was also similar: 45.4 and 46, respectively [4].

Graph 1: Human Development Index (Chile and Mexico) [5]



While both countries are members of the OECD, Chile has consistently boasted one of the highest Human Development Indices (HDI) in the region for almost 30 years [6]. – 0.847 vs. Mexico's 0.767 in 2018 (see Graph 1). In terms of political stability, government effectiveness and rule of law, Chile has performed better than Mexico in all three categories during the last 20 years [7] (see Graphs 2 and 3).

For years, governance pundits and economists alike have considered Chile an example of social and economic stability in the region. The latest OECD data indicate that both countries have the same Gini index of 0.46 [8][9]. The index measures inequality on a 0 to 1 scale, where 0 indicates perfect equality and 1 perfect inequality. Going back to the governance indicators mentioned above, Chile showed better governance than Mexico by 50%, while Mexico outperformed Chile in regulatory quality.

Graphs 2 & 3: Worldwide Governance Indicators (Mexico & Chile) [10][11]



According to the World Bank, between 2000 and 2019 Chile reduced poverty from 30% to 6.7%. With an economy based on free market and private investment, the country was also cited as an example of development to follow in a continent plagued with serious socioeconomic problems [12]. In 2019, *The Economist's Democracy Index* ranked Chile as one of only three Latin American countries with a full democracy [13].

In October of the same year, the BBC mentioned an ECLAC report that stated “While the poorest 50% of households owned just 2.1% of the country’s net wealth in 2017, the richest 1% accounted for 26.5%.” In the same period, the Chilean National Institute of Statistics reported that half of the country’s workforce received a monthly wage equal or lower than US\$ 562, i.e. barely above the minimum wage at the time (US\$423).

Based on the indicators mentioned, if we consider inequality to be the sole cause of social discontent, the likelihood of social unease was higher in Mexico than in Chile, but reality proved different than the theory. And this is an interesting fact that should not be neglected. In fact, the public seems to perceive reality in a different way and mobilize themselves for other reasons.

On October 25, people marched the streets around Plaza Italia in Santiago in what was dubbed “the largest demonstration in Chile’s history”. According to the German news agency *Deutsche Welle*, a million people or so rallied in the capital’s downtown area. Unlike the mass protests of 2011, which centered on education issues, the social unrest of 2019 was not aligned with any specific student or labor demands.

A CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS:

- October 6: Santiago Metro fare increase.
- October 7-18: Students and organized youth respond to the increase with a mass protest in Santiago’s metro system. The number of protesters increases by the day, resulting in incidents inside the metro network and clashes with the police.
- The situation changes on October 18 as the entire Metro system is shut down due to the surge in confrontations between students and the police. The national government declares a state of emergency and mandates a curfew. Protests erupt along the country, with new sectors adhering to the movement but without a visible leader.
- October 25: More than a million people take to the streets to demand the president’s resignation.
- October 28: President Piñera changes eight members of the cabinet and removes the state of emergency.
- November 15: government officials announce a national referendum for a new Constitution to be held on April 26, 2020. As a result of the global pandemic declared in March 2020, the referendum is adjourned until October 2020.

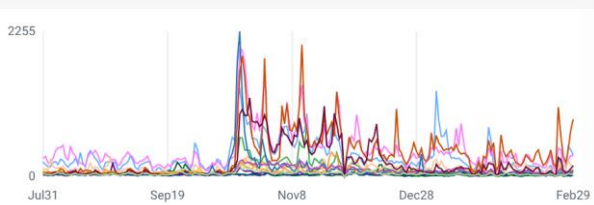
In this sense, however true the inequality hypothesis may be, it still falls short to explain this phenomenon from a citizen perspective. Inequality was a preexisting and constant factor, so what moved it to the forefront now and not before? How did the mentality change? Why didn’t citizens in other countries with similar indicators follow this path?

Taking the case of Chile as a basis for explaining the phenomenon and in an effort to understand polarization and to learn from and remain close to the people, we adopted an innovative approach to reality that detects changes regarding key issues like education, social inclusion, mobility and poverty [14].

We analyzed and processed people’s testimonies from July 31, 2019 until October 18 –the day of the most intense demonstrations– with special attention to October 6, the date of the metro fare increase that sparked the protests. Using traditional measurement criteria like inequality and governance may lead us to conclude that such a massive protest should have been anticipated, at least some weeks, if not months, in advance.

The volume of testimonies collected (Graph 4) from late July onwards shows no drastic increase in citizen use of social media, with just one change appearing in mid October. Although the metro fare increased on October 6, the peaks in conversation volume and intensity occurred on October 13 and 14.

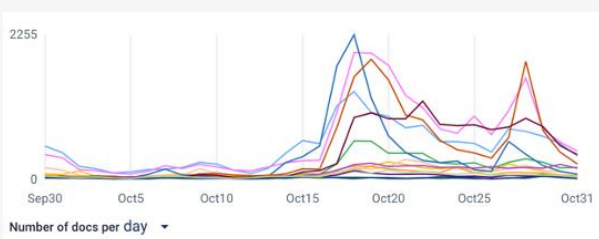
Graph 4. Conversation Volume in Chile (July-March)



After listening to hundreds of thousands of testimonies, we realized that some variables had changed. We repeatedly heard expressions like “they don’t notice us”, “we don’t exist”, “we don’t count”.

We grouped these testimonies into conceptual categories like **capacity to act (empowerment), perception of one’s own value (dignity), delegation of decisions (trust), and the feeling of counting not just as a number but as a voice that adds value (visibility)**. From this perspective, which reflects a person’s **identity**, we identified a greater volume and intensity of comments that are indicative of growing and stronger discontent (see Graph 5).

Graph 5. Conversation Volume in Chile (October)



We noted that **an analysis based on inequality as the sole contributing factor leaves many relevant actors in an invisible background**. Reality demonstrated that the level of discontent could not be anticipated using this approach alone, as traditional tools prove insufficient to accurately determine “where it hurts” and what people’s “daily struggles” are.

The lack of understanding is inversely proportional to the speed of discontent outbreak and may be one of the factors that explain the growing mistrust toward the government and the increasing polarization. **It is when taking to the streets that people feel noticed, listened to and included. It is as if people recovered their sense of identity and recognized their own value and their power to act, making themselves and each other visible.**

The correlation gap between traditional indicators and the real world seems to indicate that the hyper connectivity resulting from the use of new technologies during the last 15 years [15], makes citizens more prone to becoming part of identity groups. **Discontent is expressed in real time, concerns are conveyed in real time and citizens organize themselves almost in real time, but answers and solutions do not come at the same speed.**

In this new reality, the concept of identity seems to include the questions of “why” and “what for” do citizens identify themselves with a certain government; an ethnic, social or religious group they belong to or aspire to become a member of; a line of thought; a movement, etc. This need for identification encompasses **those variables which, when changing their intensity, may be causing changes in behavior.**

The Chilean case seems to confirm the hypothesis that, despite being a major trigger, the metro fare increase was not the real cause of discontent, **as the avalanche of demonstrations continued long after the measure was rolled back [16].** Meanwhile, the situation in Hong Kong was not very different. Even after the withdrawal of government measures, protests did not die out. On the contrary, citizens rallied under a common motto/identity [17], just like in Chile.

Can we forgo our role as experts in development for a moment and take a guess at what people feel and perceive? Definitely not. The analysis parameters that support event forecasting are always incomplete. Also, embracing a certain hypothesis while rejecting another would be a big mistake in times of substantial changes fueled by the magnitude of the sanitary emergency.

Instead, we believe **there may be a relationship and mutual interaction between these four variables that adds them to the inequality index as a cause of mounting social polarization [18].**

As the COVID-19 crisis set in, demonstrations came to a standstill. The pandemic brought people and the government together toward the common goal of flattening the curve. Still, the relationship between inequality and identity as explained above and which we believe triggered the events of 2019 is only temporarily dormant [19].

PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS:

1. The speed at which citizens express themselves is out of sync with the manner in which governments, companies and analysts perceive reality .
2. This **synchronization gap is a hotbed for conflict.** Once discontent starts building up it's already too late and issues begin to escalate, even beyond the national borders of the countries where they originate. In turn, the **lack of synchronization exacerbates polarization and undermines trust.** Without trust, governments lose their authority and implementation capacity in a matter of days.
3. Reality suggests that the indicators we normally use are **insufficient to account for complex civic issues**, such as the variables we believe are at the base of individual and group identity/polarization.
4. **Changes in a person's identity variables** seem to be in direct correlation with their decision to engage in constructive change or in violent transformation .
5. The sense of inequality before the law, the public institutions and the government, and the changes in identity variables (visibility, empowerment, trust, and dignity) may help to identify trends in areas such as social polarization and unrest .



We are working on modeling and identifying stable indicators that blow the whistle when changes in these variables are detected, thus helping to curb polarization and foster the social cohesion needed for the government, the private sector and the public to move forward.

The prediction of events is always based on incomplete analysis parameters. It would also be a mistake to take one hypothesis and discard another at a time of great changes driven by the pandemic. What we believe is that there could be a relationship and interaction between these four identity variables, adding them to the inequality rates in a context of growing social polarization.



Closer to the Future: Scenarios for 2035

At a time of quick transformations, a strong decision-making process must consider alternatives and anticipate the unforeseen. Studying the sources of uncertainty allows identifying risks and opportunities, adapting and making decision-making processes “future-proof”.

We base our work on the Oxford scenario planning approach through the prism of citizen participation issues. We design different plausible configurations in an effort to question the way in which we, actors of development, engage with citizens in the present time. Just like listening to the public enables a real-time understanding of “where it hurts” and the identification of opportunities for improvement, using [scenario planning](#) to prepare for possible future events allows planners to quickly respond and adapt to possible and realistic scenarios. Studying the sources of uncertainty allows identifying risks and opportunities, adapting and making decision-making processes “future-proof”[20].

During the health crisis, the adoption of digital technologies for business and consumer purposes leapt 5 years forward in just about 8 weeks [21]. This factor places even more urgency on the need to provide infrastructure to offset the digital gap that disproportionately affects populations in rural vs. urban areas, the have-nots vs. the wealthy, women vs. men, youth vs. adults, etc[22]. It has been estimated that nearly half of Latin America is disconnected. In countries like Brazil, Argentina and Mexico the online connectivity rate reaches roughly 87%, while in Haiti, El Salvador and Guyana the rate falls to approximately 40%.

Notwithstanding, it is also true that online participation is a reality for millions of e-citizens. In 2019, Latin America and the Caribbean was the fourth regional online market in terms on users behind Asia, Europe and Africa. In June 2020, the number of internet users in the region had jumped to over 450 million, up from 200 million in 2010.

Unlike traditional governance schemes, e-participation does not require a visible leader figure. This form of leaderless mass participation is shaping new ways of impacting reality. Institutions are not an exception and the new scenarios will require actors capable of speaking both languages, an evolved type of governance that includes the role of empowered citizens. With just a hashtag, citizens can embrace causes without any specific hierarchy or representatives, and may join hundreds of thousands of other individuals in dynamic movements that seek to define national and international agendas, as was the case with the gender-based movements #MeToo and #NiUnaMenos, or #BlackLivesMatter.



We start from the premise that all actors of development move in global and regional contexts of permanent disruption. We brought together a group of multidisciplinary experts from inside and outside the IDB Group, who contributed their own perspectives and joined their efforts to challenge conventional notions on citizen participation, study the trends and identify the factors that will shape the regional picture in the future.

The main trends have been classified as macro-trends and will very likely shape the Government-Citizenry-Private Sector relationship over the next 15 years:

- Erosion of trust in institutions:

- The pride an average resident of LAC takes in the political system has fallen 6.8% between 2010 and 2019 [23].
- Public satisfaction with democracy performance has also dropped, while executive coups (i.e., the Executive dissolving Parliament) continue to gain support [24].
- All indicators of trust in political parties, national parliaments, the executive and elections remain between a very low 28.2% and a lukewarm 45.5%, reflecting significant erosion during the last decade [25].

- Increasing polarization, fostered by digital transformation :

- In the United States, leaders with extreme ideological positions have more twitter followers than their moderate counterparts[26].
- Social media may contribute to exacerbated levels of political extremism[27].
- Exposure to ideas that are contrary to one's own may push people into becoming even more polarized, especially those who identify with conservative principles [28].
- Those who use social media for political purposes in Latin America and the Caribbean are more ideologically polarized than those who do not. However, it must be recognized that this group exercises greater political tolerance and is more supportive of the concept of democracy than those who do not engage in media use[29].

- Prominence of identity groups recognized as having a common generational, ethnic, gender, socioeconomic or other identity

- Exclusion and inequality continue to be at the source of new identity groups and coalitions that steer major political agendas.
- For example the youth of high socioeconomic segments who are educated and live in urban settings are more likely to use social media to engage in politics[30], creating specific identity narratives through those channels.
- In that context, the following questions arise: What will the social, economic and cultural impact of demographic changes in LAC be? How will the pressures of an ageing population and growing inequality impact citizens? What will be the consequences?

Adapt to remain relevant:

Based on these trends, the group of experts brainstormed a number of possible future scenarios.



The scenarios and the inputs used to configure them do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the IDB Group or its Boards. These are not recommendations or forecasts, but rather tools for challenging the status quo and promoting strategic dialogue between the actors of development of Latin America and the Caribbean.

LET'S JUMP AHEAD TO THE YEAR 2035 :

What would happen if 2035 arrived and...?

CITIZEN-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

...the relationship between companies and citizens is stronger than ever in LAC. Following the pandemic of 2020, governments continued to struggle to increase **citizen trust in public institutions**.

A growing number of fast-moving companies have seized the occasion and offer **citizen-centered services**, thus filling power gaps.

These companies have clustered together to form powerful conglomerates and have a clear understanding of **citizen needs and struggles**. They invest in Artificial and Collective Intelligence technologies and closely monitor online comments to adapt their offering. Citizen trust has turned to this new way of doing business called "**citizen-private partnerships**" or "**CPP**".

Citizen-led initiatives emerge and disappear like smoke. The swarms of people who participate online mobilize resources efficiently and create new start-ups to address social challenges in a profitable manner. **These strong citizen organizations** have replaced the old lobbyists and exert considerable influence on governments, companies and other citizen groups.

Internet access is now widespread and the online market swelled. Massive support has cemented the prestige of CPPs in the region. They have access to big data and understand people's perceptions and concerns, immediately responding to their needs.



As CPPs multiply, the public's perception of empowerment and visibility has greatly improved, while **government functions have gradually reduced**. In some places, governments outsource various basic services. Many public functions have been replaced with direct participation. **Citizens use blockchain technology to design and vote for legislation.**

CCPs follow strict codes of environmental and social conduct, and corporate governance, thanks to **citizen co-responsibility frameworks that provide real-time scrutiny**. In certain sectors, global trade associations constitute an alternative to the old multilateralism by coordinately responding to global issues and leveraging their capacity to collect and analyze mass data.

Better-off citizens report to be satisfied with economic growth, although inequality remains on the upswing. There are calls for governments to step in and regulate monopoly prices and inflation rates. Tensions grow over privacy and digital rights concerns. Citizens demand solutions.

HYPER-LOCAL POWERS

...the provision of hyper-localized services is the new norm in Latin America and the Caribbean. The COVID-19 crisis has shifted the spotlight towards **local leaders**. **Entrepreneurs, city mayors and religious leaders have come up with innovative responses to the socioeconomic crisis** and continue to give solutions to community needs with strong citizen support.

Millions have fallen below the poverty line during the crisis, **undermining their sense of dignity and identity**. **The influence of citizen groups organized behind hashtags continues to grow**, with "virtual strikes" to make their voice heard. These groups organize **collectively around different identity concepts, without individual leaders**. The number of **senior citizens has reached an all-time high**, the **silver economy** and **digital literacy expanded**, while promoting political agendas based on generational differences. Technological experts have created new platforms to facilitate citizen organization around local issues. Little by little, many citizens have renewed their sense of **agency, visibility, dignity and empowerment**.

Traditional religious groups have successfully channeled social expenditure through community health care centers and/or schools, that alleviate the burden on central budgets. As they **gain in the political arena**, **conservative beliefs also strengthen their influence** on gender and family-related matters, adding to the divisiveness with liberal agendas that had gained ground during the previous decades.

Some **foreign companies** have partnered with local governments to bring assistance, especially in communities rich in resources, and some foreign governments have entered into bilateral development agreements with these localities.



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New forms of autonomous administration have gradually emerged and now live side by side with traditional government systems. Regions with certain natural resources are very much benefited. Despite the controversy on the environmental and social implications, the global demand for lithium, niobium and cobalt has spiked. The Lithium Triangle could become the first autonomous territory where **citizens negotiate dividends directly with companies, thanks to the use of technologies that facilitate and utilize Collective Intelligence**. Initially, national governments opposed autonomies, but given their limited capacity and the pressure from some rich communities, corporations and local leaders, their resistance has gradually melted away.

Less prosperous localities continue to lag in services and market access. They are still dependent upon weaker local authorities and insufficient investment from central governments. **Connectivity and its related services has not increased equitably**. Instead, it has become a new source of socioeconomic disparity.

Transaction costs for the traditional private sector increased. Companies no longer negotiate with central governments nor operate under national regulatory frameworks: economies of scale have lessened considerably.

In 2035, many **empowered citizens in hyper-localized communities report being satisfied with their capacity to immediately influence their reality, access new jobs with local entrepreneurs, and collaborate with renewed hyper-localized institutions** to find solutions to real necessities. The current trends suggest that the region will continue transitioning towards increasingly hyper-localized societies where citizen participation plays a pivotal role, while dealing other global challenges like climate change, human trafficking and multi-dimensional inequalities at the global level.



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POLARIZED CHECKMATE

...Latin America and the Caribbean continue to display **extreme polarization at many levels**. Following the pandemic, climate and socioeconomic crises have rattled the world. Climate refugees flee the areas threatened by rising sea levels and live precariously, while other communities are still well off. In some areas, most citizens are tired of with service disruptions, water and energy shortages. In these places, there is a generalized feeling of apathy and lack of agency. Gradually, **a divide becomes apparent**:

e-Citizens, even though a minority and internally segregated, have the means to actively participate in decision-making processes on various levels. For them, online participation is the new norm. They influence decision-making through blockchain technologies, and access goods, services, and even vote, online. Conversely, **citizens** who are **off-the-grid** have restricted access to technology and the services that come with it, amplifying social differences between the two groups.

Civil society organizations or CSOs also fall prey to polarities. Since direct e-participation has soared, traditional NGOs have lost relevance. People support local causes directly, without any intermediaries. Some **CSOs became 2.0 social enterprises**, adopting innovative fee-for-service business models, and reinvesting profits in their social causes. **Citizen groups also put together new ways of funding local development initiatives**, through massive individual donations on social networks.

Resentment against migrants is now widespread among citizen groups with extreme ideologies. They are blamed for worsening governments' capacities, and the already-weak social infrastructure. Opportunistic leaders use language that heightens the divide. This polarization makes some citizen groups an easy prey, to be suppressed or recruited by political factions who gain support through identity politics, cementing the power of a few ruling blocs.



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Authorities partner with businesses who gather large amounts of user data. They leverage the **computer's ability to learn from it and design solutions for public concerns**. Some government officials still adhere to the **classic governance** model and follow a vertical logic. In some areas, there might be public concern, rooted in a generalized perception of leaders disregarding the value of citizen participation beyond voting. Others, pursuing the **new governance**, incorporating **artificial intelligence, open data, and massive citizen participation in their decision-making processes**. Yet, concerns about the ethical use of big data and personal information arise.

Initially, the private sector had tried to seize the business opportunities of delivering public services to vulnerable target groups. But heavy government controls and bureaucracy frustrate their attempt. So, they continue to focus on wealthy communities.

Governments and companies are beginning to use Swarm Intelligence: a method that harnesses groups of citizen minds to develop solutions for complex development problems. Civic groups use it to bring e-citizens closer to the struggles present for off-the-grid citizens. They come up with evidence-based interventions that inform public policy.

As 2035 comes to an end, the region takes stock of the lessons from these turbulent years. The downside of the increasing polarization is in full view. If Social fabric were to continue to weaken, escalating tensions became unsustainable, What would give?

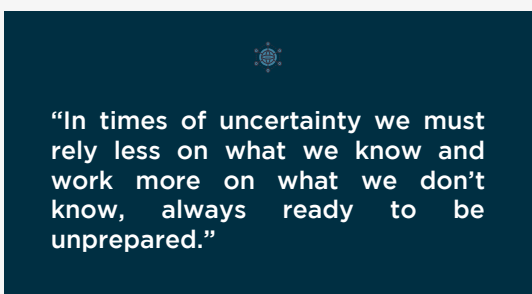


Perception: The missing link to understand complex citizen matters?

Citizens have their own priority classifications. People's main concerns and the perceived cause of a certain unrest are not necessarily accounted for or solved using objective reality analysis.

As seen in Chile 2019 and to judge from the preeminence of economic over health concerns during the pandemic, people's priorities are often outside the scope of traditional social welfare indicators. Identity may be one of the factors that help to understand complex citizen issues like polarization. We need to broaden our reality analysis in order to explain complex phenomena that occur even when the triggers for them disappear.

The COVID-19 crisis makes it very difficult to make an accurate forecast, not only in Latin America and the Caribbean, but also on a global scale. It has been estimated that **100 million citizens** will be at risk of falling into poverty by 2030 due to the impact of climate change and natural disasters. There are fears that the effects of the health crisis will push **43 million people into poverty**, while other **52 million people will plunge from middle class to low class**, losing many of the social and economic gains earned previously in the region.



From a purely technical citizen participation perspective, these numbers may have a different interpretation. The data suggesting that some 17 million jobs may be lost, therefore expanding the informal sector of the economy from 56 to 62%, means that millions of people will have their dignity severely hit. Millions will feel they can no longer control their own reality and be included as part of the solution and not as the problem itself. The sense of dignity, empowerment, visibility and personal trust in one's surrounding group and the government is simply crushed by these numbers and bleak forecast.

Using artificial intelligence (AI) technology to process millions of data, we concentrated on these variables in our search for more stable indicators. Judging by the comments posted on the Internet^[31], the millions of perceptions and concerns expressed may be summarized into simple statements like: "they don't see me", "there's nothing I can do about it", "they always rule for the rich" or, worse still, "I do not exist".

From these hundreds of thousands of comments, we identified variables which, given their magnitude and volume, seem to suggest new ways to analyze and understand reality. We decided to analyze and read reality through the lens of dignity, visibility, empowerment and trust. **These variables point to a citizen force that can come together or become polarized, leading to action in one direction or another: identity.**

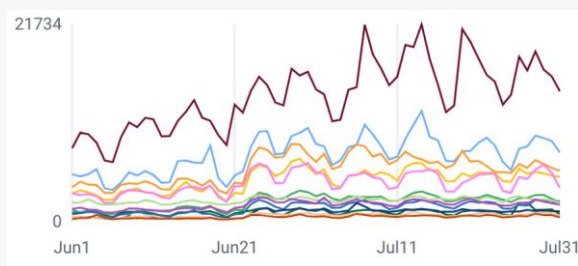
The comments express discontent, especially during a health crisis that finds people morally, physically and mentally tired in a context of extreme uncertainty.

People expressed their concerns

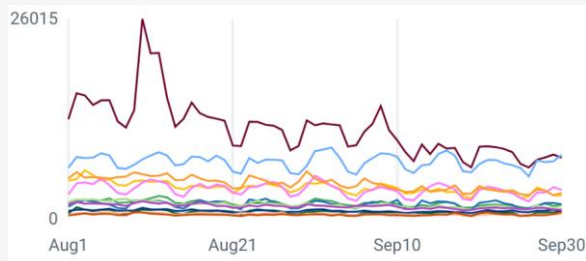
We maintained the analysis of identity variables, but before contrasting different data sources with the results of surveys and formal reports, we introduced some AI tools. Not surprisingly, in mid-July and early August 2020 people were most concerned with health, with comments peaking between 21,000 and 26,000 (see graphs 1 and 2).

1. Health Issues :

Graph 1: Concerns by day: June - July



Graph 2: Concerns by day: August - September



2. Economic Security :

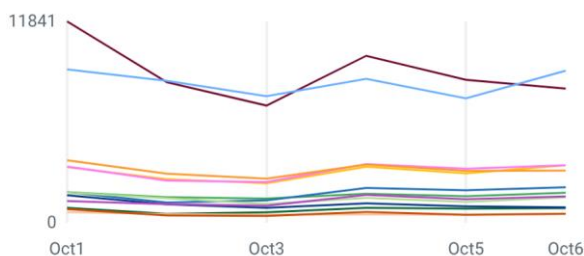
Once the initial impact of the pandemic was over, people seemed to adapt to the new normal and concerns about health security dropped by 45% during the months of August and September 2020 (see graphs 2 and 3). This time, household economic security was by far the most recurrent concern expressed, leaving health-related concerns in a distant second place for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic was declared (see graph 3).

In the context known as the “new normal”, between August and late October 2020, the economic security of business and households was the topic of 28% of conversations. In other words, more than a million people [32] on average talked about it during that period.

It is interesting to note that, even with the COVID crisis at its highest point, health care systems represented just 23% of the concerns. In other words, although health care continues to be a priority during the emergency, those other issues are more important for the public. The cases of **Barbados, Costa Rica, Uruguay and Venezuela** are indicative that the public has already accepted the fact that the pandemic is far from over in 2020. Instead, **their main concerns have to do with survival, 10% more than health security**[33]. In **Costa Rica**, 47% of the concerns went along this line, but more focused on new taxation [34].

In **Uruguay**, 41% of the conversations revolved around household economy [35].

Graph 3: Concerns by day: First Week of October 2020



3. Education:

In this context we know that the health emergency does not only affect health care systems. Due to its magnitude and duration, it also touches upon other areas like education. **Once again, measurements are not consistent with what is considered a concern.** We collected data and then contrasted it with what the public said. Estimations indicate that *95% of students enrolled in Latin America are temporarily out of school* [36] and 10 to 25% of university students are also out [37]. **Although alarming, these numbers were far from being at the heart of the public's earnest concerns**, as only 7% of all conversations reported during the months of August, September and October were in relation to this matter. Conversations were mostly positive, focusing on the efforts put in by teachers and citizen initiatives to offset the hard data [38]:

For example, in **Colombia** people joined their strength to raise funds for students regardless of their region of residence. *“#VamosPaLante || You can help talented students in different regions of the country to pursue their studies by donating here”.*

In **Panama** some concerns went along the same line, with education seen as the stepping stone for changing the future *“Education is the basis for long-term political changes.”* The reality is that the impact of changes in education, with the technological access gaps for millions of students, will be felt for generations to come. As for the near future, perceptions have focused more on the positive things happening in a system that went from in-person to online in the blink of an eye.

“This teacher is nothing short of outstanding! Kuddos to Ms. McKoy-Phipps for thinking outside the box and pouring her heart and soul into this project to help less fortunate school-children. #EveryChildCanLearn” Jamaica

4. Food security, mental health:

Among the millions of data collected, we also recognized the importance of food security and mental health[39]. We identified **mental health** topics [40], **especially among the youth**. Conversation intensity revealed some psychological disorders in the spontaneous exchanges over the internet, with **27% reporting anxiety** and **15% reporting depression**[41].

Later on, already in Q4 of 2020, the above categories showed some decline, probably due to people's resilience in a new normal context, with measures such as self-isolation, social distancing and mandatory face covering. Moreover, 58% of online conversations from August onwards became more positive in terms of mental health. We compared our hard data again, which suggests that the number of citizens affected by severe lack of food and good nutrition will increase from 3.4 million in 2019 to 13.7 million in 2020[42].

Once again opinions and numbers disagree, as we identified large numbers of positive perceptions regarding food security. For example, in Uruguay and Peru the number of positive comments reached 42% in August, September and October, but this was due to the confirmation that food does not spread the virus and that supply chains could maintain and even improve health standards:

“It is inspiring to see how during the COVID-19 pandemic the production of staple foods does not stop! iThank you for these images!” - Uruguay [43].

“A very good idea to bring food to areas without a supermarket! Homecenter and Constructor will also be available to buy essential products”- Peru [44].

5. Migration:

Another topic that has been present in many comments is the migration of more than 4.6 million^[45] people who have crossed the borders of **Venezuela** into 17 other countries ^[46].

Communities along the border that receive migrants have changed their perceptions, as their inhabitants are now under pressure to compete for access to local resources such as potable water, internet, or the local healthcare system, already undermined by the COVID crisis. Xenophobic comments are now frequently heard in areas where this was not necessarily the case before the mass displacements, creating a new ecosystem.



Citizens are showing signs of greater concern for their immediate situation, not for distant out-of-crisis scenarios.

5. Cross-fertilization between countries :

Before hyper-connectivity, most discussions remained inside the community or were disseminated by the press. Today, they reach all corners of the globe within minutes and reflect interests or concerns that can hardly be interpreted with conventional indicators. The accusations of institutional racism were one such phenomenon. **Caribbean** countries were especially sensitive to the killing of George Floyd in the United States. The event was condemned all around the world, not just in countries with a large Afro-descendant population^[47].

PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS:

1. Citizens have their own priority classifications: People's main concerns and the perceived cause of a certain discontent are not necessarily accounted for or solved using objective reality analysis. As seen in Chile 2019 and to judge from the preeminence of economic over concerns during the pandemic, people's priorities are often outside the scope of traditional social welfare indicators.



2. Identity may be one of the factors that help to understand complex citizen issues like polarization^[48]: We need to broaden our reality analysis in order to explain complex phenomena that occur even when the triggers disappear^[49]^[50]

3. The causes of social discontent are both endogenous and exogenous: The global adherence to the *Black Lives Matter* movement came as a surprise at a time when people were under the pressure and uncertainty of a major health crisis that would not be resolved in the short term. It would not be unlikely, then, that other issues may give rise to mass demonstrations as well.



The technology gap: Citizens vs. e-Citizens

*The speed of changes brought about by hyper-connectivity is inversely proportional to the speed of government and institution response. **The lack of synchronicity does nothing but add to the polarization.***

Indeed, protests are by no means a new phenomenon. What's new is the speed with which discontent seeps through national borders, fostered by new technologies. This was the case in late 2019, when mass demonstrations impacted the entire governance structure of a country, sending ripples beyond its borders and threatening to cause a domino effect [51].

The technology gap is an undeniable truth. 32% of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean, i.e. 244 million citizens, lack access to internet services while 77 million do not have minimum quality connectivity standards[52]. The lack of internet access and connectivity not only is a technological hurdle, but also a barrier for access to healthcare, education, social services, jobs and the economy[53]. This was evidenced during the COVID-19 crisis, with alarming figures regarding access to education and other sectors.

However, figures on the positive side are also impressive. As of June 2019, Latin America and the Caribbean had almost 454 million internet users, compared with the 300 million of 2013. From a technical perspective, we know these millions of users, which we call e-Citizens, create content for companies like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and others on a daily basis. These contents also express opinions, perceptions and discontent over the internet. According to 2017 figures, e-Citizens google more than 30,000 questions per second[54], share more than 4.5 billion photos and 1 billion videos each day [55].

By reviewing these numbers, we realized that the **ethical use of open data in social media and the internet** not only keeps platforms up and running, but **can also lead to improved decision-making, public policy design, investment prioritization in case of natural disaster, and the comprehension of local needs by helping to understand people's perceptions and concerns.**

Our work on the ethical use of mass data is relevant because the public makes extensive use of new technologies through social media. **Low transaction costs have added extra opportunities for people to organize themselves to express their dissatisfaction, ideas and perceptions in record time.** This has had an impact not only on government decision-making and policy processes, but also on the private sector and civil society [56].

Finally, in terms of opportunities, citizens play an essential role during major crises like the COVID-19. Hence the role of new technologies and the importance of building trust especially before an emergency arises. **Because without effective citizen participation we will not be able to *flatten the curve* that may lie ahead.**





Big data Civic Analytics: CiviClytics

When the pandemic broke out in an extremely volatile environment, we knew we had to find out what was happening to people. So, we started brainstorming at full speed and came to the conclusion that we had to adopt an innovative approach on two different fronts.

1. Change the logic of our work:

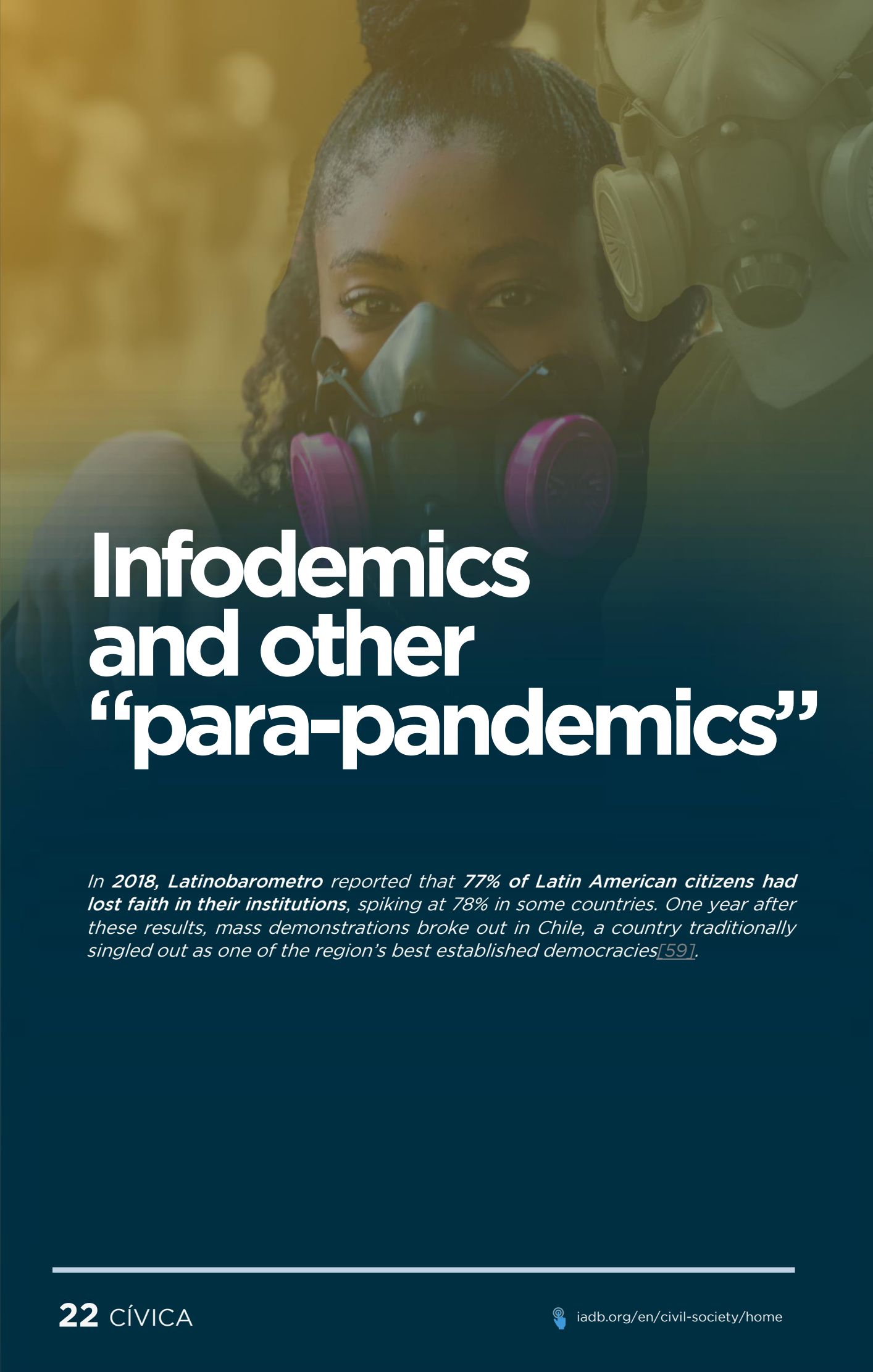
Always with a view to determining “where it hurts”, we decided that instead of looking for answers exclusively through conventional methods, **we needed to listen, but listen quickly and comprehensively to what citizens were saying.** As we already had some experience and guidelines to plan effective citizen participation[57], we focused on identifying the most effective way to reach as many citizens as possible. We already used the survey methodology, which, although excellent, only listens to the public with pre-established parameters. Survey contribution to the understanding of reality is invaluable, but they cannot tell us what citizens are talking about spontaneously and how they classify their personal priorities. **And this is an essential element to understand forecast shortcomings.** We designed an Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool in [CivicLytics](#) to reach millions of people by processing and analyzing open data shared by the public via the internet.

2. Mobilize external economic and human resources:

Once we ascertained the **magnitude of the crisis**, it became evident that no government, donor, or multilateral agency alone could face and provide answers to all the problems that mushroomed out in a matter of weeks. To effectively mobilize external Bank resources, we had to make people's needs known in order to bring in other partners and multiply the chances of finding solutions. So, we decided to share the data with national, local and municipal governments, innovation start-ups, and data analysts so they could work on the solution independently.

The collection, processing and ethical analysis of mass data **revealed the first signs of a food insecurity emergency in poor areas of Caracas like Petare or Guajira** in Colombia, allowing us to identify complex citizen issues and work toward the creation of more stable citizen indicators. Part of the work was shared when we systematized the issues that worry people most in *The first 120 days of the pandemic* [58]. For example, the citizens of **Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago** poured their support to local businesses run by people of color; the **#BlackLivesMatter** movement denounced a tendency towards institutional racism and centered inequality criticism on the police. In **Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay** the lockdown sparked a surge in mental health problems, showing differences of concerns even between neighboring countries with disparate economic priorities. **Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela:** Ecuador's decision to soften the measures created uncertainty among the citizenry; in Peru there was widespread fear of catching the disease in urban fresh produce markets; and the Andean economies had to reinvent themselves after 3 weeks of lockdown.

**Citizens
do
participate
actively, but
not
in the way
the classic
governance
perspective
would
expect.**



Infodemics and other “para-pandemics”

In 2018, Latinobarometro reported that 77% of Latin American citizens had lost faith in their institutions, spiking at 78% in some countries. One year after these results, mass demonstrations broke out in Chile, a country traditionally singled out as one of the region's best established democracies^[59].

As mentioned earlier, from a citizen participation perspective *perception creates reality*. Several case studies have shown how **perception, especially if multiplied by millions of people, can define (and even transform) reality**. And the COVID-19 emergency was no exception. The perceived risk of a potential food crisis resulted in supermarket shelves being depleted and a shortage of household cleaners in various levels of society.

In 2020, a year of deep health, social, cultural, political and economic turmoil as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Health Organization [60] (WHO) warned against a new phenomenon called *“infodemics” –or the overabundance of information and its accompanying perceptions of reality–* as a silent epidemic that has bombarded people with misinformation and disinformation ranging from dubious mitigation measures to accusations of an international conspiracy that invented the pandemic to justify the use of telecommunication antennas. In our conversations with WHO experts and hundreds of other participants around the world, we presented the innovative approach of our AI tool CiviClytiCs and discussed the impact of fake news, such as the rumors of possible looting to a local supermarket in Colombia, which caused riots as neighbors took to the streets to prevent it.

Another example with dissimilar effects was the enormous amount of internet traffic identified since the first week of CiviClytiCs, which we will call *“para-pandemic”*. People turned massively to social media, press releases, chat boxes, blogs, etc. **to report cases of domestic violence** where victims (women, children and even some men) found themselves trapped with their aggressors because of the mandatory lockdown. Many governments responded by implementing emergency protocols in places like pharmacies in an effort to offer secure protection to the victims.

As mentioned earlier, signs of food insecurity were detected in regions of **Colombia** and **Venezuela**. What’s interesting about these cases of real news is that the whistle was not blown by those who were actually affected by food insecurity or violence, but by other members of the community via social media. For example, when George Floyd [61] was killed in the midst of lockdown, thousands of citizens in the Caribbean seized the opportunity to denounce cases of institutional racism in their own countries and created movements similar to #BlackLivesMatter[62]. In other countries, especially in towns along national borders, **anti-immigrant speech has multiplied**. For this study, we have not only focused on the wave of displaced people, but also on the **needs and urgencies of immigrant-receiving communities that see increased competition for access to and use of resources like water, internet, and local health care facilities**, where immigrants are perceived as vectors of transmission.





Citizen participation towards new public governance schemes, and the need for bilingualism

The traditional patronage-based, top-down approach to the citizenry has become blurrier, not because people no longer aspire to such a model, but because many of the desired changes have already taken place.

In a study published by *Harvard Business Review* [63], Jeremmy Heimans and Henry Timms discuss the shift in power schemes. In our opinion, what is actually changing, and quite speedily, are traditional governance models, which are losing ground to mass citizen participation. If as a result of the pandemic the technological literacy process was accelerated from an expected 5 years to just 8 weeks [64], it is also possible for the crisis to give rise to new civic models. Let us stop for a moment on this transition towards a new governance model:

A classic governance model that is centralized and exerted by a few via a top-down, self-perpetuating government model.

Vs



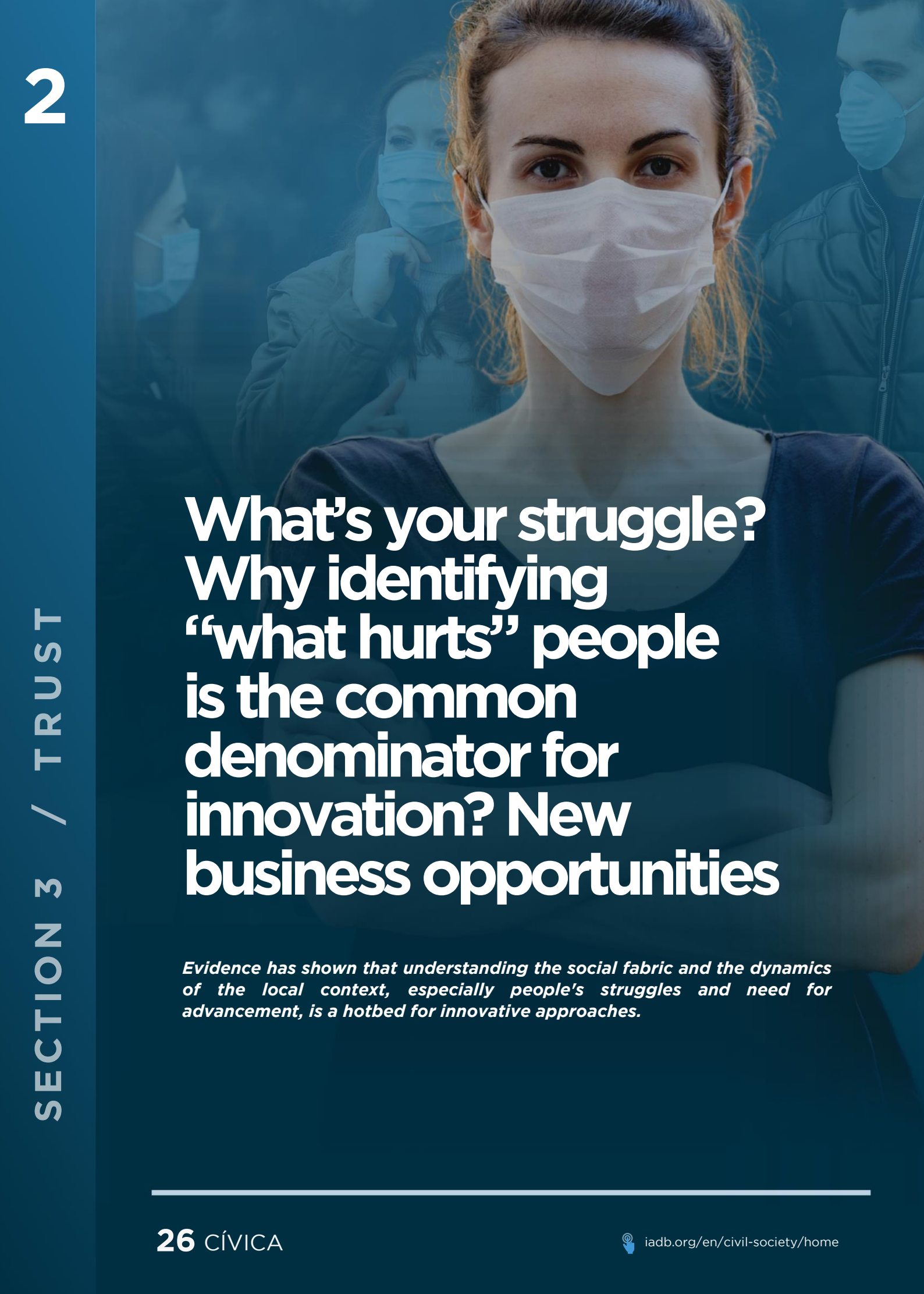
A new type of governance, without clear leadership that is exerted by large groups that come together and separate very easily.

We are not saying that one of these schemes should prevail or is better than the other, but we can safely assert that mass participation has gained ground and undermined the classic role of civil society organizations, replacing it with individual citizens who organize themselves without the need for intermediaries. Hence the need to speak **both languages in a world where changes occur ever more swiftly, even in a matter of weeks or days.**

Enhancing the capacity of governments, the private sector and the citizenry to interact quickly with each other seems to be one of the solutions. A number of companies and a critical mass of civil society organizations have already explored innovative governance systems, adopting new guiding principles and voluntary standards for the implementation of large infrastructure or extracting projects, both in terms of risks and opportunities for generating and maximizing positive results and impacts [65][66].

There seems to be no way back for this new reality. The demonstrations during lockdown in demand for deep social changes, or the strength gained by anti-racism and other movements like #NiUnaMenos or #MeToo clearly indicate that citizens have acquired a role whose consequences are yet to be studied. One thing is for sure: this new phenomenon is here to stay and is growing exponentially.





What's your struggle? Why identifying “what hurts” people is the common denominator for innovation? New business opportunities

Evidence has shown that understanding the social fabric and the dynamics of the local context, especially people's struggles and need for advancement, is a hotbed for innovative approaches.

When an innovative idea meets a fertile mind, disruptive innovation usually springs into action, identifying new hitherto underserved markets, creating new lucrative business opportunities, developing new territories and improving people's quality of life [67].

In his book *The Prosperity Paradox* [68], Harvard Business School professor Clayton Christensen, considered the most influential thinker in the world in 2011 and 2013 [69], discusses the **disruptive opportunity** that arises when, instead of looking at citizens as mere poverty numbers too uneducated or lacking resources to access services, the focus shifts towards the business opportunities that can meet their needs.

In his "Jobs to be done" theory, Christensen explains that **there can't be an innovative process without first finding out who the citizens in a certain territory are, what their needs and concerns are and "where it hurts"**. Some case studies show that certain factors must occur simultaneously: (i) **gain thorough knowledge of the needs and functioning of the local context**; (ii) **provide access to a product or service previously unaffordable or unavailable to a public deemed too poor or uneducated to be considered a consumer market worth serving**; (iii) **promote business models based on profitability rather than growth, for example, by leveraging the use of existing technology**.



In essence, this approach is an alternative to the traditional way of interacting with citizens through a welfare-based, top-down approach that relies of macro-trends and where individuality and closeness are not important. In this new perspective, **understanding the needs and struggles of citizens marks the difference between a good idea and an innovative one that has the potential to leverage progress by creating new jobs**.



In fact, *identifying the segments living in poverty or extreme poverty* [70], an exorbitantly high and growing percentage of the population in many countries, also offers the advantage of considering them as the subject and the solution to escape poverty and for territorial development.

To better understand this approach, we present three examples that illustrate the underlying principle and show how knowing the public's needs made a big difference and translated into new job posts and multi-million dollar businesses:

Las Clínicas del Azúcar

In Mexico, *Clínicas del Azúcar* is a new market that **offers health services to low-income people suffering from diabetes complications like blindness and limb amputation**. The *Clínicas* model concentrated on the specific needs of this population group and now offers access to high-quality health care services, psychological support and personalized follow-up at affordable prices. The initiative **successfully reduced the cost of public health care and curbed the disease's irreversible effects by 60%** [71].

MicroEnsure

MicroEnsure has pioneered the creation of an innovative type of insurance that **meets the needs of middle and low-income individuals in emerging markets**. After years designing and testing pilot products, MicroEnsure came up with a micro-insurance model that offers comprehensive coverage **to people in poverty or extreme poverty**, mobilizing external resources from telephone companies, banks and microfinance institutions to offer insurance. Today, MicroEnsure provides coverage to over **56 million citizens**[72]. In 2015 it won the *Financial Times* Transformational Business Award [73].



Airbnb

Airbnb is another great example of **disruptive innovation**. We relate it to citizen participation because, despite its global coverage, it does not own any property. It is users themselves who keep it running by actively participating in the Airbnb platform. **Airbnb identified an underlying need for millions of citizens that was not immediately evident**. Initially, its low-price business model provided access to affordable accommodation to a specific segment of travelers outside the hotel business. A few years later, its offering of online products is highly diversified, connecting with today's consumers and satisfying the needs of the most discerning customers. **In 2013, just five years after commencing its operation, Airbnb had 9 million associates offering and using its services, thus creating thousands of new jobs**[74].



The relationship between building trust and governance schemes

Experience has shown that needs should not necessarily be studied by focusing on the citizenry itself, at least not in a classic survey approach.

However contradictory it may sound, it is a proven fact that people do not always know why they hire a certain service or why they elect a certain government or leader. Often times the underlying reason has to do with identity and the idea that the option chosen will help us move forward.

So, we examined participation from different angles to ascertain how citizen actions can create impacts and change governance schemes. One such perspective was to identify good practices that could be replicated. Another one was the assumption that trust is a neutral value that citizens place in their governments, peers, companies or religious leaders. We identified a number of good practices that seek to increase transparency and allow citizens or organized entities to reuse data by developing applications for the common good (see boxes 3 and 4) [75].



Citizen-industry collaboration and the building of trust

A nice example of trust building with the private sector is Mesa de Buenos Vecinos de Sierra Gorda, in Chile. The *Mesa* initiative was created as a *community instrument for decision-making, expectation management and conflict prevention between the community and the mining companies that operate in the area* [76]. After a decade of operations, mining companies highlight the role of the Mesa as a vehicle for information to and from the community and in the development of high-impact collaborative community projects.

Building trust with the public sector

In Mexico, the National Commission of Protected Natural Areas promoted the *design of climate change adaptation strategies for protected natural areas* by inviting public institutions, civil society organizations and academia to participate in discussion rounds. These exchange spaces served the purpose of building trust between the different stakeholders [77], ultimately leading to the preparation of an adaptation program based on enhanced cooperation. The resulting 15 adaptation strategies were accompanied with a tool that determines social vulnerability to climate change from a gender perspective and identifies women's priorities in terms of climate change adaptation.

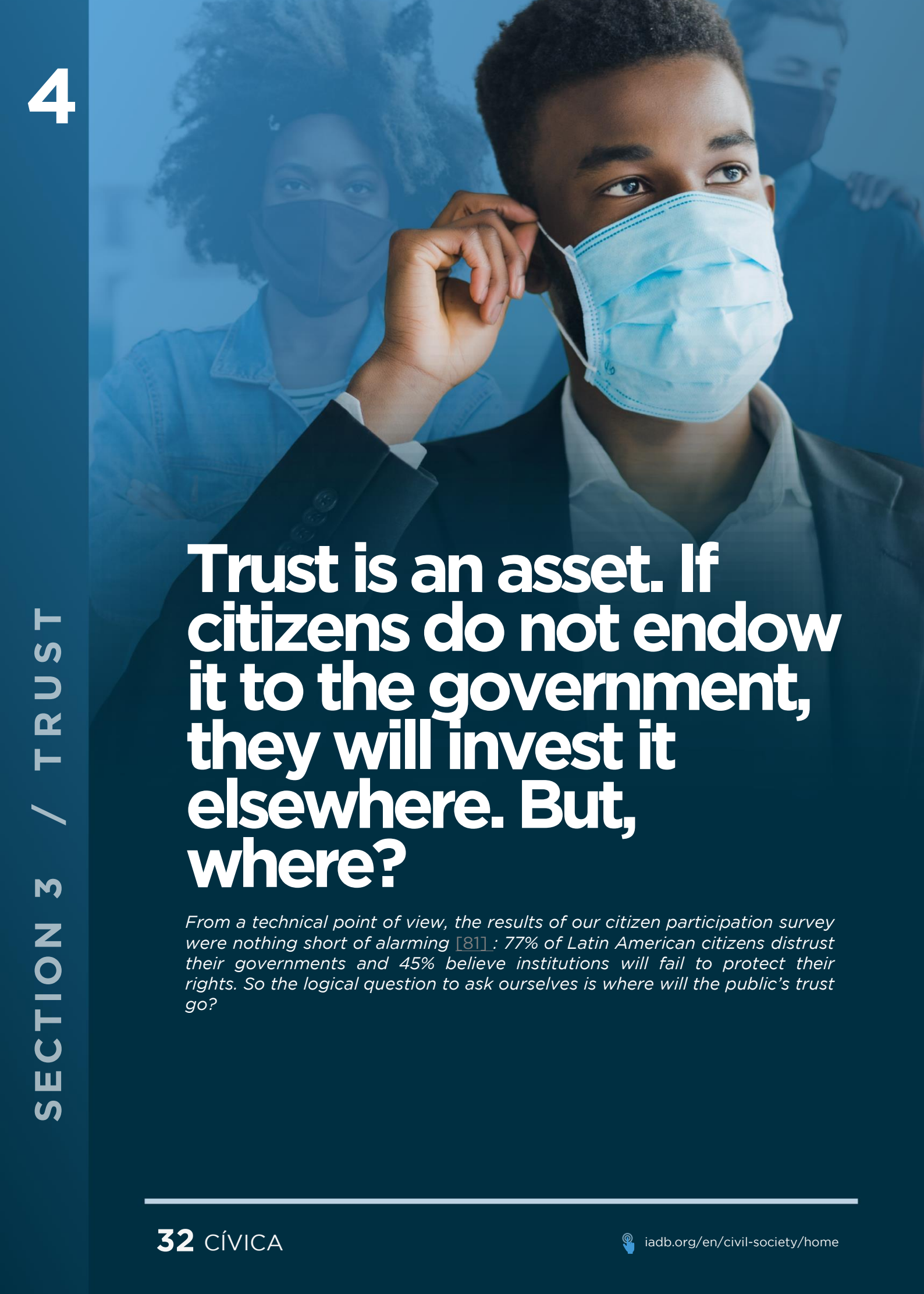
Open Data for Inclusion and Transparency in LAC

In Argentina, the Undersecretariat of Public Innovation and Open Government under the Ministry of Modernization decided to support provincial or local government work teams in the design and implementation of open data policies. The IDB Group in partnership with ILDA [78], an NGO that seeks to collaborate with the community in Latin American open data, led a *co-creation process with provinces interested in developing an open data policy*. The main purpose was to identify the needs and challenges provinces and municipalities have to face when starting an open data process, and prepare a Guide for Data Opening at Subnational Level [79]. The Guide provides the basic criteria for carrying out a data opening policy together with references to national and international good practices, a list of datasets for prioritization and tools to connect with key civil society organizations.

Big Data for the development of sustainable urban models [80]

The Getulio Vargas Foundation, with support from the IDB Group, has prepared a replicable and scalable mass data governance [pilot model](#) for the cities of São Paulo (Brazil), Miraflores (Peru), Montevideo (Uruguay), Quito (Ecuador) and Xalapa (Mexico). *The governance models developed will facilitate access to mass data for better decision-making in the areas of urban management and the evaluation of public policy effectiveness.*





Trust is an asset. If citizens do not endow it to the government, they will invest it elsewhere. But, where?

From a technical point of view, the results of our citizen participation survey were nothing short of alarming [81]: 77% of Latin American citizens distrust their governments and 45% believe institutions will fail to protect their rights. So the logical question to ask ourselves is where will the public's trust go?

We believe the potential growth and influence of religious institutions [82], and social media viewed as neutral tools may give us some clues. According to some case studies, **planning community/citizen participation** in a context of **sustained closeness to the people** is a major contributor to the trust building process[83].

We know that trust produces a wealth of proven benefits.



The following examples emphasize the need to mobilize all possible resources to pull people out of poverty. Collaboration towards the creation of sustainable solutions will be key, especially in identifying good practices that may be applied to the coming scenarios [86].

Citizens are more likely to trust their governments when these are capable of providing quality public services, anticipating new needs and responding accordingly. Trust can also underpin a project's sustainability by helping to contain risks.

When faced with natural disasters or health emergencies, trust is of the essence. In the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, the curve could only be successfully flattened when different factors came together, notably a citizenry that was confident in its leaders' efforts.

As mentioned earlier, trust is an asset that is placed in leaders and/or faith-based institutions and/or groups and/or peers. But if we want to measure it empirically, we must first define the specific kind of trust we are looking at: trust in the government, social trust, interpersonal trust or other related concepts like legitimacy or social capital [84]. Lack of consensus and the wide variety of participatory interventions, local contexts and findings further justify the need for developing clear theories that can be proven through methodologically rigorous testing.

The post-pandemic scenario seems very bleak, with 17 million jobs lost, more than 3.4 million immigrants, 43 million people falling into poverty and 53 million people falling from the middle class. From a citizen participation perspective, we believe these millions of people will have their sense of dignity, empowerment, visibility and trust gravely eroded[85]

After examining the pivotal role of trust in public governance schemes and the changes caused by a new hyper-connected citizenry capable of organizing itself spontaneously and leaderlessly behind a hashtag, we realized we needed to further delve into this relationship of factors. We teamed up with different universities and carried out experiments in behavioral economics [87] *to support better decision-making in a context where the already scanty resources should be invested as efficiently as possible.* Three experiments have yielded the first results:

1. BA Elige: Programs to improve cities from the citizenry. .

Findings:

- The program improves citizen evaluation of the government.
- No changes are observed in government transparency or efficiency.
- There are small changes in the way budget execution is perceived.



2. Buenos Aires Public Commitments: Dissemination of public commitments.

Findings :

- Citizens evaluate the city government more favorably and a positive effect is produced when authorities publicize their plans for future investments and show what has been already done.

3. Esa es mi cuadra: Individual awards delivered to neighbors who keep their street clean.

Findings :

- There is no statistical evidence to support the claim that individual awards improve citizen behavior .
- Individual awards seem to play against community organization.

As mentioned before, understanding the various meanings of trust and citizen participation at institutional and individual level is key. **We noted considerable variation in the way participatory mechanisms are institutionally designed and the way in which citizens perceive what they expect from participatory institutions** [88].


“Participatory institutions have two main components: an institutional design and an underlying incentive structure. Understanding the institutional design and the incentive structure of participatory institutions is relevant in all contexts, but particularly important when results have a political interest” [89].

For example, **variations in institutional design or citizen expectations will produce dissimilar experiences.** Therefore, **mapping incentive structures can help to understand the mediating variables that determine the impact of participation on political trust.**

Given the great variation between the context and design of the different studies, describing participatory governance mechanisms accurately is of the essence if we want to generalize and apply the findings to other contexts[90].

The work conducted in Latin America is incredibly detailed and thorough, probably even more than in other contexts. Interestingly, unlike the work carried out elsewhere, there is very little experimental evidence on any of the topics discussed so far. *One major problem concerning the evidence available is the difficulty to clearly attribute causality due to the common lack of a well-defined control group.*





Is citizen participation sparked by government regulatory frameworks or by its response to citizen necessities?

The evidence collected suggests that participation is not triggered by regulatory frameworks, or at least not those that seek citizen engagement per se within a classic governance model.

While this is a good way to ascertain the relationship between a government and the citizenry, the scheme falls short when the purpose is to foster participation.

Most governments in the region have adopted regulatory frameworks that promote a dynamic type of civil society participation^[91], under the premise that a higher level of citizen participation in public institutions will bring about (i) better social policy results from increased specialized knowledge about the real needs of the most vulnerable population, and (ii) deepened democracy by giving a voice to marginalized or vulnerable groups^[92].

In recent years, researchers like [Lindsay Mayka](#) have questioned the effectiveness of regulatory and legal frameworks in promoting greater citizen participation by themselves.

In her book *Building Participatory Institutions in Latin America* ^[93], Mayka argues that the success of political reforms resides in a crosscutting coalition between stakeholders who call for the effective implementation of such reforms. By contrasting and comparing the cases of Brazil and Colombia, Mayka comes to the conclusion that the equation is contrary to one would expect in a classic governance scheme: **when a service is provided that responds to citizen needs, participation emerges spontaneously.**

In Brazil, the legal reforms that gave rise to the Health Councils^[94] were supported by a wide spectrum of social actors (health professionals, municipalities, unions and the country's elites) and have a high level of sustainability. .

In Colombia, Local Planning Councils were instituted by law in 1991 and have now been established in half of the country's municipalities. However, the lack of incentives or motivation for citizens to promote and strengthen the institutional status of Local Councils has resulted in low operation and functionality.





Civic inclusion: When planning effective citizen participation adds value

58% of infrastructure projects [95] incur cost overruns when social conflicts break out. Overruns reach 69% [96] or approximately US\$ 1.179 billion and delays can last 5 years on average.

At the same time, **46% of conflicts arise during the feasibility, planning and design phase**. Effective citizen engagement in the design of new products, projects or policy programs has the potential to achieve more equitable and sustainable results, assist in mitigating risks of conflicts during project implementation, increase the chances of success and reduce the costs associated to potential conflict [97]. The region has numerous examples of good practices, some of which are reviewed below:

Citizen inclusion and the environment: Strategy for Reducing Emissions for Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+)

As part of the implementation of the [REDD+ Strategy in Costa Rica](#), a number of in-person and [online](#) dialogue (information workshops) and pre-consultation processes were conducted to take the specific measures required to include women's groups, indigenous people's representatives and small forest producers. An interesting innovation resulting from the environmental and social assessment workshop was the request by indigenous groups to conduct independent process, for which purpose the National Cultural Mediators Program was created [98]. The program opened spaces for discussion about the REDD+ initiative with community members, which included cultural elements and the world view of indigenous peoples in at least six of the country's eight indigenous peoples.

Youth participation: [New Employment Opportunities for Youth Program](#) (NEO).

The NEO initiative seeks to close the gap between the demand for qualified personnel and the characteristics of training programs traditionally offered to young citizens. NEO created an Employability Ecosystem as a space for strategic multisector partnerships between actors with the power to influence public policies regarding youth employability. The Employability Ecosystem helped to melt away the initial reluctance of private companies that refused to participate in activities organized exclusively by public institutions, and enriched professional training and guidance programs with innovative methodologies resulting from the citizenry's specific technical expertise, to suit the needs previously identified in the population and the private sector. To date, NEO has mobilized more than 5,500 companies that now offer internships and jobs to youth in the region .

In all cases, the common denominator of these initiatives is the knowledge and inclusion of citizen needs, which allows developing ideas and realizing a person's need for progress that would justify changing their behavior.

On one hand, *citizen engagement contributes to local empowerment in resource management through tools like participatory accountability monitoring and the transparency of procurement processes*, among others [99].

Participatory monitoring, which often reflects citizens' urge for transparency in public investments, is highly reliant on technological platforms. Some major examples are [MapaRegalías](#), [MapaInversiones](#) and the [WiConnect](#) georeferenced platform.



Platforms for participatory monitoring of public investments to raise funds

[CivicLytics](#) “Big data analytics” is a citizen observatory of Artificial Intelligence (AI) that focuses on listening to, analyzing and processing millions of citizen perceptions and concerns while supporting more inclusive decision-making, fostering investment ecosystems in specific areas, and contributing to a better design of public policies and innovation opportunities.

[InvestmentMap](#) is a data display and management platform that seeks to promote transparency and efficiency in public investment projects, contracting and the traceability of public resources transferred by the central government and managed by regional and local governments. In all its versions, the initiative has included modules for direct user participation in the form of queries and collaborative generation of information after signing up to the platform. Once registered, users can access information and interact with executors or the entities responsible for monitoring public investment by means of questions, proposals or feedback.

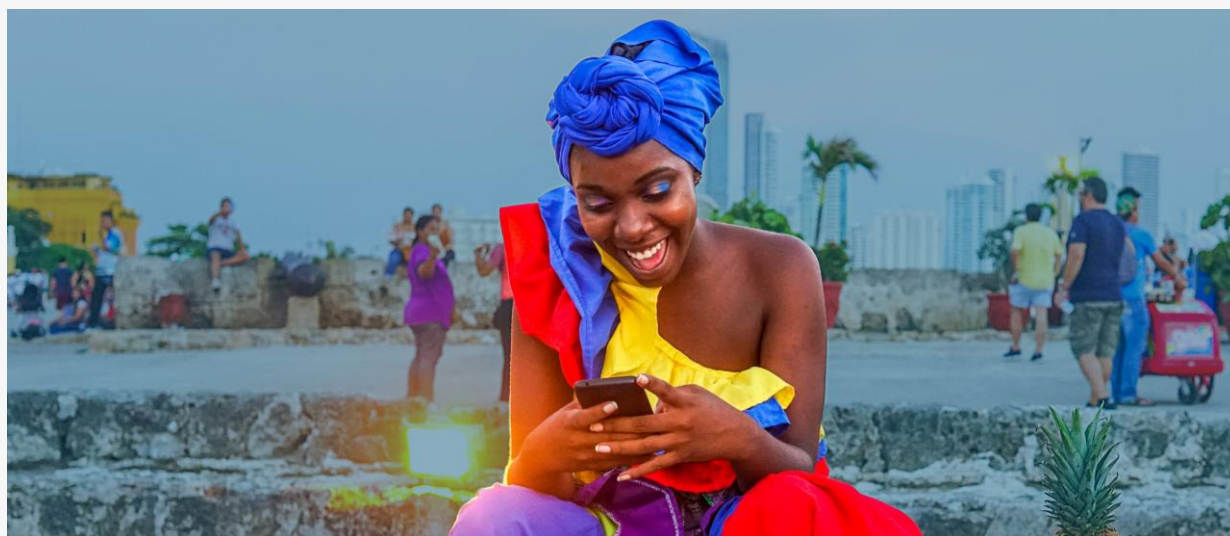
[MapaRegalías](#) is the pilot program of InvestmentMap for the extractive sector. In Colombia, the introduction of MapaRegalías improved material project progress by 8% within one year from its implementation. Similarly, the number of irregularities detected and reported to a control institution jumped from 57 in 2013 to more than 1,000 in 2016.

For its part, “WiConnect” allows knowing who does what, where and how in Latin America and the Caribbean, to add initiatives and resources to the development of shared-value agendas with governments, the private sector and civil society.

On the other hand, citizen engagement in decision-making processes responds to the basic citizen need of *feeling empowered, respected and included as part of the solution and not the problem*. The inclusion of citizens in institutional decision-making processes and participatory planning and budgeting mechanisms are some of the tools used to contribute to investment sustainability (see box 12).

Socialization and consultations for the Quito Metro.

Quito's first metro line has been built in close consultation with the citizenry in order to ensure proper progress of the works. This coordination has helped to minimize the negative impacts of construction thanks to public monitoring, which is considered an active player in overseeing adequate progress. The meetings held with civil society allowed Empresa Metro de Quito to inform citizens of some impacts and citizens to make recommendations regarding (i) the best dates to carry out specific activities; (ii) actions to avoid interfering with retailers; (iii) gradual closure of communal spaces to avoid significant impacts on users; and (iv) school vacation periods.



A woman with dark hair tied in a ponytail, wearing a light blue surgical face mask. She is looking off to the side with a serious expression. The background is a blurred crowd of people, suggesting a public setting. The overall color palette is teal and blue.

Give me an *example* to stand and I shall move the world

Perhaps the most effective way to put a theory into practice is by using practical examples. We have identified good practices [100] where citizen inclusion in the form of information, dialogue, public consultations, collaboration and partnerships adds value to initiatives that may be replicated with practical examples.

We have classified the examples into seven criteria or guiding principles for good practices: efficiency, innovation, relevance, timeliness, transparency, accessibility and sustainability [101]:

Efficiency[102]: As part of an investment operation for the transportation sector in **Costa Rica**, citizens were supported and encouraged to form Routine Road Maintenance Microenterprise Partnerships, saving up to four times the cost per kilometer compared to traditional maintenance [103].

2. Innovation[104]: The [CivicLytics](#) experience in **Latin America and the Caribbean** was recognized by Forbes Magazine, the Atlantic Council and other mass media[105] not so much for its AI tools but for its innovative approach. The work logic was inverted so, instead of proposing answers, millions of people were listened to in order to learn and understand their worries and support the prioritization of investments, public policies and initiatives. Another example is [ExploraLatam](#), a platform that operates throughout the region and has developed the first map of civic technology and open data initiatives for producing evidence on the value these initiatives create for the region. For its part, [WiConnect](#) allows live georeferenced mapping of organizations to determine who does what, where and how in the region.

3. Relevance[106]: The Regional Recycling Initiative that originated in **Brazil, Panama, and Colombia**[107], brought together different stakeholders from the recycling sector (recyclers, recycling industries, consumer goods producers, municipalities, knowledge institutions and civil society organizations) and became a venue for dialogue and action to create effective economic inclusion models for recyclers[108].

4. Timeliness[109]: In **Argentina**, the Subnational Data Guide was developed soon after the adoption of Law No. 27275 on Access to Public Information. The Guide was an initiative of the Government of Catamarca and received support from the Latin American Open Data Initiative. Citizen participation was instrumental in identifying the needs and challenges facing the opening process and, at a later stage, adapting the Guide's data opening tools to the local context.



5. Transparency[110]: As part of the preparation of the Strategy for Reducing Emissions for Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+), the **Costa Rican** government shared meeting minutes and workshop reports with participating citizens. Then, all the information was posted online, thus extending the principle of transparency to the entire population[111].

6. Accessibility[112]: The **Mexican** government presented its Nationally Determined Contributions after conducting multiple dialogues with different actors, notably the citizenry, to define targets by sector. The government sent invitations to all experts referred by Professional Associations and other entities from relevant sectors.

7. Sustainability[113]: The *Agua de Páramos Fund* has achieved financial visibility thanks to the contributions of local institutions and companies, and the support of indigenous and farmer movements of the Tungurahua province in **Ecuador**.



So, How to plan effective citizen participation?

*The World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group conducted a comparative study on **citizen participation issues** regarding several international financing institutions and **consolidated the leadership of both the World Bank and the IDB Group** in the integration of these issues into their initiatives and operations. [114].*

The experience gained from these trial-and-error experiences indicates that good planning can make the difference between multiplying the benefits or reduce them, with the associated negative financial impact [115].

In fact, the experience and the results of causal experiments in effective citizen participation matters are highly valuable resources, as long as they include stories of success and draw lessons when things do not go as planned. For both hypotheses, no distinctions are made between small or medium civil society organizations like foundations, associations, stakeholders or multilateral development agencies like the IDB Group.

Planning must include the following actions:

- **Information** on the project based on questions about citizens' biggest concerns (not just what project executors consider relevant) designed with resort to a previous data collection mechanism.
- Active, ongoing **Dialogues** with stakeholders in line with agendas that measure progress;
- **Public consultations** through well-structured plans shared with the public in processes that elicit citizen opinions on development policies, strategies, projects and programs;
- **Collaboration** with universities, think tanks, innovation hubs and/or territorial associations to create knowledge products;
- **Partnerships** to mobilize external mass data on human and economic resources that can be applied in order to multiply positive territorial impacts .

The above, which is part of the training resources offered by the IDB Group[116], adds to and sometimes defines the advancement of government development agendas, the implementation of private sector operations or the strengthening of civil society with a view to promoting territorial development[117].

Once the previous steps have been evaluated, good planning for strategic engagement with citizens kicks in almost naturally. We know that the value added by participation increases the potential impact on local and regional development [118].



The following are some examples that illustrate each level:

- At the **information** level **collecting information** deserves particular attention. Capturing information is important if we want to identify people's concerns and perceptions, and to determine what worries them. This approach was also shared by [Forbes Magazine, the Atlantic Council and dozens of mass media across the region](#)[119].

Why invest funds in identifying perceptions?

As mentioned earlier in this publication, "**Perception is Reality**". Hundreds of studies have shown how perception of a certain topic, political party or situation determines reality. Perhaps the best example occurred at the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, when the perception of a potential food insecurity and shortage of domestic cleaning products like toilet paper led to a mass depletion of supermarket shelves in practically every country.



In most cases, information is collected via surveys that select groups of people to gain perspectives on specific issues. The big advantage of surveys is that they reveal concrete issues. However, a major challenge is that the information collected is not always current, and their cost prevents conducting them more than once or twice a year.

Conversely, the use of AI allows reaching millions of people in real time, but it has the disadvantage that data alone often seems chaotic rather than a value-adding attribute. If complemented with technical knowledge, the ethical processing of big data concerning people's perceptions and concerns allows greater flexibility when adapting the design of a public policy or operation.

Another example is [INFOCARBONO](#), a platform sponsored by the Peruvian government with support from the IDB Group that shares information on greenhouse gases (GHG) broken down by year, sector and methodology to help both citizens and decision-makers to present proposals and action plans aimed at reducing GHG emissions^[120].

- At the **dialogue** level seems very evident, but it is usually confused with others. Also, in terms of effective citizen planning, an important distinction needs to be made. Dialogues that create shared value are those that follow a work agenda permitting to discuss and agree on the central topic, the periodicity, the topics for discussion in the different phases, the day, venue and modality of the meeting (in-person and online), and the progress made. Dialogue must be conceived as an active, ongoing and regular exchange process, just like thematic tables that allow direct exchanges between two or three actors (e.g. government, the public and the private sector).

The IDB Group has ample [experience in direct and high-level dialogues](#): it organizes annual meetings under the auspices of the Bank's senior management that include representatives from foundations, social enterprises, start-ups, organizations, professional associations and representatives from indigenous and Afro-descendant groups, among others ^[121]. Each year, new knowledge products are created in agendas about borderline issues regarding development in the region.

Another platform implemented by the IDB Group was [ConSoC \(civil society consulting groups\)](#), which added tremendous value at the beginning and all countries maintained its structure by organizing regular meetings with member entities.

However, as new technologies brought transaction costs down and citizens adopted a new role as drivers of change, exchanges between these organizations lost relevance. In 2020 an evaluation of the platform revealed deficiencies in the sense that ConSoCs were not always representative of other stakeholders in the country nor added the value required to advance one or more pillars of the Country Strategy in all countries^[122]. The evaluation helped to update exchanges, especially with a view to possible COVID-19 exit scenarios.

In addition, we drew baselines regarding good dialogue practices in sectors like Climate Change. One good example is the [Public-Private Dialogue on Costa Rica's Nationally Determined Contributions \(NDC\)](#), which incorporated a holistic approach to include specific groups (notably indigenous communities) in order to promote effective participation and empowerment. The work identified the communities' main concerns, risks and opportunities and conducted regular meetings to follow-up on the agreements reached ^[123].

- At the **public consultations** level includes formal public processes organized into stages that respond to regulatory frameworks and legal obligations, as well as to universal best practice principles, with a view to collecting inputs about a certain project or initiative.

The consultation level is often confused with the dialogue level. The difference is that dialogues are not bound to a legal obligation, whereas public consultations are. One important thing to avoid is the “*consultation fatigue syndrome*” that results from an excess of consultations or the lack of feedback from participants in the process. In summary, in its preliminary phase, the consultation requires:



Preparation

a. Collect information: Prior to any consultation process, we must ensure we *know the context*. This requires collecting information on people's perceptions and concerns. The identification of disputes with neighboring communities is also relevant for effective citizen planning.

b. Provide information: The documents that communicate the project's scope and nature must be in a format that is appropriate for the target audience (especially regarding the language, the style and the means utilized), thus guaranteeing transparency and increasing trust among participants.

c. Conduct dialogues: Contrary to the general belief, dialogues are different from consultations. Examples are dialogue tables with a clear agenda that allows measuring progress in discussions, or thematic dialogues by gender, where women can contribute their own approaches to improve a project's design and execution.

In anticipation to this, a publication and its subsequent updated version^[124] examine more than 300 regulatory frameworks applicable to the extractive, energy, forestry, fishing, and infrastructure sectors of **Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela.**

A good example in the transportation sector are the consultations held in relation to the First Metro Line in Bogota, Colombia, where the publicizing and consultation rounds initially included in the Relocation Plan were increased from 5 to 22 to allow more exchange opportunities with the population affected and to maximize citizen participation. In addition, thanks to the high degree of awareness of citizens and stakeholders, two additional meeting rounds were conducted with the affected and interested parties, both with high participation rates (1,008 participants in the first round and 1,299 in the second) ^[125].

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS AND TOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE PLANNING

A [study by the IDB](#) shows that 68% of all infrastructure projects affected by some sort of social and/or environmental conflict have as common denominator deficiencies in the *project information provided to the public*, and a *failed understanding of people-related information* during the decision-making process. The same study revealed that many of the communities that were not initially hostile to the project changed their position after realizing they were not considered in the decision-making stage or information about the project was not shared with them^[126].

In the same vein, the IDB's Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism established that 47% ^[127] of the people who filed a claim did not have sufficient or timely information on the project or did not have access to it ^[128]. This trend is consistent with the fact that 1 out of 2 conflicts arise during the feasibility, planning and design phases^[129].

A good example of this level appears in [Public Consultations: Step by Step: 300 Regulatory and Legal Frameworks Applicable in Latin America and the Caribbean](#). Here the focus was placed on explaining in the clearest and simplest way possible how to plan effective in-person and online public consultations for building trust among participants: generate timely information, understand the perceptions of stakeholders for a better understanding of the context, tools for mapping organizations and key individuals, open spaces for dialogue, ensure the applicable legislation and regulation are included in the consultation, particularly legislation and regulations pertaining to sectors like mining, fishing, forestry, infrastructure, energy and the environmental impact assessment system, and those applicable to prior, free and informed consultation as established in ILO Convention 169 for Indigenous Peoples.



- At the **collaboration** level regarding effective citizen participation planning implies identifying the local knowledge that adds value in order to maximize territorial impacts. For example, collaboration with local universities to conduct behavioral economics experiments, seminars and technical exchanges via webinars, workshops, training and agendas for thematic tables, among others.

- A good example is the work conducted with universities and technical associations to carry out experiments in behavioral economics^[130]. For its part, the Deep Decarbonization Pathways in Latin America and the Caribbean (DDP-LAC) program opened a high-level technical debate in **Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, México and Peru** around the implementation of the Paris Agreement, by creating national-international work teams between academic institutions^[131], with the purpose of creating deep decarbonization pathways. Civil society involvement in debate forums permitted to identify the investments required to meet the medium and long-term targets, as well as the policy actions needed for an inclusive and sustainable transition^[132]

- The last level to consider is **partnerships**. It consists of actions that mobilize human and financial resources for access to external, open data to provide actionable solutions at local level.

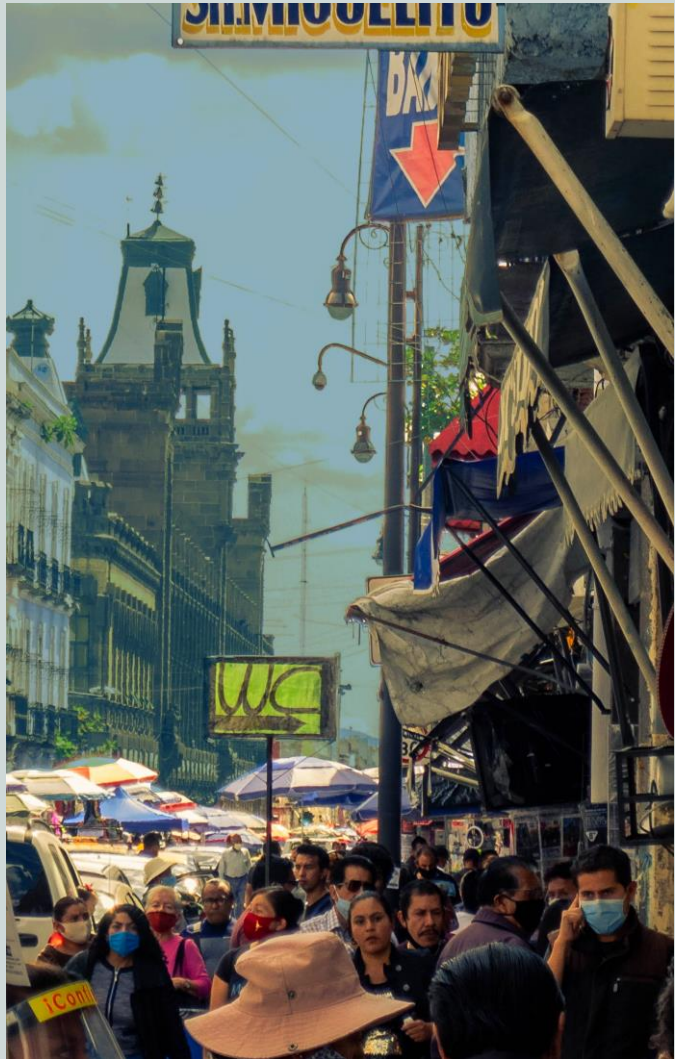
One such example is the Water Funds currently operating in **Brazil, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru**. The Funds are created by actors from civil society, the private sector and public institutions who acquire obligations and responsibilities (including the contribution of human and financial resources) that are specified in the trust contract^[133]. One of the most outstanding funds is Fondo de Páramos y Tungurahua, which since 2014 covers all administrative and investment costs and capitalizes up to 60% of regular contributions.

DATUM:

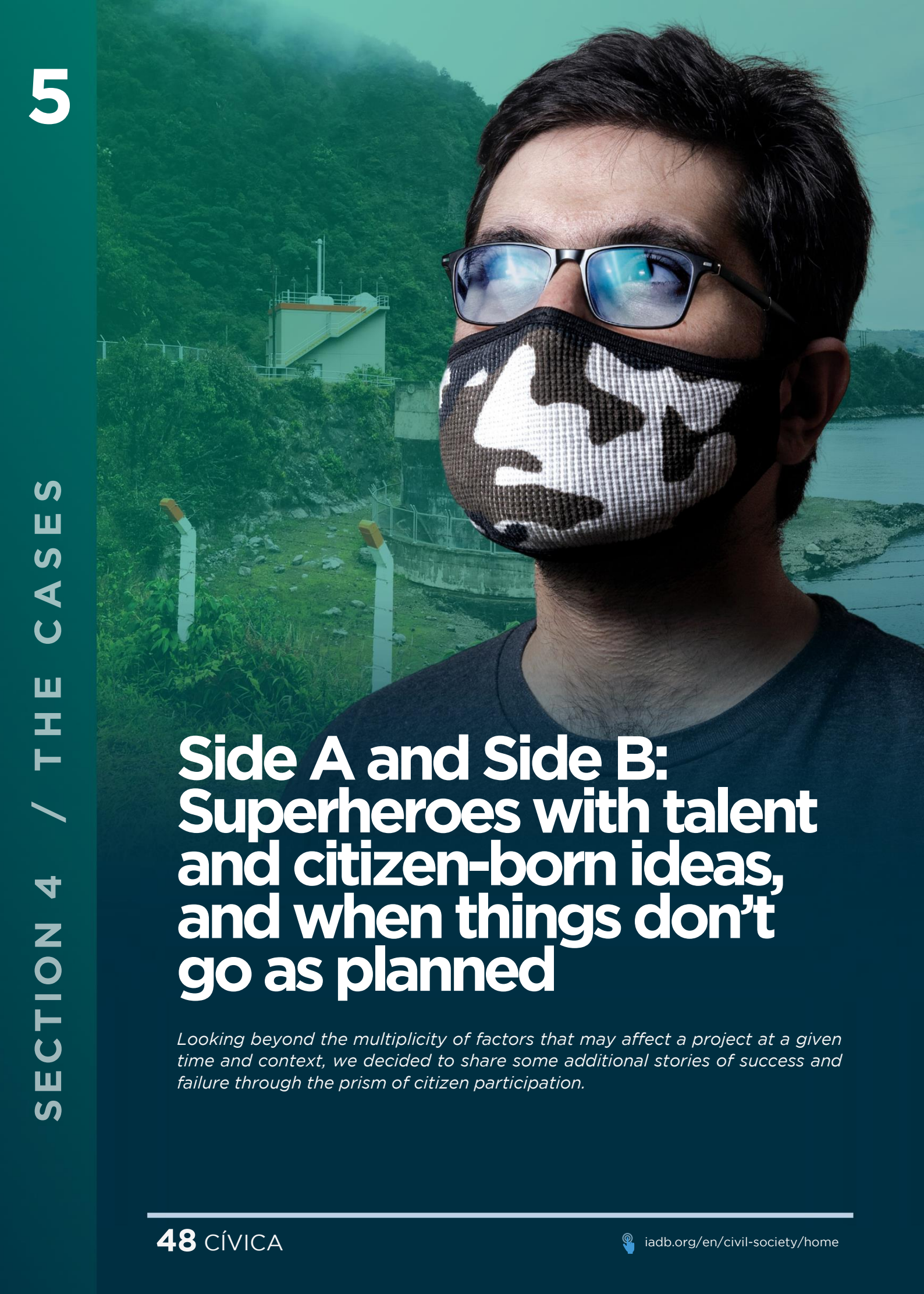
Collect information, foster dialogue, include collaboration actions to alleviate public transportation

1. The case of Santiago de Caballero shows how the combined use of collaborative methodologies and free software tools can create information at a low cost and with citizen support for better city planning. The collective mapping covered 29 urban bus routes, 25 branch routes and 6 state routes in just five days.
2. The success of this project is proof that collaboration between civil society, the private sector and the government can contribute to the development of their regions by introducing digital technology.

Between 1950 and 2018, the urban population of Latin America and the Caribbean doubled in size, from 41 to 81%, making it the world's second most urbanized region^[134]. While greater urbanization is normally associated to more development, the rapid growth of Latin American cities has put enormous pressure on infrastructure and public services, notably transportation systems, which have to deal with mounting congestion, longer travel time, increased associated costs, higher energy consumption, polluting emissions and accidents, urban deterioration and social exclusion ^[135] ^[136].



DATUM is a digital platform that collects, processes and publishes data on urban mobility. The platform was the launch pad for *Mapeando Santiago*, a project that focused on citizen participation and the understanding of transport user needs^[137]. University students used different applications to record georeferenced data for the different routes, bus stops and public spaces that required interventions. Civil society organizations prepared a complementary map of accessibility and security conditions for the elderly and people with disabilities. Finally, citizens participated in a survey to better know the users of the public transportation system and use their insights to improve the service. Open-source applications and platforms were used to develop a technological solution. The student team utilized MapMap to record the different bus routes and Mapillary to collect images of the public space along the routes, and processed data using the GTFS format so they could be shared via Google Maps.



Side A and Side B: Superheroes with talent and citizen-born ideas, and when things don't go as planned

Looking beyond the multiplicity of factors that may affect a project at a given time and context, we decided to share some additional stories of success and failure through the prism of citizen participation.

Side A**When things go as planned::**

The Superheroes of Development Award recognizes the work of executing agencies that implement successful and innovative solutions [138], we extracted talent and ideas from the public to improve lives, such as:

1. **“Innovation comes flying”**, developed under the [Regional Roads Integration II Program](#) [139], in **Honduras**.

- a. **Drones:** Drones were used to collect information on works progress.
- b. **Dissemination:** Free-access multimedia information was disseminated on-line for use by the citizenry and financial/government agencies.
- c. **Transparency:** Video evidence of the project execution chronology is a step forward in transparency and accountability for citizen validation of public investment works.

2. **Comprehensive Transformation of La Chacarita Alta neighborhood, Paraguay:** The project evidenced the need for a specialized social and economic team to develop a comprehensive diagnosis of the area of intervention, with participation from the community [140].

3. **Water and Sanitation Improvement Program / Rural and Remote Areas, Peru:** the [PROCOES](#) program improved water and sanitation services for some 200 communities. It faces the challenge of fostering citizen participation during the design and execution phase to increase service ownership. The PROCOES program implemented “Executing Nuclei”, which consist of representatives from the community and companies specializing in small-scale rural projects. This helped to reduce both costs and execution time [141].

4. [Sustainable Tourism Development Program for the Salta Province, Argentina:](#)

Local committees were created that included institutions, associations, local and neighbor groups organized into multi-sector working tables, thus providing opportunities for dialogue and decision-making around issues deemed crucial for the program. This ensured the ongoing support from the actors involved and the alignment of the measures taken with local needs[142] [143].

5. [Global Entrepreneurship Network, El Salvador:](#) the [Regional Entrepreneurship Network](#)

promotes coordination between entrepreneurs, thus facilitating the exchange of good practices and collaboration between members[144]. The creation of spaces for interaction like strategic partnerships or networks between agencies and institutions with a common topic allows improving inter-actor coordination by leveraging their knowledge and expertise.



6. Rural Economic Development Program^[145], **Guatemala**: the program involved the community along the entire project execution cycle in order to incorporate their opinions and inputs. Along this line, it is important to note that the actions of IDB water and sanitation experts underscore the effectiveness of dialogue and consultation processes to adapt interventions to the community's needs ^[146]. For example, the Rural Water Supply and Waste-Water Management Program organized a series of Dialogue, Socialization and Sensitization sessions with the wayuu consultation table aimed at tightening its bonds with the community. The sessions allowed presenting the aqueduct and sewer network project as a real solution to potable water access problems.



Projects require the design of strategies that ensure effective citizen/community coming together to better understand the program and its objectives.

7. Macambira-Anicuns Urban Environmental Program, Brazil: A dialogue space was created for discussing the municipality's Master Plan: "Transferring the Right to Build"^[148].

Sometimes, urban and social infrastructure works face environmental challenges caused by the unregulated occupation of the urban space. **According to experts, dialogue is an effective way to find alternatives to expropriation.**

8. Building trust: the case of water, Basic Sanitation, and Electrification Program for the Colombian-Pacific Region, Creating and participating in an inter-institutional working table with local leaders from the very onset allowed sensitizing the community about program benefits, fostering social engagement and strengthening bonds with the community^[149]. A good practice identified in projects implemented in areas highly distrustful of the government is to prepare a strategy that prioritizes the values of the territory and promotes trust with the community.



Side B **When things go wrong:**

According to the publication "Four Decades of Infrastructure Project-Related Conflict"^[150] project interruptions, delays, cost overruns and cancellations are a consequence of deficient citizen participation planning. Along this line, a study by Harvard University in conjunction with Queensland and Clark showed that **operations in the order of 5 billion dollars lose as much as 20 million dollars per week due to social conflicts**^[151].

The IDB's Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism (MICI), which analyzes and resolves disputes arising from non-compliance with operational policies, has established that during 2010-2019, 72% of the cases reviewed involved indigenous communities or community groups and that the alleged damages are of a very diverse nature^[152].

Conflict is an integral part of human relationships. Hoping for it not to occur and planning under that premise is a big mistake. Every organization engaged in development project implementation has enough accumulated experience that is part of its competitive advantage in knowledge and differentiated experience. Part of that experience are the cases where things did not go as planned ^[153].

The following are two cases where, despite all the efforts and ample technical experience, operations were interrupted due to citizen conflict that rendered project execution impossible [154]

1. *Mareña Renovables*[155] **in México:** members of various indigenous communities residing in the State of Oaxaca submitted a request to the MICI alleging environmental and social harm caused by the Mareña Renovables Wind Project[156]. The project considered construction and operation of a wind farm with total capacity of 396 MW. All relevant studies were conducted and the Environmental and Social Management Report (IGAS) states that the community received information on the objectives and scope of the operation. However, consultations focused on obtaining exploitation and easement agreements and the results were not properly recorded[157] [158].

2. *Alto Maipo Hydroelectric Power Project (PHAM) in Chile :*

The objective of the PHAM was to support the construction, operation and maintenance of two hydroelectric plants, with installed capacity of 531 MW. In January 2017, the MICI received a request from neighbors of the San José de Maipo district detailing the socio-environmental harm caused by the lack of a social impact assessment and non-compliance with the obligations incurred by the borrower, among them: (i) the increased vehicle traffic – beyond the levels agreed–impacted the number of visitors, thus affecting the area's tourist activity; (ii) the alteration of the flow rate of the rivers concerned, especially regarding the area's recreational and economic activities; and (iii) the lack of adequate consultation and information dissemination processes. While the MICI is still conducting the [investigation stage](#), from a citizen participation perspective we would like to highlight two important approaches within the very good actions already undertaken[159]:

Lessons learned: Focus on what is relevant, avoid polarization by concentrating on the main underlying issue. For example, in these two cases the relevant issue is the country's energy matrix:

A. Dialogues with relevant agendas: Some key aspects of citizen participation are to provide timely information, capture trends, hold dialogues with the public regarding the reasons for opting for one project or another.

In the previous examples, the real issue to discuss with the public is the country's energy matrix, avoiding polarization and reducing the debate to "say yes or no to the project."

B. Including civil society/ citizenry actors like academia and trade associations in complex discussions like the future of the country's energy matrix offers the possibility of reaching new agreements with other important social nodes.



- [1] <https://time.com/5710268/chile-protests>
- [2] <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/americas/chile/report-chile/>
- [3] <https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=4842>
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- [12] <https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/Home/Reports>
- [13] <https://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index>
- [14] The 14 variables considered are culture and community, economy and employment, education, governance, social inclusion, infrastructure, environment, mobility, poverty, health, security, procurement, tourism and housing.
- [15] Fast Company <https://bitly/3pg4xfm>
- [16] <https://aonews.com/article/3ffac92680fd4db2aee7a28ea96228dc>
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- [28] <https://www.pnas.org/content/115/37/9216#sec-2>
- [29] https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/IO892en_V2_012915.pdf (2013)
- [30] https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/insights/IO892en_V2_012915.pdf (2013)
- [31] V. CIVICA article on Social Unrest.
- [32] The exact number reported is 1,035,093.
- [33] In Barbados, 22% of citizen exchanges are about corporate economic security, followed by education access and governance. Health security has fallen to number 8, with an average of just 3% since July.
- [34] <https://covid19-cividytics.citibeats.com/#/>
- [35] <https://covid19-cividytics.citibeats.com/#/>
- [36] <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/09/what-covid-19-means-for-edtech-latin-america/>
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- [100] Good practices are identified using evaluation parameters established by the OECD Development Assistance Committee and parameters issued from the IDB Group's experience.
- [101] For more examples, see Governments and Civil Society Advancing Climate Agendas (IDB, 2019).
- [102] Understood as the degree of achievement of the engagement objective and the achievement of expected results (eg. the action allows generating and/or collecting information)
- [103] As per the comparative analysis conducted by the National Roads Council (CONAVI) for the execution of the same manual routine maintenance tasks of the national road network. Manual routine maintenance requires recurrent inspections, which translate into cost overruns. For further information, see: <https://www.iadb.org/en/project/CR-L1065>

- [104] The goal is for the operation to incorporate engagement with non-traditional sectors and the use of innovative tools (eg. products based on new technologies or with disruptive approaches)
- [105] V. <https://wiconnectiadb.org/en/news-opportunities/>
- [106] Summoning stakeholders in a timely manner so they can inform themselves and participate before final decisions are made.
- [107] For further information, see: <https://latitud.org> https://www.iadb.org/en/project/RG-G1010_y_https://www.iadb.org/en/project/RG-T2050
- [108] To date, in Buenos Aires a total of 6,000 urban recuperators have been formalized and organized into 12 cooperatives that recuperate some 70,000 tons of recyclable materials per year.
- [109] The practice must take into account the political priorities and the legal framework of the area where it is developed.
- [110] Stakeholders must be able to dynamically contribute to the decisions regarding the concepts and implementation of the operation.
- [111] For additional information see: <https://blogs.iadb.org/conocimiento-abierto/en/opening-climate-agendas-good-practices-access-information/>
- [112] People, stakeholders and/or groups identified as target audience can access the practice without imposing any socioeconomic, physical or cultural conditions.
- [113] The practice is conducted periodically or is established and institutionalized, and has a steady allocation of funds that guarantees continuity.
- [114] V. Engaging Citizens for Better Development. Independent Evaluation Group, Washington, DC: World Bank. (World Bank, 2018)
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- [127] See Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism (MICI)
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- [129] V. Graham et al.
- [130] V. See the note on behavioral economics experiments in this publication.
- [131] Under the program, local technical teams were trained in the use of prospective models with collaboration from international teams of experts. For example, the Bariloche Foundation of Argentina collaborated with the Center for International Research on Environment and Development, from Francia, the Universidad del Pacífico from Peru worked with the University of Tennessee, United States.
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- [140] The Comprehensive Transformation of the La Chacarita Alta Neighborhood of the Metropolitan Area of Asunción project (PR-M1032). Other similar experiences are: PR-L1084, PE-X1004 and GU-L1006.
- [141] The implementation of the so-called "Executing Nuclei" contributed to better adapt intervention services.
- [142] Other similar experiences are: JA-G1001, ME-M1091.
- [143] Other similar experiences are: PN-M1027, ME-T1295, CO-L1119, CH-M1062 and GY-L1058, NI-L1083 and ES-T1179.
- [144] Other similar experiences are: RG-M1231, PR-L1084.
- [145] Other examples that demonstrate the effectiveness of these recommendations are: In Mexico, the Sustainability of Water Supply for Rural Communities Project (ME-L1147) highlighted the importance of incorporating the socio-cultural singularities of the different regions into the country's social strategy; in Paraguay, the executing team of the Water and Sanitation Program for Rural and Indigenous Communities Program (PR-L1022) saw the need to re-design sanitary units based on the community's complaints, and therefore asked community leaders and social support company representatives to add their recommendations to the terms of reference, thus creating a sense of co-responsibility among the different users.
- [146] In the same vein, the Water and Sanitation Program for the Municipio de Pasto (CO-L1028) reported the difficulties during the execution of the aqueduct improvement project due to community distrust. Difficulties were eventually overcome thanks to a dialogue and consultation process that established the pros and cons of including a micro-measurement element in the project (fear of privatization or increased tariffs versus greater water consumption awareness in each household). The dialogue facilitated the introduction of control mechanisms for proper and rational water consumption and the community launched a campaign against uncontrolled use.
- [147] The Macambira-Anicuns Urban Environmental operation (BR-L1006) financed the construction of a Linear Park that includes urban and social infrastructure like street paving, sewerage, health and education units, and faced the environmental problem of unregulated occupation of urban spaces. The high cost of expropriation and the successful project completion led the team to look for alternatives through dialogue.
- [148] The Water, Basic Sanitation and Electrification Program for the Colombian Pacific Region shows how enabling spaces for ongoing dialogue with the community can ensure good project execution, especially in areas highly distrustful of the government. In particular, the actions prior to project commencement aimed at promoting social engagement via inter-institutional working tables with leaders and representatives of local, regional and national organizations reinforced trust with the citizenry.
- [149] V. See Lessons from Four Decades of Infrastructure Project-Related Conflicts in Latin America and the Caribbean (IDB, 2017).
- [150] "The Cost of Conflict as Interpreted by Corporations" Harvard, Queensland y Clark. "Conflict translates environmental and social risk into business costs" D. Franks, R. Davis, A. Bebbington, S. Ali, D. Kemp, M. Scurrah.
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- [154] For details of the MICI resolution, see <https://www.iadb.org/en/mici/complaint-detail-2014?D=MIC-ME-2012-053>
- [155] In particular, the request mentions threats to: (i) their self-government system and the physical integrity of communities and their leaders; (ii) their land, territory and resources; (iii) their lifestyle, cultural integrity and traditional knowledge; (iv) the environment and biodiversity; and (v) their food security and traditional livelihood. See <http://idodocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=38811283>
- [156] The MICI's Compliance Review Report observed non-compliance to the Operational Policy on Environment and Safeguards Compliance (OP-703), the Access to Information Policy (OP-102), and the Operational Policy on Indigenous Peoples (OP-765).
- [157] As a result of the conflict resolution process and in order to settle the controversy, the Bank Administration prepared a work plan to implement the project-specific recommendations contained in the MICI Report: (i) create an independent register for the project aimed at communicating progress and publishing mandatory dissemination documents; (ii) hold regular meetings with the borrower in order to clarify the status of the contracts for exploitation-land ownership of the communities affected.
- [158] See <http://idodocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=EZSHARE-1800453186-687>



The contents and the inputs used to build this publication, as well as its contents, do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the IDB Group or its Boards. These are not recommendations or forecasts, but rather tools for challenging the *status quo* and promoting strategic dialogue between the actors of development of Latin America and the Caribbean.



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2021