Digital government toolkit

Digital Government Strategies: Good Practices

 españa: Red México Abierto / Open Mexico Network

The OECD Council adopted on 15 July 2014 the Recommendation on Digital Government Strategies. The Recommendation provides a set of 12 principles structured around 3 pillars. The OECD Secretariat is developing a Digital Government Policy Toolkit to support OECD member countries and non-member adhering countries with the implementation of the Recommendation. This practice was submitted by the government of Mexico to be considered as a good practice in the implementation of one or more of the principles contained in the Recommendation.

**Description of the practice:**

**Organisation:**
Digital Government Unit, Ministry of Public Administration

**Name of the practice:**
Red México Abierto / Open Mexico Network

**Principles implemented:**
Principle 3 – Create a data-driven culture in the public sector

**Description:**
Red México Abierto is rooted in the idea that innovative practices and the expertise to deploy them is ill-distributed, highly-centralised, and hardly reaches subnational governments. Practices such as publishing open data, contracting open source solutions, or hosting civic innovation events, seldom happen in cities or states in Mexico. On the other hand we believe people, government officials and civil society representatives, possess the expertise and willingness for innovation to happen at the subnational level.

Red México Abierto is an open platform for cooperation among municipalities and states with the Federal government for sharing knowledge, tools and resources to facilitate the publication of Open Data in Mexico and enhance its impact, based on the Open Data National Policy.

Red México Abierto intends to boost new models for reducing cost and effort-duplicity at the subnational level across the country when investing in technology aimed at using and publishing data.

In 2015 the Network’s main objective is to foster greater collaboration among government levels across Mexico while making the process of opening-up data and innovating less daunting for subnational government officials.

The target are public servants interested in implementing innovative practices within cities with a population larger than 100 thousand people and during their administration’s first year or public officials at the state level within the first four years of the administration are the key audiences to participate in Red México Abierto.
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Red México Abierto initially launched in September 2014 with a pilot phase in 3 states (Morelos, Jalisco and Puebla) and 4 municipalities (San Pedro Garza García, Zapopan, San Luis Potosí, and Xalapa); in February 2015 a new phase was launched, now 26 states and municipalities are part of the Network.

In 2015 the work to be undertaken is to test and deploy the toolkit designed in during the pilot phase in order to:

1) Group cities and states with similar needs to open data thematically, reducing uncertainty when launching an open data initiative locally under 4 themes: Resilience, Public Security, Cadastre information, and Mobility; and

2) Clearly demonstrate the impact open data and open source technological solutions could have for boosting innovative practices at sub-national governments.

The Coordination of National Digital Strategy prepared a business case in support of the Open Data Policy becoming an Executive Order, the Open Mexico Network is the subnational component of the final approved presidential decree.

- The draft document was open to the public, receiving more than 1,300 comments.
- It was revised by the legal department of the Coordination of National Digital Strategy
- It was revised by the legal department of the Ministry of Public Administration
- The final draft was revised by the Open Data Council, which is comprised of representatives from academia, private sector and civil society
- The Draft was vetted by the SubComission of Open Data (official coordination body comprised of General Directors of Technology from government Ministries)
- The final Draft was then revised by Mexico’s Legal Council (Ministry level institution in charge of analysing and proposing legislation)
- The Executive Order was published in the official gazette on February 20, 2105.

Red México Abierto launched the First Generation, post-pilot phase on February 20, 2015 and by October 2015 the Ministry would have signed more than 25 MOUs with subnational governments to collaborate towards implementing the Open Data Policy in their jurisdictions.

Red México Abierto, as part of the Open Data Policy, is implemented jointly by the Ministry of Public Administration and the Coordination of National Digital Strategy of the Office of the President.

- There is a Sub-Commission of Open Data in charge of assessing and following the implementation of the Policy at the National level
- There is an Open Data Council (comprised of members of academia, private sector and SCOs) that follow, evaluate and give recommendations regarding the implementation of the Policy.
- The Network is accompanied by a series of technical allies, both within and outside government, that advice on the relevance of topic-specific information to be open by municipal and state governments; such as UNODC, the National Statistics and Geography Institute, ITDP, Google, the World Bank and Waze, among many others.
Inside each of the 26 municipal and state governments part of Red México Abierto, the Governor or Mayor, have designated two high-ranking public servants for implementing the open data strategy. Usually these roles have been assigned to the Chiefs of Staff or equivalents and to the Chief Technology Officer, who work locally with semi-formal Open Data Council (comprised of those responsible of information and data management in various government offices, the transparency and access to information government liaisons, government auditors, local representatives of the National Statistics and Geography Institute, and representatives of the local agencies generating relevant data.

For more:

www.mxabierto.org
http://www.mxabierto.org/
www.Datos.gob.mx

**Results**

Xalapa was the first municipality to upload open data at datos.gob.mx in November 2014; San Luis Potosí and San Pedro Garza García uploaded during December 2014; Zapopan, has previously uploaded at datamx.io (a civic open data platform), and eventually to datos.gob.mx on June 2015.

Jalisco worked a solution that integrates Jalisco’s evaluation indicators to the open data portal, they launched in June 2015 their own Open Data portal based on the national example: www.datos.jalisco.gob.mx

Puebla and Morelos uploaded datasets during 2015.

During the pilot phase, the National Digital Strategy, through Red México Abierto, participated and collaborated in hackathons with the local government, to stimulate data usage and socialization.
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Participation and collaboration in events for the socialization of the strategy: IN: MX, Dataton San Pedro, hackathon Xalapa, Laguna Innovative, CIAPEM 2014, among others.

Content development and basic resources to municipalities and states identified in the pilot phase on datos.gob.mx and mxabierto.org.

MOUs signed by the Public Administration Minister, the mayors and governors.

Currently working on piloting 4 new data packages for publishing subnational data: Resilience, Public Security, Mobility and Cadastre information with more than 15 technical and expert partners.

Development

Design: 2013/09 to 2014/03

Open Data National Policy

Started with the implementation of an Open Data Readiness Assessment with the World Bank at the national level, and followed with the development of the draft policy, governance framework, and business case and implementation strategy for the national Open Data Policy.

The policy was opened to public comments online and public discussion sessions.


Testing: 2014/04 to 2015/02

Data Squads

Started in April 2015 with the ‘Data Squads’ Project, a team of information architecture, development and public policy experts that during 6 weeks, implemented the draft policy in 10 Federal government agencies. The result was the publication of 100 quality datasets in datos.gob.mx and the building of open data related capacities in the agencies involved.

2015/09 to 2015/02

Red México Abierto / pilot phase

Following the scheme created for the national government and taking advantage of the knowledge gathered by the Data Squads, Red México Abierto’s pilot phase launched its pilot phase. Red Mexico Abierto worked with 4 cities: Xalapa, San Pedro Garza Garcia, Zapopan, and San Luis Potosi; and 3 states: Jalisco, Morelos and Puebla.
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Methods: The initial Pilot phase led to three main learnings before the final deployment, documented by USAID and shared publicly on the following link.

The main learnings were:

1. Commitments at the executive level are key to leverage success of implementation.
2. Local governments IT teams do not have enough political power to enforce openness policies.

Confusion with finding relevant data sets to open was detected; hence on the second phase 4 specific topics based on data standards guide the opening processes of newly adhered cities and states.

Implementation: The official launch of the Policy was done through an Executive Decree published on February 20th, 2015. The Implementation Guide for Local Governments to follow the Open Data policy is based on the Official Federal Guide published in the official gazette on June 18, and compulsory for federal government agencies, subnational adherence to the Open Data Policy is, until now, voluntary and a matter of political will. The Decree only dictates that subnational governments through MOUs can work collaboratively, exchange best practices and tools with the federal government to harness local open data strategies that boost an environment for interoperable data while creating new opportunities to innovate locally.

- Subnational governments participating in this initiative have already appointed two open data points of contact and established an informal Open Data Council within their governments, replicating the federal experience.
- The 26 municipalities and states are working on their initial Data Inventories and are currently prioritizing based on 4 categories informed by internationally accepted data standards and formats: Resilience, Public Security, Mobility, and Cadastral Information, these inventories and developing their Open Data Plans.
- The open data plans, along with dataset publications from all municipalities and states part of the Second Phase of Red México Abierto are expected before Oct 26, 2015.
- From then onwards, municipalities and states will work towards increasing data quality and promote concrete use cases throughout 2016 in partnership with the technical allies.

Tools:

Workshops, based on a Theory of change-approach to solving problems with open data were established.

Diverse tools in open source were develop to accompany and diminish the costs for cities and states to start opening up data.

CKAN works as the platform for the open data catalogue at the national level to be found at datos.gob.mx.
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**Resources:** Budget allocated to this project for documentation and development of digital tools to be found at mxabierto.org and developed by Codeando México were part of a USAID grant.

The National Digital Strategy within the Office of the President of Mexico has allocated human resources for follow-up and technical assistance via the Data Squads and project managing.

**Diffusion and scaling:** [www.mxabierto.org](http://www.mxabierto.org) will be the repository of stories, case studies and best practices following the progress of all the governments involved in Red México Abierto.

The initiative is partly support by USAID through funding for the documentation of the progress made by the governments involved.

Monthly webinars are made to accompany the process with the points of contact.

The Open Data Network has yet to see expansion and replication as a model to share federal government based resources to subnational governments.

**Partnerships:** Civil society, Academics and Research Bodies and Public sector Organisations

Partners: World Bank, Open Data Institute, OKFN, USAID, Codeando Mexico

Nature of the partnership: World Bank helped with the initial readiness assessment for an open data policy

ODI and OKFN helped with the implementation of the Data Squad

USAID has funded and documented the initiative

Codeando Mexico has been the main technical advisor and partner

**Lessons learned**

Subnational governments are eager to collaborate with global and national stakeholders that could bring innovative practices and technologies without new costs.

As citizens’ expectations grow across the country, municipal and state-level authorities sometimes lack the human resources, technical infrastructure and leadership that support innovative processes for improved governance. In order to leverage the possibilities for municipal and state governments to innovate Mexico’s Federal Government through the National Digital Strategy with the Ministry of Public Administration, launched the pilot phase for the project Red México Abierto in 2014.

So it has advanced on several fronts regarding open government, open data and public innovation:

1. Designing an open data portal and piloting a crowdsourced National Policy on Open Data, to be soon published as a presidential decree;
2. Launching the pilot phase of Red México Abierto aimed at researching and learning how to lower the entry level barriers to implement open data strategies at municipal and state
Digital government toolkit levels. This includes the design of a set of tools, templates, and applications as a service for boosting local innovation that in turn respond to the findings on technical, political, legal, and human capacity needs of said local administrations.

In 2015 the Mexican Government launched a new phase for Red México Abierto, which further facilitates and promotes the implementation of open data strategies with clearly outlined, impactful, and scalable uses by linking local issues with data as input to solve them. Red México Abierto is based on the National Open Data Policy Executive Decree and will also result in piloting national data packages at the subnational level to improve supply and demand for open data for better public service delivery and evidence-based policy at every government level.

Conditions required: Political will at the highest level and public servants at mid-level eager to do things differently.

Additional information: