

Country case: Social witnesses in Mexico

Description

Since 2009, social witnesses are required to participate in all stages of public tendering procedures above certain thresholds as a way to promote public scrutiny. In 2014, these thresholds are MXN 336 million (approximately USD 25 million) for goods and services and MXN 672 million (approximately USD 50 million) for public works.

Social witnesses are non-government organizations and individuals selected by the Ministry of Public Administration (SFP) through public tendering. SFP keeps a registry of the approved social witnesses and evaluates their performance; unsatisfactory performance potentially results in their removal from the registry.

When a federal entity requires the involvement of a social witness, it informs SFP who designates one from the registry.

As of January 2014, SFP had registered 39 social witnesses for public procurement projects, five Civil Society Organisations and 34 individuals. This number has grown from 5 social witnesses in 2005 to 40 in 2014.

SFP notes that “the monitoring of the most relevant procurement processes of the federal government through social witnesses has had an impact in improving procurement procedures by virtue of their contributions and experience, to the point that they have become a strategic element for ensuring the transparency and credibility of the procurement system”. An OECD-World Bank Institute study (2006) indicates that the participation of social witnesses in procurement processes of the Federal Electricity Commission (Comisión Federal de Electricidad) created savings of approximately USD 26 million in 2006 and increased the number of bidders by over 50%.

Source: OECD (2014), [“Compendium of Good Practices for Integrity in Public Procurement: Meeting of the Leading Practitioners in Procurement”](#), OECD, Paris.

Public Procurement
Principle: **Participation**

Procurement Stage:
All phases

Audience: **Policy Maker,
Procuring Entity, Civil
Society**