

CHAPTER 15

Capacity Development for Changing Mindsets in Latin America

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development entails a different way of approaching the social, economic, and environmental challenges that our societies face today. Realizing the 2030 Agenda requires adopting a holistic view of the multi-dimensional nature of sustainable development that takes into account the synergies and trade-offs among the SDGs. It requires governments to be innovative in the way they tackle these challenges.

Against this backdrop, the Latin American Center for Development Administration (CLAD), as an organization dedicated to working on issues related to state reform and public administration, has developed a set of fundamental principles that can guide public administrations in the region to be more open to change and innovation, and thus achieve better results in the delivery of public services. More specifically, the Ibero-American Charter on Innovation in Public Management¹⁷¹, approved by all CLAD's member countries in 2020, defines the key concepts and practices that can facilitate innovation in government in the Ibero-Latin American region. It also outlines a set of pillars, principles, criteria, and fundamental components that are needed to promote innovation. It includes recommendations on how to enact the above principles and promote innovation at all levels of government.

The Charter highlights that: “innovation in management involves rethinking, adapting and transforming policies, services, institutional architectures and plans for training of public servants, as well as promoting an entrepreneurial and innovation culture based on the needs of citizens”¹⁷². For this reason, training and training capacities of public institutions must be strengthened, creating the conditions for training institutes, such as public management schools, to be renewed in each country to update public servants’ mindsets. Indeed, public servants for the most part have been working according to certain governance paradigms for years. These yielded good results in the past. However, as people’s expectations towards their governments have grown and countries are faced with increasingly complex challenges, new mindsets and behaviors are required. Education and lifelong training are critical in promoting new mindsets. Otherwise, the critical challenges of the 21st century and the SDGs will be tackled by public servants who have mindsets of the 20th century anchored in paradigms of the 19th century. The development of new mindsets and capacities not only affects the way public administration works, but also generates a climate of greater trust of people in their governments, which in turn can lead to more engagement and co-creation of public services for the benefit of all.

The Charter also underscores the critical role of fostering an organizational culture of innovation in the public sector by introducing incentives for collaboration and experimentation and by promoting exploration and interaction among officials within the public sector and with outside stakeholders, including academia, think tanks and the private sector.

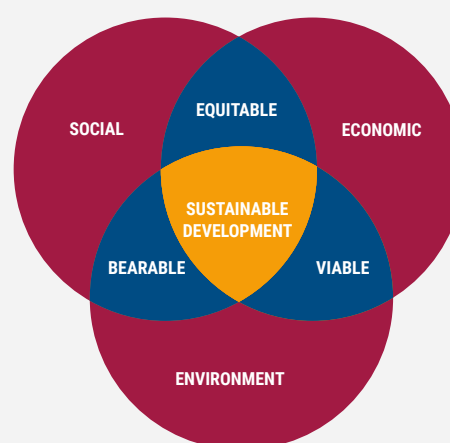
The Ibero-American Charter on Innovation in Public Management is guided by the [Ibero-American Charter for Public Service](#)¹⁷³, which was developed together with UN DESA and approved in 2003 by the V Ibero-American Conference of Ministers of Public Administration and State Reform. It establishes the need for public administrations to work in different ways and promote a change in mindsets among public servants. The Charter highlights the critical role of public servants for the effective delivery of services and the need to put in place policies that can ensure and develop the needed capacities of public servants.

In its work to formulate specific proposals around the 2030 Agenda, CLAD is also reviewing strategic plans and guidelines for education and training to help implement and monitor the SDGs in Latin America. This is done in partnership with countries from the region and international organizations that are specialized in capacity building. Transformational leadership, including changing mindsets and behaviors, and digital transformation, will be part of the training and education programs offered by the Ibero-

American Schools of Administration and Public Policies. Ensuring that the administrative culture of Latin American countries is aligned with those of the 2030 Agenda is essential to achieving the SDGs. Thus, CLAD will guide the design and implementation of specific training plans regarding the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs for the region. To do so, training programs should apply a model certification and homologation of professional competencies and refer to the critical experience of some country members.

CLAD is also working on redesigning and implementing a governance system for the achievement of the SDGs. It is guiding a team of 11 academics and experts from Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Spain, El Salvador, Portugal, Venezuela, and Colombia, who are working on the definition of the essential pillars of an Ibero-American Governance Index (IGI) that can help countries formulate the necessary policies for the realization of the SDGs.

Figure 15.1: Scheme of sustainable development: at the confluence of three constituent parts



Source: Johann Dréo, 2006

The Ibero-American Governance Index will contain two types of analysis, based on the one hand on the data of the countries in the region (number and types of public employees, institutional diversity, selection procedures, disciplinary regime ...) and, on the other hand, on the qualitative assessment formulated by experts of how public administration operates in different countries as well as their challenges and strengths. Ultimately, the objective is to contribute to measuring specific parameters so that governments have new instruments for evaluating and improving their public administrations and, consequently, their public policies¹⁷⁴.

Endnotes

173. <https://clad.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Carta-Iberoamericana-de-Innovacion-10-2020.pdf>

174. Ibidem, pg. 5

175. <https://clad.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Carta-Iberoamericana-de-la-Funcion-Publica-06-2003.pdf>

176. F. Velaquez, “Medir la gobernanza iberoamericana: Artículo escrito por D. Francisco Velázquez”, 25 January 2021, available at <https://clad.org/2021/01/25/noticias/medir-la-gobernanza-iberoamericana-articulo-escrito-por-d-francisco-velazquez/>