



CIMTRA: Creating Accountability in Mexico

Through its USAID-funded Mexico Partnership for Municipal Development, ICMA International helped set up the Citizens for Transparent Municipalities (CIMTRA) program (www.cimtra.org.mx) in 2002. Organized by more than 20 Mexican nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and coordinated by the Centro de Servicios Municipales Heriberto Jara, Locallis, Accede, and ICMA, CIMTRA aims to assist in building a culture of accountability among local governments through transparent actions toward society.

To achieve this, ICMA and participating NGOs designed a 37-item questionnaire covering nine topics to evaluate a municipality's level of transparency, generating a score from 0 to 100. The questionnaire, application, and scoring manuals provide guidelines to municipalities to enable them to take the necessary steps to improve their score.

The questionnaire measures (1) information provided to society by the municipal government; (2) the way communications between government and society are established and operate; and (3) transparency in governmental services. The nine areas measured are:

1. Public expenses
2. Public works
3. Material goods
4. Management
5. Urban issues
6. Citizen councils
7. Citizen participation
8. Municipal councils
9. Customer service



By the end of 2014, the CIMTRA tool had been applied to 219 municipalities and 16 delegations of the federal district, representing more than 44.9 million people; 63% of the municipalities had been evaluated at least twice. As a result of the program, municipalities have adopted new local resolutions, improved existing citizen committees, publicized previously classified information, and increased citizen interest in local affairs. NGOs that had previously never worked together began cooperating on this initiative, along with business groups. The results have become a reference for national policy makers, particularly those involved in issues of transparency and accountability.

ABOUT ICMA

ICMA (International City/County Management Association) is the premier local government leadership and management organization worldwide. Its mission is to create excellence in local governance by developing and advancing the professional management of local government. ICMA has been doing this since 1914 by providing technical and management assistance, training, and information resources to its members and the local government community. ICMA International was created in 1989 to further the ICMA mission worldwide. Since then it has successfully designed, implemented, and evaluated hundreds of international projects, establishing a solid reputation for its practical, hands-on approach to meeting global challenges.

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