



# Final Learning Exercise Summary Report

City of Mendoza, Argentina – Action Plan 2021-2023

Maria Candela Grec

## Section I. Local context

In the last four years, where the implementation of the First Open Government Action Plan took place, the City of Mendoza has faced significant challenges and undergone profound changes, marked by decisive action in the environmental sphere. By declaring an environmental emergency, the city stood out as a pioneer and adopted concrete measures based on evidence and data. This technical approach involved considerable efforts in planning, execution, and monitoring, meeting international standards and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The pandemic presented unique dilemmas that the city addressed with differentiated strategies, emphasizing leadership focused on health and the economy. The municipal management actively engaged, creating early protocols that contributed to a swift economic recovery.

The management excelled in urban transformation, concentrating efforts on projects that improved squares, parks, streets, and public spaces. Despite temporary setbacks, long-term planning was prioritized to generate lasting benefits. In the field of public safety, territorial, technological, and participatory strategies were implemented, strengthening citizen collaboration and leading the fight against crime. Despite the provincial responsibility for security, the city took an active role in ensuring a secure environment.



In terms of economic development, the city experienced significant net growth, supported by initiatives such as Ciudad Activa, the Urban Reactivation Plan, and the promotion of various economic sectors. In the social sphere, the city established itself as inclusive, promoting the active participation of people with disabilities and developing projects that eliminate barriers and inequalities. Additionally, the identity of the city was strengthened as a tourist, gastronomic, and cultural destination, receiving international recognition and leading the gastronomic revolution in the region.

We believe it is important to emphasize the significance of a comprehensive approach in municipal management, addressing multiple challenges and reaffirming the commitment to the well-being, development, and active participation of the Mendoza community.

## **Section II. Action Plan Co-creation Process**

### **2.1 Review of the co-creation process**

The co-creation process of the Open Government Action Plan in the City of Mendoza demonstrated various strengths, as well as some significant challenges. Among the main strengths, the inclusion of prestigious Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), such as the Latin American Center for Human Rights, Nuestra Mendoza Foundation, and local universities, stands out in the joint design of commitments. This diverse collaboration ensured a broad representation of perspectives and specialized knowledge in the creation of public policies.

The commitment to conduct citizen consultations through various mechanisms, such as the Participa Mendoza Portal, citizen participation forums via Zoom, and in-person citizen consultation, demonstrates a significant effort to involve the community in the decision-making process. This contributed to active participation and the incorporation of citizen voices in the development of the Plan.

As for the challenges, it is important to note that citizen participation, although diverse and extensive, may have limitations in terms of total representativeness. Despite the various channels used, ensuring the inclusion of voices from all sectors and groups in society remains a constant challenge in these processes.

Furthermore, the long-term effectiveness of these commitments will depend on proper implementation and follow-up. It is essential that associated institutions, both governmental and non-governmental, fulfill the commitments made to ensure the ongoing success of the Action Plan. The diversity of mechanisms used for citizen participation and the inclusion of various perspectives are positive aspects that could serve as a model for institutionalizing open government processes in the future.

### **2.2 Recommendations for the co-creation process**



- **Diversification of Participation Channels:** Expand and diversify citizen participation channels to ensure more complete representation. In addition to online tools, consider in-person methods that can reach segments of the population that may not have easy access to digital participation.
- **Incorporation of Marginalized Voices:** Implement specific strategies to guarantee the inclusion of voices from marginalized communities or with less access to participation processes. This could include closer partnerships with community organizations and specific campaigns to encourage the participation of these groups.
- **Continuous and Educational Communication:** Establish a continuous and educational communication strategy to inform citizens about the co-creation process, its stages, and the importance of their participation. This may include awareness campaigns before and during the process, highlighting how your contributions will impact public policy.
- **Ensure Actionable Commitments:** Ensure that the commitments generated are specific, measurable, and actionable. This will facilitate effective implementation and allow for easier monitoring of results, thus building a solid foundation for the continued success of the Action Plan.
- **Continuous Evaluation and Feedback:** Implement a robust continuous evaluation and feedback system that involves all stakeholders. This will allow us to identify areas of improvement in real-time and adjust strategies to optimize the effectiveness of the co-creation process in future iterations of the Open Government Action Plan.

## Section III. Action Plan Commitments

### 3.1 Review of the implementation of commitments

The three commitments we undertook within the framework of the First Open Government Action Plan were significant and transformative for the City of Mendoza. In the implementation of the Climate Change Laboratory, it is worth highlighting the collaboration between various academic and civil society institutions, such as UNCuyo, U. Mendoza, UMaza, CONICET, the Bar Association, and the Architects' Association. Despite the inherent challenges of interinstitutional projects, experimentation, participation, and innovation were achieved to address the issue of climate change.

Regarding the "Ojos en Alerta" (Eyes on Alert) Program, the focus was on citizen participation through an app to collaborate in the fight against crime. The commitment emphasized the importance of coordination with residents, chambers of commerce, and other social actors. Although public safety is a constant challenge, the program mobilized more than 3500 residents, demonstrating the effectiveness of community participation.



On the other hand, the Transparency Plan served as a tool to create a transparent ecosystem in the municipal sphere. Through accountability mechanisms and open data, efforts were made to strengthen institutions and consolidate civil and political rights. The challenge lay in establishing open and accessible channels, but the plan has contributed to improving the quality of information, disclosure, and citizen participation.

In general, the three commitments faced common challenges, such as coordination among various institutions and the need to actively involve citizens. The implementation of this first plan has contributed to advancing the strategic vision of Open Government in the City of Mendoza, standing out for experimentation, citizen participation, and the strengthening of transparency. However, as open government represents a long journey toward the cultural change of states, there are lessons learned that will guide future action plans toward greater effectiveness and sustainability in achieving an Open City of Mendoza.

### **3.2 Commitment recommendations**

- Implement a continuous evaluation system that allows monitoring of the progress of commitments in real time. This would facilitate timely adjustments based on the results and challenges identified during implementation.
- Ensure the active participation of key stakeholders not only in the planning and design of commitments but throughout the entire action plan, especially in the implementation of commitments. This includes both civil society and relevant experts, ensuring diverse perspectives and specialized expertise in specific thematic areas.
- Develop training and awareness programs to strengthen the capacities of both the government and civil society in areas related to the commitments. This could include topics such as citizen participation, environmental management, and transparency.
- Harness the potential of technological platforms to facilitate citizen participation and enhance transparency. This could involve the development of more intuitive and accessible applications, as well as the integration of emerging technologies to strengthen the impact of commitments.
- Adopt an iterative approach to design commitments in future action plans. Build on lessons learned from previous commitments to create more ambitious, realistic, and aligned commitments with the changing needs of both citizens and the government.