



# Final Learning Exercise Summary Report

## Peñalolén, Chile Action Plan I 2021-2024

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### Section I: Open Government in Context

The Illustrious Municipality of Peñalolén is a political-administrative entity that governs the commune of the same name, located in the eastern sector of the Metropolitan Region of Santiago (RMS). Unlike other Latin American cities, the city of Santiago is a conurbation of 48 municipalities out of the 52 in the RMS, without a single city-wide government. Even though they are autonomous entities, these municipalities are highly dependent on the Metropolitan Region Government and, primarily, on the National Government, due to the characteristic centralism of the Chilean political system<sup>2</sup>. Peñalolén is viewed as a commune with a medium-high level of development<sup>3</sup>, with a projected population for 2024 of 272,913 people, all of whom are inhabitants of urban areas, 13% of whom identify as indigenous peoples, and 3.2% of whom are in income poverty<sup>4</sup>.

The Municipality of Peñalolén has been recognized for both its participatory experiences and its efforts to implement mechanisms for local public innovation<sup>5</sup>. Said experiences were distinctive from the two administrations of Claudio Orrego (2004- 2012) and the three consecutive terms of mayor Carolina Leitaó (2012-2024), both of whom were part of the same political party, which helped maintain a focus on constant participation and community engagement for 20 years<sup>6</sup>.

Indeed, the municipality has participated for several years in projects aligned with the idea of a municipal-level open government, like the Citizen Perspective Project (Proyecto Mirada Ciudadana), led by the Government of Cerro Largo, Uruguay, and financed by the European Union, which sought to strengthen institutional capacities and create spaces for dialogue among municipalities in the Southern Cone<sup>7</sup>, also hosting the International Seminar “Gobierno



Abierto y Gobernanza”(Open Government and Governance), held in 2018 with the participation of various local governments from the region<sup>8</sup>. At a national level, the Municipality of Peñalolén, alongside the Municipalities of Vitacura, Cerro Navia, Recoleta, Santo Domingo, and Talagante, participated in the implementation of one of the commitments of Chile's Third National Action Plan to the OGP, which consisted on the formulation of a Model for the Implementation of Open Government at a Municipal Level, which was published in December 2018<sup>9</sup>.

Finally, the Municipal Development Plan, presented by the previous administration (2018-2025) established within its strategic axis, “Peñalolén Más Cerca” (Peñalolén Closer), all actions on participation, transparency and open government<sup>10</sup>, which contributed to the formation of the Directorate of Control and Open Government, the unit currently in charge of the OGP process in the Municipality.

Both the linkage with the national OGP initiative and its prominence and recognition in the subject were significant advantages when starting the Local OGP process. Being the first sub-national government to join the initiative, and given its networks with national civil-society and international organizations, the municipality had consolidated support agents, including CEPAL, UNDP Chile, Chile Transparente (Transparency International Branch), Academics from the Universidad de Chile, the Adolfo Ibáñez University (located in the municipality), and the Academy of Christian Humanism University, supported the project as members of the Open Government Committee and as consultants in the action plan design process. The municipality also integrated representatives of local social organizations from the outset, taking advantage of the historical mobilization present in the commune<sup>11</sup>, which were essential in prioritizing activities for the Action Plan<sup>12</sup>.

## Section II: Action Plan Co-Creation Process

### 2.1 Co-creation process review

The multi-stakeholder forum, called the Open Government Roundtable by the municipality, was formed by inviting various actors from civil society, both from the Peñalolén commune and from the metropolitan and national levels<sup>13</sup>. It was made up of representatives of community and functional organizations from the Peñalolén commune (Communal Council of Civil Society Organizations, Union of Neighborhood Councils, Security Council, youth and senior citizen associations); representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations at a national level (Chile Transparente Foundation, Ciudadano Doce Foundation); representatives of Municipal Employee Associations; Representatives from Academia (Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez, Universidad de Chile, Academy of Christian Humanism University); and two external observers, the Tribu Foundation and CEPAL, who provided technical support for the work carried out<sup>14</sup>.

There is evidence of at least two general meetings of the Governing Board Open during the



design process: the formation meeting, held on April 29, 2021, and the working meeting, held on May 11, 2021<sup>15</sup>. In this last meeting, the municipality's strategy for developing the plan was presented, and a group workshop was held to gather information on the commune's situation and possible actions to consider when defining the plan's commitments. The entire process, as well as the steps taken by the municipality to create the action plan, were shared with the Open Government Committee: both the planning of citizen dialogues and the execution of the citizen consultation to prioritize commitments<sup>16</sup>.

In turn, the municipality created a website for the Local OGP<sup>17</sup> process and organized a microsite to conduct citizen consultations for the prioritization of commitments<sup>18</sup>. Once the Committee was established, two mechanisms were put in place to support the participatory development of the Action Plan: a series of citizen dialogues and an online consultation, both of which aimed to prioritize the actions and milestones to be developed within the initiative. The results of both processes were compiled and published, providing feedback on both participatory processes and establishing the results obtained as guiding lines of work<sup>19</sup>.

Two points became evident that needed review in the lead-up to the design of a new action plan. Firstly, despite the municipality providing information to the Open Government Roundtable, the involvement of these social organizations in monitoring the plan's implementation is unclear. In practice, the bulk of the work was carried out independently by the municipality, and although it was attentive to the comments of those participating in the Roundtable, only a few provided feedback or helped disseminate the actions taken to create the Action Plan.

A second point was the original wording of the commitments, which was considered too broad and, therefore, sometimes lacked sufficient information to assess the potential impact of the proposed actions. This, as mentioned later, was corrected during implementation, but it would be ideal to consider it from the outset in the next plan.

## 2.2 Co-creation process recommendations

- **Continuity of the process in the new government:** Publications on the Peñalolén case, corroborated by field interviews, emphasize both the political and administrative will of the Municipal authorities and officials regarding the initiative and implementation of open government mechanisms. The new municipal administration, from a more progressive sector than the one traditionally leading the district, can view these advances as an opportunity and build on what has been built.

- **Articulation with the new local development plan (PLADECO):** Another interesting point in the case was its alignment with the work lines projected in the Local Development Plan, allowing the actions before the OGP to contribute to the mission of the local administration. In turn, given that the new government must update the PLADECO for the duration of its term through participatory mechanisms, this process could be used to align the two plans and strengthen the initiative's institutional standing.



- **Articulation with other participatory mechanisms:** Continuing with the previous point, it is worth noting that participatory experiences can be exhausting and very costly for civil society, primarily when multiple spaces for interaction exist, like in Peñalolén. To reduce the burden on citizens, participatory processes and spaces could be coordinated to leverage capacities and avoid duplication. Using the diagnostic and design process of the new PLADECO could be one option, as well as using recommendations from the same Municipal Open Government Manual, regarding coordinating spaces such as the Communal Council of Civil Society Organizations (COSOC) as a multi-stakeholder forum for the Action Plan<sup>20</sup>.
- **Leveraging national and international networks:** Peñalolén has a leadership position at a national and international level in open government issues, which led it to become the first municipality to join the OGP (followed by other municipalities in Santiago, as well as the Metropolitan Region's government). This position as a benchmark presents an opportunity to set working guidelines and explore innovative approaches to open, democratic, and participatory management. Likewise, its well-known collaboration with civil society in the national OGP process can also serve as an asset for building new forms of interaction and territorial governance, while making the most of the commune's longstanding tradition of grassroots mobilization.
- **Design more specific and measurable commitments from the start:** As mentioned earlier, one aspect of the Action Plan's implementation was the need to adjust the original commitments to make them more specific and, in turn, more measurable, which allowed for better accountability and monitoring of activities. In this regard, it is recommended to leverage this learning to start from the beginning with concrete, measurable, and auditable goals that also allow you to demonstrate the potential impact of your activities.
- **Continuity and monitoring beyond design:** Finally, although there is evidence of constant interaction with the Open Government Committee during the design phase, the municipality also appears to be working independently during the implementation of the commitments. In this regard, it would be interesting if the strategies of the next plan take into account, from the beginning of its implementation, monitoring and oversight mechanisms by the Board and the public.

## Section III: Action Plan Commitments

### 3.1 Commitments implementation review

The three commitments presented and implemented in Peñalolén's first Municipal Action Plan showed almost complete progress, with only specific milestones pending in two of the pledges. In turn, all three achieved significant advances in transparency and access to information, citizen participation, and accountability, which allows us to affirm that their



implementation did indeed have a substantial impact on the municipality's openness.

In the case of **Commitment 1, “Being connected makes everything easier: for a more efficient municipal management”**, an adjustment was made to the milestones and activities of the original plan, to make them more concrete, reducing the very ambitious original scope (a Single Integrated System for interaction with citizens) to the development of a specific platform for managing virtual requests received by the Information, Complaints and Suggestions Office (OIRS), and a proactive transparency platform for the municipality. Although it reduced the ambition, the commitment was much more specific and measurable, achieving clear goals of transparency, access to information and accountability, thanks to the implementation of the two platforms mentioned: on the one hand, the information available to citizens is increased, and on the other, the process of responding to requests is monitored, allowing for accountability in cases of non-compliance in form and substance. Less significant progress is evident in citizen participation, thanks to the participatory diagnostic milestones and the proposed user satisfaction survey, although the latter was not completed. Even though it is a commitment focused on internal management processes, its impact on the municipality's openness is evident.

Regarding **Commitment 2, “Building a Greener Peñalolén,”** all milestones were fully completed, and the results were highlighted as a good participatory practice, specifically in its Active Citizenship program. This commitment builds on the municipality's previous progress, especially by the Environmental Directorate and its Environmental Education Department, to strengthen actions aimed at consolidating the environmental strategy in the district. Thus, ecological education strategies (the aforementioned Active Citizenship program) are combined with platforms for monitoring projects evaluated by the National Environmental Assessment System (SEA), citizen participation mechanisms such as the Environmental Committee and the Territorial Council, and accountability mechanisms such as the implementation of public environmental accounts and the updating of environmental regulations. Finally, training goals for municipal employees on ecological issues and internal certification of municipal directorates were achieved.

Finally, **Commitment 3, “Promoting Friendly and Inclusive Management for People with Disabilities”**, stands out as an interesting effort to improve the municipality's services to people with disabilities and their caregivers. As with the previous commitments, the existing units with prior experience and programs focused on this issue were an advantage in developing ambitious actions that, in turn, have improved the quality of life for a population that has traditionally been underserved. The commitment achieves significant participation goals through a series of diagnostic sessions, working groups, and planning, as well as the participatory institutionalization of municipal regulations on disability, which, in turn, creates spaces for public responsibility and accountability. It was also very well received by officials and the target population, as evidenced by the fieldwork conducted for the implementation report.



In conclusion, the work carried out during implementation reflected both the political and administrative motivations of the authorities and officials, while also strengthening the work already underway in different municipal units and leveraging the existing grassroots mobilization within the commune. All of this was aimed at achieving measurable goals with visible effects on internal management and on the municipality's interaction with the public.

### 3.2 Commitments recommendations

- **Design measurable and specific commitments from the outset:** In all three commitments, it was necessary to adjust the milestones and scope of the initiatives, making them more concrete, specific, and measurable in their potential impact. This provides greater clarity in the actions committed and allows for the presentation of concrete results.
- **Leverage existing advances and capabilities:** It is also evident in the three commitments evaluated that the existence of specialized municipal units and programs aligned with citizen priorities significantly aids the implementation of the committed actions. Furthermore, the Action Plan before the OGP allows for the strengthening of institutional goals by establishing commitments that could lead to the development of priority actions for citizens and the municipality.
- **Aligning commitments with the work plans of the new administration:** As mentioned above, aligning the new Action Plan with the PLADECO and other planning mechanisms would be ideal for strengthening community goals and leveraging existing municipal capacities. This also implies continuing to demonstrate political and administrative will for the design and implementation of commitments.
- **Continue working with grassroots civil society and strengthen the role of the Government Roundtable:** An interesting point about the three commitments is that they all involve citizen participation, whether through assessments, consultations, working groups, or collaborations in their implementation. This is mainly due to the municipality's existing participatory culture, which should be maintained and nurtured. However, the Open Government Committee had little influence on the implementation of these actions, something that could be strengthened to leverage the capabilities of social organizations at the metropolitan and national levels.
- **Focus on participatory spaces to avoid burnout:** Finally, and complementing the previous point, although it is necessary to continue the participatory approach of the first action plan and its commitments, it is essential to review these strategies to avoid overburdening officials and social leaders. Speaking with members of civil society and municipal officials, a certain weariness with the use of formal mechanisms is evident, as evidenced in the spaces created by Commitment 2. In this sense, rather than presenting the creation of a participatory mechanism as an action, it would be essential to consider **the purpose** of this space, assigning concrete, measurable goals when opening the dialogue and deliberation, avoiding false expectations, and focusing on committed actions.



- <sup>1</sup>Este informe es un producto asociado al proyecto Fondecyt Regular No. 1231562, “Instituciones formales e informales y sus efectos en el éxito de estrategias de gobierno abierto local: el caso del programa OGP Local”, financiado por la Agencia Nacional de Investigación y Desarrollo (ANID) del Gobierno de Chile.
- <sup>2</sup>Vial, C. (2017). El Gobierno de Santiago de Chile: entre la autonomía local y la omnipotencia del gobierno nacional. En: Grin, E.; Hernández-Bonivento, J.; y Abrucio, F. El Gobierno de las Grandes Ciudades. Gobernanza y Descentralización en la Metrópolis de América Latina. Santiago de Chile, CLAD, Universidad Autónoma de Chile, pp. 263-286.
- <sup>3</sup>Hernández-Bonivento, J. et al. (2020). Índice de Desarrollo Comunal Chile 2020. Santiago de Chile, Universidad Autónoma de Chile.
- <sup>4</sup>Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile (2024). Peñalolén, Reporte Comunal. En: <https://www.bcn.cl/siit/reportescomunales/repordf.html?anno=2024&idcom=13122>
- <sup>5</sup>Henríquez, S., & Ramírez-Alujas, Álvaro. (2022). Innovación pública municipal en Chile. Análisis comparado de las estrategias de Puente Alto, Peñalolén y Renca. Revista Iberoamericana de Estudios Municipales, (25), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.32457/riem25.1733>
- <sup>6</sup>Ver más en: Castillo, C. (2022). Creación de valor público desde el enfoque de gobierno abierto: la experiencia municipal en Chile. Magíster en Gestión y Políticas Públicas, Universidad de Chile. Disponible en: <https://repositorio.uchile.cl/xmlui/bitstream/handle/2250/193724/Creacion-de-valor-publico-desde-el-enfoque-de-gobierno-abierto-La-experiencia-municipal-en-Chile.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y> y en Valdés Fernández, D. (2023). Desafíos en la implementación de Gobierno Abierto en Peñalolén: un enfoque crítico. Magíster en Gestión y Desarrollo Regional y Local, Universidad de Chile. Disponible en: <https://repositorio.uchile.cl/bitstream/handle/2250/198249/DESAF%20EN%20LA%20IMPLEMENTA%20CI%20DOMINIQUE%20VALD%20FERNANDEZ%20%282%29.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- <sup>7</sup><https://www.gub.uy/intendencia-cerro-largo/politicas-y-gestion/proyectos/proyecto-mirada-ciudadana>
- <sup>8</sup><https://gobiernoabierto.penalolen.cl/penalolen-fue-sede-del-seminario-internacional-gobierno-abierto-y-gobernanza/>
- <sup>9</sup>Consejo para la Transparencia (2018). Modelo para la implementación de gobierno abierto a nivel municipal. <https://www.consejotransparencia.cl/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Cuaderno-Modelo-GAM.pdf>
- <sup>10</sup>Plan de Desarrollo Comunal (PLADECO) de Peñalolén 2018-2025. Disponible en: [https://www.penalolen.cl/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/PLADECO\\_2018\\_2025.pdf](https://www.penalolen.cl/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/PLADECO_2018_2025.pdf)
- <sup>11</sup>. Ver más en Cantillán, R.; Herrera, J. (2020). Centralidad de actores y bloques en las redes organizativas de movilización en el conflicto por el Plan Regulador Comunal de



Peñalolén en el año 2011. EURE (Santiago), 46(138), 25-46. <https://dx.doi.org/10.4067/S0250-71612020000200025> y en Fernández Prajoux, V. (2011). Participación ciudadana reactiva: el caso del Plan Regulador de la comuna de Peñalolén y la modificación del Parque Los Dominicos en la comuna de Las Condes. Revista De Arquitectura, 17(24), Pág. 26–33. <https://doi.org/10.5354/0719-5427.2011.26910>

- <sup>12</sup>Informe de Inicio – Plan de Acción – Peñalolén, Chile, 2021 – 2024. Disponible en: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/es/documents/inception-report-action-plan-penalolen-chile-2021-2024/>
- <sup>13</sup>Invitación al foro multiactor. Disponible en: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qdiYsR\\_4gIOsw5oZ3chJ69\\_h8MRKWwte/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qdiYsR_4gIOsw5oZ3chJ69_h8MRKWwte/view?usp=sharing)
- <sup>14</sup>Página web de Gobierno Abierto de la Municipalidad de Peñalolén. Disponible en: <https://gobiernoabierto.penalolen.cl/mesa-gobierno-abierto/>
- <sup>15</sup>Carpeta compartida con acta de reunión, grabación y sistematización del trabajo. Disponible en: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1XebiyqkZnUHBUn3DSDJpU4khU\\_6uTrF?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1XebiyqkZnUHBUn3DSDJpU4khU_6uTrF?usp=sharing)
- <sup>16</sup>Correos electrónicos de la municipalidad a la Mesa de Gobierno Abierto. Disponibles en: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1C9Oc8YcEhzTdUZF6GngFIB5Pul9dVNXe?usp=sharing>
- <sup>17</sup>Enlace de la página web del proceso OGP Local – Municipalidad de Peñalolén: <https://gobiernoabierto.penalolen.cl/>
- <sup>18</sup>Enlace a micrositio web de la Consulta ciudadana OGP Local – Municipalidad de Peñalolén: <https://participa.penalolen.cl/>
- <sup>19</sup>Ver el Informe de sistematización de los Diálogos Ciudadanos, disponible en: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/15QjRY6wij8pirzPpAk0YccQ6GreEp1R/edit?usp=sharing&oid=101067744635581012541&rtpof=true&sd=true> y los resultados consulta ciudadana y priorización, disponible en: <https://participa.penalolen.cl/Home/proyecto/9c1c01dc3ac1445a500251fc34a15d3e75a849df>
- <sup>20</sup>Consejo para la Transparencia (2018). Modelo para la implementación de gobierno abierto a nivel municipal. <https://www.consejotransparencia.cl/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Cuaderno-Modelo-GAM.pdf>