Buenos Aires Citizen Monitoring Climate Action Platform

Buenos Aires is the first city globally to integrate open government and climate initiatives, actively engaging citizens in climate action and upholding transparency regarding its commitments towards becoming carbon-neutral, resilient, and inclusive by 2050. This approach underscores the essential role of collaboration, transparency, and accountability in addressing climate change, enhancing democratic integrity, boosting public trust, fostering participation, and augmenting the effectiveness of government operations, marking a novel and groundbreaking venture on the world stage.

Open Data Platform for Transparency, Co-creation, Participation, and Accountability

The Government of the City of Buenos Aires, supported by the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), co-created this platform with civil society organizations, environmental experts and citizens. The platforms brings together, in a one-stop-shop, all thecity's policies of energy efficiency, sustainable mobility, waste management, education policies, urbanism, and civic engagement initiatives related to addressing climate change.

The design of the platform was guided and aimed to combine the principles of citizen participation, transparency, access to information, transparency and accountability, and innovatio. TThe platform was developed with the intention of democratizing information on climate change and providing a tool for citizen monitoring, fostering the involvement of citizens in cultural change efforts to mitigate climate risks.

Co-Design Process

The co-creation process was designed in partnership with the organization Democracia en Red, involving various stakeholders throughout its stages.

Exploratory Phase - The first phase in co-designing the BA Climate Action platform focused on exploratory research to gather insights and ideas from experts. The government conducted in-depth interviews with 15 activists, NGO representatives, and policymakers. Questions aimed to understand priority sub-topics for climate action, relevant data points currently lacking, and ideas to motivate individual behavior change. Interview findings highlighted demands for open data on emissions, transport, energy, and more as well as creative concepts like an eco-store, household sustainability program, and collaborative data collection initiatives. They recommended geolocalized data providing special attention to the visualization and communication via story telling, clear indicators for the Climate Action Plan, collective data collection, and emphasizing interactive, educational and user-friendly interphase.

Co-creation with civil society - The second co-design phase engaged civil society actors through a series of collaborative workshops. An initial federal ideathon brought together 15

youth activists, NGO representatives, and specialists to brainstorm concepts for citizen activation campaigns that could encourage low-carbon behaviors. This led to ideas like incentive programs and public commitments for sustainable lifestyles. Additionally, 4 engagement roundtables with over 130 residents identified motivations and barriers to climate actions, spurring suggestions for improved recycling systems, electric vehicle infrastructure, and sustainability education. Finally, in-depth co-creation activities with climate NGOs prototyped specific digital activation tools like a green points reward program for household measures and a platform connecting neighbors for ride-sharing.

Open Data - The third co-design phase focused on sourcing open data to include in the platform based on the insights gathered. Ultimately over 30 data sets were published covering the explored topics, dataset and visualization co-developed by experts and civil society. This included information on emissions, energy, transport, weather, waste and more. Relevant agencies then worked to publish quality updates for existing data while structuring and formatting new information for accessibility. The use of machine-readable open data allows public to scrutinize climate progress. For increased capacities and raise awareness the government held an open data challenge inviting innovative data visualizations and hosted a hackathon for building impactful digital tools with the available information.

RESULTS
The hands-on participation deepened climate awareness and understanding of personal impacts. Ultimately the multi-stakeholder co-design process produced an engaging, needs-based, and community-centered platform with targeted impact thanks to broad-based public input and collaboration.

Institutional Arrangements

Advisory Council on Environment and Sustainable Development was created through Resolution 66/2020 of the Ministry of Environment of the City of Buenos Aires. It is made up of civil society organizations specialized in the environmental agenda. This council has the mission to assist and advise the Ministry of Environment on public environmental and sustainable development policies.Since the beginning of the collaborative design process of the BA Climate Change platform until the first draft version, the Council was involved. It also participated in a co-creation activity coordinated together with the Ministry of Environment and the General Direction of Participatory Communication.

Cross-department collaboration within the Government of the City of Buenos Aires was crucial to successfully implement the BA Climate Action platform, as it required compiling data and information from various agencies. Over the course of 2020, the Secretary General's Office and the Ministry of Environment led an inter-ministry strategic group to coordinate existing climate initiatives and align efforts. Core data and content then came specifically from the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Public Space and Urban Hygiene, Ministry of Education, Secretary of Transport and Public Works, Secretary of Urban Development, Ministry of Human Development and Habitat among others. Support on accessibility, design and public communications also came from the Secretary of Digital Innovation, Secretary of Communications and Citizen Participation. This broad intra-government coordination ensured comprehensive, accurate information on the platform reflecting the integrated climate change strategy. It also strengthened stakeholder mapping and ongoing updates across departments.