



SMARTER CROWDSOURCING
ANTI-CORRUPTION

Smarter Crowdsourcing | Anti-Corruption Playbook | Guidelines for Participation

This Playbook provides answers to frequently asked questions about participation in this **Smarter Crowdsourcing** initiative.

We invite you to contribute to the Playbook. Please feel free to ask questions, make suggestions and comments. For more information, please contact, Dinorah Cantú-Pedraza (dinorah at thegovlab dot org).

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Introduction

What is the challenge we are addressing?

Complex problems, like corruption, demand access to expertise that is widely dispersed.

Mexico has recently enacted a groundbreaking series of anti-corruption legal reforms (read more [here](#) and [here](#)). However, both civil society and government institutions now face the challenge of translating the ambitious principles they agreed on into concrete practices.

Global and complex problems, such as corruption, threaten public trust in Institutions and democracy, risk disruption to global and regional trade and economic stability, and cause widespread uncertainty and concern. People look to traditional institutions, both at the national and international level, to act effectively and quickly eradicate problems; however, in many occasions it is difficult to implement effective -- and, especially, innovative and tech-enabled -- actions to solve such complex issues.

What if we could identify those at a local and global level with relevant experience, skills, and know-how and, above all, with creative ideas for how governments and the public could (among other things):

1. Measure Corruption and its Costs
2. Strengthening integrity in the judiciary
3. Engaging the public in anti-corruption efforts
4. Ensure Whistleblower Support and Protection
5. Effective Prosecution
6. Tracking and Analyzing Money Flows

Above all, the expertise exists to help take an overwhelming challenge like corruption and identify the constituent problems at a granular level, as well as, develop approaches that institutions can implement to overcome them.

But mobilizing this diverse and distributed expertise -- both credentialed know-how and experiential wisdom -- demands coordination and curation, in order to bring the best thinking to bear and translate good ideas into actionable proposals backed by evidence.



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What is crowdsourcing?

The process of using the Internet to solicit such help from a distributed audience or “crowd” is known as “crowdsourcing.”

Typically, crowdsourcing involves putting out an open call inviting all corners to help. Enlisting the aid of a large audience can augment the manpower and wisdom of those inside an organization and help to accomplish many tasks more quickly, such as when an organization turns to “the crowd” to help classify thousands of photos of space for NASA to advance our understanding of how galaxies form or to help digitize records to help a public institution quickly create a digital archive.

However, the open call of traditional “crowdsourcing” is not sufficient. By itself, crowdsourcing is too “hit or miss” because crowdsourcing relies on the happenstance of having the right people learn about the opportunity to participate and wanting to do so. It may not attract the people with the right know-how quickly enough. Typically, crowdsourcing works well when the need is to perform small tasks without a high degree of complexity and it almost does not matter who participates.

What is Smarter Crowdsourcing?

In the case of serious challenges such as corruption, what’s needed is to marry the agility and diversity of crowdsourcing (also called open innovation) with *curation* to target those with relevant know-how and bring them together in a format designed to produce effective and implementable outcomes. This more targeted form of crowdsourcing, which quickly matches the demand for expertise to the supply of it, is what we call “smarter crowdsourcing.”

The GovLab has deep expertise with designing smarter crowdsourcing projects. We [designed the first crowdsourcing program](#) for the United States Government when we convened scientific and technical experts to help the United States Patent and Trademark Office get the information it needs to make a more informed determination about pending patent applications. We married an online open call with extensive curation to attract knowledgeable participants and replicated the project in several countries, leading to a statutory change to enable citizen engagement in patent practice in the United States.

More recently, the GovLab designed and ran a [smarter crowdsourcing project](#) to help government officials in the Governments of the City of Rio de Janeiro, Argentina, Colombia and Panama, prepare for and respond to mosquito borne viruses and to generate innovative and implementable solutions to the challenge posed by major infectious disease outbreaks in the



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region of Latin America, in particular those transmitted by mosquitoes. Over 100 experts from 25 countries participated in the process of proposing ideas and developing them into implementable solutions. A full list of these experts, as well as their geographic distribution and organizational affiliations, is available on [the project website](#).

This process led to the development of an Implementation Report designed to enable public authorities to translate these new ideas into practical improvements in the way they deliver policies and services. The Report includes:

- **20 recommendations, summarized in a series of infographics.** Infographics include:
 - A list of the proposed recommendations
 - A taxonomy of the types of actions each recommendation entails (e.g., private-public partnerships, prizes, software platforms)
 - Resources and time required for implementation
 - Potential cost offsets
 - A list of specific experts best-positioned to help governments implement each recommendation
- **Detailed implementation guidance** for each intervention, organized into the six themes of the online conferences.

How will the project work?

This four-month initiative will target and mobilize global expertise to identify innovative approaches for fighting corruption, that can be implemented by the Mexican government, Mexican civil society, and the Mexican public. Results will be openly shared for the benefit of all as we hope that reformers in other countries can take advantage of these materials

Instead of a handful of people meeting once at great expense in a conference room, we will use the Internet to make it easy for people to lend their time and know-how and deliberate with one another to identify, design and iterate upon implementable ideas that governments can use.

The project will progress through **four phases**:

1. **Problem Identification:** The Yale Law School Governance Innovation Clinic in collaboration with the GovLab and the IDB has developed the agenda for these conferences.
2. **Problem Definition:** Graduate students in the Clinic then drafted briefs for each challenge, which have been posted online. The briefings explain the problems and their root causes and inform the discussion for the online dialogues.



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3. **Curating Guests:** Diverse experts and innovators – from a variety of fields, including public administration, data analytics, technology, law enforcement, and business – are identified and invited to participate in one or more online conferences, matching their expertise to the topics. Guest lists are posted online for public input and suggestion of additional experts who should participate. The focus will be on finding those with innovative yet practical approaches to tackling identified problems.
4. **Online Conferences:** Online conferences -- each one of them focused on a specific problem -- bring together experts to brainstorm innovative and practical ways to tackle the problems between June-July 2017. Videos and post-conference briefings of each discussion to be posted online for comment.



How does problem identification and definition work?

The Yale Law School Governance Innovation Clinic, under the supervision of Professor Beth Simone Noveck, and the GovLab have formulated a list of constituent problems after discussing the major topics and breaking them down into many smaller problems, each one of which may be amenable to innovative and actionable solutions.

Defining the problems is fundamental to achieve success in creating actionable solutions through crowdsourcing. It is important:



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- Not to have a too broad definition
- Not to state solutions instead of problems
- Not to describe a symptom disguised as a problem

The list was not comprehensive but, rather, was designed to reflect those issues that are the greatest priority of governments trying to decide how to respond to the problem of corruption. Each problem was a potential topic of conversation of an online conference and discussion with global experts.

The government partner (Mexico) helped to prioritize among the problems on the list. The selected problems will be fleshed out with additional briefing designed to:

- Describe the root causes of the problem
- Current approaches in different countries
- Lessons learned from other domains
- Suggest additional readings on the subject
- Raise questions on the topic

How will the online conferences work?

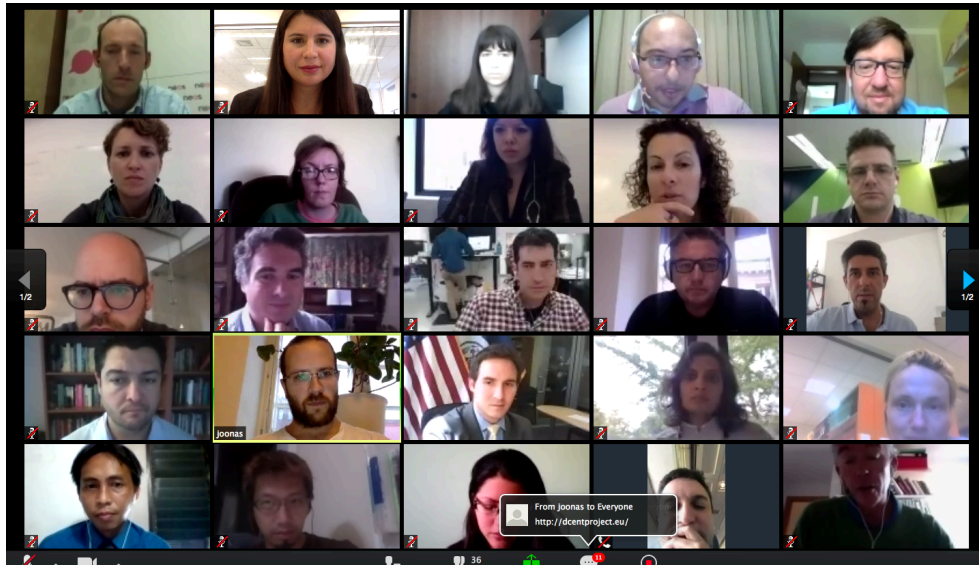
The Online Conferences will begin in June. The goal is to:

- Attract the world's most creative experts and innovators to lend their time, talent and know how.
- Identify innovative and practical ways – including but not limited to uses of new technologies – to tackle the problem that could potentially save lives, save resources, and allow for money to be spent on what matters most.
- Work towards a concrete plan for implementation of those solutions backed by the necessary research to facilitate the transition from idea to reality.

Online sessions will be held on the video conference software [zoom](#). Zoom is a video and web conferencing software that enables groups to talk in real time and share information via voice, text-based chat or screen sharing. The GovLab has used web conferencing software such as Zoom, Skype, Gchat and other platforms to run conferences and training for thousands of participants, such as a series of meetings on participatory lawmaking with conference participants from sixteen countries and a training program for criminal justice professionals with professionals from sixteen counties.



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The videoconference software allows participants from all over the world to interact and share information.

Each session:

- Will be limited to twenty-five participants.
- Will be centered on one specific problem related to corruption.
- Will run online for two hours.
- Will be attended by:
 - Government officials:
 - with responsibility for that topic and who are decision makers who can implement good ideas that are surfaced
 - with knowledge of on the ground conditions
 - Civil society leaders and activists
 - Subject matter experts from around the world
 - These need not be experts on corruption or on Mexico but, rather, those with knowledge of how to solve similar problems in other fields
 - Innovation experts
 - GovLab and IDB project staff
- Sessions will be recorded and posted later on the project website.
- Each session will be staffed by a multi-lingual support team who will assist with translation, take notes, and follow up the session to develop good ideas into more concrete and actionable proposals backed up by research.

To facilitate productive conversation, online discussions will be kept to a small number of Projector Supporters, Collaborators, Partners, and staff. Hence attendance at the conferences is



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by invitation, although anyone can request an invitation through the project website. Conference attendees will be carefully curated for diversity of relevant expertise.

Additional sessions may be added, as needed, for example, to discuss the details of implementation of a proposal in a specific place.

The approach to the online sessions may evolve as we learn by doing what works best.

What will participants receive before each session?

- Participants will receive a draft agenda for input.
- GovLab will prepare a problem brief, which will be in the form of a short memo, before each conversation. This will contain an explanation of the problem to be solved and background information about the current state of readiness.
- Participants will receive a list of conference participants.
- All materials will also be posted online.

What does a sample session agenda look like?

Each session will run for 90-120 minutes, and will include:

1. Introductions
2. Questions and discussion of the problem definition
3. Background briefing and questions from experts to government
4. Discussion of solutions
5. Questions from government to experts
6. Discussion of what needs to be answered to implement these solutions

What should I expect after the session?

- The project will develop session summary briefings posted online in English and Spanish widely shared. These will include:
 - Takeaways
 - Action items
 - Resources that were shared by session participants
- The GovLab will research and develop high level implementation plans and metrics for the most promising solutions that were identified in sessions. These memos to be publicly posted for comment and circulated to conference participants. The implementation plans are designed to help government partners refine the plans for local execution of desired solutions.



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Who is paying for the project

The project is funded by a grant from the Inter-American Development Bank., Established in 1959, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) is the main source of financing for economic, social and institutional development in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). It provides loans, grants, guarantees, policy advice and technical assistance to public and private sectors of its borrowing countries. Within this context, the IDB has sought to add to the efforts to combat corruption, implementing an innovative, actionable, intersectoral strategy that takes advantage of current technological resources.

Yale, GovLab and IDB do not work for nor are they compensated by the Mexican government. This is an independent project where all outputs will be transparently published online. We will work to hold government accountable for the implementation of the best ideas proposed in these conferences.

Roles and responsibilities of project participants

For the Government Partner

The Mexican government will:

- Help prioritize and select the topics for discussion
- Supply information about on the ground conditions to inform the online conferences
- Convene the right officials within the government (e.g. ministry of public health or sanitation) to participate
- Consider implementing worthwhile proposals suggested by international experts

In general, the Mexican government will:

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Identify a champion within the government organization to support the efforts	Prioritize topics Provide detailed on-the-ground information on selected problem areas to inform briefing	Identify national and other experts for guest list	Select government decision makers to participate in each online session based on topic Select officials with knowledge of on-the-ground conditions to participate in each online



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	Provide comments on problem definitions		session Promote results of online sessions Participate in debriefing sessions Use implementation plans to enable a local execution of desired solutions
Work toward implementation of the ideas proposed and participate in a dialogue with the GovLab and IDB to ensure that ideas are delivered in a format and with enough information to make implementation possible.			

People in the international community will give of their time to participate in these conversations and share their know-how if they feel there are government officials “listening” on the other end who have the power to act on what is proposed. Hence one of the keys to be successful is the willingness to supply information about on-the-ground conditions with the authority to further develop and implement worthwhile solutions derived from the online dialogues with international experts.

What are the benefits of partnership?

In general, government partners stand to benefit in a number of ways by participating in this Smarter Crowdsourcing initiative, including:

- Engaging world-class, worldwide expertise on anti-corruption;
- Obtaining innovative, actionable ideas for addressing the problems they face;
- Connecting to a global network of like-minded, forward-thinking government innovators;
- Accessing distributed, expert knowledge in a timely, agile and low cost fashion, and;
- Acquiring capacity to deliver multi sectoral responses to challenges.

For Project Collaborators

During the course of the project, we expect to engage with organizations that have subject matter expertise related to the region and prioritized problem areas. These project collaborators,



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including IDB in-country officials, academic research organizations and think tanks, are those who are:

- Willing to share their subject matter expertise
- In a position to mine their networks to recruit experts

What is the role of collaborators?

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Identify a liaison within the organization to support the efforts	Provide background information on problem areas Provide comments for problem definitions pertaining to relevant areas of expertise	Identify institutional experts per topic area Invite networks to participate	Secure participation of experts in sessions Promote results of online sessions

What are the benefits of being a Project Collaborator?

- Being part of a world-class, worldwide expert network on anti-corruption.
- Speaking directly to those institutions in a position to implement your ideas.
- Lend your skills and know-how to tackling anti-corruption.
- Connecting to a network of like-minded, forward-thinking experts.

For Project Supporters

Project supporters are those international experts who volunteer their time and know-how to participate in online conference sessions and share their expertise about how to do things differently.

As a supporter, we ask that you:

- Share the invitation to participate with your networks.
- Review project materials and provide comments and information to the pre- and post-session briefings.
- Participate in one or more sessions relevant to your experience.

What is the role of Project Supporters?

If you participate in an online session, we ask that you

- Provide short bio for the Project website.



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- Acknowledge that online discussion sessions will be open and public.
- Devote some time before the conference to review the briefing materials, that will include the problem description, agenda, among others.
- Make yourself available, to the extent that you are able and willing, for follow up questions and information sharing.

What are the benefits of being a Project Supporter?

- Lend your skills and know-how to tackling a public problem.
- Speak directly to those institutions potentially interested in implementing your ideas.
- Deliberate with other innovators to refine each other's thinking.

About the GovLab

The GovLab is an action research center based at the Tandon School of Engineering at New York University. Our mission is to improve people's lives by changing the way we govern. Our goal is to strengthen the ability of institutions – including but not limited to governments – and people to work more openly, collaboratively, effectively and legitimately to make better decisions and solve public problems. We believe that increased availability and use of data, new ways to leverage the capacity, intelligence, and expertise of people in the problem-solving process, combined with new advances in technology and science can transform governance. We approach each challenge and opportunity in an interdisciplinary, collaborative way, irrespective of the problem, sector, geography and level of government.

About IDB

We are an international financial institution whose goal is to improve the quality of life of people in Latin America and the Caribbean by financing economic, social and institutional development projects and promoting regional economic integration.