

A Model for Policy Innovation: Low Cost, Consensus Building and Effective

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Note: The opinions and views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of USAID.

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INTRODUCTION/ABSTRACT

A Model for Policy Innovation: Low Cost, Consensus-Building, and Effective
Three years ago, the Mexican Congress passed the first ever Professional Service Law in Mexico in the midst of a multi-party legislative deadlock. Why did the law pass after more than 20 years of debate?
As a USAID contractor we looked at the policy interventions we had undertaken to assist passage, with an eye to elements of the process that could be used for future reforms. Our informal study included interviews with the Office of the President, the Ministry of Public Administration, legislators, donors and academics. We identified what we and other stakeholders had done to ensure passage of this innovative new law. Based on study results, we worked with USAID/Mexico to develop a Policy Model and have been successfully using the model to stimulate other reform efforts.
Results, based on the model, have been effective with very little investment. Average time to bring an issue to a vote, or to implement a reform initiative in an executive department has been less than 18 months. The average cost from all parties is less than 200,000 USD. Successes include, the first vote in 40 years on reelection of legislators (currently Mexico does not allow reelection). It has been adopted by the Trust for the Americas, the OAS NGO to stimulate ethics in journalism, and is being used to bring the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law to a vote by a group of concerned NGOs. The methodology is simple:
1. Identify a trust-worthy policy partner; such as a Presidential Office, Ministry, NGO, or an individual such as a Congressman, or Senator who is working to pass a law or stimulate a reform. The partner must be a committed champion for the reform proposed. Support that partner by providing staff assistance on policy development and analysis. Never say it can't be done on time. Respect political and legislative deadlines.
2. Stimulate creation of a neutral and politically independent network of high-level opinion leaders interested in the reform and staff it with a Technical Secretary. This is not an open network; it is for like-minded academics, NGOs, and opinion leaders committed to the reform proposed (Political parties, politicians and donor organizations do not participate). Network members appear on talk shows, have newspaper columns and are consulted by legislators and politicians.
3. Use technology to create an information portal. A one-stop website demonstrates that the network is operational, provides a solid base of information for legislators and the press and provides an opportunity for academics to publish information on the subject.
4. Hire a network Technical Secretary that respects member time and has the political skills to act as a convener. The Secretary ensures meetings and communications are action oriented and have a time-line for passage of legislation, a key vote or development of a press campaign.
5. Use events to create momentum for reform, generate consensus among stakeholders, and build public pressure on legislators to pass reforms. Create venues to promote the reform such as the release of commissioned papers, press conferences, and targeted awareness events (e.g. Senate hearings, public forums, university conferences).
6. Rely on international best practices to validate proposed reform efforts. Identify international best practices through multi-national organizations and academic institutions, use study tours to visit reforms in action, and most importantly, use internationally respected speakers to explain reforms occurring in other countries. Reach out to other donors to obtain world-class speakers or resource materials that ensure the reform is based on international best practices.
Bottom line, the model transforms the role of academics and opinion leaders from evaluators to change agents by using their key analytical skills.

BACKGROUND ON GOVERNANCE IN MEXICO

The 2000 presidential election marked a critical step in Mexico's consolidation of democracy through the peaceful change at the ballot box that brought to an end seven decades of single party dominance. This election demonstrated that Mexican politics are more competitive than ever before. The transition to a new ruling party expressing commitment to demonstrate meaningful change offered opportunities for public policy and institutional reforms that never existed before. The main development challenge was to undo a legacy of poor and often undemocratic governance left by seventy years of single party dominance, thereby enabling Mexican public institutions to achieve critical economic and social development results.

The political regime that emerged after the Mexican Revolution of 1910 rested on two central pillars: a strong executive and an official, hegemonic political party. Although the president changed every six years, during his term in office he was the most important decision-maker in the country. Since its founding in 1928, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) ruled continuously until 2000 and was the primary means of recruiting political leaders, mobilizing the electorate, gaining access to power and maintaining discipline in policy-making.

From the 1980s onward, Mexico has been in the process of a political transition from this highly centralized one-party state to one that is more pluralistic, competitive and democratic. Mexico's free and fair presidential electoral process of 2000 was the clearest manifestation of this transition. The inauguration of President Vicente Fox from the Partido de Accion Nacional (PAN) was the culmination of a broadly and long-held public desire for more accountable governance, that is, government that would be more responsive to the needs and interests of citizens and more capable of providing an improved quality of life and equal opportunities for a better future.

The change in the competitive electoral nature of the presidency has had an important impact on the country's other key political institutions, such as its federal and state legislatures, state and local governments, courts, and federal executive branch ministries. The fundamental "rules of the game" of how governance works in Mexico are undergoing a total overhaul of governance principles: from closed, centralized, and clientelistic practices that primarily served the ruling political elite to new standards of transparency, accountability, and government dedicated to the service of a more broadly defined public good. While universal application of these standards does not yet exist, the shift in vision is nothing short of revolutionary, as most political institutions and actors must now learn how to operate successfully in a democratic environment where performance and accountability are judged from an increasingly clear citizen satisfaction perspective. For the first time, competition is allowing Mexico to construct a political system that gives its rightful place to the rule of law, checks and balances, and productive inter-governmental relations.

However, the achievement of a truly functional democracy is a long-term endeavor. Despite expert and public opinion asserting that Mexico's democratic change is irreversible, the country will continue to be challenged to manage this evolution, made

more difficult by the consensus that has to be constructed among multiple actors from the major political parties, the public and private sectors and civil society, many of whom are acquiring real voice and participation with the democratic transition. Mexicans are clearly in charge of this complex process, and their effective response to the challenges will be the ultimate determinant of the success or failure of the country's democratic consolidation. It is within this context that the policy reform model offers effective, low-cost and innovative mechanisms so that Mexicans build consensus on the democratic practices and institutions that will sustain Mexico's ever-more critical economic and social progress.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE POLICY REFORM MODEL

The policy innovation model recognizes that a thorough communication strategy is often overlooked by policy makers. The communication strategy begins inside our organization, we post our guidelines for working with our partners and live them.

- *We believe our partners know best and we stand for their success.*
- *We deliver on their terms, when they want the work completed.*
- *We never create extra work for them and we always give them completed staff work.*
- *We are operational. We make results happen.*

We believe our partners know best and we stand for their success. This is the foundation of our work. It is like the old adage of bacon and eggs and what breakfast means to a pig and chicken. When a pig becomes bacon it is a complete commitment to breakfast. On the other hand, eggs for a chicken are one day's work. Consultants, donor organizations, and foundations are like the chicken; we often give advice and that advice is based on our training and experience. However, it is the in-country policy makers—legislators, cabinet secretaries, and governors—who have to live with our recommendations after we leave.

Given this scenario and the fact that they have ultimate responsibility for reform we listen, really listen to their concerns and their explanation of their political context. When we stand for their success we never have a hidden agenda and agree to respect their ground rules. They can trust us.

We deliver on their terms, when they want it. Governments at all levels have deadline dates. It might be a scheduling date for a legislative vote, information for a report to the President or a date imposed by budget or regulatory needs. For that reason, our team has to commit to due dates and make them inflexible even if it means we work around the clock to meet due dates. When we deliver on-time, our partners understand the level of our commitment. A trust relationship can develop rather quickly through our ability to provide rapid response and excellent results.

We never create extra work for our partners and we always give them completed staff work. We never give a bureaucratic answer like put it in writing and we will see. We cut “red tape.” We understand that our partners often have operational responsibilities, and

they operate in a rapidly changing political environment. They do not need partners who create work for them. Instead of saying you need to write a letter, we write a letter they might use as a sample. If we schedule a speech, we offer to do talking points. If they need to “put it in writing” we offer to send someone to help them. Our goal is to assist them achieve results as expeditiously as possible.

We are operational. We make results happen.

Did you ever hear the story about the man who refused a position after he saw the job description? His parting comment was “much of the work is beneath my dignity the rest beyond my capability.” We never give advice without offering the help our partners need to carry it out. And that means whatever it takes. Do they need someone to deliver invitations to an event? Do they need something printed? Do they need an international expert or even a panel of experts? When we commit to the policy outcome, we commit to being their operational partners and we never give them inexperienced help. We give them our best.

We think about each initiative as a cycle of completion. There is never a lack of “good ideas”; what separates a good idea from a result is on-time delivery. Our action plans have four stages:

1. **Beginning:** Develop an action plan and timeline. Remember if you spend all your time on the perfect plan there might not be time to get a result. Our plans are simple (take no more than a week to develop) and are driven by legislative or policy deadlines.
2. **Doing:** What are the next steps? Agree on deadlines and work backwards from the policy due date. Programs often get stalled when policy makers feel overwhelmed. We break our work into simple next steps. What needs to be done today, (phone calls, letters) as well as conferences, etc.
3. **Evaluating:** Look for lessons learned after each event or activity. This is the quality analysis phase that informs future work.
4. **Ending:** Either declare it a success or declare it done. Many policy initiatives encounter obstacles. The goal is to ensure that the obstacle is not insurmountable. If we encounter an insurmountable obstacle, we do not hesitate to withdraw from the project. There is no reason to continue funding an initiative after the political deadline has passed or the political will has faded.

IDENTIFYING THE RIGHT POLICY PARTNER

Before choosing to commit to a reform with a minister, cabinet secretary, governor or senator, assess the ability of this partner from four perspectives.

First, eliminate to the best of your ability partners who may receive negative publicity.

Vet your potential policy partner to be certain that there are no pending investigations, previous allegations of wrong doing, or open court cases. With technology, this does not take much time; use web searches, law libraries, on-line press searches and word-of-mouth.

Second, make sure the potential partner has a track record of success. Have they demonstrated the ability to ensure successful policy implementation? If they make excuses about why their prior legislative initiatives or executive branch programs have failed consider it a major red flag. Ask the hard questions. If a program on their watch died ask what happened. If they honestly tell you what went wrong, trust them.

Third, assess position power. It is impossible for a manager to solve a problem if he does not have adequate position power. If he/she has responsibility for a program at a level lower than the one at which the problem was created; change will not happen. For example a regulatory agency may be an independent agency that reports to a cabinet secretary. While they have legal authority, it is almost impossible for them to control regulations that are created in other cabinet ministries so they need to focus on specific issue areas. They do not have the position power necessary to affect government-wide reform. A senator in a minority party might be a reformer, but if that person cannot command the necessary number of votes---we do not invest time or money.

In other words, assess the ability of the potential partner to get resistors on board. A simple way to do this is assess their ability as a convener. In Mexico it is called “*poder de convocatoria*.” If this person calls a meeting who will come? Will principals come, including Presidents of Companies, Senators, and Cabinet Ministers? Will principals send Assistant Ministers or refuse the invitation? Make sure your partner has the power to convene.

Finally, the most difficult issue to assess is the commitment of the partner to the initiative. Is he or she paying lip service? Or is the potential partner willing to commit time, resources and political capital to the initiative? As a rule of thumb, we never get involved without a commitment of time and money from the partner.

Now, assuming you have the right staff in place and the right partner, it is time to apply the policy model. The model begins with developing a reform network.

DEVELOPING A NETWORK TO SUPPORT THE POLICY MAKER

This is where communication begins to be as important as the policy itself. According to public opinion surveys like the Mitofsky annual “Who do you trust?” survey, university academics are the more respected group in Mexico. In last year’s “Trust” survey, academics were rated more highly than the Catholic church, the President and senators. (On a 10 point scale, the rating was 8.1 for Academics, 7.7 for the Catholic church, 6.2 for the President and 5.0 for senators.)¹

In other words, Mexican academics can be opinion leaders. If a non-partisan group of academics support a reform initiative, Mexico listens. However, academics often have no vehicle to make their voice heard. They are often subject matter experts with little understanding of communication strategy.

The goal of the reform network is to give a voice to seven to ten of the most respected academics. It is important that a network be composed of academics from a variety of institutions. When key academics from public and private, liberal and conservative universities agree on the need for reform they create a formidable civil society voice.

We begin to assess potential members by reading their research and publications in the reform area. Our goal is to find members who agree on the need for reform. For example, if the policy network will support a new law, it is important that the network members selected support passage of that law. If one member is off message saying it is possible to achieve the outcome through regulatory changes without the law, events and press may be off message and the voice for change incoherent. Instead of mobilizing support, the network may give the opposition the avenue it needs to fight the reform. The network's goal is create a firm line of support for the initiative; not to create debate.

The role of the network members is to make their research available to the policy maker, conduct research, write on the subject, and participate in educational and press events. This is usually a win-win for the network members as they obtain positive press, access to high-level policy makers and have a channel for publishing their research.

We have worked with networks in a variety of contexts, for some networks it is key to include NGOs. When working with NGOs, we have found that they often have very clear purposes and they often vie for the same funding streams from donors so it is better to include them only at specific intervals in the process. For example, when creating a network to support anti-trafficking in persons legislation, the NGOs preferred to be called a group rather than a network. They were willing to help but wanted only to support their specific area or facet of the law such as sexual tourism, employment without pay, or child prostitution. In other words, their support was unwavering but the method of their participation in the network differed from a solely academic network. In other words, we have found that the model can be used flexibly to achieve the outcome.

It is imperative however, that network members not be aligned with a political party or seen in a political light. We experimented by including members of political parties who are also academics and found that it stifled debate and slowed consensus building. *The most effective networks include non-partisan academics respected for their merit and academic achievements.*

- **Staffing:** There are two key roles that must be filled to ensure a successful network. The first is that of the Technical Secretary. Network members are often unavailable because they are teaching classes or traveling. The job of the technical secretary is to make the work of the network happen on the schedule of the policy maker. This is full-time job for a person with political and communication skills. On any given day that person could be organizing press interviews, managing an event, designing a website or identifying international best practices. The person who takes on this job must be experienced and proactive. This person must know how to organize events, manage a message,

and ensure that network members are satisfied with all work being carried out in their names.

The second position is that of the network leader. The person will be the key spokesperson for the Network. He or she must be a well known expert on the subject, willing to attend meetings, chair events and conduct press interviews. This is an unpaid position; but one that requires an unwavering commitment to the reform. It is crucial that the policy maker, the network leader and the network technical secretary reach agreement on how they will work together. The policy maker and network leader may each need to identify a key staff person who will ensure action items are handled on a timely basis in their absence. Without a shared vision and shared sense of urgency, the reform will not succeed. ⁱⁱ

- **Network Portal:** With a new reform initiative it is imperative that the press, opinion leaders and even legislators have one-stop access to information on the subject. The website is the public point of reference for the network's activities. It also gives the illusion of organization while the network is forming. Usually the technical secretary has a draft website developed for the network members to approve at their first meeting. It provides them an opportunity to post their research and support statements and provides links to related initiatives. It also includes best practices and results from events. It is also an effective promotion tool. It is easy to refer reporters to the site and provides interested parties a way to access network members or express their support for the initiative.

The first network, we worked with, the Network for Professional Civil Service is three years old and today it is self-sustaining. It publishes a journal, *Career Civil Service*, (*Servicio Profesional de Carrera*ⁱⁱⁱ)” conducts training, has scheduled an online certificate program through the National Autonomous University of Mexico and maintains a website (See www.redservicioprofesional.org.) In addition, network members continue to write on the issue, and one of the members most recently published a book, “*Servicio Profesional de Carrera ¿Para qué?* (Career Civil Service, What For?)”.^{iv} The magazine and the books published by members have begun receiving funding from other sources and USAID no longer contributes to the network.

USING INTERNATIONAL VALIDATION

The value of this model is related to the cultural values of the society. Mexican society has high-regard for the opinions of international organizations. For instance, in the World Economic Forum's trust in institutions survey Mexico demonstrated a 79% approval rating for the United Nations while trust in the UN decreased in other countries.^v In Mexico if a UN spokesperson endorses a reform it is covered by the Mexican press. This third-party validation of the reform is a significant method for gaining civil society endorsement. International organizations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the World Bank, the Organization of American States, and Inter-American Development Bank are also respected as validators and advocates of reforms. International rankings such as those produced by

Transparency International, the Institute for Management Development, and The World Bank also achieve broad media coverage.

In addition to international indexes and organizations, countries such as Spain, France, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States are held in high regard.^{vi} In other words, network activities use international speakers to coalesce public opinion, deflect the arguments of the opposition and validate the need for reform. It is difficult for opposition legislators to vote “no” when international organizations stand firmly with Mexican reform advocates.

It is important to hire a researcher or have the network secretary devote time to identifying the positions of these organizations and countries on specific issues such as reelection of legislators (See www.democraciadecalidad.org).

REFORM COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

A targeted communication strategy is crucial to obtaining acceptance of the reform. It is imperative that the strategy be linked to “*the unique cultural factors and formal and informal structures of the political system.*”^{vii} We accomplish this in two ways. First, we review the press published on the reform area for the previous quarter or year. We identify reporters who are writing for and against the reform so the Network can target them with information as the reform progresses. We also identify the dimensions of the issue being reported in the press and the political actors who are being quoted on the issue. For example, the review of anti-trafficking in persons articles included more than 400 articles. This review highlighted 17 areas being covered in the press such as US/Mexico relations, women’s rights, and Mexican state law enforcement. In other words, the analysis provided the foundation for the Network’s communication strategy.

The second step in our research is holding focus groups on the message. While network members and the policy partner may know the issue, they often do not know how listeners will respond to what they are saying. Focus group reports help them frame the debate, inform them of which stakeholder groups might support the initiative and which arguments are most compelling. The focus group reports assist in creating the messages for fact sheets, frequently asked questions and talking points for network members.

We use this research to determine which papers to publish, which articles to commission and which books to support. Once the materials are cleared by the network leader, members can be called on to conduct events and hold radio and TV interviews.

Each event or publication offers the opportunity to host a press conference or release a statement to the press. We have found that busy reporters often use verbatim language from frequently asked questions or fact sheets. The network knows its strategy is working when we see the language they have used repeated in the press.^{viii}

The role of the network technical secretary cannot be overemphasized. That person must review the issue related press on a daily basis to ensure that the network can counter negative press or conduct press conferences if there are misunderstandings about the

reform. This person is also called on to do political mapping of legislators and stakeholders who are in favor of, neutral on, or against the reforms. This political analysis assists network members in educating legislators.

The communication strategy is not just press releases etc., it is message development for the entire initiative. It ensures that network members have materials available to them for events and that events are structured to appeal to the most important stakeholders and be on message for the desired policy outcome.

ENSURING HIGH-IMPACT EVENTS ARE TIMELINE DRIVEN

We have found that awareness activities for policy reforms are successful when they have the following key components:

- *They are timeline driven.*
- *They are on message.*
- *They include internationally recognized and respected speakers.*
- *The audience is made up of the key stakeholders or legislators.*
- *Finally, there is press coverage by all key media outlets.*

Without attention to each aspect of the event, the event does not achieve the intended outcome. In our experience, policy partners are usually inexperienced at preparing for high-impact events. For that reason, the network technical secretary takes the lead on these events.

Timeline Driven: Reform issues have windows of opportunity. It is imperative that the events and publications are driven by political reality such as a specific legislative session, the honeymoon period when a new President or governor has a good relationship with a congress, or as a response to a current political problem. The network secretary understands this. He or she designs all activities to coincide with these deadlines. If the event, paper, or book does not happen when the policy partner needs it; the partner loses trust in the effectiveness of the network. In other words, this job is not 9-5 for the Secretary. It may mean working weekends and nights, hiring extra personnel, or outsourcing work to make sure that the policy partner trusts the ability of the network to deliver.

Messaging: A good policy event begins with clear and consistent messaging. We achieve consistent messaging by using questions. Academics, consultants, government executives or legislators often have “stock speeches”. While it may be a great speech, it usually is not targeted to the message necessary for the policy reform.

If there is a draft law, presidential decree or even proposed regulations, we translate the materials into the native language of the speakers. We then ask the speakers to answer three to five key questions about the initiative. In this way, we assure that the speaker includes in his or her presentation how the policy is in accordance with international best practices or what we can do to improve the policy under discussion.

We also ask our speakers to submit a three page paper that answers the questions (one page for each question) at least two weeks before the event. We publish these papers in a compendium of event papers and release the compendium at the event in paper form or on a CD. We also give these papers to reporters and reprint them and distribute them to legislators or important stakeholders. In other words, we use them to create understanding of why the policy reform is needed.

One week prior to the event, the technical secretary orchestrates conference calls with the speakers and the network leader or policy partner to ensure that presentations are coordinated and that speakers understand the political reality. If there is to be a panel, we include panel members on the call so they can share what they will be covering in their presentations to avoid duplication and give them time to clarify key messages with the panel moderator. We have found this attention to messaging assures our event will be on target to support the reform.

Internationally Recognized and Respected Speakers: An important part of the issue-area research is identifying internationally recognized organizations and speakers. For example, in anti-trafficking in persons the Organization of American States has subject matter experts. When they speak in Mexico they receive broad press coverage.

Since Mexico has the 10th largest economy and has a host of internationally trained academics, it is important to use best selling authors, such as David Osborne on Reinventing Government or internationally acclaimed academics, such as Dr. Pippa Norris on Democratic Values. The key is to know the work of the speakers the network invites. In other words, the technical secretary or network leader reads what speakers have previously written, vets them for press coverage they have received, and calls the organizers of conferences where they have spoken. We call conference organizers to ensure they are not only experts on the issue, but that they are also outstanding speakers who can take complex issues and make them easily understandable.

The Audience: The most overlooked part of event organizing is often audience building. Building the right audience is hard work. It means compiling a list of addresses and emails for all those who need to be informed of the policy reform. The composition of the audience validates the importance of the initiative. In our experience, audience building is a full-time job for one person for every 100 people. The network begins by sending out “save-the-date” emails, then sends invitations, calls to verify that the invitation was received, confirms attendance, and then calls to remind those confirmed of the event one day before the event is held.

Press Coverage: Finally, our motto is that “the event did not happen if the press did not cover it.” For each of our events we expect broad coverage. We ensure good press coverage by building a data base of reporters, editors and publications interested in the subject. The network secretary develops press advisories, releases, and fact sheets. We have someone available to schedule interviews with network members and international speakers.

In other words, we get the right information into hands of the reporters at the right time and making sure they have access for interviews. We know publication deadlines are 5:00 pm and schedule events accordingly. As with the audience, we spend a good deal of time informing the press of the event, inviting them, and reminding them of the event. Even if they do not attend the event, we send packets of information with a note explaining how they can schedule an interview with speakers. We have found that reporters may not have time to attend the event but call for an interview or use the written information such as the three page papers from speakers to write an article. The network website is also press friendly. Reporters can use the site to find quotes, background and review policy debates.

USING OTHER HIGH IMPACT EVENTS: STUDY TOURS, PRESS CONFERENCES, BOOK LAUNCH EVENTS AND FORUMS

International Study Tours

We determine if a study tour is necessary by discussing the expected outcome of the proposed tour with the policy maker. If the policy maker believes a tour would be useful, we conduct research to ensure that we identify the right country for the visit. Without upfront issue identification and speaker scheduling, the study tour is little more than a nice visit. It is best to begin with two specific objectives in mind:

1. To demonstrate a completed reform effort, and
2. To facilitate team building among naysayers and supporters for the reform.

Study tours must be timeline driven. We have successfully used them to turn naysayers into raving fans of initiatives. The person arranging the study tour; however, must ensure that the right people are included on the tour, those responsible for drafting, passing and implementing legislation. It is also important to ensure the in-country experts are good speakers who are willing to explain the context of implementation as well as the reform itself. In other words, study tours are not useful if the technical secretary does not closely supervise agenda development, messaging and the events included in the tour. It is also important to have a tour leader who ensures there are dialogue sessions daily about the reforms and that members feel included and have their expectations of the trip met.

Use International Forums to Validate the Reform or Make Recommendations for Change

In Mexico, international forums often are covered by the press and are important venues for validating the reform. As with all events, it is important to ensure the speakers are on message. We again require speakers to submit three papers well in advance and use these papers for Op-Ed articles, press releases, and books. The goal is to have Mexican government officials, legislators or a federal agency publicly commit to the reform. If possible, we ensure the event is covered on educational television or live on the radio.

Publish Books or Magazines on the Subject

Distribution of books, pamphlets or magazines can sway public opinion and create tangible evidence of the need for reform. Publication and distribution timing is crucial to success. We distribute executive summaries of books, articles, and frequently asked

questions and answers to legislators and stakeholders who may be too busy to read the publication in its entirety. Sometimes network members hand-deliver materials to legislators or other important stakeholders to ensure that the message is clearly understood.

The network may find funding for research studies or literature reviews from many donor organizations. Finally, book launch events are another way to publicize the need for reform. We have found that these events are well covered by the press. Publishing houses often have public relations departments who are eager to help publicize the book and the event.

COMMITTING SUPPORT THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION

Just because a law passes or a presidential decree is signed we do not assume that implementation will happen. Often this is when our real work begins and when the policy partner needs your support. Support might range from speakers who have implemented similar initiatives to training for managers who will be in charge of the effort. We have found that this assistance usually falls into the following categories:

- Strategic planning,
- Assistance in developing implementing regulations,
- Help creating awareness among stakeholders,
- Assistance creating systems reengineering,
- Personnel development and training, and
- Identifying and purchasing necessary technology.

Implementation usually has a timeline of 12 months to two years. For that reason, when we begin an initiative, do not assume our job ends with policy reform. In reality the assistance is just beginning and can drastically increase costs from the roughly 200,000 USD spent for the policy reform.

CONCLUSION

Policy reform happens in Mexico because of the commitment and knowledge of our partners, Mexican academics, legislators and government executives. The success of this model boils down to relationships based on shared vision and nurtured through trust.

The unsung heroes of the network model are the employees of the network technical secretariats. These committed Mexicans spend countless hours ensuring that the decisions and goals of the policy partner and network members are carried out. The technical secretariats are of fundamental importance in ensuring the success of the network model.

All of our work is about using our resources and experience to assist committed Mexican change agents. We believe our success is only measured when our partners have achieved their intended outcomes and we are grateful for the opportunity to have assisted them.

We have learned that successful policy reform is both an art and a science. Most often attention is paid to the science of reform the research and evaluation phases. We hope through this paper we have explained the importance of timing, communication skills, and consensus building.

ⁱ “Confianza en Instituciones,” Encuesta Nacional en Viviendas, Consulta Mitofsky, Julio de 2005.

ⁱⁱ See Introduction to Mexican Anti-Trafficking in Persons Bill, [www. grupoantitrata.org](http://www.grupoantitrata.org). The Senate bill drafter recognized the network support in improving the bill that was unanimously approved in the Senate.

ⁱⁱⁱ Profesional Civil Service Journal, Servicio Profesional de Carrera, Vol. II, Number 4, Fall 2005

^{iv} Servicio profesional de carrera ¿para que?, Rafael Martinez Puon, Fundacion Mexicana de Estudios Politicos y Administrativos, A.C., October 2005, funded by the Mexican Federal Chamber of Deputies.

^v Bi-annual global public opinion poll conducted by GlobeScan Incorporated, World Economic Forum, December 15, 2005, <http://www.weforum.org/site/homepublic.nsf/Content/Full+Survey%3A+Trust+in+Governments%2C+Corporations+and+Global+Institutions+Continues+to+Decline>

^{vi} Profesionalizacion del Servicio Publico en Mexico, Memorias, March 2003 included papers from Spain, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and the United States. It also included papers from the United Nations, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank.

^{vii} The Handbook of Strategic Public Relations and Integrated Communication, Clarke L. Caywood, 1997, McGraw Hill, pg. 454

^{viii} Reforma, February 8, 2005, La Red Mexicana por una Democracia de Calidad expone en su carta a los senadores cinco grandes argumentos para sustentar su peticion de que se apruebe la reeleccion de legislativa.