

COSTA RICA _____ 2020 - 2022

INNOVATION AND CIVIC TECHNOLOGIES FOR INCREASED TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT SERVICES



OAS | More rights
for more people

First edition 2022

Contents and editing: **Rodrigo Iriani, Jorge Umaña and Andrea López.**

Communications: **Lara Bersano, Carlos Escalante and Isabella León.**

Creativity and Design: **Marco Ortega Vega.**

Special thanks to: **All donors and partners involved in the project.**

© **THE TRUST FOR THE AMERICAS**

Washington D.C., United States of America.

Total or partial reproduction of this book is prohibited

without the express written authorization of

THE TRUST FOR THE AMERICAS.

Release date, December 2022.

CONTENTS

- 04** EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
- 08** SITUATIONAL AWARENESS
- 10** PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION
- 49** LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES
- 51** CHALLENGES
- 53** EFFORTS FOR THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROJECT
- 55** COMMUNICATIONS
- 66** DONORS AND PARTNERS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Startup representatives at the GovTech Forum 2022



Municipality of Mora and startup Neural Coders

Considering the challenges that Covid-19 brought to governments and citizens, The Trust for the Americas (the Trust) affiliated with the Organization of American States (OAS), in partnership with the Costa Rican government and local organizations, implemented the project “Innovation and Civic Technologies for Increased Transparency in Government Services” aimed at strengthening the capacities of municipal governments and public institutions. This two-year project (September 2020 – September 2022) fostered multi-stakeholder collaboration and a long-term process to spur innovation in public administration and the use of data to improve government services. Additionally, it mobilized the latest technology to support the Government of Costa Rica and local start-ups to maximize efficiency, improve communications and transparency in the delivery of resources.

The main objectives of the project were:

1. Strengthen the capacity of public institutions and civil society regarding public data to improve quality, accountability and transparency in delivery of public goods and services.
2. Increase transparency, inclusivity and efficiency of government services through civic engagement and innovation.
3. Provide civic technologies to increase transparency and efficiency, reducing opportunities for corruption and increasing citizens’ trust.

Throughout the implementation of five capacity-building components, over 400 people from the public sector, private sector and civil society were impacted. The components varied in format and methodology, but all sought to facilitate interoperability and improve the efficiency and confidence of actions to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic. They were also planned in alignment with the standards and recommended best practices of the Inter-American Open Data Program (PIDA). This project contributed to creating a collaborative ecosystem that leads to government services with improved quality and coverage.

The **Simplification and Digitalization of Procedures component** (aligned to objective 2) supported the streamlining and digitalization of 3 municipal procedures, with a people-centered approach in the municipalities of Acosta, Sarchí, and Esparza. The GovTech Bootcamp main focus was to promote the creation of a GovTech Ecosystem in Costa Rica. Municipal officials and civil society leaders representing local startups worked together to develop, incubate and implement 5 tech projects to improve public service delivery to make them more efficient, transparent, and reliable.

The **Training Program for the implementation of the National Guide to Open Public Data (GDA)** (aligned to objective 1) focused its efforts on strengthening the Open Data ecosystem through the implementation of awareness-raising activities on the use of public data. 40 participants from the public sector representing 13 municipalities participated in a comprehensive training program structured to teach them to design public data opening processes at the municipal level.

In 2022 we celebrated the **GovTech Forum**, this time as an on-site event in San José Costa Rica. In 9 panel sessions, 27 speakers shared about relevant topics such as the application of new technologies in the public sector, the digitization of administrative procedures, and the use of open data. 186 people attended the event either in person or online. Lastly, an open-source Data Intelligence Platform in Sarchí (aligned to objective 3) was developed based on visualizations and data analysis to publish critical information promptly. This platform utilizes Blockchain to publish critical data and certify government operations.

The long-term impact of this project will be the effective collaboration of government entities with a wide range of stakeholders at every level of society (including vulnerable communities), and improved quality and coverage of government services in a post-pandemic recovery phase.

Timeline of the project:

1. Simplification and Digitalization of Procedures

January 2021 - September 2022

2. GovTech Bootcamp Costa Rica

June 2021 - September 2021

3. Training Program for the Implementation of the National Guide to Open Public Data (GDA)

January 2022 - June 2022

4. GovTech Forum Costa Rica 2022

August 04, 2022

5. Data Intelligence Platform in Sarchí

April 2022 - September 2022

Impact of the project:

- **403** people impacted (47.6% women).
- **206** government officials engaged.
- **36** government agencies or institutions participated.
- **32** Civil Society Organizations involved.
- **9** digital projects incubated and 5 of them were financed.
- **\$85,000** awarded in seed funds for digital problem-solving projects.

Access the project's interactive data visualizations:

Simplification and Digitalization of Procedures: [here](#)

GovTech Bootcamp Costa Rica: [here](#)

Training Program for the implementation of the National Guide to Open Public Data (GDA): [here](#)

GovTech Forum Costa Rica 2022: [here](#)

The Trust implemented this project with the financial support of the **US Embassy** in Costa Rica and in partnership with **OS City, GOVTECHHUB, and InnovaAP of the University of Costa Rica**. Technical support was also received from specialists of the **OAS**, as well as regional experts and partners working on transparency, accountability, technology, innovation, and citizen participation.

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Since 2015, The Trust and the OAS have supported the Costa Rican government in transitioning from an Open Government to an Open State, inviting different government branches at the national and sub-national levels to participate. In 2018 and 2019, The Trust and InnovaAP developed mobile innovation labs in fifteen Municipalities outside the Costa Rican Central Valley. Generating this collaborative environment led to identifying local challenges and brainstorming solutions with an innovative and sustainable approach. Additionally, The Trust established and trained 15 multidisciplinary teams per Municipality to work collaboratively to develop a municipal Open Data Plan.

In 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic challenged the way governments and citizens used to interact and presented an opportunity for governments to innovate and use technology at the core of their services and procedures. The concepts of Open Government and Open Data emphasize the use of data for social and economic value. They also promote citizen oversight on emergency packages, rebuilding trust between citizens and governments, considering multi-sector involvement in the construction and implementation of policies, plans, and services, and adopting new technologies and more digital solutions

The Government of Costa Rica identified the need to get closer to citizens to improve the quality of public goods and service delivery and to be sufficiently broad-based, legitimate, and capable. This new way of relationship and management is transforming public administration, generating more spaces and mechanisms of participation, collaboration, and innovation. To improve government's performance, it is necessary to invest in modernization processes, and provide resources for technological improvement.

The databases that different levels of government administrations make public contain relevant information on the management of public affairs. Although, it is not always presented in an understandable format to most citizens. Access to reliable public data is an important facilitator for evidence-based policymaking, better public service delivery, and greater innovation in the sector. High-level national statistics are no longer enough, people are seeking access to more granular and localized data, from disaggregated macro statistics to real-time local data. Any information that may be useful in making the public sector more efficient, sustainable, and reliable must be publicly available, within the limits of the law. This is the principle behind Open Government actions.

The post-COVID-19 scenario comes with changes in digital services and in the exercise of public administration. This has changed the way in which institutions relate to citizens:

1. Government institutions need to increase their presence on the Internet through disseminating data and information on their websites or portals.
2. Using data sources to design actions and policies to mitigate COVID-19 requires new and innovative governance approaches.
3. Face-to-face procedures were drastically reduced. Citizens avoid crowds to make inquiries or procedures.

Implementing actions to promote communication between local governments and citizens, including different sectors, becomes a key aspect to democratize access to information and participatory processes. These tools will validate citizen's inputs and a collaborative decision-making framework.

Along the lines of the Open State Declaration, both the executive and local governments have recognized that open government strategies are effective tools for promoting a closer relationship with citizens to understand their problems and needs, to recognize the social capital of social actors, and thereby co-construct innovative proposals to solve public problems. These new strategies for effective public management also help to build capacities and empower citizens to be able to influence public decision-making spaces.

For these reasons, this project focused on supporting the creation of networks and coalitions to improve the dynamics between public organizations and local actors. Improve the provision of public goods and services considering citizens' perspectives. And foster the design of plans, programs, strategies, policies, and projects focused on citizens, taking advantage of their capital as change agents.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

SIMPLIFICATION AND DIGITALIZATION OF PROCEDURES

JANUARY 2021 – SEPTEMBER 2021



The Simplification and Digitalization of Procedures component supported the Acosta, Sarchí and Esparza Municipalities in the process of redesigning and digitizing municipal procedures or services, making them more agile and accessible; by using a user-centered approach. Along with InnovaAP, a collaborative methodology was developed, which allowed the analysis of procedures, generating a reengineering of processes and the prototyping and testing of procedures.

This initiative was launched due to the existence of limitations for municipalities when providing procedures and services to taxpayers, namely:

1. Excessive number of requirements for procedures.
2. Little or no information (clear and specific) of the requirements for the completion of a procedure; as well as in their response times.
3. Conceptualization of procedures from a bureaucratic perspective.
4. Lack of legislation related to the issue of simplification and digitalization of municipal procedures.

See final report of the component: [here](#)

See blog entry: [here](#)

Modality and methodology

The component was executed in 5 phases, in which both municipal officials and users participated to evaluate and develop the new tools, consultation processes, and other inputs that allowed to correct the limitations identified. At the same time, the methodology focused on increasing the quality of the services provided by the municipalities to the taxpayers and citizens.



PHASE 0: PREVIOUS PHASE

This phase focused on starting the interactions and conversations with the municipalities' teams (Acosta, Sarchí y Esparza), through a series of meetings. The objectives, activities, and dynamics of the component were explained, as well as the definition of responsibilities and commitments.

PHASE 1: PROCESS DIAGNOSIS

A citizen consultation and mapping of technological and institutional resources were carried out.

This phase began with identifying the procedures that adapted best to the standards of innovation and acceptance of the municipalities. The procedures to be digitized were selected considering the information reviewed, and the resources and assessments of the municipalities.

PHASE 2: REDESIGN OF THE PROCEDURE

Two workshops on user experience and redesign of the procedure with public officials and users were held.

The main activity was the development of the redesign workshop of procedures in which the selected procedure was analyzed structurally and comprehensively. Elements of the procedures were evaluated, such as the presence of repeated steps, unnecessary activities and the verification of times. In addition, the procedures were redesigned collaboratively by the citizens and the public officials of each municipality.

PHASE 3: LOW RESOLUTION PROTOTYPE DESIGN

A non-functional and low-resolution prototype was created based on the inputs that resulted from the workshops. A prototyping workshop was presented and carried out. Based on the information collected through the tools implemented in the workshops, ideas, recommendations, and suggestions by the users and officials, the laboratory team prepared proposals for each procedure, which were validated through workshops with the users and officials.

PHASE 4: DIGITIZATION OF THE PROCEDURE

A list of technical and operative requirements was generated, and the digitization of the procedure was entrusted to the Technological Institute of Costa Rica (ITCR for its acronym in Spanish). Afterward, the digitalization and user testing were completed.

PHASE 5: EVALUATION OF RESULTS

The learning process of the users and officials who participated in the digitalization of the procedure was systematized: the improvement opportunities were reviewed.



Procedures selected

Acosta Municipality: started the simplification and digitalization first. Due to the citizen consultation and the experience of the officials of the Municipality, they decided to work on the digitalization of the land use procedure. This redesign process generated spaces for the disruption of ideas and co-creation with the Municipality and its citizens.

Sarchí Municipality: In a citizen consultation, three administrative procedures in need of simplification and digitization were identified. After discussions and evaluations, the Municipality decided to work with the real estate tax exemption procedure. Many challenges were faced when calling for citizen participation. To face these challenges, the Innovaap team carried out the training workshops on several occasions until they had enough user participation.

Esparza Municipality: The municipality chose to work with the residue collection procedure. The municipality was directly responsible for inviting citizens and users to the workshops. They complied with the component's demands to prepare a collaborative prototype and validate it.

Digitalization

Each digitized municipal procedure now offers the user a digital alternative to carry out the process. However, the procedure can still be carried out in person.

The digitalized procedures:

1. Are simple to use and accesible to users.
2. Allow to upload files depending on the type of procedure (procedures in Sarchí and Acosta Municipalities).
3. Promote trust among users by displaying the logos and visual identity of the municipalities.

Each municipality supported the launch of these digital platforms with communications campaigns to promote the use of these new digital public procedures.

The digitalized procedures

See the three digitalized procedures: [here](#)

See blog entry: [here](#)

Land-use permits Municipality of Acosta



Welcoming page: site where the user can see the phases of the procedure and the requirements to send an application.

Applicant form: space where the user must complete a series of fields required to process the request.

Main tray: section where the system administrator may inspect each request received, as well as control pending requests.

Inspection of request: space where the system administrator can see in detail the information of a specific request.

Issuance of certificate: section where the system administrator will accept the issuance of the certification of a specific request.

Request status review: space where the person applying for the procedure can check the status of their request.

See the digitalized procedure: [here](#)



Municipalidad
de Sarchí

Exoneración de bienes inmuebles

Solicitud de exoneración de bien único

El siguiente formulario recopilará la información esencial para dar inicio al proceso de exoneración, de tipo bien único, según la ley 7509 en la Municipalidad de Sarchí.

Para completar el presente formulario son necesarios los siguientes requisitos:

1- Estar al día con los pagos municipales.

2- Contar con un único bien a nivel nacional.

3- Adjuntar certificación del Registro Público Nacional donde indica que posee un único bien inmueble a nivel nacional: <https://www.rnpdigital.com/shopping/login.jspx> / Si tiene duda de como adquirirlo de [click aquí](#)

4- Adjuntar la siguiente declaración jurada firmada y escaneada: [Declaración](#)

1. Nombre completo:*

Application form: this section presents a form and instructions on how to acquire external documents to complete the form.

Attach files: the user must indicate whether or not they have a digital signature and attach the specific documents to complete the procedure.

Confirmation of request sent: after completing the procedure, the user will see a confirmation message in the screen and will receive a confirmation email.

Proof of application: the user will receive an email with a document specifying whether if the application was accepted or rejected.

Login: space where the system administration will review each request, once logged in with the credentials.

Panel of requests received: section where the system administration will be able to inspect each request received.

Application review: the system administration may use this section to inspect any request in detail to ensure that it complies with all the requested data.

See the digitalized procedure: [here](#)

Residue collection Municipality of Esparza

Solicitud de recolección de desechos valorizables

Ponemos a su disposición los pasos de inscripción de forma opcional al programa de Recolección de Desechos Valorizables. Los mismos deben ser presentados y tramitados ante la Unidad de Gestión Ambiental.

Conozca más sobre el trámite [aquí](#)

Pasos:

1. Completar el siguiente formulario.
2. Conocer sobre clasificar los residuos.
3. Conocer las rutas y horarios de recolección
4. Ingresar al chat de whatsapp de la municipalidad y solicitar unirse a las listas de difusión

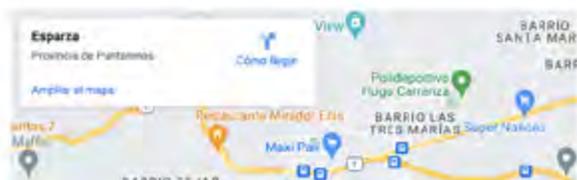
[Completar aquí](#)

[Descargar aquí](#)

[Descargar aquí](#)

[Unirse aquí](#)

Nota: En el plantel municipal se pueden entregar los desechos valorizables.



Steps to enroll in the program: a description of the steps to follow to complete the procedure.

Program registration form: a space where the user will have to fill out a series of fields to register their interest in participating in the residue collection program.

Login screen: section where a system administrator can review and inspect each request received.

Request panel: panel where the system administrator can inspect each request received in detail.

See the digitalized procedure: [here](#)

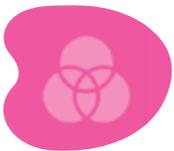
Final Results



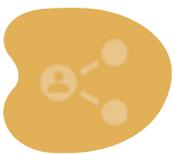
115 participating people (70% women)



3 participating municipalities



3 simplified and digitalized procedures



9 Civil Society Organizations engaged

Impact

Through an online exit survey, the perspectives, opinions, best practices and opportunities for improvement identified by the users and officials who participated in the component were systematized. The following comments about the component can be highlighted:

“It is providing us with a tool that makes it easier for the departments involved to have controls and have access to all those taxpayers who do not have to carry out the procedures in person. They now can do it through the platform.” María Giselle Monge, public official of the Municipality of Acosta.

“We learned to listen to the citizen in the need they have and promote solutions.” Marisol Esquivel, public official of the Municipality of Sarchí.

“It facilitated the user-municipality relationship in all its aspects.” Enrique Alvarado, user of municipal procedures.

See interactive visualization of the component: [here](#)

See last blog entry: [here](#)

GOVTECH BOOTCAMP COSTA RICA (JUNE 2021 – JUNE 2022)



The [GovTech Bootcamp Costa Rica 2021](#) implemented by The Trust for the Americas, GovTech Hub, and OS City, sought to strengthen the GovTech ecosystem in Costa Rica by stimulating innovation in public administration, increasing open data analysis, and promoting the creation of public-private partnerships to generate solutions to public sector problems.

In this initiative, startups and municipal governments after a series of sessions and online workshops for the generation of GovTech capacities, worked together to identify and develop creative solutions to local problems or challenges. **Objectives:**

1. Sensitize government officials on the GovTech topic.
2. Promote success stories and lessons learned.
3. Generate public-private partnerships.
4. Accompany startups in the search for their value proposition.
6. Ensure quality between GovTech supply and demand.
7. Promote the GovTech ecosystem.
8. Implement pilot solutions.

Modality and methodology

The GovTech Bootcamp was structured in the following phases:

Open call: receipt of applications of startups and sending of invitations to municipalities.

April 19, 2021 – May 15, 2021

Selection: evaluation of applications and selection of startups.

May 31, 2021 – June 8, 2021

First phase: welcome talk and bootcamp presentation for all participating teams.

June 17, 2021

Second phase: content leveling sessions for the participants and meetings with municipalities to identify the public problem to address.

June 22, 2021 – July 27, 2021

Third phase: Training for startups and meetings to find solutions to public problems between startups and municipalities.

July 29, 2021 – August 28, 2021

Demo day

August 31, 2021

Open call and selection process

A call to Costa Rican Startups with a technological base and that wanted to work with the public sector was launched. It was supported by a communications campaign on Social Media, and with an informative session to answer questions from potential participants. Additionally, a [microsite](#) with all the information related to the Bootcamp was created, including the registration and application form for startups.

See press release: [here](#)

See informative session: [here](#)



RESUMEN DEL PROGRAMA

El GovTech Bootcamp es un espacio que busca generar y crear soluciones GovTech para resolver problemas y oportunidades del sector público, los cuales se definirán de manera colaborativa entre la sociedad civil, startups y funcionarios de gobierno. Con la generación de alianzas público-privadas, se busca sensibilizar, resolver problemáticas locales y fortalecer el ecosistema GovTech en el país, a través de iniciativas innovadoras y disruptivas.

Informative session

16 startups submitted their application for the Bootcamp:

1. **LISTICA** Costa Rica
2. **Inco** Costa Rica
3. **Meet and Grow** Costa Rica
4. **Communis Software** Chile
5. **Contratus** Costa Rica
6. **Revista Tecnológica Quantico** Costa Rica
7. **Big Cloud** Costa Rica
8. **Neural Coders** Costa Rica
9. **Refugio vital filtro purificador** Costa Rica
10. **Panoramica Urbana** Costa Rica
11. **Baset Labs** Costa Rica
12. **TOFARMA** Costa Rica
13. **SmArtech** Costa Rica
14. **Communis Software** Chile
15. **EOS Costa Rica** Costa Rica
16. **Yenko Solutions** Costa Rica

Additionally, 30 municipalities were invited directly by The Trust for the Americas to participate in the Bootcamp initiative.

Selection process

All applications of startups were reviewed and evaluated following specific selection criteria:

MANDATORY

- It is a GovTech startup with an interest to collaborate with the Government.
- It is a Costa Rican startup, or it has commercial activities in the country.

DESIRABLE

- It works on projects with the capacity to generate public value.
- It already developed a product or service that can benefit local governments, or it can transform a product or service to benefit government activities.
- Capacity to develop technology-based solutions.
- Fits in with the innovation spaces specified by the program.
- Willingness to work jointly and collaboratively with peer companies and municipal teams.
- Willingness to participate in shared learning spaces.

After the evaluation process carried out by representatives of The Trust, the GovTech Hub, and OS City, 7 startups were selected to participate in the GovTech Bootcamp.

Startups selected:

[Big Cloud](#)

[Contratus](#)

[EOS Costa Rica](#)

[Inco](#)

[Listica](#)

[Neural Coders](#)

[SmArtech](#)



To finalize the selection process, all startups presented commitment letters to participate actively in the Bootcamp. Out of the 30 municipalities invited, 12 decided to join the Bootcamp as the government counterpart.

To finalize the selection process, all startups presented commitment letters to participate actively in the Bootcamp.

Municipalities participating:

[Municipalidad de Atenas](#)

[Municipalidad de Belén](#)

[Municipalidad de Cañas](#)

[Municipalidad de Cartago](#)

[Municipalidad de Esparza](#)

[Municipalidad de Orotina](#)

[Municipalidad de Osa](#)

[Municipalidad de Orotina](#)

[Municipalidad de Osa](#)

[Municipalidad de Orotina](#)

[Municipalidad de Quepos](#)

[Municipalidad de Turrialba](#)



See press release: [here](#)

Development of the Bootcamp

First phase. To start the Bootcamp, a presentation session was held for all the participating teams (startups and municipalities) on May 17.

In this session, the program, the agenda, the work dynamics and the tools available were presented and explained to participants. Additionally, all questions about the Bootcamp. Lastly, participants were asked to complete a [registration and baseline survey](#) to measure and evaluate their level of knowledge and understanding of GovTech concepts.

All the sessions were held in a virtual format and were supported by a [Notion platform](#) to guide participants through the different phases.

[Agenda of the GovTech Bootcamp](#)

[Support materials](#)



The image shows a presentation slide with a pink background. The title "EL PROGRAMA" is written in large, white, stylized letters. Below the title, there is a list of three items:

1. Charla de inicio del GovTech Bootcamp
2. Sesiones de definición de problemas de gobiernos locales + Encuesta de nivelación de contenidos. Pitch de los problemas al ecosistema
3. Sesiones colaborativas entre startups y equipos municipales, de búsqueda de soluciones para los problemas identificados. Demo day startups

On the right side of the slide, there is a vertical strip of four video call windows. From top to bottom: a woman with long dark hair, a man with short dark hair, a man with a beard and glasses wearing a headset, and a man with short dark hair and glasses. The bottom-most window shows a grey silhouette icon.

See presentation session: [here](#)

Second phase. Consisted of eight sessions (two sessions per week), and additional sessions for preparing for the pitching and session with each team:

Content leveling sessions for all participating teams on Tuesdays. Each session was taught by the Bootcamp organizing team and invited experts:

[Session 1: What is GovTech? Transition from civictech to GovTech](#)

[Session 3: Digital government stages. Governments as a platform](#)

[Session 5: Public innovation laboratories](#)

[Session 7: a- Innovative public procurement b- Technologies 4.0](#)



Sessions to identify and define the public problem for municipalities, on Thursdays

[Session 2: Problem definition](#)

[Session 4: Discovering the problem](#)

[Session 6: Problem redefinition](#)

[Session 8: Problem definition](#)

Throughout three sessions, municipalities presented their public problems to the startups on June 27th.

Pitch preparation session

Individual sessions with the municipal teams

[Session 9: Pitch - Public problems](#)



Phase 3. This phase was divided into two types of sessions:

- Training of startups.
- Collaborative sessions between startups and municipalities to search for solutions to public problems.

Session 10: [Training](#)

Session 11: [Search for the solution](#)

Session 12: [Search for the solution](#)

Session 13: [Search for the solution](#)

Session 14: [Training](#)

Session 15: [Chat session](#)

Session 16: [Demo day](#)

Project financing

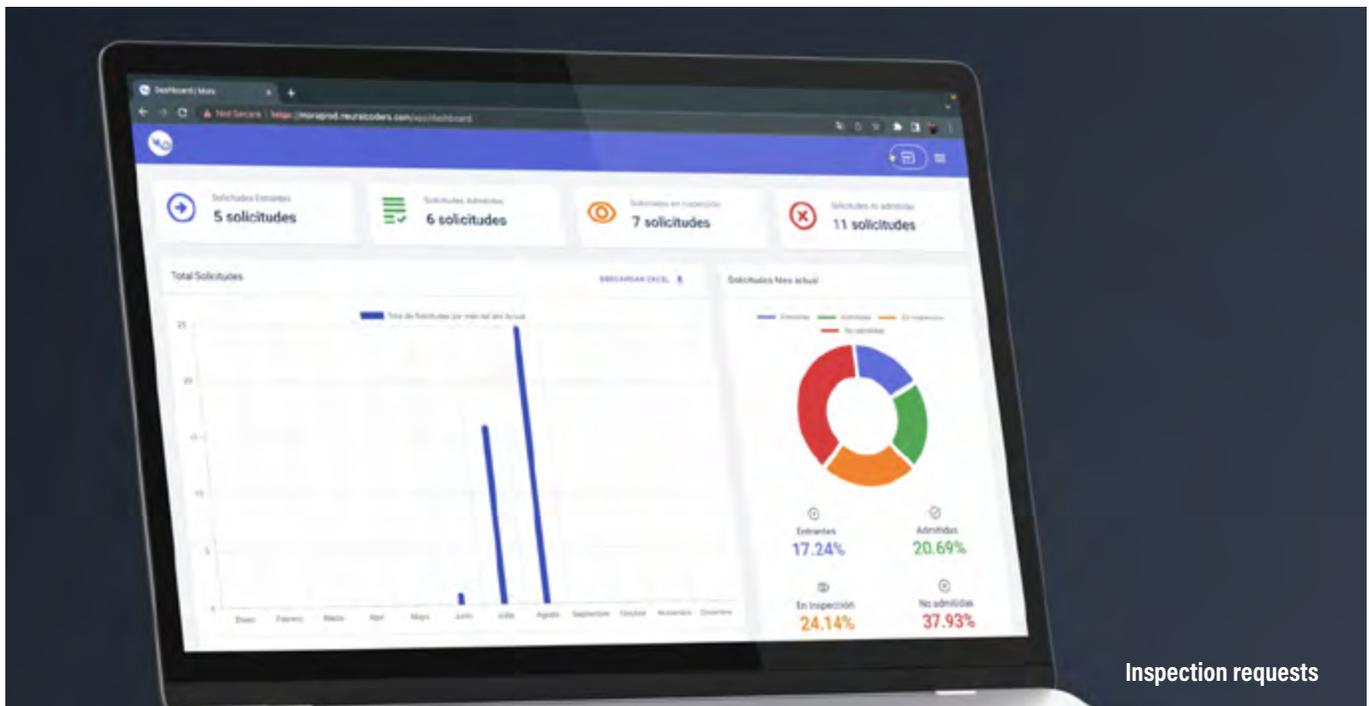
Seed Funding contest

The GovTech Bootcamp provided 7,500 USD as funding for the five best and most promising project ideas. Ideas capable of providing a solution to a specific municipal problem through the digitization of municipal processes and simplification of data management and the relationship with citizens.

See press release: [here](#)

Winning projects

Inspection requests



Inspection requests

Get to know the project "Inspection requests":

- [Success story video](#)

- [Platform link](#)

Implementing partners: Municipality of Mora & Neural Coders.

Problem to address: Challenges to carry out procedures and provide simple services to citizens in the municipality of Mora.

Proposed solution: “Inspection requests” is a web platform that allows the citizens of the Mora Municipality to carry out inspection procedures digitally, as well as to see the status of their procedures (waiting, approved, rejected). Likewise, the platform allows adequate traceability of the procedures by the Municipality, which will speed up inspection requests and will contribute to having updated data.

Highlights: the collaboration between The Trust for The Americas-Neural Coders-Municipality of Mora was published in Forbes Central America magazine, as part of a publication in which Neural Coders was highlighted as one of the most promising companies of 2022 in Central America: [see publication](#).

Extra modules were included in the platform to improve its performance of it, covering more procedures than those requested initially. The team developed the digital platform using agile methodologies such as Scrum and Kanban. Also, continuous and productive communication with the Mora Municipality was essential to reach the expected results.

The grant allowed the startup to hire the services of different professionals in software development, specialized in areas that contributed to the proper preparation of the platform. Likewise, an informative video aimed at inviting the citizens of the Mora Municipality to use the platform and value the agreement between the three parties (Neural Coders, Municipality of Mora, and The Trust for the Americas) was developed. In addition, it allowed giving several student interns the opportunity to generate new knowledge and skills, specifically in the area of web development.



Tenorí Digital Information Platform



Get to know the project “Tenorí Digital Information Platform”:

- [Success story video](#)

- App link: [Apple store](#) or [Google store](#)

Implementing partners: Municipality of Cañas & Listica.

Problem to address: information gaps between the government of Cañas and the citizenry.

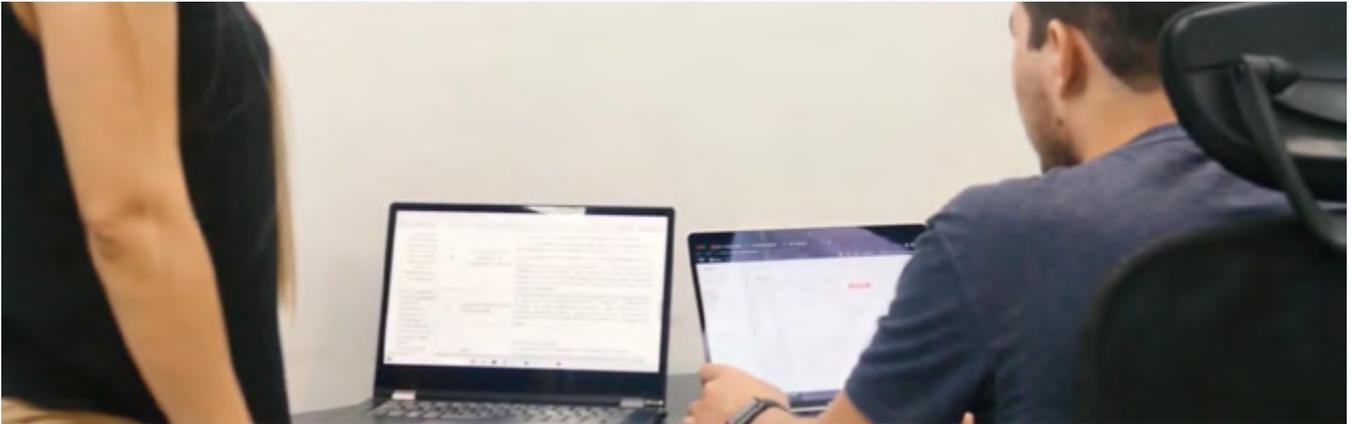
Proposed solution: the “Tenorí Digital Information Platform” is an application with a Content Administration Panel that allows and facilitates the interaction between businesses, the Cañas Municipality and citizens. It integrates a business directory, a news panel, information on municipal procedures, an events calendar and instant communication of incidents reported by citizens.

In this first version the user will find:

- A catalog of companies in the Cañas Municipality, with business details and buttons for direct contact.
- A list and details of events in the municipality, sorted by dates.
- News, with search filter.
- La Voz del Pueblo section, in which the user reports or notifies incidents observed in the municipality in real-time. Reports of incidents are received instantly in the administrative panel of the application.
- Frequently Asked Questions Section, regarding municipal procedures.

Highlights: Version 1.0 of the application is available in the Play Store and App Store. It can be found under the name Tenorí.

Infrastructure and IoT services to improve the mobility of people with visual disabilities



Get to know the project "Infrastructure and IoT services": [Success story video](#)

Implementing partners: Esparza Municipality & Grupo Inco.

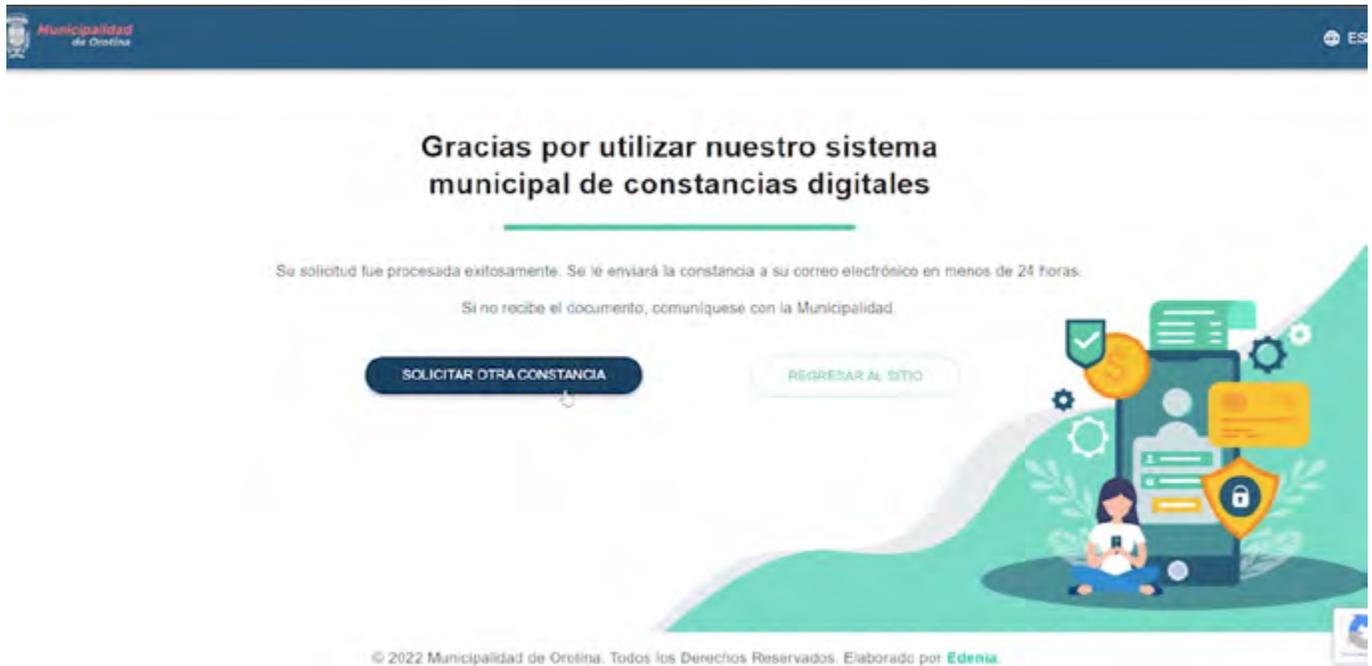
Problem to address: little accessibility for the mobility of blind people in the canton of Esparza.

Proposed solution: a beacon management application and geospatial viewer services to display the beacons on the map and thus know the location of each device in the Municipality of Esparza. This application can contribute to the geospatial identification by people with visual disabilities, and thus improve their urban mobility making it more inclusive and accessible. The beacons are small devices based on Bluetooth low energy technology, which emit a signal that uniquely identifies each device.

This development included:

Configuration of the AWS IoT Core service with the beacons owned by the Municipality of Esparza.
Cloud infrastructure enabled for what the project requires and a properly configured back-end.
Enabling geospatial services to be used with beacon visualization.

Highlights: the Municipality of Esparza has robust technology in the cloud to scale this project and develop different applications. This project was an important step towards helping the municipality to start the development of the web application for people with visual disabilities. They have already started the development process of this new application.



Get to know the project “**Municipal System of Digital Records**”:

[Success story video](#)

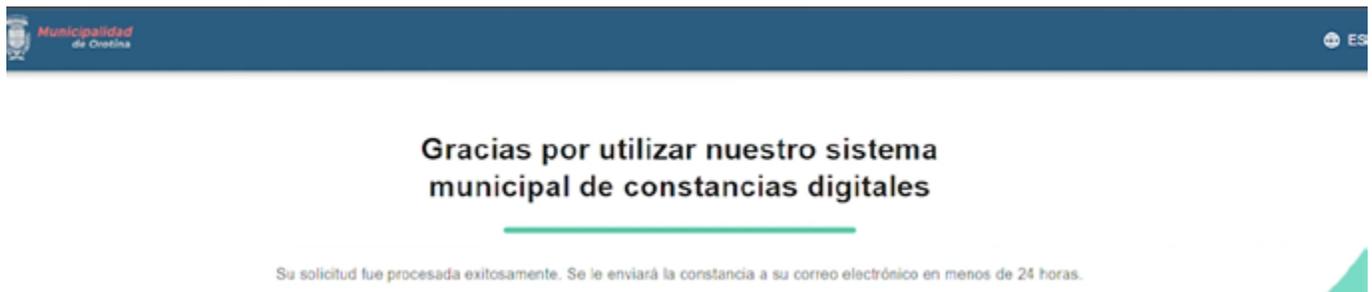
[Application link](#)

Implementing partners: Municipality of Orotina & EOS.

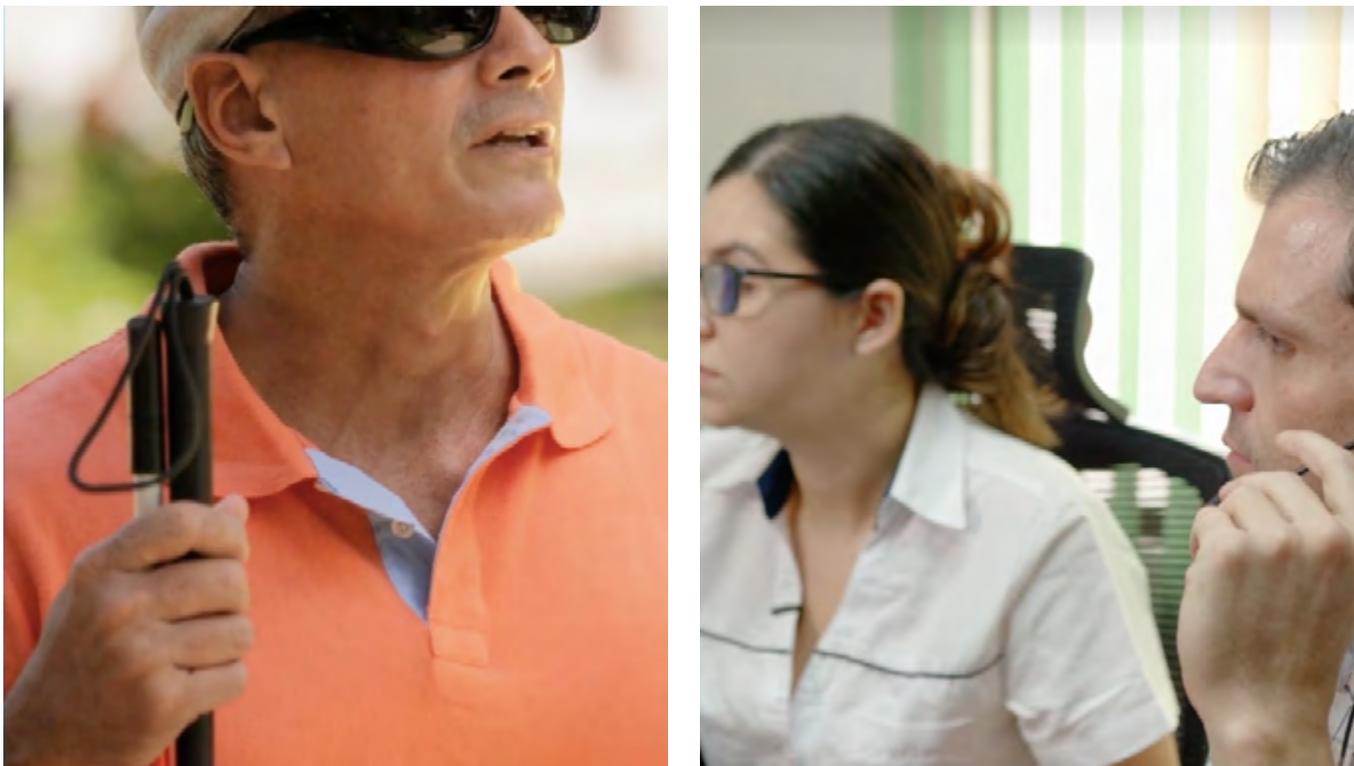
Problem to address: challenges in the interoperability of systems and institutions for the management of public procedures in the Orotina Municipality.

Proposed solution: a web app hosted on the site of the Municipality of Orotina in which users can enter from any device and complete a procedure to request proof of taxes up to date. This will have no cost to the user. The certificate will include the digital signature approved by the government, so it can be verified by any instance.

Highlights: In addition to the platform, technical documentation was created, available for 1. those who wish to adapt the generic platform for their own use and 2. those who are looking for the process to connect the digital seal with any other application. This is available on GitHub.



Virtual assistant (bot) Municipality of Heredia



Get to know the project “**Virtual assistant (bot) Municipality of Heredia**”:

[Success story video](#)

[Application link](#)

Implementing partners: Municipality of Heredia & Smartech.

Problem to address: challenges in the inclusion of population with disabilities considering the component of smart cities in the Heredia Municipality.

Proposed solution: a virtual assistant or chatbot available online. It is a conversational solution with which people with hearing and speech disabilities can interact in a written manner with greater flexibility. The technology of the product allows a conversation with a virtual assistant (bot) through a software initially integrated into a web page.

The bot’s responses are given without human intervention through intelligent natural language recognition technologies. Given the high complexity of the needs of the different types of disabilities, the scope of the project was limited to the disabilities that are more common among the population, also considering the requirements of the municipality, the technical resources available and the budget: hearing and speech disabilities. Additionally, some functionalities were added for interaction with the population with visual

Final Results



62 participating people (24% women)



10 participating municipalities



7 participating startups



35,000 USD granted in seed funding for projects



5 collaborative and tech-based projects developed

See the interactive visualization of GovTech Bootcamp: [here](#)

GovTech Bootcamp Impact

Entry and exit surveys were applied to participants to assess the improvement in their skills and knowledge in the topics addressed by the bootcamp.

Indicator	Entry level of knowledge	Exit level of knowledge	Overall change
Recognizes the difference between CivicTech and GovTech.	43% understands the difference.	80% understands the difference.	32% of improvement.
Recognizes and understands the difference between GovTech, e-government, digital government and governments as platforms.	52% recognizes and understands the difference.	80% recognizes and understands the difference.	29.8% of improvement.
Ability to define the concept of GovTech.	53% have the ability to define GovTech.	86.8% have the ability to define GovTech.	33.6% of improvement

Change management

During the evaluation, it was important to identify the capacity of the municipalities to identify problems that could be addressed with the use of technology. **Here we present some findings:**

- At the beginning of the Bootcamp, **80%** of the participants were able to identify public problems that can be addressed with the use of technology, at the end of the Bootcamp, this percentage was increased to **90.2%**.
- The Bootcamp also contributed to increasing the percentage of participants that were able to identify and define real problems of the municipalities' users, from **74.6%** to **86.8%**. This result is related to the
- Lastly, there was a change of **31.8%** in the skills of the participants in the areas of prototyping, ideation, and design of GovTech projects.

TRAINING PROGRAM FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL GUIDE TO OPEN PUBLIC DATA — GDA (JANUARY 2022 – JUNE 2022)

HTTPS://BIT.LY/MUNIDATOSABIERTOS', and 'FECHA LÍMITE DE INSCRIPCIÓN: SÁBADO 26 DE MARZO'."/>

CURSO

APERTURA DE DATOS

200 AÑOS COSTA RICA

GOBIERNO ABIERTO

DATOS ABIERTOS COSTA RICA

TRUST THE TRUST FOR THE AMERICAS

Versión 1

Guía Nacional para la Publicación de Datos Abiertos

MAYO 2020

· DIRIGIDO A PERSONAS FUNCIONARIAS MUNICIPALES

· REGISTRO EN: [HTTPS://BIT.LY/MUNIDATOSABIERTOS](https://bit.ly/munidatosabiertos)

· FECHA LÍMITE DE INSCRIPCIÓN: SÁBADO 26 DE MARZO

The [Training Program for the Implementation of the National Guide to Open Public Data](#) (GDA) aimed to strengthen the Open Data Ecosystem through awareness-raising activities for the use of public data and the capacity of municipal officials to design public data opening processes at the municipal level. The program was designed in collaboration with the Open Government Strategy team of the Ministry of Communication of Costa Rica.

Support, advice and technical assistance were provided to the personnel of Costa Rican public institutions on opening public data. The training process was also developed in compliance with the objectives established by **Executive Decree 40199-MP**:

1. Establish the guidelines to publish public databases in an open format and the promotion of their use.
2. Strengthen the culture of transparency, access to information, accountability and participation.
3. Promote the generation of social and economic value through the development and use of new technologies, collaborative processes and spaces for innovation based on open public data.
4. Promote the generation, storage and publication of public databases in an automated manner, as part of the ordinary document management of the institutions.
5. Promote efforts to improve the harmonization of the data sets of public institutions to avoid duplication of efforts and the waste of resources in the exchange and dissemination of data.

Also, the program intended to contribute to the fulfillment of the objectives set out in the National Open Data Work Plan, and sought to support the implementation of the Open State Agreement, through the commitments that establish a component for the opening of public data at all levels of the Public Administration.

Objectives

General

To strengthen technical capacities to consolidate Open Local Governments through the study and practical exercise of opening public data at the local level.

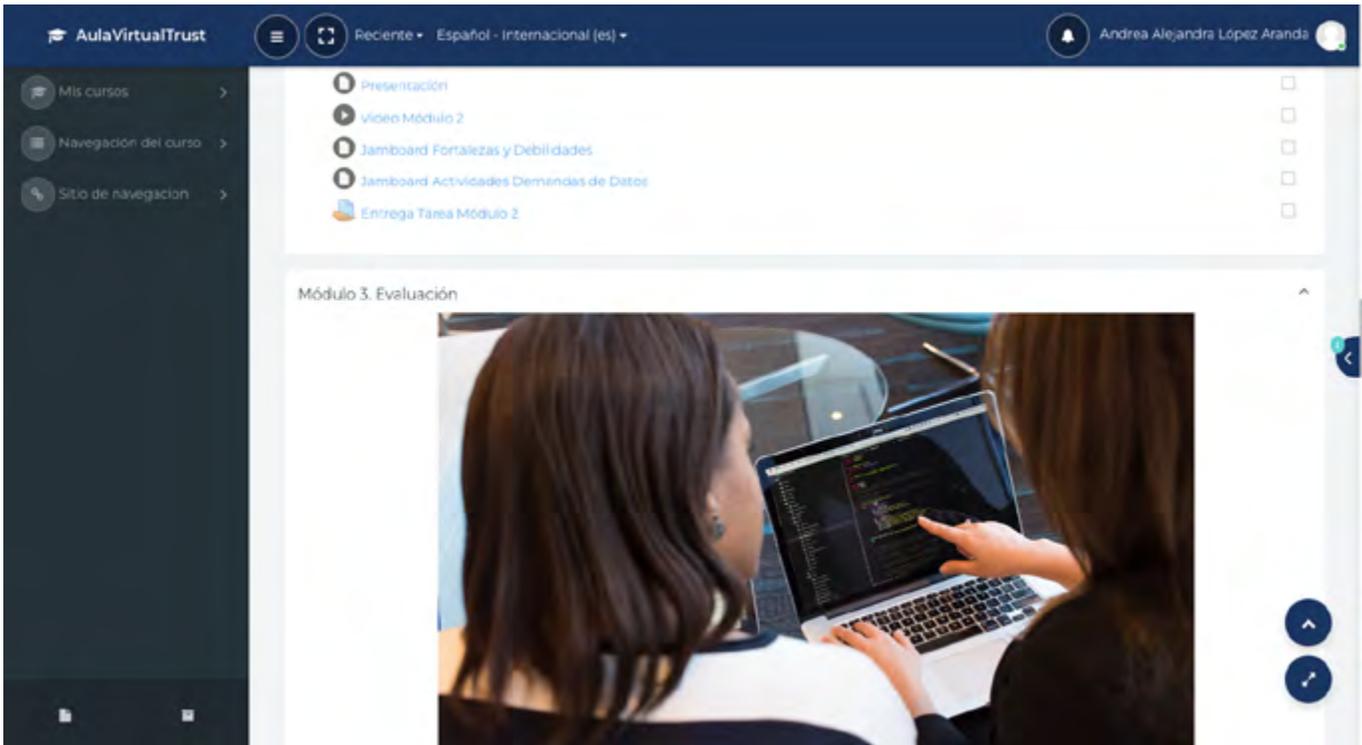
Specific

- Identify the concepts and principles of open data.
- Deepen the applicable regulations on open data.
- Map the elements required to develop a data opening process.
- Recognize the technical elements necessary to prioritize public data sets, susceptible to publication.
- Define the technical processes for preparing open data of the highest quality.
- Identify good practices of open data portals and actions to promote the use of open public data.

Modality and methodology

The course was structured in 6 virtual and synchronous modules (comprising 10 phases), taught throughout 6 weeks from April to May. A total of 12 training hours were delivered to theoretically review the stages of the GDA-CR and put each stage into practice. The first 5 weeks consisted of group sessions where all registered participants participated, and the last week was used for bilateral sessions with each local government. 8 additional hours were assigned to practical work after the sixth theoretical training session.

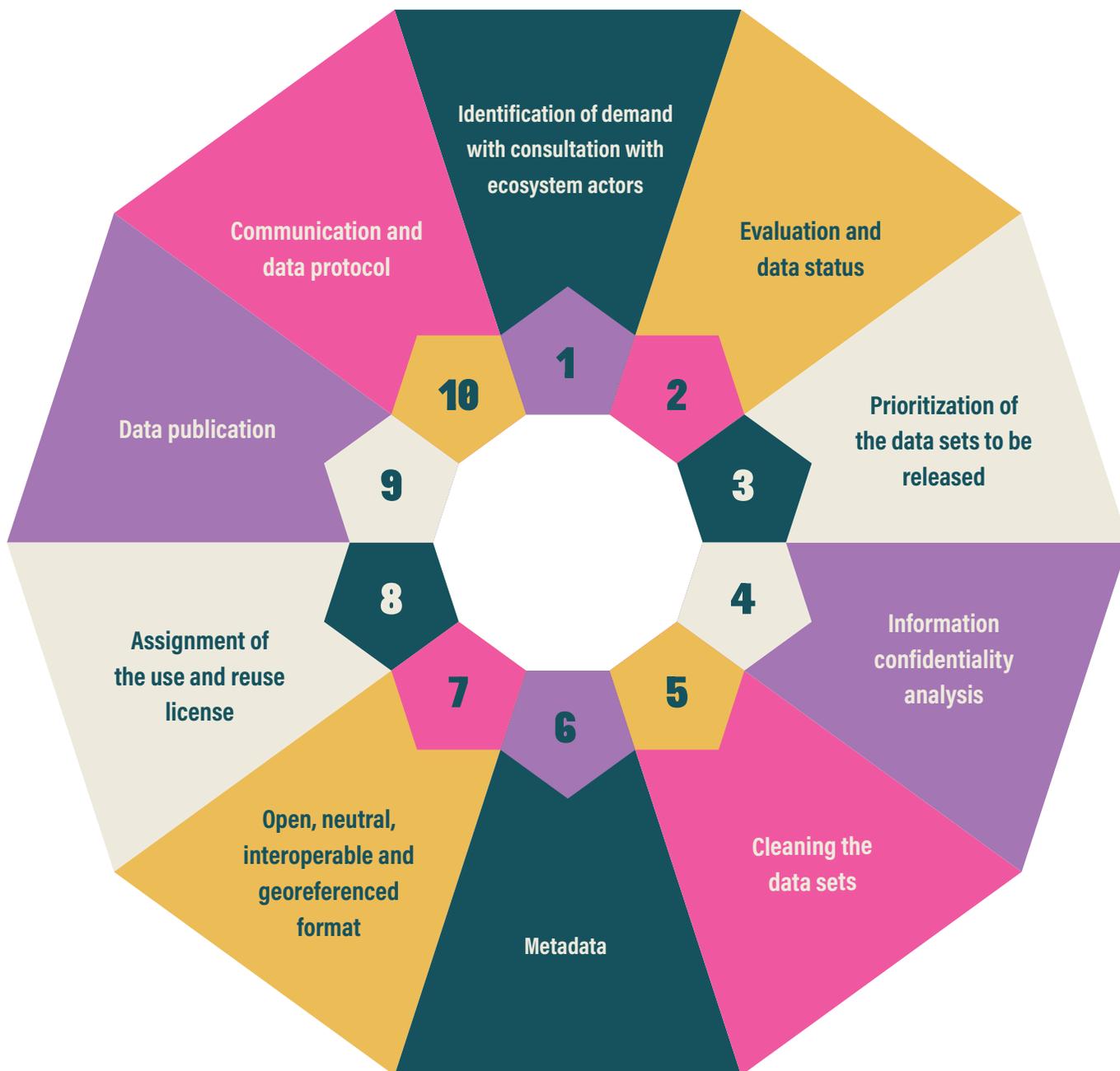
The sessions had an interactive format, and at least two practical activities were included in each of the sessions. Also, the participants had access to a [course hosted at the Trust's Virtual Classroom](#) that hosted all the contents, readings, tools and information related to the training program.



Course hosted at the Trust's Virtual Classroom

At the end of module 6, each municipal team started a practical work to create an Open Data Municipal Action Plan, the validation and implementation of which depended on the technical intentions and the political and strategic feasibility of the municipality.

Public data opening process



MODULES

Each module was designed according to the parameters defined by the National Open Data Commission.

Module 1 Introduction

- Theoretical review
- Transparency and access to public data
- Public and sensitive data
- Definition, characteristics and principles of Open Data
- Open Data formats
- Publication and Open Data portals

Module 2 Readiness

- Open Data Ecosystem
- Impacts and benefits of open data
- Phase 0. Institutional readiness
- Phase 1. Identification of demand with consultation with ecosystem actors

Module 3 Evaluation

- Phase 2. Evaluation and data status
- Phase 3. Prioritization of the data sets to be released

Module 4 Technical Opening

- Phase 4. Information confidentiality analysis
- Phase 5. Cleaning the data sets
- Phase 6. Database documentation (metadata)
- Phase 7. Open, neutral, interoperable and georeferenced format

Module 5 Publication and Use

- Phase 8. Assignment of the use and reuse license
- Phase 9. Publication of data sets
- Phase 10. Communication, use and promotion of data

Module 6 Action Plan

- Practical work. Creation of Open Data Action Plans at the municipal level

Program development

65 people representing 22 municipalities started the training program. All participants were requested to complete a registration and baseline survey to evaluate their knowledge in the topics covered by the program: open data and open government. From March 31st to May 10th, 2022, all 6 modules were developed and delivered. A total of 40 participants representing 13 municipalities completed the program. The registration survey showed that 40% of the participating people were from Municipalities outside the Metropolitan Area. Likewise, the participants represented different areas or departments within government institutions.

MUNICIPALITY	# OF PARTICIPANTS	AREA
Belén	1	State Opening
Curridabat	1	Economic
Desamparados	5	Environment
Esparza	1	Communication
Grecia	5	Social
Heredia	5	Other
Montes de Oca	2	
Naranjo	1	
San Rafael	2	
Santa Ana	10	
Sarchí	3	
Turrialba	3	
Zarcelo	1	
TOTAL	40	



First training session

Open Data Municipal Action Plans

The training process culminated with the development of 10 Open Data Municipal Action Plans, where the municipal teams created a work route to opening data at the municipal level. These plans had to be sufficiently linked to the real needs of each municipality, to ensure the greatest success in the implementation and execution of their proposed actions. The teams were provided with technical guidance and review sessions.

DESAMPARADOS

Commitments:

1. Formal creation of the Open Government Commission.
2. Identify information needs/data of interest to the community.
3. Disseminate information from transparency and open data portals to taxpayers from the municipality.

SMART objective:

1. Promote the publication and opening of existing data in the municipality.

GRECIA

Commitments:

1. Open Data Municipal Plan: detailed annual budgets, annual operational plans, district meetings UTGV, contracting goods and services, interinstitutional agreements.

SMART objective:

1. Municipal operational Transparency.

HEREDIA

Commitments:

1. Publication of Open Data following the National Open Data Guide.
2. Design a strategy to implement an Open Data Laboratory in the Municipality of Heredia.

SMART objective:

1. Provide an open database of the Municipality of Heredia for 2023 that is aligned with the guidelines of the National Open Data Guide and published on the Transparency Website.
2. Formalize the process of updating open data.

MONTES DE OCA

Commitments:

1. Implementation of the Institutional Open Data 2.0 process.

SMART objective:

1. Redesign of the Open Data process in the municipality.

NARANJO

Commitments:

1. Create the Open Data Commission.
2. Generate an inventory of Open Data.
3. To publish the inventory of Open Data.

SMART objective:

1. Activate the Open Data Commission in the municipality.
2. To have an inventory of Open Data to publish.
3. Opening Data in the municipality.

SANTA ANA

Commitments:

1. Designation of a responsible for the Open Data Project and the creation of the Institutional Commission.
2. Develop an Open Data verification inventory.
3. Identify new Open Data needs.

SMART objective:

1. Creation of a working team for the Open Data project.
2. Comply with the levels of openness of Open Data.
3. Promote the publication and opening of Open Data of the municipality.

SAN RAFAEL

Commitments:

1. Develop an inventory of a published or susceptible data set.

SMART objective:

1. Promote transparency through the opening of data in the municipality.

SARCHÍ

Commitments:

1. Identification and evaluation of the status of priority data to be published.
2. Prioritization of the data sets to be released on the web page of the municipality.

SMART objective:

1. Diagnose existing databases to seek improvements in the treatment of information to be published in open format by 2022.
2. Prioritize the publication and opening of data that responds to the demand for information from users of the municipality.

TURRIALBA

Commitments:

1. Ensure that the municipality has regulations, Open Data policies, a roadmap, an inventory and a work team structure established on the subject of open data.

SMART objective:

1. Transparency and accountability on Open Data.

ZARCERO

Commitments:

1. Introduce to the municipality's staff the basics of Open Data.
2. Identify the channels through which the communication of the Open Data will be carried out.
3. Review the Open Data available at the moment.

SMART objective:

1. To inform the staff of the importance of Open Data and its management.
2. Identify what communication channels allow closer interaction with the taxpayer.
3. Standardize the information and the way of communicating the data for better use both, internally and externally.

See the Open Data Action Plans: [here](#)

Final Results



40 government officials trained (70% women)



Creation of a group of local government officials as change agents in open governance, data governance and digital governance.



10 action plans developed for 10 participating municipalities



22 participating municipalities

See the interactive visualization of the training program: [here](#)

Training Program Impact

Entry and exit surveys were applied to the component participants to assess the improvement in their skills and knowledge in the topics addressed by the program.

Indicator	Entry level of knowledge	Exit level of knowledge	Overall change
Knowledge and expertise on methods and tools to work with Open Data.	49% basic level 44% intermediate level 7% advanced level	26% intermediate level 74% advanced level	60% of the participants said to have improved their knowledge.
Knowledge about the various types of Open Data.	41% basic level 44% intermediate level 15% advanced level	46% intermediate level 54% advanced level	56% of the participants increased their level of knowledge.
Knowledge about the diverse actors in the Open Data ecosystem.	41% basic level 44% intermediate level 15% advanced level	46% intermediate level 54% advanced level	56% of the participants increased their level of knowledge
Knowledge about the guidelines for the publication of public databases in open format.	68% basic level 13% intermediate level 18% advanced level	3% basic level 18% intermediate level 79% advanced level	60% of the participants increased their level of knowledge.
Knowledge about the possibilities of using Open Data.	46% basic level 39% intermediate level 15% advanced level	26% intermediate level 74% advanced level	60% of the participants increased their level of knowledge.

Change management

During the evaluation, it was important to identify the capacity of the municipalities and their teams to improve and scale their Open Data Plans. After the training program, the following findings were identified:

- 73% of the participants indicated that the training program contributed to improving the response of their municipality in terms of transparency, efficiency and innovation.
- 67% of the participants indicated that the training program helped them increase their opportunities to collaborate with other organizations, communities and allies on issues of transparency, access to information, accountability and participation.
- 79% of the participants stated that after they participated in the training program, their level of trust in government institutions increased, in terms of transparency, access to information, accountability and participation.
- 76% of the participants indicated that the training helped them in a positive way to develop efforts that increase citizen confidence in the work of the municipalities.

GOVTECH FORUM COSTA RICA 2022 (AUGUST 04, 2022)



The [GovTech Forum Costa Rica 2022](#) was a space that promoted the dialogue and exchange of best practices between experts from the public sector, companies and start-ups, academia, multilateral organizations, and civil society on crucial issues such as the application of new technologies in the public sector, the digitization of administrative procedures and the use of open data. The Trust for the Americas organized this event alongside [OSCity](#) and [Innovaap](#) from the University of Costa Rica. In the first edition of the forum in November 2020, the implementing partners announced the launch of the GovTech CR Fund, which sought to support the Government of Costa Rica in its Digital Transformation process involving academia, the public and private sector, and multilateral organizations. This second edition had significant relevance as it showcased some examples of the impact of the fund launched two years before and was the first hybrid event organized by the partners taking place in Costa Rica after the pandemic.

See press release: [here](#)

Objective

Promote multisectoral dialogue and exchange of knowledge, best practices and practical experiences.

AGENDA

Enrique Zapata (CAF Data Intelligence, Govtech and Open Government Coordinator)

The evolution of GovTech in Latin America

Watch the recording: [here](#)

Melissa Hernández Sánchez (Coordinator of public innovation projects, Innovaap)

Kevin Moraga Garcia (University professor, Technological Institute of Costa Rica)

Lourdes Araya (Vice Mayor, Municipality of Esparza)

Digitization and data in local governments

Watch the recording: [here](#)

Jorge Mora Flores (Innovation expert)

Aura Cifuentes (Strategic Ecosystem Manager, Ágata Analytical Agency)

Luis Papagni (Undersecretary of Administrative Innovation, Government of the Argentine Nation)

GovTech in Latinamerica

Watch the recording: [here](#)

Henry Lizano (CIO, Costa Rica University)

Paola Vega-Castillo (Professor and Researcher, Technological Institute of Costa Rica)

Juan Gowland (Director of the postgraduate diploma in Digital Government, Universidad Austral)

Research in GovTech

Watch the recording: [here](#)

Sharon Marín Jiménez (Software Consultant, Inco Group)

Luis Castillo Jiménez (Founder, SmArtech),

Justin Alejandro Zamora Esquivel (CEO, Neural Coders)

Allende Concepción Romá (CEO, LisTica)

Edgar Fernández (Co-founder, EOS Costa Rica)

Innovation, entrepreneurship and the private sector

Watch the recording: [here](#)

Ilan Melendez (Blockchain project leader, LACChain)

Guillermo Villanueva (CEO, Extrimian)

Blockchain Technologies in Government

Watch the recording: [here](#)

Yolanda Martinez (Overall Lead GovStack Initiative, Digital Development Bureau, International Telecommunications Union)

The future of government in Latin America

Watch the recording: [here](#)

Main highlightst

- It is imperative to continue developing comprehensive public policies with technological assets to facilitate and streamline bureaucratic processes and improve the lives of citizens, based on the identification of the problems we want to solve.
- Emphasis was placed on the benefits of enabling ecosystems and areas of collaboration and co-creation between the public and private sectors, academia, multilateral organizations and citizens, as a key aspect to boost public transformation.
- The opening of data and the use of blockchain technology can be useful tools to generate an environment of transparency and promote greater trust in citizens.
- All digital transformation requires new capacities and skills that allow an effective appropriation of its benefits and processes.
- It is important to put in practice all the knowledge generated, test it and implement it in an agile and fast way.

See the report of the forum: [here](#)

See press release: [here](#)

GovTech Forum recap videos



Final Results



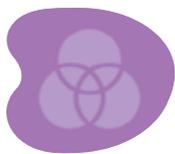
186 people attended (37% women)



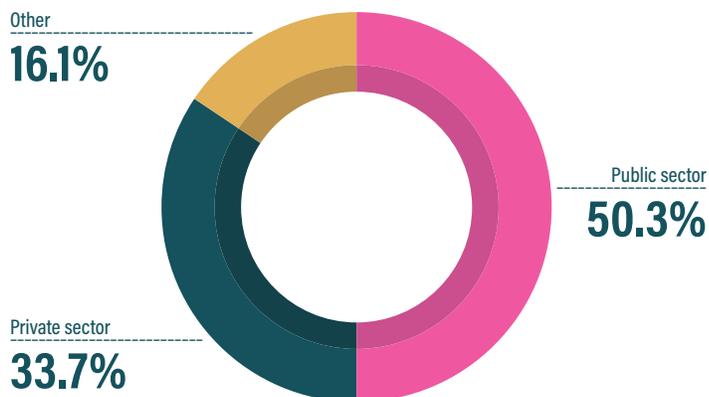
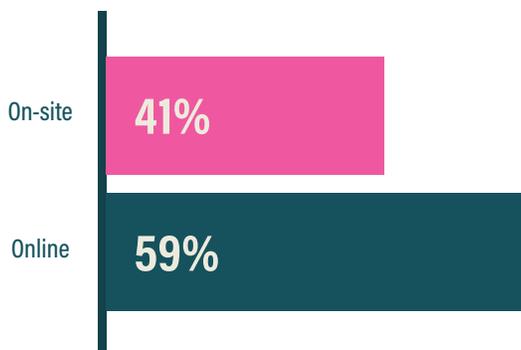
27 participating speakers (40% women)



9 sessions or panels



21 Civil Society Organizations engaged



See the interactive visualization of the GovTech Forum Costa Rica 2022: [here](#)

DATA INTELLIGENCE PLATFORM IN SARCHÍ

(APRIL 2022 – SEPTEMBER 2022)

The objective of this technology component was focused on offering the Sarchí Municipality an open-source platform based on visualizations and data analysis to publish critical information promptly that, among other things, allows the municipality to manage, analyze, visualize and make transparent information simply and understandably for any citizen.

Its portal and browser facilitate the publication of insights, use cases, and Open Data with interactive visualizations in the format of web pages, reports, and storytelling. It also facilitates its dissemination and promotes the participation through social media.

The data visualization platform called VPress becomes a meeting point for those who work with information, allowing the flow of data to be managed from multiple channels and thereby facilitating the use of information and interoperability.

Platform link: <http://datos.munisarchi.go.cr>

The platform allows to:

- Increase transparency and collaboration of the public sector in Costa Rica.
- Facilitate interoperability between the areas of the municipality
- Improve the efficiency and reliability of actions to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Align efforts to the standards and best recommended practices of the Inter-American Open Data Program (PIDA)

The platform is available at the municipal web page. This platform hosts data and visualizations related to:

- Trade and liquor patents.
- Municipal investment in public goods and services.
- Tax collection.
- Expenditure and budget execution.
- Covid: humanitarian aid and food delivery.

The platform has allowed the Sarchí Municipality to analyze, visualize and publish 5 data sets to the public. The platform centralizes the information in a single query space, thus allowing an easier interaction with all data sets. The platform contains a working engine that allows the incorporation of other data science processes for analysis and evidence-based decision-making. Lastly, its portal and search engine facilitate the publication of insights, use cases and open data with interactive visualizations in the form of web pages, reports and storytelling.

The data used in the platform was selected by the mayor's office and the technical team of the municipality, following the determination of common requirements of the citizenry and strategic elements that are required to enhance accountability in the municipality.

LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES

When proposing this project, The Trust identified that training local government officials on transparency strategies, citizen participation, and collaboration is a challenge. To address this challenge and reinforce government responsibility for improving basic services, efforts should be made to include a greater number of local social actors, including NGOs, private companies, trade associations, the media, academic institutions, and community groups.

Simplification and Digitalization of Procedures

- It is of high practical importance to have a design of low-resolution prototypes of digitized procedures to carry out the tests and complete the digitalization processes. In addition, validation mechanisms of prototypes with potential users are essential to identifying areas of improvement and technical challenges.
- The process of validating the prototype in collaboration with the citizens and the municipal representations facilitated the development of the digital procedures, giving relevance and attention to the feasibility of its implementation and adaptation in the municipal logic. This stage of the methodology was extremely important since it was the moment that required active participation from the municipalities.

GovTech Bootcamp

- The participation of the 10 municipalities in the Bootcamp process promotes a new GovTech ecosystem in Costa Rica that recognizes the current needs of users and the municipal requirements to develop digital transformation processes for municipal procedures and services.
- The program promoted the participation of the local startup sector, who now have practical examples of collaboration between local startups and municipal governments.
- For startups, having worked with public institutions represented an opportunity to give visibility to their work. In addition, the grant received made it possible to create a first-rate technological product applying the potential of collaborative technical capabilities.
- During the bootcamp it was confirmed that the Municipalities are involved and committed to exploring new collaboration formats with citizens to improve the provision of services.
- All the initiatives developed have enormous potential for growth and scaling with future functionalities that deepen the municipality-citizen communication in a friendly, intuitive and useful way.
- This initiative helped the private sector identify the digital and service needs of their municipalities and identify ways to influence the satisfaction of those needs.

Training Program GDA

- After the program, we identified that participants significantly increased their level of knowledge on the topics addressed. Participants recognized the importance of GovTech in the actual context of limited resources and a growing collaborative ecosystem. For this reason, it is important to keep developing pilots or prototypes that show the experiences and results that can be achieved from this type of collaborative programs aimed at solving public problems.

Data Intelligence Platform in Sarchí

- The main focus to improve the efficiency and confidence of municipal management was to develop a platform that would facilitate interoperability between the strategic areas of the institution.
- The platform also made it possible to align efforts to the recommended standards and best practices of the national Open Data strategy within the framework of the Open State declaration.

CHALLENGES

CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION

Simplification and Digitalization of Procedures

- The technological adaptation of the procedures required more time than initially planned since the technical and design details had to incorporate all the considerations determined by the municipalities. Identifying these details was of great importance to include them on time and thus advance optimally in the project.

GovTech Bootcamp

- Despite the interesting opportunity to solve public needs and problems within the govtech ecosystem, there is little investment capital available for new initiatives. Some investors consider that selling a product or service to the State is risky and unlikely to generate significant profits. For the project, it was a challenge to change this perspective and promote the availability of resources for the improvement of public management through innovative and technological solutions.

Training Program GDA

- One of the main challenges of implementing open data initiatives at the municipal level is promoting or guaranteeing the sustainability of the initiatives. During the component, the Municipal teams worked to consolidate short, medium, and long-term planning processes to sustain the implementation of their plans over time.
- An area of opportunity for this component is to increase its reach and visibility through collaboration with the Open Government Team of the Ministry of Communication (the entity in charge of the open state agenda) and thus replicate this process with new municipalities and generate initiatives that strengthen the municipal strategies that are already in implementation.

Data Intelligence Platform in Sarchí

- Planning a data visualization initiative or project requires detecting certain possible risks in advance: challenges with data quality, data cleansing, data governance model, and data updating. On this occasion, these considerations led to unforeseen delays during implementation and in the release of the prototype of the data visualization platform in Sarchí.
- Challenges with efficient and simple access to public information have limited the agility and effectiveness of the implementation of the platform.

EFFORTS FOR THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROJECT

Simplification and Digitalization of Procedures

- Digital procedures with the municipalities were designed as prototypes of the procedures, therefore, digital platforms will have changes and improvements. The Innovaap team is committed to replicating the initiative in other municipalities willing to implement the methodology and to explore the utility of already digitized procedures by other municipalities.

GovTech Bootcamp

- Agreements were developed with the municipalities to maintain and grow each of the developed municipal applications. The five platforms developed were donated to the corresponding municipalities and are considered first versions of the digital developments.

Training Program for the Implementation of the National Guide to Open Public Data (GDA)

- Monitoring and support will be provided to promote the sustainability of municipal action plans and guarantee their implementation in the long term. It is also important to keep open and active communications with the people in charge of the municipal open data processes to guarantee the commitments and objectives are actively pursued.

Data Intelligence Platform in Sarchí

- To guarantee the continuity and strengthening of the platform with more quality data, the municipal team programmed a budget for two more years (remaining time in position of the current government) to continue implementing and promoting the platform on its website. In addition, work will be done to create a strategy for citizen use and empowerment, which will allow people and organizations to use and provide feedback on the platform, promoting a culture of right to access public information and encouraging citizen participation through public scrutiny.

COMMUNI- CATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Communications Department developed different campaigns for each of the five components of the project: **(1) Simplification and Digitalization of Procedures**, **(2) National Guide to Open Public Data**; **(3) The GovTech Bootcamp Costa Rica 2021**; **(4) The Costa Rica GovTech Forum 2022**; and **(5) the Final Results**. Through each of the initiatives, we aimed to build local visibility and disseminate the successes and milestones of the project. To this extent, this final report seeks to recap all the communication efforts, showcase results and best practices learned.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The Trust for the Americas provides its programs and projects visibility through different media channels and communication approaches. These include our [institutional website](#), social network accounts, [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube channel](#), and [Institutional Newsletter](#). Therefore, we strive to disseminate content that complies with the highest branding standards so that our audience can witness the evolution of our work in different formats and perspectives.

We distributed highlights, messages, and media products according to the project's necessities and components. In this sense, the following pages include details of the elaborated communication efforts and a complete media clipping.

COMPONENT 1: SIMPLIFICATION AND DIGITALIZATION OF PROCEDURES

For the Simplification and Digitization of Procedures initiative we used our [Blog Section](#), which serves as a channel for the team members to share their experiences, relevant information, and best practices in a less formal language. Therefore, the Communications Official of the DIA Program elaborated three online blog posts with the local partners' support to disseminate this initiative's evolution. The first compiles general information and introduces the initiative's phases, the second generates an update on the phases' evolution, and the last one entails the closure of the process and the final results. Below are the links to the notes:



[Link to Blog](#)



[Link to Blog](#)

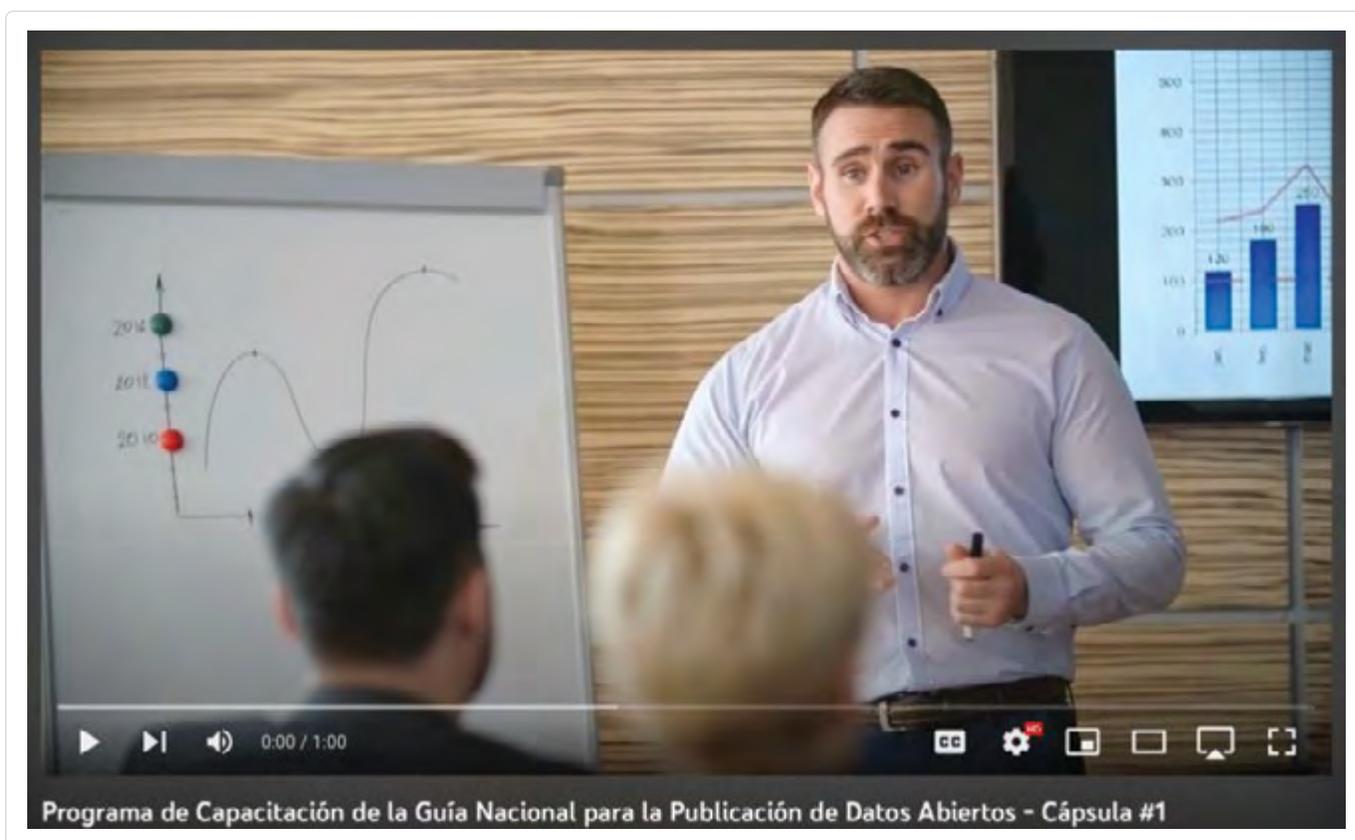


[Link to Blog](#)

The three blogs were disseminated on The Trust's social media networks to guarantee the broadest reach of possible interested partakers. Likewise, we interacted with the stakeholders' profiles, who, through likes and reposts, gave further visibility to the effort.

COMPONENT 2: CAPACITY BUILDING ON THE NATIONAL GUIDE TO OPEN PUBLIC DATA

In coordination with Innovaap, we executed the first part of the communications campaign to raise awareness of the training's topics and disseminate key messages about the initiative on social media. As the second part of this effort, we touched base with several municipalities for them to answer questions regarding the training experience, impact, and results to prepare a short video capsule for this component. Below is the link for the capsule:



[Link to Video Capsule](#)

COMPONENT 3: GOVTECH BOOTCAMP

In the different phases of the implementation of the GovTech Bootcamp, various efforts were made to guarantee this initiative's maximum visibility and reach. These include a microsite on our institutional page, articles on progress and results in our press room, mentions as featured articles in various editions of our monthly newsletter, visibility and dissemination on social media, and finally, success stories.

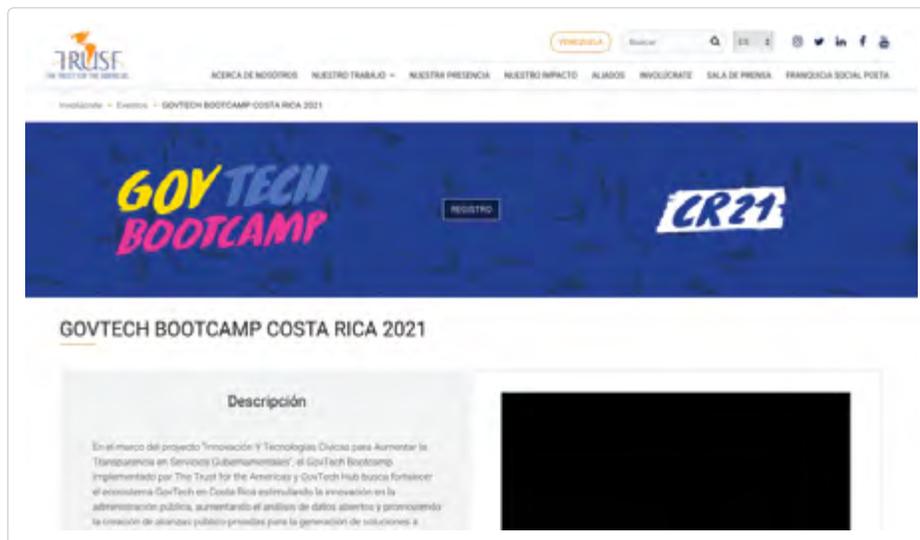
Messages:

1. The Govtech Bootcamp seeks to strengthen the GovTech ecosystem in Costa Rica and aims to create solutions to solve public sector problems collaboratively between civil society, startups, and government officials.
2. This collaborative space is the first one of its kind in Costa Rica. It brings together 12 municipalities and seven startups to develop technology-based projects to improve an identified local challenge.
3. Thanks to the funding support from the United States Embassy in Costa Rica, the GovTech Bootcamp provided a space for training and collaboration, where 12 municipalities and seven startups worked to propose digital solutions to local problems.

DETAILS OF MEDIA PRODUCTS

Microsite

The GovTech Bootcamp Costa Rica 2022 microsite was an information tool for all interested stakeholders. It contained a general description of the initiative, information about the learning modules, the calendar of activities, details about the speakers, and links of interest.



[Link to Microsite](#)

Press Room

Our [Press Room](#) helps us reach local and regional media to inform them about the project's progress. This section publishes updates, events, and milestones about our projects and programs. For the GovTech Bootcamp Costa Rica 2021, we elaborated three press releases: the first with the invitation to participate, the second with general information and insights about the initiative, and the last with the results of the component. Find below the products generated:



[Link to Press Release](#)



[Link to Press Release](#)



[Link to Press Release](#)

Newsletters

The Trust for the Americas has designed and implemented Open Government Projects for the past seven years. Over the course of these years, we have been informing people interested in Open Government and Open Data topics in the Americas.

Our monthly newsletters reach an audience of 2,500+ with direct mailing, including our board members, government officials, academia, students, and members from other organizations in the field. We featured press releases related to the GovTech Bootcamp Costa Rica 2021 in our newsletter's April, July, and October editions.

Social Media and Success Stories

The GovTech Bootcamp Costa Rica had two communications dissemination phases. The first phase included the invitation to participate, details of interest, and the initiative's results, and the second phase enclosed the success stories of the winning startups.

In the 'first phase,' Twitter was the designated platform to communicate all the updates. As part of our communications strategy, we identify a 'person' per social network to determine the correct content, define the tone to address the audience, understand how the audience wants to consume the information, and finally, have a more efficient and effective plan.¹ Thanks to this strategy, based on an in-depth analysis of engagement, reach, and audience data, we determined that Twitter is where GovTech-related topics circulate the most. In any case, during this stage, this component was also given visibility in the other networks to create a larger audience in Costa Rica for the 'second communication stage' and prepare our followers on these issues in a certain sense.

The 'second phase' focused on disseminating the final videos of the startups, which served as a tool to accredit our achievements and as promotional support for these innovative projects to achieve more visibility among potential stakeholders. At The Trust, there is no better way to tell a story than hearing it from the beneficiary. This communication product is one of the most relevant and impactful; it is an opportunity to showcase the participant's evolution in the project and the real impact of our programs.

We posted the videos on all of The Trust's social media profiles: Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. We noticed a more significant interaction in the latter mainly because 9.1% of our followers on Instagram come from Costa Rica, making it the second country with the most presence on our profile after Colombia.

COMPONENT 4: GOVTECH FORUM COSTA RICA 2022

For the Costa Rica GovTech Forum 2022, a marketing plan was designed in collaboration with Innovaap and OS City's communications teams to ensure consistent messaging and obtain the most significant reach. Communication efforts ranged from press releases, newsletter mentions, and dissemination on social media to video capsules and forum streaming.

To produce cohesive communication throughout the different platforms, we established the following messages:

Messages:

1. The GovTech Forum Costa Rica is an event that seeks to strengthen the exchange between the technological areas among different sectors within OAS' Member States to promote the intelligent use of emerging technologies to optimize public services and democratic practices.
2. The GovTech Forum Costa Rica, organized by The Trust for the Americas, an affiliate of the GS/OAS, OS City, and Innovaap, will bring together public, private sector, academic, and civil society performers interested in the ecosystem of emerging technologies and government in Latin America.
3. The GovTech Forum Costa Rica seeks to strengthen the exchange of ideas between different sectors to promote the intelligent use of emerging technologies to optimize public services and democratic practices.
4. The GovTech Forum Costa Rica, organized by The Trust for the Americas, an affiliate of the OAS, OS City, and Innovaap, brought together public, private sector, academic, and civil society performers interested in the ecosystem of emerging technologies and government in Latin America.

DETAILS OF MEDIA PRODUCTS

Press Releases

For the Costa Rica GovTech Forum 2022, we elaborated two press releases: the first with the invitation to participate and general information, and the second with information on the actual event, panels, and conclusions.

Find below the products generated:



[Link to Press Release](#)



[Link to Press Release](#)

Newsletters

Our Monthly Newsletter compiles the most relevant events and news within The Trust. In this sense, both the press releases on the Costa Rica GovTech Forum 2022 appeared as DIA Program news in the July and August editions.

Social Media and Success Stories

A month before the event, The Trust's communications team began meeting with OS City and Innovaap to define and identify the marketing strategy, messages, hashtags, and social media handles. We agreed that each party would generate one or two posts weekly with the event information and the registration link. Finally, on the event day, we extracted and posted some quotes from the speakers, and afterward, we published the conclusions and the final report with all the metrics. Considering the 'persona' strategy previously stated in this report, we also selected Twitter as the primary channel of communication for the Forum.

For all this content, we established the following hashtags as identifiers for the event: #ForoGovTechCR and #ForoGovTech. This way, it was possible to map the posts published from The Trust for the Americas channels and those generated by our allies, participants, and interested audience. The constant interaction with our partners and the detailed strategy allowed us to reach 100,000+ users in three months.

YouTube was the platform selected to live broadcast the event. Through it, an audience of 500+ users connected at different points of the GovTech Forum. Once the event was over, we edited the final video so that there was a single tape for each panel, making it easier for the public to enjoy and watch the conversations. Additionally, we posted four interview capsules developed by the hired audiovisuals team at the event. These short videos have also been given visibility on the different social media networks to keep the GovTech audience, which we have gained thanks to the various components of this project, active and prepared for future initiatives.

COMPONENT 5: FINAL RESULTS

For this final component, we prepared the last article in the press room section of our institutional page, highlighting each initiative's achievements and the final metrics of impact. Find below the product generated:



[Link to Press Release](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA REACH

The chart below demonstrates the average reach attained through our social media posts. Since we own these communication channels, the metrics are calculated thanks to accurate statistics provided by each social media platform.

SOCIAL MEDIA	REACH
Twitter	49.137 users
Facebook	38.877 users
LinkedIn	5.837 users
Instagram	105.220 users
YouTube	621 users
TOTAL	199.692 USERS

Note: the total refers to the final sum of all our posts during the implementation of this project.

DONORS AND PARTNERS

Innovaap
UCR



TEC | Tecnológico
de Costa Rica





OAS | More rights
for more people

Copyright © 2022 THE TRUST FOR THE AMERICAS.

All rights reserved.

Any form of distribution, copying, duplication, reproduction or sale (total or partial) of the content of this manual, both for personal and commercial use, will constitute an infringement of copyright.

All the content of the “**INNOVATION AND CIVIC TECHNOLOGIES FOR INCREASED TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT SERVICES 2020-2022**” text is the intellectual property of its authors and is therefore protected by the laws governing copyright and intellectual property.

Any type of reproduction of its content is strictly prohibited, unless express written authorization is requested from **THE TRUST FOR THE AMERICAS**.

The materials and graphic elements used by the authors of **DIA** and **THE TRUST FOR THE AMERICAS** are solely ours and do not have to coincide with the policy, ideas, plans, strategies or official position of any agency, company, business organization, service or person. .

All the information and data that we provide are merely informative. The authors are not responsible for its veracity, updating or validity, so they are exempt from all liability derived from its incorrectness, omission, lack of updating or delay, as well as any loss, or damage that its use or exposure may cause. by third parties. parties (authorized or not). All information is provided “as is”, whether correct, satisfactory or not; No warranty.

**INNOVATION AND
CIVIC TECHNOLOGIES
FOR INCREASED
TRANSPARENCY IN
GOVERNMENT
SERVICES**

**COSTA RICA
2020-2022**



OAS | More rights
for more people