



LOCAL OPEN GOVERNMENT ISSUES: EXPERIENCES FROM JALISCO, MEXICO

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the main issues of open government in Jalisco, Mexico. Jalisco plays a leading role as the only pilot local government program of Open Government Partnership in the country. A qualitative approach and bibliometric analysis method were used in this study. The research data were obtained from the official website of the Government of Jalisco and sourced from the Google Scholar database. The findings of this study indicate that the study of open government in Jalisco is not popular. The topics that dominate the study of open government in Jalisco include transparency, corruption, citizen participation, accountability, and youth. While the latest and potential topics include transparency portal, health system, regulatory oversight, electoral participation, security, tax collection, and digital party. Jalisco is currently focusing on three main commitments of their open government, which include harmonization, unification, transparency, and corruption control in the Rules of Operation (ROP) of social programs aimed at Civil Society Organizations (CSOs); strengthening and incorporation of new elements in the digital platform for citizen participation in the creation and modification of laws; and preparation of an annex of sentences, with a clear and understandable wording, oriented to priority groups. These commitments have the potential to create a more open Jalisco government.

Keywords: Jalisco, Key Issues, Local Open Government.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis isu-isu utama open government di Jalisco, Mexico. Jalisco memiliki peran utama karena satu-satunya program percontohan pemerintah daerah Open Government Partnership di negara tersebut. Pendekatan kualitatif dan metode analisis bibliometrik digunakan pada penelitian ini. Data penelitian diperoleh dari website resmi Pemerintah Jalisco dan bersumber dari database Google Scholar. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa studi open government Jalisco tidak populer. Topik-topik yang mendominasi pada studi open government Jalisco meliputi transparency, corruption, citizen participation, accountability, dan youth. Sedangkan topik-topik terbaru dan potensial meliputi transparency portal, health system, regulatory oversight, electoral participation, security, tax collection, dan digital party. Jalisco saat ini fokus pada tiga komitmen utama open government mereka yang meliputi harmonization, unification, transparency, and corruption control in the Rules of Operation (ROP) of social programs aimed at Civil Society Organizations (CSOs); strengthening and incorporation of new elements in the digital platform for citizen participation in the creation and modification of laws; preparation of an annex of sentences, with a clear and understandable wording, oriented to priority groups. Komitmen-komitmen tersebut berpotensi untuk menciptakan pemerintahan Jalisco lebih terbuka.

Kata Kunci: Isu-Isu Utama, Jalisco, Open Government Lokal

INTRODUCTION

The term open government is not new, but various social contexts and advances in information technology have contributed to the way open government is conceptualized (Afandi, Erdayani, Afandi, & Lestari, 2024; Wirtz, Weyerer, & Rösch, 2019). The origins of open government can be traced back to the Greek Athenian codification of law, but the Visigothic Code of the Kingdom of Sweden is considered the beginning of modern open government initiatives that take into account citizens right to information (Afandi, 2024; Moon, 2020). Open government is an interesting agenda promoted by many governments since the 2000s. Open government initiatives have been widely introduced not only in Western democracies but also in Asian and African countries (Gil-Garcia, Gasco-Hernandez, & Pardo, 2020; Prastya, Misran, & Nurmandi, 2021).

Open government has become an important strategy for administrative reform, prompting many countries around the world to design and implement initiatives related to



access to information, transparency, participation, and collaboration (Afandi, Erdayani, & Afandi, 2024b; De Blasio & Selva, 2019; Zulfa & Afandi, 2023). Many governments have expanded the concept of open government; for example, the Obama administration announced the Open Government Directive in 2009 and, together with South Africa, Brazil, the Philippines, Indonesia, the United Kingdom, Mexico, and Norway, took a leading role in founding the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in 2011, a multinational effort to promote open government worldwide (Afandi, Afandi, & Erdayani, 2024; Moon, 2020; Schmidhuber & Hilgers, 2021).

OGP is an organization of countries, local governments, and civil society organizations that support each other in designing and implementing projects that promote transparency in governance, public engagement, and accountability. Transparency describes the public's ability to not only see but also understand how their government works. Public engagement refers to the public's ability to influence government by engaging in government processes and programs. Accountability reflects the public's ability to hold government accountable for its policies and performance.

The Open Government Partnership is based on the idea that open government is more accessible, more responsive, and more accountable to citizens, and that improving the relationship between citizens and government has long-term and exponential benefits for all (Afandi, Erdayani, & Afandi, 2024a; Ruijter & Meijer, 2020). The partnership focuses on the policy areas of anti-corruption and integrity, beneficial ownership, open contracting, civic space, freedom of assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression, digital governance, environment and climate, extractive industries, fiscal openness, inclusion, people with disabilities, youth, justice, land and spatial planning, open parliaments, public service delivery, education, health, water and sanitation, and the right to information (Gao, Janssen, & Zhang, 2021; Ingrams, 2020; Ruijter, D tienne, Baker, Groff, & Meijer, 2020).

Seventy-five countries and one hundred sixty-three local governments are currently members of OGP. Being part of a local OGP provides benefits to encourage open reforms that have become part of the vision and mission of every local government to achieve levels of accountability, responsiveness, inclusiveness, and transparency (Erdayani, Afandi, & Afandi, 2023a; Ingrams, Piotrowski, & Berliner, 2020). Through membership in this global community, every local government can obtain new information on the implementation of open government, as well as being able to share views, experiences, and resources to achieve the principles of open government.

The Open Government Partnership has launched the local government pilot program, recognizing that much open government innovation and reform is happening at the local level, where governments can engage more directly with citizens and deliver many important public services. The local governments involved in the program are Buenos Aires, Basque Country, La Libertad, Sekondi-Takoradi, South Cotabato, Seoul, Paris, Tbilisi, Madrid, Austin, Scotland, Kaduna State, Sao Paulo, Elgeyo Marakwet, and Jalisco.

Jalisco is the only local government in Mexico designated as a local government pilot by OGP. In the country, eleven local governments have joined OGP, including Jalisco, Chihuahua, Merida, Mexico State, Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Quintana Roo, San Pedro Garza Garcia, Tlajomulco de Zuniga, Tlalnepantla de Baz, and Yucatan. This makes Jalisco play a leading role in the open government campaign in Mexico. Since joining OGP, Jalisco has made eighteen open government commitments. Their first commitment was made in 2017, and they are currently focusing on three main commitments: harmonization, unification, transparency, and corruption control; strengthening and incorporation of new elements in the digital platform for citizen participation; and preparation of an annex of sentences. This study aims to analyze the main issues of local open government in Jalisco.



LITERATURE REVIEW

The origins of open government can be traced back to the codification of Athenian law in Greece, but the Visigothic Code of the Kingdom of Sweden is considered the beginning of a modern open government initiative that pays attention to citizens' right to information (Moon 2020). Open government has become an important strategy for administrative reform that has encouraged countries around the world to design and implement initiatives related to access to information, transparency, participation, and collaboration (Gil-Garcia, Gasco-Hernandez, and Pardo 2020).

Openness has been considered one of the most important characteristics of a democratic government. Historically, a number of aspects were highlighted in order to promote openness in the public sector. The old term open government refers to the freedom of information made available to citizens so that they can hold government authorities transparent and accountable, emphasizing the contribution of freedom of information laws to increased transparency, accountability, and public trust, although their contribution is often constrained by the political environment. Traditional approaches to freedom of information are being reconsidered and reshaped as web technologies offer new channels whereby more information can be provided simultaneously to many anonymous people beyond the constraints of time and space (Moon 2020).

This has led to open government initiatives that emphasize the reuse of public information as well as the proactive provision of public information before citizen requests. There have been dramatic changes in many aspects in the shift from conventional freedom of information approaches to citizens' right to know (so-called old open government) to newer open government approaches, both at the country level (i.e., open government data from the US) and at international levels such as open government partnership (Ruijter and Meijer 2020).

Since the Obama Memorandum for Heads of Departments and Executive Agencies in 2009, open government has attracted enormous public and academic attention. Open government aims to create a transparent and collaborative government through the involvement of citizens (Zulfa and Afandi 2023). Open government wants to make government more efficient and prepare it to face the challenges of the digital era. Currently, open government is popular in various parts of the world, including the European Union, Australia, and Asia.

METHODS

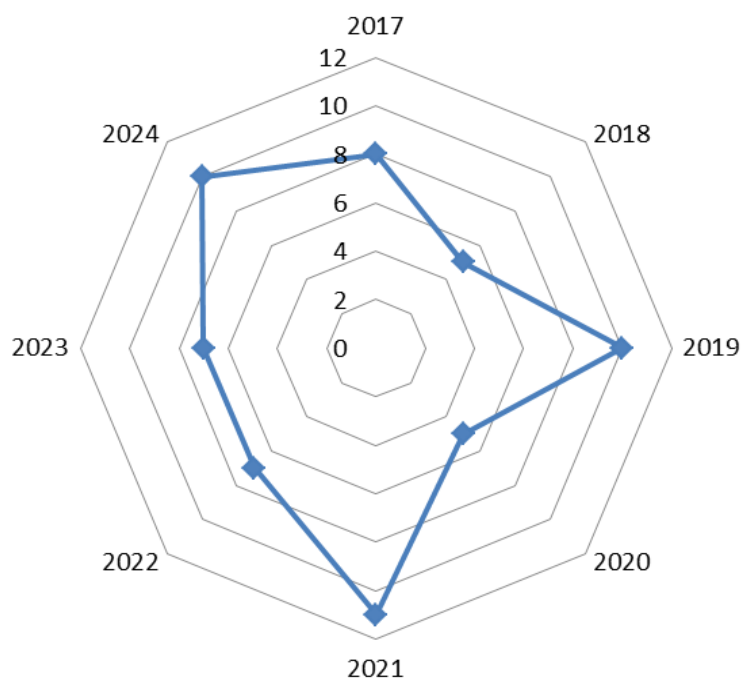
This study uses a qualitative approach with a bibliometric analysis method. Bibliometric analysis is a method for analyzing scientific literature in a particular field of knowledge or topic (Donthu, Kumar, Mukherjee, Pandey, & Lim, 2021; Erdayani, Afandi, & Afandi, 2023b; Moral-Muñoz, Herrera-Viedma, Santisteban-Espejo, & Cobo, 2020). This method is used to identify and highlight critical insights generated from scientific literature (Gaviria-Marin, Merigó, & Baier-Fuentes, 2019; Kulsum et al., 2022). The research data were obtained from Google Scholar using the Publish or Perish (PoP) application with the keywords Jalisco information access, Jalisco transparency, Jalisco participation, and Jalisco collaboration, based on the main principles of open government. The data used is within the time limit of 2017 to 2024 in accordance with Jalisco's involvement in the Open Government Partnership. Data were stored in RIS format, selected using Mendeley (including completing details author keywords), and analyzed using VOSviewer (type of analysis: co-occurrence; unit analysis: keywords; counting method: full counting) to obtain a bibliometric map.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



Jalisco's open government is not popular. This contradicts its designation as a local government pilot program by the Open Government Partnership. In the period 2017-2024, there were only 63 relevant articles published in scientific journals (see Graph 1). The fewest articles (5 articles) were published in 2018 and 2020, while the most articles (11 articles) were published in 2021. Eight articles were published in 2017; seven articles were published in 2022 and 2023; ten articles were published in 2019 and 2024. In addition to being volatile, this is also not in line with the Open Government Partnership's goal of campaigning for open government broadly.

Graph 1. Publication trends

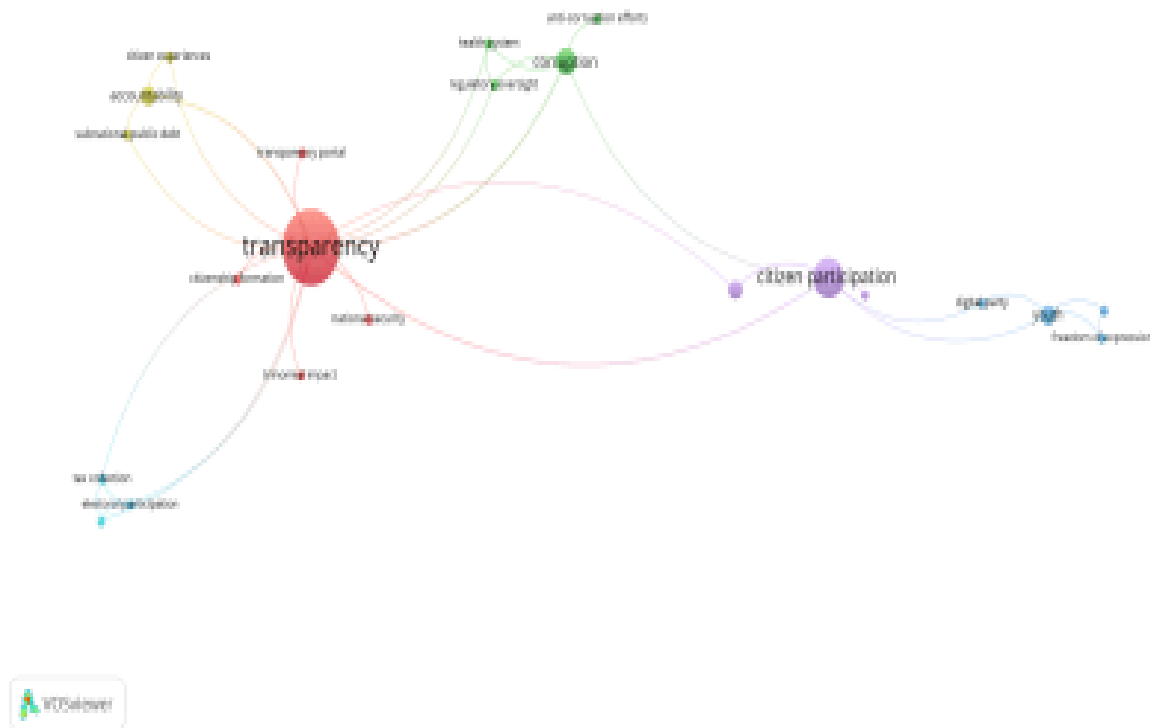


Source: Processed by the Author, 2025

Network visualization (see Figure 1) displays the relationships between topics (Irfan, Septiadi, Rivandra, & Rakhmawati, 2023). This visualization represents topics with circles. The size of the circles is determined by their respective weights. The more frequently a topic appears, the larger the resulting circle size will be. The lines between topics represent links, while the location of each topic indicates the closeness of the relationship (Ham, Koo, & Lee, 2019; Lnenicka & Saxena, 2021).



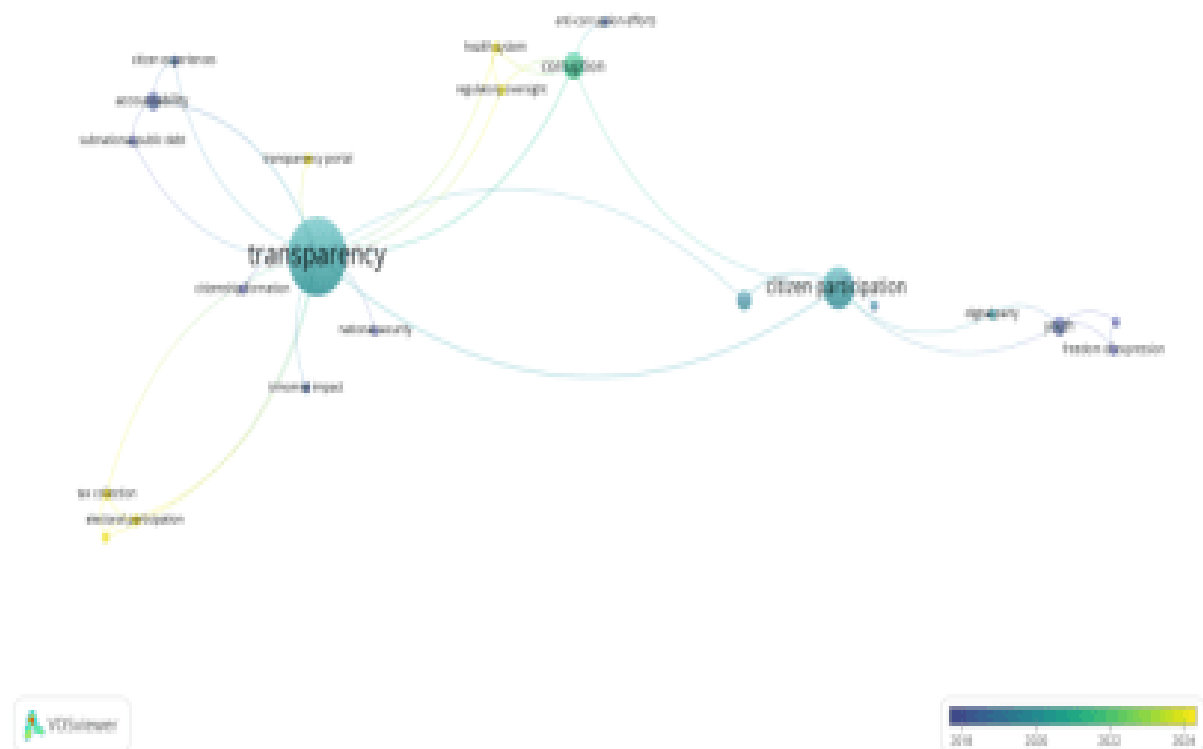
Figure 1. Network visualization



Source: Processed by the Author, 2025

Twenty-two topics and six clusters were found in the Jalisco open government study. The first cluster focuses on the topics of citizenship formation, national security, transparency, the transparency portal, and trinomial impact. The second cluster focuses on the topics of anti-corruption efforts, corruption, health system, and regulatory oversight. The third cluster focuses on the topics of digital party, freedom of expression, political participation, and youth. The fourth cluster focuses on the topics of accountability, citizen experiences, and subnational public debt. The fifth cluster focuses on the topics of citizen participation, civil society, and civil society organizations. The sixth cluster focuses on the topics of electoral participation, security, and tax collection. All of these clusters show the relationship between the topics in the Jalisco open government study. Meanwhile, the dominant topics are transparency, corruption, citizen participation, accountability, and youth. These topics are the main focus of the Jalisco open government study, which shows the urgency and interest of scholars.

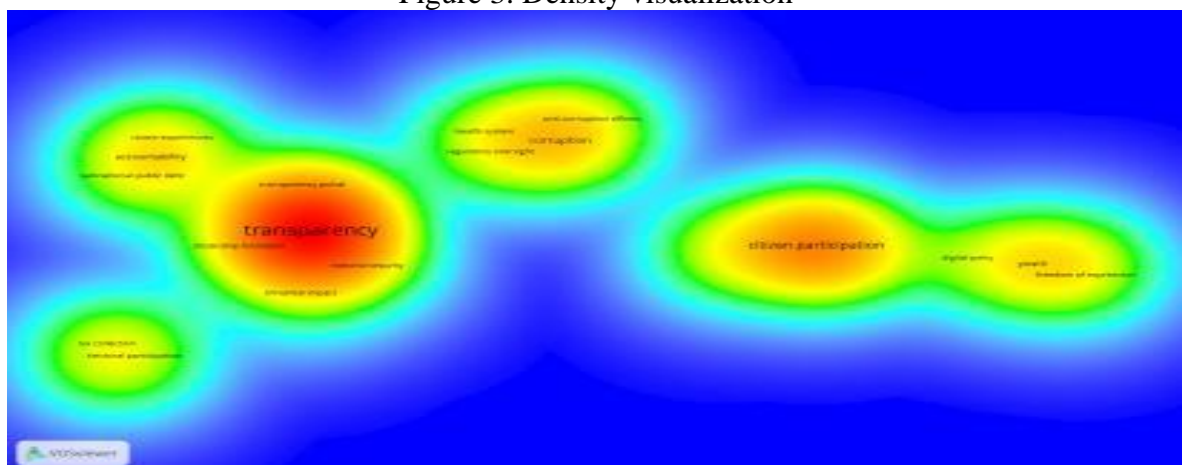
Figure 2. Overlay visualization



Source: Processed by the Author, 2025

The overlay visualization (see Figure 2) is identical to the network visualization, except for the colors. In this visualization, the colors range from blue (lowest score) to yellow (highest score). Items in yellow indicate the most recent year. Recent and interesting topics in the Jalisco open government study include the transparency portal, health system, regulatory oversight, electoral participation, security, tax collection, and digital party. These topics allow for potential future studies on Jalisco open government.

Figure 3. Density visualization



Source: Processed by the Author, 2025



The Jalisco open government study focuses on two main, non-integrated groups (see Figure 3). Connecting the topics of transparency, transparency portal, citizenship formation, national security, trinomial impact, tax collection, electoral participation, security, citizen experiences, accountability, subnational public debt, corruption, anti-corruption efforts, health system, and regulatory oversight with the topics of citizen participation, civil society, civil society organization, digital party, youth, political participation, and freedom of expression allows for the birth of potential strategic studies that contribute to the implementation of open government in Jalisco.

Jalisco is currently focusing on their three main open government commitments: *First*, harmonization, unification, transparency, and corruption control in the Rules of Operation (ROP) of social programs aimed at Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Citizen perception that the ROPs are complex, with requirements that are difficult to comply with and lack transparency, especially in the dates of delivery of resources, in the methodology of project evaluation, and in the accountability of the channeling and exercise of resources of the CSOs of Jalisco. In addition, they identify different criteria and parameters in the ROPs of the different agencies that issue calls for proposals for CSOs, which leads to difficulties in the application of these calls, as well as in complex general processes and in the verification of expenses. The public demands that the application and verification processes of public programs be less complex and more transparent, as well as clearer in their information.

How can this commitment contribute? The inputs generated during this process will form an agenda for improvement in order to have clear, harmonized, and unified ROPs, in terms of their structure and content, which will strengthen the institutional framework of government actions, which in turn will increase certainty regarding the exercise of public spending and its beneficiaries. Likewise, instruments of this type, with internal coherence and validity, will provide a frame of reference for the implementation of transparency and corruption control mechanisms with a human rights approach and will entail significant benefits for improving the results of government action. What long-term goals are being pursued? To increase citizen participation in planning, monitoring, and evaluation processes in the instruments of the participatory planning system, as well as to promote governance processes in the state public administration and municipalities through training for citizens and state and municipal officials and the promotion and use of participatory mechanisms linked to public decision-making processes and projects in the Government of Jalisco.

Second, strengthening and incorporation of new elements in the digital platform for citizen participation in the creation and modification of laws. Presence of elements within the “Congreso Abierto Jalisco” platform that make its interaction with users unfriendly, such as the use of unclear or incomprehensible language; the non-existence of data published in open formats, or the absence of informative elements that encourage the use of the platform. How can this commitment contribute? The Congress of the State of Jalisco has made available to society the platform “Open Congress Jalisco”, a tool for citizen participation through which society can participate and influence the construction of laws; however, so far, the use of this platform has not been as expected, and after an internal evaluation and a public consultation, some areas of opportunity have been identified. With the implementation of this commitment, these areas of opportunity will be directly addressed, allowing us to correct them and take advantage of the platform as a cutting-edge tool at the national level and in line with international best practices.

What long-term goals are being pursued? It is directly linked to the State Plan for Governance and Development Jalisco 2018-2024, “Governance for development” by increasing citizen participation in planning, monitoring, and evaluation processes in the instruments of the participatory planning system, as well as promoting governance processes in



the state public administration and municipalities through training for citizens and state and municipal officials and the promotion and use of participatory mechanisms linked to public decision-making processes and projects in the Government of Jalisco.

Third, preparation of an annex of sentences, with a clear and understandable wording, oriented to priority groups. It has been identified that the rulings issued by the Supreme Court of Justice of the State are not very clear, since they do not use colloquial language or use very complicated or technical terms, which are incomprehensible and confusing to the interested parties. The foregoing represents a great problem for society because when these elements are combined, it prevents the identification of relevant information for a person without knowledge in law or lawyering, generating, among other circumstances, economic problems, as they are forced to hire a lawyer, who at least interprets and explains the resolutions, finding in these situations multiple cases of abuse.

How can this commitment contribute? In order to comply with the commitment, initially, two courses will be held for the personnel of the Judicial Branch of the State: the first with the purpose of identifying the needs or areas of opportunity that limit the personnel to write the sentences in a clear and simple manner, thus seeking to generate an initial diagnosis; the second course will provide the necessary tools for the personnel to be able to write the annexes of the summary of the sentence, clearly explaining the scope and consequences of the same, especially to persons belonging to groups in a situation of vulnerability. At all times, personal data will be protected, so they will be public versions. Additionally, there are plans to explore the possibility of acquiring a Braille printer, as well as the creation of a platform to digitize the sentences with videos.

What long-term goals are being pursued? It is directly linked to the State Development Plan by "guaranteeing the rights and freedom of people is an unavoidable task of the State, with its different powers, orders of government, and autonomous agencies. Safe citizens, free from risks and threats, living in harmony and peace, is the result of legal certainty, access to justice, and public safety." Likewise, it is linked to the State Plan of Governance and Development of Jalisco 2018-2024 in point 9, referring to the Planning of the Judicial Branch, specifically in its third strategic objective that mentions, "Consolidate open justice".

Table 1. Potential Policy

| No | Commitments | Potentials |
|----|---|--|
| 1 | Harmonization, unification, transparency, and corruption control in the Rules of Operation (ROP) of social programs aimed at Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) | Contribute to improving the quality of the information published, as well as access to it. |
| | | Improve the conditions to promote citizen participation in each of the actions under governance schemes, fostering incidence and co-responsibility of citizens in the public agenda. |
| | | Improving and strengthening the ROPs of public programs that issue calls for proposals to channel resources to CSOs, mechanisms will be generated so that the agencies involved are not only more transparent in their actions and processes, but also accountable for them, constituting a vital tool that allows citizens to monitor the government's actions and thus prevent any possibility of corruption in public programs. |
| 2 | Strengthening and incorporation of new elements in the digital platform for citizen participation in the creation and modification of laws. | The quality of the information published on the Platform will be improved by adding data in open formats; also, by using clear and understandable language for society, access to information will be improved. |
| | | Promote the use of the tool so that society can have an influence on the construction and approval of laws in Jalisco. |



| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | With the creation of a section for the publication of data in open formats, a mechanism is incorporated that will contribute to the open data policy of the Congress of Jalisco, which is established in Legislative Agreement ACLEG-2470-LXII-21. |
| 3 | Preparation of an annex of sentences, with a clear and understandable wording, oriented to priority groups. | <p>With the issuance of the annex to the summary of judgments using clear and understandable language for society, access to information will be improved.</p> <p>With the creation of extracts of the judgments issued by the Supreme Court of Justice of the State in accessible formats, society belonging to groups in vulnerable situations will be provided with favorable conditions to know and understand the scope of the same.</p> <p>With the generation of the annexes to the summary of the sentences, the personnel of the Supreme Court of Justice of the State will be obliged to deliver a report regarding the sentences issued.</p> |

Source: Processed by the Author, 2025

CONCLUSION

Jalisco's open government is not popular despite being a pilot local government program of OGP. Jalisco's open government studies are dominated by topics of transparency, corruption, citizen participation, accountability, and youth. Meanwhile, the latest and potential topics include the transparency portal, health system, regulatory oversight, electoral participation, security, tax collection, and digital party. Connecting topics on transparency, transparency portal, citizenship formation, national security, trinomial impact, tax collection, electoral participation, security, citizen experiences, accountability, subnational public debt, corruption, anti-corruption efforts, health system, and regulatory oversight with topics on citizen participation, civil society, civil society organization, digital party, youth, political participation, and freedom of expression allows for the birth of potential strategic studies that contribute to the implementation of open government in Jalisco.

Jalisco is currently focusing on three open government commitments that have the potential to contribute to improving the quality of the information published, as well as access to it; improve the conditions to promote citizen participation in each of the actions under governance schemes, fostering incidence and co-responsibility of citizens in the public agenda; improving and strengthening the ROPs of public programs that issue calls for proposals to channel resources to CSOs, mechanisms will be generated so that the agencies involved are not only more transparent in their actions and processes but also accountable for them, constituting a vital tool that allows citizens to monitor the government's actions and thus prevent any possibility of corruption in public programs; the quality of the information published on the Platform will be improved by adding data in open formats; also, by using clear and understandable language for society, access to information will be improved; promote the use of the tool so that society can have an influence on the construction and approval of laws in Jalisco; with the creation of a section for the publication of data in open formats, a mechanism is incorporated that will contribute to the open data policy of the Congress of Jalisco, which is established in Legislative Agreement ACLEG-2470-LXII-21; with the issuance of the annex to the summary of judgments using clear and understandable language for society, access to information will be improved; with the creation of extracts of the judgments issued by the Supreme Court of Justice of the State in accessible formats, society belonging to groups in vulnerable situations will be provided with favorable conditions to know and understand the scope of the same; with the generation of the annexes to the summary of the sentences, the



personnel of the Supreme Court of Justice of the State will be obliged to deliver a report regarding the sentences issued.

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