



Statistical Award Facilitates Evidence-Based Policy Making

REGIONAL AWARD FOR INNOVATION IN STATISTICS

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

IMPACT

The Award serves as a unique opportunity to underscore the importance of statistical development as a foundation for evidence-based policymaking for poverty reduction, an increasing priority for middle income countries. Although it is premature to assess broader impacts, it is anticipated that the Award will stimulate greater knowledge and interest of innovative ideas in statistical development that will be replicated by other countries and regions.

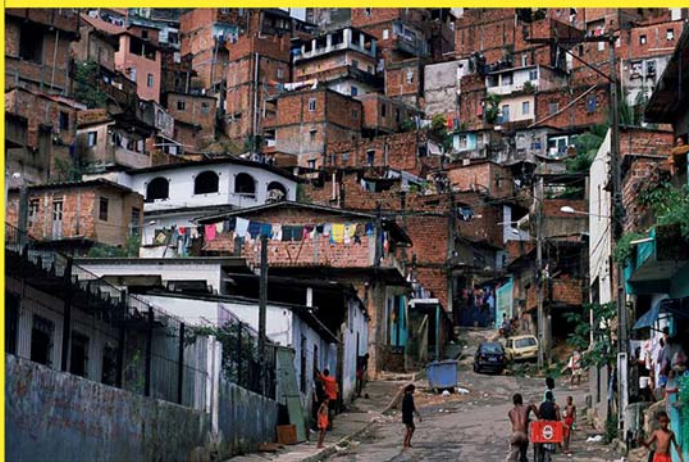
FORWARD-LOOKING POTENTIAL

The experience of the Regional Award for Innovation in Statistics will be institutionalized in the LAC region as a recurring bi-annual or triennial competition, highlighting new and different areas or categories of innovation. Also, the Award might be replicated in other regions to promote its positive effects on statistical development. The best practices harnessed through the LAC Regional Award will be further disseminated to other regions through South-South learning activities to transfer the innovation from LAC to other parts of the world.

Additional information on the Award and the top ten selected programs can be found at www.worldbank.org/lacstatistics (English), and www.bancomundial.org/lacestadisticas (Spanish).



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AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH

In June 2007, the World Bank, through the LCSPP Team for Statistical Development, launched the Regional Award for Innovation in Statistics, the first of its kind in the world to call attention to the innovation of statistical producers in Latin America and the Caribbean. This highlighted producers' creativity in developing and applying new ideas to better address their country's particular realities. The usefulness of statistical information is not only determined by the type of data produced, but also by the application of inventive measures to enhance its quality. This ensures that the demand for information is met and presented in a creative and constructive manner. Awarded this past April 10, the first prize winner was the Mexican Family Life Survey produced by the Iberoamerican University and the Center for Economic Research and Teaching (CIDE), in association with other institutions. The survey compiled information on the well-being of Mexicans at the national, regional and urban-rural levels. One of the most innovative aspects of the survey is the inclusion of information on Mexican migrants to the United States, which constitutes an enormous leap forward in the gathering of information on migration and its effect on the rest of the household. A second innovative aspect is the multi-purpose nature of the survey, which allows for longitudinal nationwide research on many social issues.

STRENGTHENING COUNTRY RELATIONS THROUGH CLIENT ENGAGEMENT

This award provides a creative approach that accentuates the impact of statistical development on evidence-based policymaking at the national and regional levels. It has given a more practical face to a subject that often is overwhelmingly technical. Furthermore, the award serves as a unique venue to recognize the important work of statistical producers in public decision making, work that often goes unnoticed and unrecognized.



TESTED IDEA

The Award was launched through various media including the regional World Bank website, an Award-specific Web page with information in English, Spanish and Portuguese, e-mail announcements, printed materials, communication through the press as well as personal communication. Public Information Centers provided support to distribute information about the award within the countries. The team also consulted internal and external colleagues to identify potential candidates to further disseminate information about the Award. Expert evaluators from various relevant international and bilateral agencies such as the World Bank, the IMF, the IDB, PAHO, the UN, the National Statistical Office of Spain and the US Census Bureau, offered extensive support, stimulating greater interest, legitimacy and collaboration. The External Relations department has been extensively involved in the launch of the Award as well as the media campaigns to highlight the winners.

RESULTS

More than 150 applications from 20 countries were submitted, highlighting the level of innovation in the region. After a process of evaluation, 31 semi-finalists were selected, and requested to send detailed technical briefs. Information received from the semi-finalists, in addition to more than 60 other high quality statistical programs, will be widely disseminated as best statistical practices in the region. Furthermore, the high level of interest among numerous stakeholders has stimulated notable support and collaboration within the international community, including substantial financial support for the Award.