Montevideo

Montevideo secures What Works Cities Silver Certification, elevates decision-making with new Chief Data Officer, and introduces new data processes to address public health, unemployment, and water quality.

Highlights

> Achieved **What Works Cities** Silver certification, which Results for America and Red de Innovación Local celebrated with a **site visit** with Mayor Carolina Cosse.

> Introduced several open-data products, including Montevidata, which houses data across departments, and a health services dashboard that expands healthcare access to 6,000 residents, particularly in underserved communities.

> Won first prize at the 2023 **Latam Smart City Awards** for the Data: tool for the management of cities project, which aims to increase data transparency.

> Launched a **citywide data strategy** with all five components: governance, quality, capacity, use, and transparency.

Background

Montevideo, the capital and largest city of Uruguay with a population of 1.38 million, had already amassed a substantial amount of data before joining the City Data Alliance. But effectively utilizing this data for decision-making posed a challenge. Many managers were unaware of the data's existence, and even if they were aware, they often lacked the knowledge of how to leverage it. Data utilization varied significantly across departments, and there were no established quality standards or policies for data sharing.

Mayor Carolina Cosse (a participant in the fifth class of BHCLI) wanted to focus on the city's data workforce during the city's CDA engagement. "I realized that, when someone is onboarded, for example, the onboarding process does not talk about innovation," she said. "We need to build this common language, even though this may be superficial, for all people working in the city government. This is a great opportunity for this program: build the capacity and help to retain talents for data use."

Impact

The city undertook several initiatives to address capacity and knowledge gaps. It conducted a cross-departmental capacity survey involving over 1,700 staff to assess data capacities and requirements throughout the

city. Through this analysis, coaches assisted the team in identifying disparities between departments' perceived needs and the existing resources.
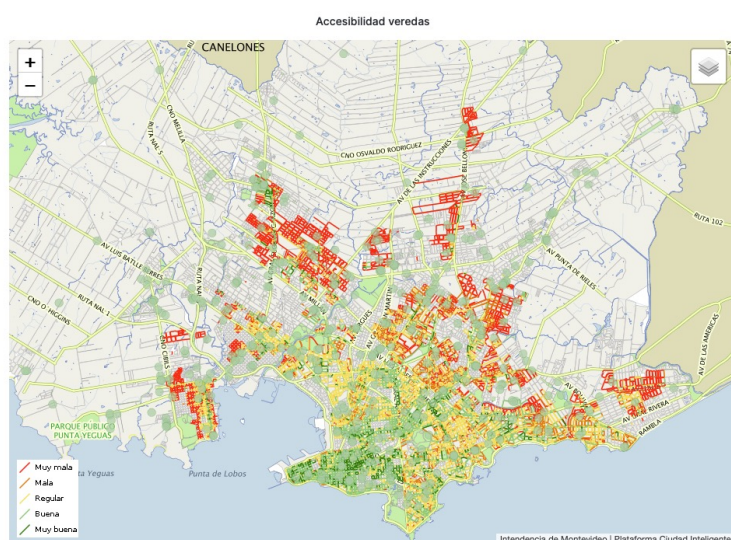
Demonstrating its commitment to changing culture and improving data governance, the city promoted CDA Lead Damian Pintos to the newly established position of Chief Data Officer, with a reporting line directly to the Mayor. In this role, Pintos leads senior leadership team meetings focused on data, a practice that will persist even after the city's participation in the CDA.

Pintos is activating residents by creating short broadcast segments for local TV that engage the public with data, maps, and graphics that inform and empower residents to act on local environmental issues, including on water, air, and soil quality and monitoring. Furthermore, he is now spearheading an effort across the city called "camino a clase," to increase the city's walkability by building sidewalks in the poorer outskirts of the city, so that residents can more easily commute to work and school.

With the support of CDA coaches, the city leveraged procurement to increase job opportunities for local workers and lower the city's 7.4% unemployment rate. Efforts included a new RFP for trash pick-up services that prioritizes hiring and training people who are currently unemployed, come from underrepresented backgrounds, and/or have been formerly incarcerated. To supplement the RFP, the city is engaging with local vendors to recognize and celebrate innovative approaches to hire and retain underrepresented residents.

Montevideo has introduced two new platforms designed to improve resident results in key areas. CDA Coaches helped the mayor's team uncover and correct inconsistent data and develop a health services dashboard. As a result, the city is expanding health care access to serve 6,000 residents annually, particularly in underserved communities where 30% of residents live below the poverty line. In addition the city developed an open data platform, Montevidata, which houses data across departments, and is available to the public.

Mayor Cosse used Montevideo's new Citywide Data Strategy as an opportunity to rally leaders across the city. In May, 2023, she presented the strategy to the directors of all city departments, and asked for their commitment and collaboration in implementing it across the municipal administration. The strategy promises to be a powerful tool to codify data standards and break down silos to advance top mayoral priorities like resident health and the environment.

Camino a clase sidewalk assessment results