

INTEGRATED STRATEGY FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITH HERITAGE: EDUCATION, OUTREACH AND PROMOTION

Mexico City, Mexico

1. DESCRIPTION

The strategy, launched in 2008 by the Fideicomiso Centro Histórico de la Ciudad de México, combines civic education, cultural promotion and direct access to heritage. Its aim is to strengthen residents' ownership of the historic centre through three complementary initiatives: a school for civic participation, a popular magazine (Km Cero) and a programme of free cultural tours (Visitando el Patrimonio). Together, these tools enable residents to understand the heritage value of their environment, participate in its management and integrate it into their daily lives.

2. CONTEXT THAT MOTIVATED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRACTICE

Although the historic centre is a central element of Mexico City's identity, cultural, economic and informational barriers remain that limit access for the local population: many residents were not even aware of the existence of heritage sites in their immediate surroundings. Added to this was the low level of participation and social ownership of the heritage identified in the Historic Centre Management Plan.

3. APPROACH/METHOD

The strategy adopts an integrated approach based on education, outreach and direct experience, structured in three components:

1. School of Citizen Participation: an annual training programme (4 modules and workshops) aimed at building citizens' capacities and fostering dialogue between residents, authorities, the academic community and civil society. The training is open to all publics and sessions take place both in person and online.

2. Km Cero Magazine: a free publication (print and digital) which, since 2008, has been disseminating content on the history and social uses of the historic centre in accessible language. It has a monthly print run of 20,000 copies.

3. Visiting Heritage: a programme of free guided tours, themed walks and cultural activities in collaboration with over 60 institutions. Primary school pupils from the historic centre are included in these guided tours.



Excerpt from a workshop at the School of Citizen Participation

- **Stakeholders involved:** the local council, cultural institutions, universities, civil society and residents.
- **Budget:** Given that the annual budget is limited (School: USD 11,700; magazine: USD 180,000), the strategy relies on partnerships and collaborations with the numerous educational and cultural institutions present in the historic centre. These institutions contribute in particular to the design of activities, the provision of venues, the supply of human resources necessary for their implementation, as well as other forms of support.

4. EXPECTED/IMMEDIATE/MEASURABLE EFFECTS

Measurable results

- Approximately 6,000 participants per year on guided tours
- 295 cultural events in 2025 (240 tours)
- Around 2 million people reached each year by the magazine

Expected outcomes

- Fostering an informed and engaged citizenry
- Strengthening an active community centred on heritage
- Improving collaborative governance and social inclusion

Immediate outcomes observed

- Strengthening of a sense of belonging and social cohesion
- Increase in citizen participation and transparency
- Emergence of citizen-led projects and practical tools (e.g. manuals on heritage conservation and participatory budgeting projects)

5. KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The habitability of a historic centre is enhanced by linking heritage to residents' daily lives
- Urban governance is strengthened through informed participation
- Providing equitable access to cultural heritage is essential for creating a sense of community.



Excerpt from the magazine Km cero

FOR MORE INFORMATION :

<https://www.centrohistorico.cdmx.gob.mx/>

