

GLOBAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS

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There is an entrepreneurial ecosystem in Latin America that is forever changing the way of life of many people based on the establishment of Smart Cities at the local level.

However, the concept of "Smart" in cities does not focus on the costly installation of technology, but on the contrary means transforming cities under the premise of intelligent, efficient and strategic use of local infrastructure, promoting the creation of open source, developing technologies and exploiting existing data, as well as encouraging social innovations to improve decision making and, above all, people's lives. **It means joining efforts and knowledge to take advantage of the best we have.** Technology should not be understood as an end, but as a means, to migrate from traditional management to the Smart City.

Therefore, an innovative ecosystem, or rather, a Smart City should be designed under the following pillars:

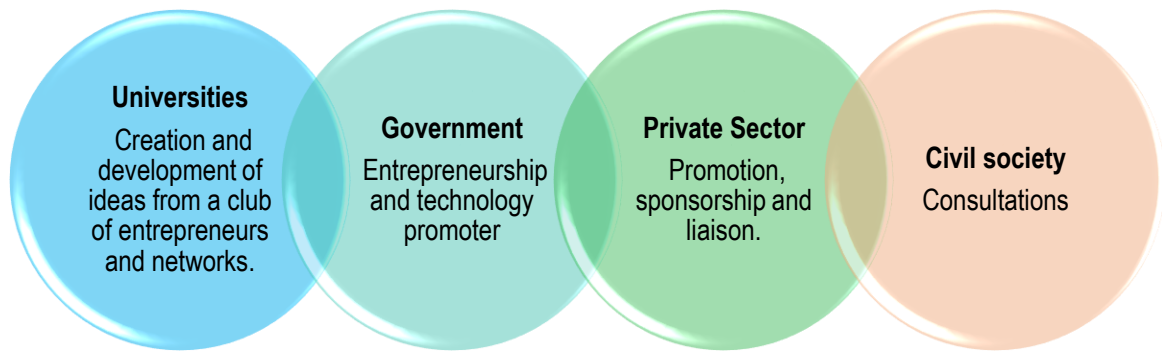
1) Evidence-based public policies. 2) Focus on people and their quality of life. 3) Sustainable decisions 4) Technology (efficient and intelligent use) 5) Global vision. As a result, the city will improve its administrative management, increase its competitiveness, its economic development and reduce inequality gaps.

At the same time as the "Smart" vision, it is important, especially for underdeveloped countries, to employ and, if possible, design creative solutions to daily problems. Solutions must be achievable, affordable, practicable and replicable. **Cities must become smarter with fewer resources to overcome global challenges and ensure sustainable living.**

Under this model the magical town of **Tequila in Jalisco, Mexico**; pioneer in the implementation of Tourism Intelligence Systems (connectivity, mobility and traceability) achieved in 2020 an increase of 35% of tourists, 31% in products and services, a decrease of 61% in poverty and 10% in population growth through **data-driven decision making and inter-sectorial collaboration.**

Another important case is presented in **Arequipa, Peru**, which has a 70% informal employment rate, a high demand for technology talent and the need to provide added value in the market. In the last 10 years, Arequipa has become the city with the highest number of innovation projects co-financed by the government and private companies by promoting its **economic-technological development and fostering the talent of scientists and computer scientists from universities.**

These initiatives have not only given local people a new sense of purpose, but they have also given them a sense of pride. And they have given a glimpse of **four key players for science, technology and innovation in cities:**



Within this framework, it is essential to highlight the creation of a **culture of entrepreneurship** based on government support for innovative, dynamic and high social impact seed projects. As well as the development of **digital education**, with a **gender approach** and in a framework of **interculturality**, for social inclusion and the effective exercise of rights and access to knowledge.

Likewise, it is important to create a **Knowledge Society** in which the priorities of the State are: **technological development, research, science, education, innovation, competitiveness and productivity, telecommunications**, etc. To tackle the challenges expressed in the 2030 Agenda such as: achieving quality education (SDG 4), encouraging the use of affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), creating decent and quality jobs (SDG 8), building sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), climate action (SDG 13), etc.

On the other hand, **open access technology initiatives** are fundamental for States insofar as these provide advice, technical assistance and specialized knowledge to national and local governments. Thus, initiatives like the Development Bank of Latin America's (CAF) GovTechLab provide value to the Latin American governments' management and important information for public innovation labs through three variables: digital start-ups, government policies and procurement system. Incidentally, other key **indicators** to help guide the Smart Cities model are: R&D expenditure as a % of GDP; employment rate in knowledge-intensive sectors; patent applications per capita; self-employment rate; new companies registered; etc.

Therefore, the creation of innovative and technological ecosystems must foster digital transformation under the premise of **Smart and Cheap Cities**, undertake open government practices, create conditions of **findability, accessibility, interoperability and reusability**, in order to guarantee the right to public information, accountability and the creation of social and economic value, while ensuring the protection of privacy.