PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

**INNOVATIONS FOR
SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES**

Building Institutions, Escaping Development Traps

One-Stop Shops Improve Service Delivery in Bahia, Brazil

Until 1995, citizens of the Brazilian state of Bahia encountered long lines when they tried to obtain birth certificates, identification cards, work permits, and other documents essential to earning an income and participating in political life. The process took many hours, return trips, and visits to several offices, as well as the occasional bribe. Because most issuing centers were located in urban areas, residents of interior areas were underserved. A **new ISS case study** describes how a reform team improved service delivery in the state.

Under Governor Paulo Souto, Bahia helped pioneer one-stop shops that provided a wide range of documents under one roof in selected locations throughout the state. A reform team at the Secretariat of Administration won the cooperation of state agencies and national and municipal governments. It hired new workers, streamlined procedures, increased the number of permanent issuing centers, and deployed a fleet of mobile units to increase service access in remote areas. Customer-satisfaction surveys indicated the system was highly popular with the public. By 2003, when Souto won re-election, his reforms had not only simplified and accelerated document access but also demonstrated that government could be responsive and accountable to citizens.

Conflict Management Panels Reduce Tension in South African Elections

In 1994, South Africa's interim electoral commission accomplished a seemingly impossible task: navigating myriad technical and political challenges to hold the country's first post-apartheid election. Although the election ushered in a largely peaceful transition to majority rule, political tension and violence marred the campaign period. A **new ISS case study** examines how the country's permanent Independent Electoral Commission, created in 1996, organized conflict management mediation panels in preparation for the country's second national election in 1999.

Working with the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa, the commission created mediation panels to handle disputes before they reached the threshold for police or Electoral Court intervention. The commission deployed respected community members within each province's political hot spots to help resolve tensions on the ground. These mediators dealt with particularly fraught issues such as reducing barriers to entry in the 165 "no-go" areas where dominant political parties used intimidation or outright violence to exclude competition. In preparation for the local government elections in 2000, the commission extended the conflict mediation system into the country's 284 municipalities.

Improving Government Accountability and Leading Reform

Innovations for Successful Societies (ISS) helps public servants, policy makers, and scholars share institution-building strategies that work in especially challenging contexts. Interview-based case studies facilitate these exchanges and provide a basis for scholarly research. To date, ISS has published 113 reformer-focused case studies and 364 interviews, all of which are available for free on a web repository. . Thousands of people around the globe access these web resources each month. Governments use the materials to learn from each other, inspire discussion in their ranks, and recall the steps they took to implement a reform. Universities and training programs use the cases in the classroom to engage students in the operational and strategic aspects of public sector reform.

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