



INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

Building Institutions, Escaping Development Traps

[Weathering the Storm: Calderón's Office of the Presidency](#)

In 2006, incoming Mexican president Felipe Calderón had to work quickly to deliver on his ambitious campaign promises. A hands-on manager, Calderón sought to ensure policy coordination and follow-through by creating a strong Office of the Presidency. Changing circumstances revealed the limitations of an organizational structure that relied heavily on the chief executive's participation. This ISS case study traces how the structure and management of the office evolved during the president's six-year term.

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Featured ISS Interview

[Gord Evans](#) has worked with cabinet offices in more than 25 countries, helping them improve their effectiveness and efficiency. In a [2012 interview](#) with ISS, he discusses his experiences working in Lithuania on center of government reforms. In an [interview](#) the following year, he reflects on some of the common impediments to center of government reforms and the importance of setting concrete priorities and communicating goals and accomplishments.

New Translated Case

In 2007, the Mexican government began to reform and standardize the country's systems of vocational education and training to better fit the needs of workers and employers. It also helped launch a public-private collaboration to set standards for job skills. ISS recently translated its 2014 [case study](#) about this model in Spanish.



Palacio Nacional at Zócalo, Mexico City. Photo by Jess Lis.

[Anti-Corruption Education in Lithuania](#)

In 2002, Lithuania struggled to defeat corruption, which had flourished during the Soviet occupation. Once viewed as the key to survival in an administered economy, offering gifts for services had become an accepted social norm. The Modern Didactics Center, an educational NGO, worked with a dedicated group of teachers to illuminate the ethical and practical downsides of corruption for students across the country. Despite resistance from educators that limited the program's scale, the initiative produced a curriculum and other materials that became a model for other countries facing similar problems.

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Contact Us

206 Bobst Hall
Princeton University
83 Prospect Avenue
Princeton, NJ 08544
USA

Phone: +1 609-258-5258
Fax: +1 609-258-7762
Email: iss@princeton.edu

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 more than 140 case studies and more than 380 interviews, all of which are available free online. 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 case studies in the classroom to engage students in the operational and strategic aspects of public sector reform.

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