



SPOTLIGHT ON PUBLICATIONS: METHODOLOGIES OF LATIN AMERICAN REPORT CARDS ON HEALTH



In the last decades, citizen initiatives formed by academia, the private sector and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in various Latin American countries have emerged seeking greater participation in social oversight of their cities' public policies.¹ The report card methodology is one of the tools these initiatives have used. Report cards - now becoming well-known across the world - are survey assessment tools that gather citizen feedback on various aspects of the quality, efficiency and coverage of public services in order to support informed decision making and advocacy efforts to bring about improvements in those services.

This Spotlight on Publications focuses on the use of report cards to assess quality and access in health care services. After analysing a selection of publications from these initiatives, the author presents four different approaches to report cards that have been implemented in Latin America to gather citizens' feedback on various aspects of health care. Each of these four publications demonstrates a different methodology used and the results obtained. The emphasis of the analysis is on showcasing the different contents and objectives of these surveys regarding perceptions of health services.² Though only available in Spanish or Portuguese, these publications still offer a useful introduction to the variety of approaches to report cards found in Latin America.

This Spotlight on Publications complements the information and cases presented in the longer [ELLA Brief: Citizen Participation in Evaluating Health Services: The Latin American Experience](#).

¹ Some of these citizen initiatives are part of a network called The Latin American Network of Fair and Sustainable Cities (*Red Latinoamericana de Ciudades Justas y Sustentables*). The Network is formed of organizations from nine countries: Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. To learn more about this network, see the video [Latin American Network for Fair, Democratic and Sustainable Cities](#) and the [Red Ciudades' website](#).

² It is worth noting that these initiatives use report cards to assess various types of public services and policies such as education, environment and transportation. This Spotlight, however, only focuses on report cards for assessing health care quality and accessibility.



▶ [Argentina: Cordoba City's Basic Health Indicators 2010](#)

This report presents the methodology used by [Our Cordoba Citizen Network](#) to assess the impact of health policies on the city's population. In contrast with other initiatives, *Citizen Network Our Cordoba* has elaborated - through the health team's working group - a number of health indicators based on definitions from the Health Ministry, Pan-American Health Organization and World Health Organization, to evaluate health policy and its outcomes on quality of life. The 1991-2008 report depicts health indicators such as birth rate, mortality rate, child mortality rate and maternal mortality rate. Their research compares the city's data with the province and national-level records of the same period. This permanent monitoring exercise allows for a different kind of assessment: one on the impact of health policy on Cordoba's population. According to the methodology used by the initiative, first indicators were selected to help shed light on Cordoba's health and disease status and available health and sanitation resources. This initiative also carries out a monitoring exercise to identify to what extent Cordoba's three Government levels are complying with their obligations, with special emphasis on the municipal level. By doing so, the initiative seeks to create spaces for public deliberation that include citizen collaboration to advocate for enhancing health care services.

Full Citation: Red Ciudadana Nuestra Córdoba. 2010. *Cordoba City's Basic Health Indicators 2010 (Indicadores Sanitarios Básicos 2010)*, Red Ciudadana Nuestra Córdoba, Córdoba.

▶ [Brazil: Sao Paulo City's Perception Indicators 2009](#)

This publication from the [Our Sao Paulo Initiative](#) presents the results of the perception indicators about quality of life in the city. In terms of health, the initiative used the citizen report card to identify the degree of health care accessibility, quality of services people access and citizen satisfaction with health service delivery. The two surveys implemented in 2008 measured accessibility as the type of services available close to users' homes, and the services people use, such as primary or specialised care, hospitalisation or drug supply. The quality of services was measured according to quality of drug supply, ambulatory services, surgical interventions, health care services, dental services, specialist care, family care, treatment of illness, outpatient care, emergency care, and waiting time between planning and carrying out consultations, operations or examinations. To capture people's satisfaction, the surveys assessed the availability of medical consultation schedules and if the services were appropriate to provide the required medical care.

Full Citation: Nossa Sao Paulo. 2009. *Sao Paulo City's Perception Indicators 2009 (Indicadores de Percepção da Cidade de São Paulo 2009)*. Nossa Sao Paulo-Ibope Inteligência. Sao Paulo.

▶ [Peru: Lima How Are We Doing Survey 2011: Report on Perception of Quality of Life](#)

This report from the [Lima How Are We Doing? Initiative](#) presents the 2011 survey results of citizen perception about quality of life in the Peruvian capital. With regards to health, the citizen report card methodology they used assessed people's perceptions about service delivery in terms of access, efficiency and quality. In general terms, the 2011 survey aimed to identify: the major problem faced by the city of Lima in terms of health services; the types of services used by citizens when needed, either public or private; and people's satisfaction level with the health care they obtained. The results of the citizen report card showed that the major problem faced in the city is deficient health care quality, particularly in the centre



and the south of the city. Also, the majority of people that needed health care used public services and hospitals. Finally, in terms of satisfaction, 52% of respondents felt completely satisfied with the care they obtained, while 34% felt unsatisfied.

Full Citation: Observatorio Ciudadano Lima Cómo Vamos. 2012. *Lima How Are We Doing Survey 2011: Report on Perception of Quality of Life (Encuesta Lima Cómo Vamos 2011: Informe de Percepción sobre Calidad de Vida)*. Observatorio Ciudadano Lima Cómo Vamos, Lima.

► [Uruguay: Montevideo's Citizen Perception Survey Report 2010](#)

This report presents the results of the citizen perception survey implemented in 2010 by the [Montevideo How Are We Doing? Initiative](#). It is worth noting that in relation to health, the initiative elaborated its citizen report card based on the Our Sao Paulo initiative's survey, though they added questions particular to Uruguayan health policy. The report card took four key aspects into consideration. First, it assessed to what extent health services were available in the city's different districts, in order to capture unequal distribution of services. The second sought to understand citizens' assessment of vaccine campaigns, proximity of care centres including clinics and hospitals, public policies regarding abortion, and sanitary and environmental auditing. Third, for service quality, the survey measured two indicators: whether patient treatment was humane and respectful, and the waiting time to get a consultation. Finally, the fourth aspect was citizens' perceptions of their own health status, using indicators such as personal behaviour relative to sleep quality, health and diet. Overall, the report card implemented by the *Montevideo How Are We Doing? Initiative* incorporates various elements to assess the quality of health, including some innovative aspects such as people's perception about specific health policies and healthy personal behaviours.

Full Citation: Montevideo Cómo Vamos. 2010. *Montevideo's Citizen Perception Survey Report (Encuesta de Percepción Ciudadana)*. Montevideo Cómo Vamos, Montevideo.

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To learn more about these publications or about health services report cards in Latin America, contact the author, Gina Chacón Fregoso, researcher in Fundar's Budget and Public Policy Analysis Area, and Janet Oropeza, ELLA Project Coordinator, janet@fundar.org.mx.

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To learn more about health services report cards in Latin America, read the [ELLA Brief: Citizen Participation in Evaluating Health Services: The Latin American Experience](#). To learn more about other Citizen Participation issues in Latin America, read the [ELLA Guide](#), which has a full list of knowledge materials on this theme. To learn more about other ELLA development issues, browse other [ELLA Themes](#).

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