
BOOK REVIEW

*PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE
CARIBBEAN. FOCUS, EXPERIENCES
AND PERSPECTIVES*

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To quote this article:

Fraga R. Evelyn L. (2020). [Reseña del libro Planificación para el desarrollo en América Latina y el Caribe. Enfoque, experiencias y perspectivas, de Máttar, J., & Cuervo, L. M.]. *Espacio I+D, Innovación más Desarrollo*. IX(22), 172-177. Recuperado de https://espacioimasd.unach.mx/docs/Resena_libro_Planificacion_para_el_Desarrollo.php

Keywords

Planning, development, multi-temporality, multi-scale, intersectional, evaluation.

The book *Planning for development in Latin America and the Caribbean. Focus, experiences and perspectives* was written by authors from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), an institution that is part of the United Nations regional commissions and whose objective is to collaborate mainly in a technical manner for the development of said region. Jorge Máttar, former director of the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES), an organization that is part of ECLAC and whose vision is to generate knowledge, present research and technical proposals related to the State's role, planning and public management in development processes. Luis Mauricio Cuervo is currently an Economic Affairs Officer at ILPES and his research focus on the analysis of development theories and practices, as well as on the investigation of prospective tools applied in construction of futures as a means for long-term planning.

Modern planning paradigm has been strongly analyzed by ECLAC. Within this framework, ILPES is compiling a compilation of experiences of nine countries in the region in the 21st century, based on current challenges it faces, identifying the following: (i) Multi-temporality; (ii) Multi-scale; (iii) Intersectional; (iv) Evaluation and monitoring. In this way, the present document establishes a synthesis of the main research results generated on planning challenges outlined above.

The first chapter studies "Planning for Latin America and the Caribbean development", beginning with a historical analysis of the concept of development planning in Latin America, whose origin dates back to the 1970's and in which it is considered to be a central part of the State and industrialization is assumed to be an important part of it. During the 80's and 90's, planning was distorted and therefore its conceptualization did not have great advances. Development greatest challenges had as a means of operation public

management, which sought to resolve critical knots related to "development of plan, budget and results" (p.20).

Later, conceptualization of development planning from a modern paradigm has its origin in the 20th century, and starts from the "proclamation of the International Charter of Human Rights, the birth of the United Nations and the geopolitical disputes (...)" (p.19). Planning for development has as its main ingredients public management linked to management by results, public value chain creation, development of new political leadership, importance of citizen participation framed in the need to achieve sustainable and egalitarian development, economic slowdown which is one of the main challenges linked to the creation of own development models and finally it considers international agreements, an example of this is the 2030 Agenda, which through its Sustainable Development Goals aims to build a desired world in the long term in a collaborative way.

Thus, the chapter ends with the conceptualization of planning as "a political act, a theory and a discipline for the creation of a sense of belonging and future and multi-secular, intersectional, and multi-temporal governance of development" (p.35), and development planning is further understood as:

[...] a means and not an end. Its purpose is to contribute to the construction of development, understood as a collective idea of the social duty to be, of what humanity in general and different groups in which it is organized intend for themselves as an ideal and as a vision of the future (p.36).

Multi-temporality challenge is addressed in chapter III, which analyses the way in which public policy has different time frames for its implementation. In this regard, it focuses on how countries of the region present solutions for articulating instruments and means of planning in short, medium and long term. Experiences of Guatemala, the Dominican Republic and Cuba have been considered in the analysis and show as a result the importance of having a long-term vision in planning processes that allows for the definition of State policies based on participatory processes that guide short and medium-term actions, medium-term planning that is aligned with periods of government and is articulated with the vision, and short-term planning that links management and budget with medium-term planning.

Chapter IV analyses multi-scale, which is based on the existence of various levels of planning; national, intermediate and local, and on these levels the existence of a variety of competencies and actors, making it necessary to articulate various scales and generate convergences in order to manage development within the framework of the national territory. Argentina, Mexico, Dominican Republic and Ecuador are analyzed, and as a result of their management, it is considered important in this challenge

to define the territorial problems and potentialities in the public policy framework, to build suitable regulatory mechanisms to guide the articulation of national and subnational planning, to generate dialogues for intergovernmental agreement, to develop mechanisms for follow-up and evaluation, and to improve institutional capacities.

Intersectional challenge is analyzed in chapter V. This challenge seeks to examine how countries propose to resolve coordination of specialized planning within a sector with more comprehensive and cross-cutting planning, recognized as intersectional and national planning. Brazil, Dominican Republic, Chile, Argentina and Mexico were analyzed in this chapter, the analysis of their experiences shows that one of the mechanisms used for section coordination is management by results. On the other hand, it is necessary at this level to convene non-governmental actors as well as the articulation and strengthening of institutional capacities. However, generation of budgets by section programs still presents challenges.

The chapter concludes by mentioning that the challenge of intersection analysis through experiences in the region has been complex and recommends the following to improve national and sectional coordination: (i) Generate mechanisms for coordinating national and sectional goals; (ii) Articulate national and sectional objectives; (iii) Link public investment with sectional investment; (iv) Strengthen institutional capacities and follow-up and evaluation mechanisms.

Chapter VI discusses the challenge of evaluation, plans and programs monitoring, which analyses the monitoring and evaluation measures that allow for improvement in the processes of public policy implementation and lifelong learning, as well as verification of planning processes developed in order to achieve desired results. Monitoring and evaluation applies to public policies, plans, programs and institutions. This chapter analyzes the experiences of Colombia, Chile and Brazil, identifying that currently in the region there are great advances in the implementation of monitoring and evaluation systems that have regulatory support, as well as responsible entities. However, it is still necessary to strengthen the monitoring processes at the local level, as well as the monitoring of international commitments such as the 2030 Agenda, on the other hand, it is necessary to strengthen impact evaluations mainly at program level.

The document ends with conclusions, which the following can be highlighted: (i) Planning must be understood as a system, i.e., coordination processes that must exist in its components must be identified; (ii) Challenge of participation cuts across all planning challenges identified in the document and must therefore be analyzed in the planning processes; (iii) Tools that allow progress to be made on each of the challenges are, in general, strategic planning, foresight, management by results, multi-year

budgets and monitoring; (v) Planning is a political act which must contribute to the achievement of society's wishes and desires. In this regard, it is necessary to have long-term national agreements which guide action in the medium and short term.

It is important to mention that planning system is not static, therefore tools used are various, complementary and evolve over time, since they respond to specific moments and problems; this is why institutions such as ECLAC and ILPES share tools, methodologies and in general, knowledge generated in the region regarding planning as a development tool and a shared learning mechanism.

Finally, in the book analysis framework, I consider that it is of great relevance in learning from the region's experiences regarding the challenges of modern planning; however, research could deepen in an analysis of articulation mechanisms of regional planning and how this would support the hegemonic development of Latin America and the Caribbean.

REFERENCES

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ABBREVIATIONS

ECLAC: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

ILPES: Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning

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