WELLNESS CENSUS, ORIGINALLY BIASED

A diagnosis without specialists

Wellness Census, originally biased

SYNTHESIS

The political transformation of the current government is based on the creation of new programs with direct monetary transactions. With them, a response to the emergency of COVID-19 is attempted. Never the less, the "Wellness Census" which is used to select the recipients of these programs, displays issues of opacity, political bias from the "Servants of the nation" structure that amended it and serious technical and operational limitations.

FACTS AND DATA

The "Wellness Census" started its field application on September 29th, 2018, prior to the start of the current government[1]. The same way, the "Wellness Census" in information gathering on the field, done by the constituents of the political-electoral of Morena, in charge of Gabriel García Hernández. This structure changed its designation to "Servants of the nation". The "Servants" use uniforms with the color palette of Morena and promote the figure and name of the President.

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1   Coordinación General de Programas para el Desarrollo. Estrategia y Metodología del Censo del Bienestar. Diagnóstico de las necesidades de México [Strategy and methodology of the Wellness Census. Diagnostics of the needs of Mexico]. pag. 5. Disponible en https://tinyurl.com/ybry2wnw

It is until recent dates (May 18th, 2020), that a document which includes a methodology was presented, one that doesn't fulfill the minimum requirements of technical quality. Hence, the technical aspects of territory deployment, questionnaire design, field operations supervision, and quality control are unknown, just like the results and generated databases.

ANALYSIS OF RISKS AND NEGATIVE EFFECTS

It's important to highlight that the "Wellness Census" lacks from origin an institutional responsibility framework, which contradicts the principles of budgeting and administrative normativity, at least on its activities from October and November 2018. On this date, the "Program Coordination for Development" wasn't a part of the government yet, but a structure of Morena's party.

The structure that is in charge of the "Census" presents a political bias, for its electoral and partisan inception. Consequently, the "Servants" which circulated as promoters and watchmen of the vote of one party, transition to a task of identification of recipients of social programs. The profile they use, like a

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Image: https://www.forbes.com.mx/politica-resultados-censo-bienestar-rezago/

dress code, imagery, materials, and discourse, contradicts the partisan neutrality principle presented on the 130th article of the constitution.

The so-called document methodology, confirms that this exercise wasn't really a census, but the verification of rolls from three current programs in 2018: Prospera, Proagro, and PIMAF (Support Program for Corn and Beans Farmers for its acronym in Spanish). It also confirms that the identification of possible new recipients incorporated into the new programs was totally discretional.

The major technical flaws in this operation generate delays or non-compliance with the coverage goals. I.E., The Pension Program for the Well-being of Seniors that has a prospective population of 8,860 million of seniors and its goal population is 8,481 million, barely reaches 8,001 million (94%). Whit this way it reaches a maximum coverage of (8,055 million) till the fourth bimester of 2019 (July-August)

It is vitally important, that most of the "primary" programs are not suitable to face the fall of income during an emergency since they do not cover those who lose their labor income (Formal or informal). Most of the programs –and those with a greater number of recipients- are destined to a population outside of the labor market: children, adolescents, young students, elderly people, people with disabilities, and youngsters without employment.

In this regard, the contingency derived from the COVID-19 pandemic makes evident their inadequacy, since the amounts are not enough to cover the loss of income and the cost of basic consumer goods for homes. Likewise, given the biases and the aforementioned flaws, there's no guarantee that they will cover the lowest income population, and for its limitations, it won't be possible to cover 70% of them.

FOCAL POINTS

We must place special attention in the field of transparency in the databases produced by the Census and its transfer to the rolls of the programs. In this respect, an independent and technical audit of the databases and the rolls will be required, as well as a monitoring strategy for the use of information and the territorial structures during electoral processes and actions of voting purchasing and duress.

Finally, there must be an evaluation of the results of the coverage and selection of recipients for the new

programs by the CONEVAL (National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development for its acronym in Spanish) and the integration of a single roll of recipients that is in compliance with technical standards of partisan neutrality and transparency.

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