Foreword

Infrastructure projects are central to government mandates. Their benefits and risks can be seen as two sides of the same coin. One side holds a vision and a promise: increased national competitiveness, better public service delivery and inclusive growth. On the other side there are risks of mismanagement, waste of public money and corruption. Because major infrastructure projects can represent the legacy of governments for generations to come, governments must be particularly attentive to ensure their social value.

Much of the success of such projects depends on transparency, efficiency and skills. International experience shows that implementing these principles often remains a challenge.

The Government of Mexico has called on the OECD to assist the state-owned entity Airport Group of Mexico City (Grupo Aeroportuario de la Ciudad de México, GACM) to deliver on its mandate to manage the construction of the New International Airport of Mexico City. In responding to this request, the OECD brought together practices and expertise from Member countries on the governance of infrastructure projects, public procurement, integrity frameworks and the related communication strategies.

This report is part of OECD’s mandate to help governments at all levels design and implement strategic, evidence-based and innovative policies to strengthen public governance, respond effectively to diverse and disruptive economic, social and environmental challenges and deliver on government’s commitments to citizens.

While the GACM is committed to applying international best practices of integrity, transparency and open government, additional efforts are necessary. The report identifies several areas for improvement based on international experience.

The report demonstrates the imperative of co-ordinated action from different institutions and levels of government, as well as systematic stakeholder engagement. A corporate governance structure replacing GACM’s current organisation would better address this complex environment. In addition, procurement processes should be tailored to the magnitude and specificities of the project to ensure effective delivery. Also, a comprehensive integrity strategy including public and private stakeholders would reduce the risk of corruption. Finally, strategic and frequent communications are needed to secure vital social and political support.
Infrastructure projects are multidimensional by nature. Progress made in one area not only represents an improvement in itself, but also contributes to strengthening other dimensions that together pave the way for effective delivery of large infrastructure projects. By providing assistance to the Mexican authorities in this unique project, the OECD aims to support the government in reaping the direct benefits of better policies for better lives without taking unnecessary risks and ensuring that the outcomes of the project reflect the right side of the coin.

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