

Open Brazil

The World Bank Group’s new interactive monitoring, accountability and engagement tool for Brazil

By Claudia Tufani and Marek Hanusch

Summary

Open Brazil is an interactive and user-friendly online platform that provides information about the current Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Brazil. **Open Brazil** is intended to make the work of the World Bank Group (WBG) more accessible—or open—to an external and internal audience, providing intuitive insights into the rationale and logic of WBG activities as well as regular (and where possible real-time) monitoring of results achieved on the ground. **Open Brazil** leverages new technologies including Big Data, Open Data, remote sensing (e.g. satellite images), social media, and smart supervision tools.

The platform also includes an innovative dashboard that can be used to track the impact of COVID-19 on specific sectors of the economy. As the COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally altered the development challenge in early 2020, the platform was expanded to include a COVID-19 response section, which includes not only a dashboard with real-time, automatically updating indicators, but also an interactive story map, and displays all specific WBG operations related to COVID-19.

Challenges

Communication is an important part of engagement with clients. Information on what the WBG does and what development results are achieved is critical.

A next-generation tool like **Open Brazil** was needed for three reasons. First, it is important for the WBG to keep track with innovation in the public sector more generally as relates to

transparency. Notably in Brazil, the public sector has solid record on transparency mechanisms, and institutions are committed to fostering open government policies. By law, all states as well as the federal government are required to have “transparency platforms” where data on budget and on the execution of expenditures is displayed and accessible to the general public.

The Office of the Controller General (CGU) oversees the transparency policies at the federal level and is responsible for analyzing (and often making it available) any data requests for information that is not already public. In 2016 the Brazilian government announced its commitment to open data policies (Decree 8.777/2016), which followed best international practices available. In this context, it became important for the WBG in Brazil to have its own transparency platform. A tool like **Open Brazil** allows the WBG to better align its transparency policies with those of the government.

Second, the WBG needs to be able to actively engage on its work with the public. While the external page of the WBG displays information for all projects, it does not allow to take into account the context and idiosyncrasies of the WBG’s engagement in every individual country. **Open Brazil** is thus highly customized to Brazil, explaining the context of the engagement and how the WBG specifically addresses Brazil’s idiosyncratic development challenges, together with the government and other stakeholders. WBG task team leaders working on Brazil can use this tool to show how their projects fit into the bigger picture and what results they achieve.

Thirdly, Brazil’s country team also identified a need for an interactive tool to facilitate the execution of key tasks. For example, preparing for official travel or being able to collect quick and reliable information before meeting with a client are time consuming activities that could be performed in a shorter time. It would be important for staff to be able to access the WBG’s portfolio footprint in the country as well as have access to specific indicators at the subnational level via a simple and accessible tool. Thus, an online platform that could provide interactive monitoring of current projects and real time data for subnational governments was identified as an important element to facilitate and expedite important activities carried out by WBG staff working in Brazil.

Innovation

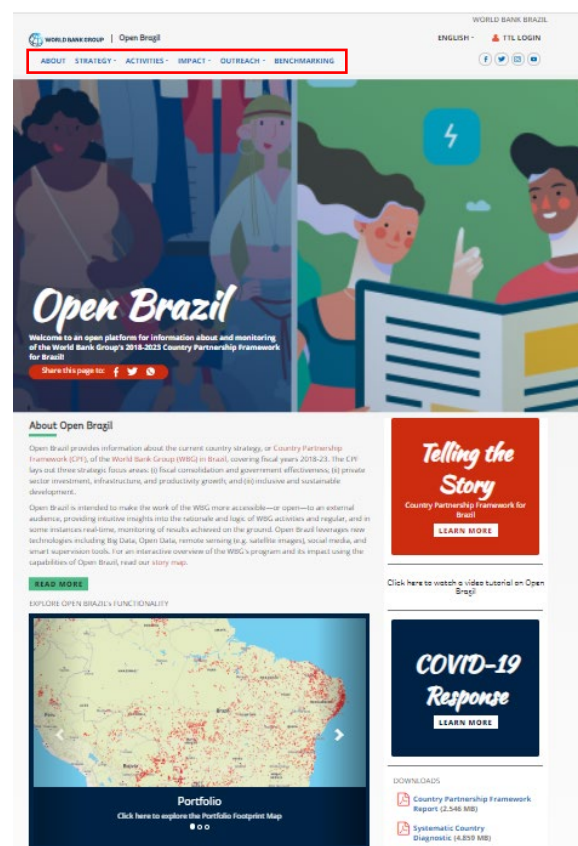
The solution to address the challenges described above was to elaborate a platform, **Open Brazil**, that was user-friendly and accessible to the general public and that could also be used by WBG staff working in Brazil to facilitate the execution of key activities related to WBG’s engagement in the country.

The platform is structured around five sections, which are displayed in the navigation menu bar: 1) Strategy; 2) Activities, 3) Impact, 4) Outreach, and 5) Benchmarking (Figure 1). The first three sections are the core of the site and are interconnected. Strategy is related to the framework constructed in the 2018-2023 CPF that guides the program in the country. The Activities section displays a portfolio footprint, projects, and research reports. Finally, Impact shows the achieved development results, tracing the CPF’s results framework with regularly updated (in some cases real-time) indicators.

The last two sections are Outreach and Benchmarking. In the benchmarking section, it is possible to see how Brazil measures up with other countries in areas such as human capital, economic development, institutions and infrastructure and environment. The Outreach section displays an overview of public debate on

social media about the WBG’s work in Brazil, and relevant aggregated demographic information of users who participate in the debate, with data drawn from the TalkWalker tool.

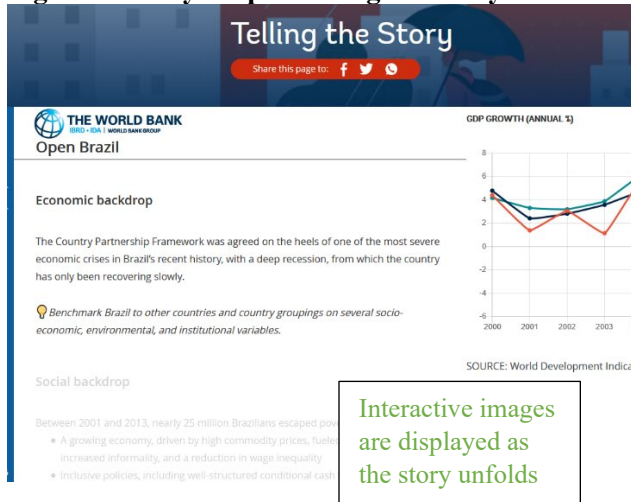
Figure 1: Open Brazil landing page



Story telling

Among the innovative features that the platform has, Story Maps deserve special attention (Figure 2). A Story Map is an interactive tool that allows a narrative to be illustrated by images, maps and other multimedia content. **Open Brazil** makes use of such tool, to explain the current CPF and key results achieved under it. *Telling the story* allows the user to interact with both the Country CPF for Brazil and with key functionalities in the site, including the Indicators section, thus providing a guided tour across the functionalities of Open Brazil, leveraging it to tell one consistent, updated, and interactive story of the WBG’s engagement in Brazil.

Figure 2: Story Map – Telling the Story



A story map is also available for the COVID-19 dashboard, walking the users through the monitoring dashboard using a framework developed in [2020 WBG assessment of the pandemic in Brazil](#).

Impact

The 2018-23 CPF focused on impact in three areas: 1) Fiscal Consolidation and Government Effectiveness for Sustainable, Inclusive and Efficient Service Delivery; 2) Private Sector Investment and Productive Growth; 3) Inclusive and Sustainable Development.

Impact in these areas is tracked through a results framework with quantitative indicators. These are displayed under the Impact section of **Open Brazil**. The indicator pages display the baseline, progress and target values for all the indicators that are part of the CPF as well as some that have been added later, as preparations for a 2020 Program Learning Review advance (in total, there are 54 indicators being displayed).

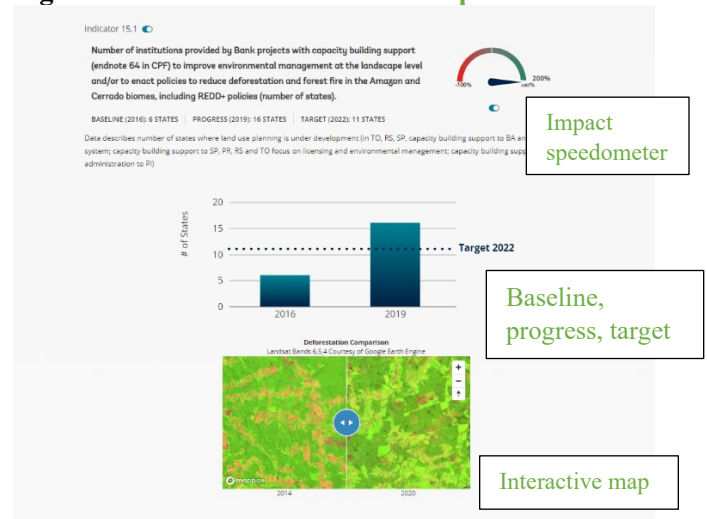
The indicator section includes dynamic data from internal and external sources. For example, under Focus Area 2, indicator 9 and indicator 10.1 are both updated automatically via an Application Programming Interface (API) that connects **Open Brazil** with different databases. Indicator 10.1 draws data from the Brazilian Open Data System available from the Brazilian Central Bank. This Open Data System is a direct result of the national policy for Open Data (Decree 8.777/2016), which

from the outset targeted specific agencies/departments with a focus on making data from these institutions available via APIs.

Internal data include automatically drawn data from the WBG’s operation portal or manually input data.

Icons of the shape of speedometers (Figure 4) indicate whether projects are on track assuming a linear development trajectory.

Figure 4: Selected indicator from Open Brazil



Under Focus Area 3 there is extensive use of interactive maps that are built with high definition satellite imagery. For example, indicator 15.1 (Number of institutions provided by Bank projects with capacity building support to improve environmental management at the landscape level) allows the user to explore satellite imagery taken in 2014 and 2020 to gain a better understanding of deforestation over time by simply dragging the swipe icon back and forth across the screen. It is also possible to zoom in or out of an area depending on the level of interest (see Figure 3).

Indicators under Focus Area 3 also take advantage of the Brazilian governments initiatives with open data and interactive monitoring tools. As mentioned earlier, Brazil has been committed with transparency and accountability platforms, and there is wide range of tools available to track and monitor data. For

example, the National Water Agency makes available georeferenced data on a variety of topics related to the water and sanitation sectors.

Open Brazil uses the information available to highlight the relevance of the indicators that are part of the CPF. In particular, the maps from the National Water Agency, available under Focus Area 3, provide users with the opportunity to understand the broader context of water sanitation issues and overlay different information of the same geographic area. Since these maps are embedded in Open Brazil, they are updated concomitantly with the maps shown in the National Water Agency page.

Portfolio mapping

Figure 4: Portfolio Footprint section expanded



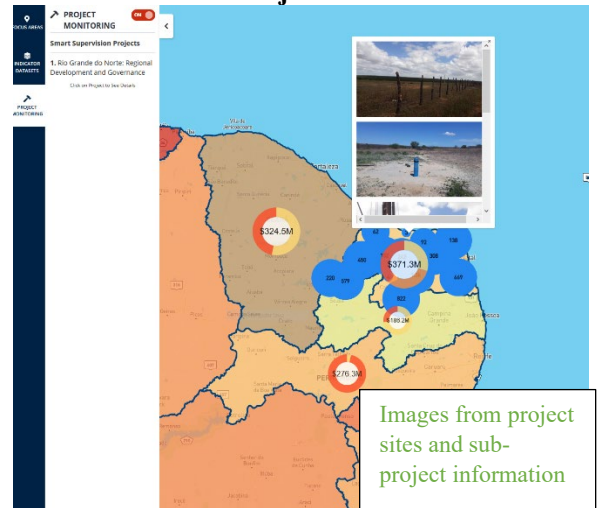
The Portfolio Footprint sub-section, under Activities, is another important innovation that makes the platform relevant and both externally and internally. The Portfolio Footprint page is rich in data and helps users gain a better understanding of WBG portfolio in Brazil as well as gather specific information about states, and probe the extent to which projects target development challenges at the state level.

The Portfolio Footprint page displays committed loans to each state under the current CPF by focus area. In addition, it also displays an indicators dataset, which provides state-level data on socioeconomic indicators, climate, disasters, and deforestation or real-time wildfires. For example, Figure 4 displays poverty rate at the state level. This information is overlaid with state’s loans from the Bank. In total, there are 34 indicators

that can be displayed in the map. The page is interactive so users can select the information they want displayed in the map.

When users select a specific state, the projects that are related to that state under the current CPF are also displayed (both active and closed projects) on the right side of the page. In addition, the information of the indicators’ dataset for the selected state is also summarized below the list of projects for the selected state. Projects are available for the World Bank and Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) as well as the International Finance Corporation (IFC), jointly comprising the WBG.

Figure 5: Smart Supervision App – Rio Grande do Norte Project



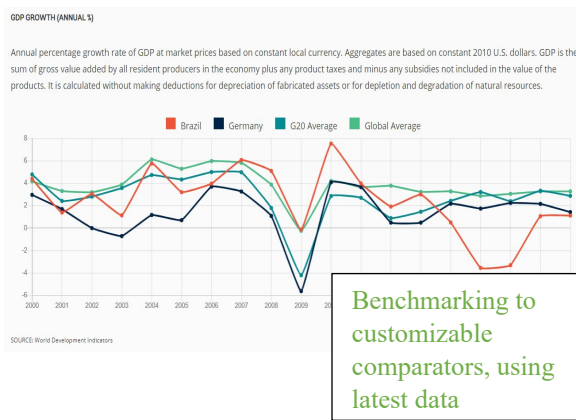
Finally, as a pilot initiative, the Portfolio Footprint section also includes the Project Monitoring page. The page provides real-time, on-the ground project monitoring for selected projects, which makes use of the Smart Supervision App, another WBG innovation. The user can click on a project name which will zoom the map over to that location (see Figure 5). The pop-up provides information on the project, its value, approved date, end date, and beneficiaries, as well as all active sub-projects. Photos from project sites uploaded by project staff can also be accessed, providing more flavor of the work on the ground. Through the Smart Supervision App, the WBG is also able to communicate with project beneficiaries via mobile phones. Further

projects will be added as the Smart Supervision App is rolled out.

Benchmarking

A good complement for the indicators in the portfolio footprint section is the benchmarking page. Here users will be able to benchmark Brazil on a number of socioeconomic, environmental and institutional indicators to other countries or country groupings (Figure 6).

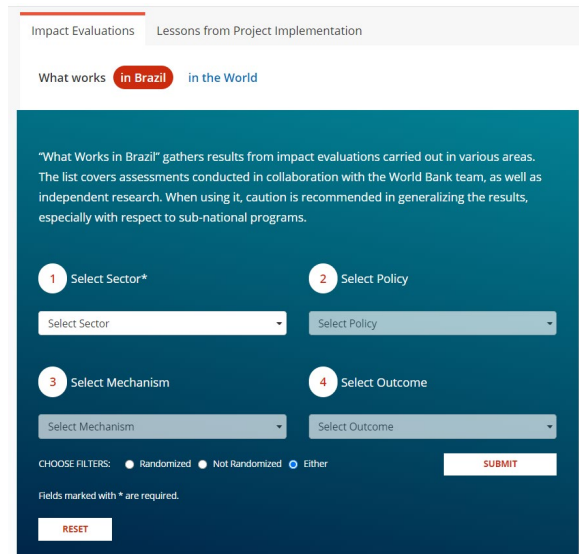
Figure 6: Benchmarking Brazil to countries and country groupings



Learning and evidence

As a global development institution, drawing lessons from across the world is critical, as is disseminating them across countries. To this end, **Open Brazil** includes a section on lessons on its Evidence page under the Impact section (Figure 7). This includes impact evaluations conducted on Brazilian development projects, by the WBG and other institutions. To bring global experience from the world, **Open Brazil** entered into a partnership with the NGO AidGrade, which conducts meta-analyses of impact evaluations of development initiatives globally. A partnership with the Global Delivery Initiative, on the other hand, provides insights on common project implementation issues, drawn from thousands of development projects across the world, which can help development practitioners improve the quality of their projects during preparation and implementation.

Figure 7: Evidence in Open Brazil



Public sentiment

Any policy work requires to remain in touch with sentiment on policy issues in-country. For this reason, **Open Brazil** includes an online media snapshot under **Open Brazil**'s Outreach section (Figure 8). This section draws on public social media discussions and other online data, to provide information on the online debate in areas where the WBG is active under the 2018-23 CPF, such as fiscal policy or the business environment. Using the Talk Walker tool, information on key terms of the debate, the location and intensity of the debate, and on aggregated demographic insights are displayed. As a pilot social media is also used under the Indicators section (Figure 9) to track the WBG's impact on the public debate through its analytical engagement.

Figure 8: Online media snapshot

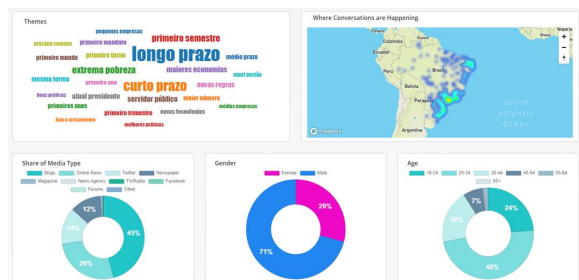
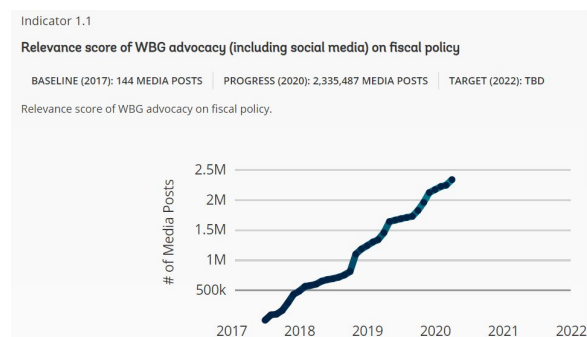


Figure 9: Using social media to track impact of WBG research and advocacy



COVID-19 Dashboard

As the COVID-19 pandemic spread, **Open Brazil** was expanded to include a section on COVID-19 response, which features: 1) a dashboard that tracks real time data to help track the depth of the crisis and the speed and shape of the recovery, 2) a Story Map putting these indicators into context through the framework developed in the WBG’s 2020 assessment of the pandemic in Brazil, and 3) a page that tracks WBG’s portfolio in response to the crisis – which includes new projects (in the public and private sector) as well as re-structuring operations. The dashboard makes extensive use of APIs available from different institutions of the Brazilian government, such as the Central Bank, the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), and the National Statistics Office (IBGE).

The dashboard also features a partnership between the World Bank and CIELO, a credit card company. The data provided by CIELO allows an in depth understanding of how business across the different sectors of the economy are impacted by the crisis. The data is summarized in CIELO’s sales index (ICVA – Índice Cielo de Varejo Ampliado). Google mobility and pollution data are used to nowcast industrial production.

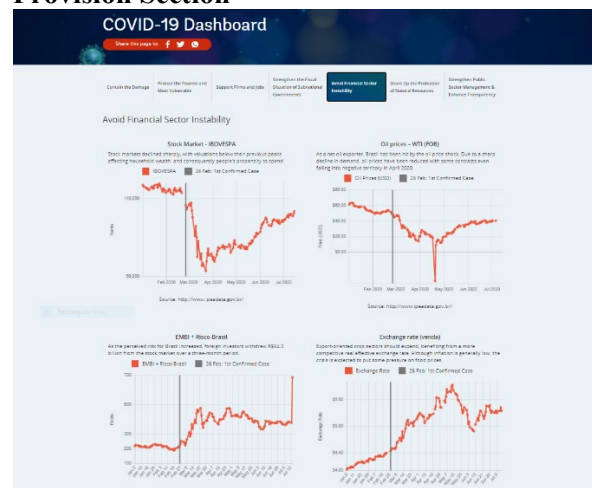
Guided by the WBG’s assessment of the pandemic in Brazil, the dashboard is organized around the following themes: 1) contain the damage; 2) protect the poor and most vulnerable;

3) supporting firms and jobs; 4) strengthening the fiscal situation of subnational governments; 5) avoiding financial sector instability; 6) enhance natural resource protection; and 7) strengthen public sector management (Figures 10a and 10b).

Figure 10a: Dashboard – Contain the Damage Section



Figure 10b: Dashboard – Avoid Financial Sector Instability and Support Credit Provision Section



Next steps

Open Brazil is going live in September 2021. Data analytics will be conducted to understand how it is being used by the public and internally. This will inform any further development.

About the authors

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