Governance of Smart Cities: Comparing Practices in Helsinki, Hong Kong, Hyderabad

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1. Introduction

In recent years cities around the world developed new approaches to manage urban data; "urban informatics" and "smart city" are concepts where information, data, and technology become the basis for new models of managing processes in a city. This paper attempts to compare urban practices across cities with different degrees of citizen involvement in their planning approaches.

This practitioner presentation focuses on governance of urban data and information, in particular asks questions on citizen-involvement in urban planning and managing processes. Many smart city approaches see governance within the framework of public-private partnerships between city administrators and ICT service providers. More inclusive multi-stakeholder frameworks of governance are emerging. How is governance developed in smart city planning in cities around the world? How can we compare governance across cities?

2. Approach and Description

Using examples from Helsinki, Hong Kong and Hyderabad the presentation shall describe and discuss recent developments and potential of leveraging data and information for participatory urban planning and design to efficiently use a city's resources and increase the quality of live for all citizens.

In Helsinki, the development of better public services is the main driving force behind the Smart City initiatives. The basis for this development has been opening up public data in order to encourage the creation of digital services and applications that enable crowd sourcing of ideas and citizen involvement in city decision-making. Open data is considered the basis for transparency and governance.

In Hyderabad, one of the metros in India, smart governance means leveraging technology to ensure greater transparency and moving an increasing number of services online. As a leading hub of IT in India, the city has also been making progress in leveraging ideas and knowledge of citizens to enable them play a constructive stakeholder role than remain a mute recipient of public services.

In Hong Kong the government has an explicit "Digital21" development strategy with a strong focus on digital economy development supported by e-governance services and digital inclusion, however, citizen involvement is not explicitly included in the strategy.

3. Conclusion

From a practitioner's perspective, we find a common thread across the efforts of governments of developed and developing countries in leveraging (a) data - to get smart insights (b) ideas - crowd sourcing for better public services and their delivery (c) knowledge - to develop smart device apps to enable citizen to play a constructive stakeholder role in development of smart cities and delivery of smart governance.

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