Countering Crime and Violence through Georeferenced Citizen Engagement Tools in Kinshasa

PROJECT OVERVIEW

PROJECT NAME
Kinshasa Multisector Development and Urban Resilience Project (P171141)

GLOBAL PRACTICE
Urban, Disaster Risk Management, Resilience and Land

REGION
Africa

COUNTRY
Democratic Republic of the Congo

GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE
Kinshasa

COUNTERPART
Kinshasa City Province

GLOBAL SMART CITY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM SUPPORT OVERVIEW

ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVE
To develop a georeferenced citizen engagement application to report and map crime and violence in the City of Kinshasa.

OUTPUT
- Market and stakeholder analysis for a digital Smart City platform
- Rapid assessment of the current crime and violence situation
- Technical inputs to the design of a crime and violence reporting application
- Benchmarking of international examples
- Roadmap recommendations for creating a Smart City Lab

KINSHASA, DRC

CHALLENGES

Kinshasa, with a population of more than 12 million in 2016, has been growing rapidly and is poised to become Africa's largest city by 2030. However, limited financial, technical and management capacities have hindered the public sector's ability to deliver services and carry out effective urban planning. Crime and violence are also serious problems in Kinshasa. Most crimes are never brought to the courts, usually due to lack of evidence. Gender inequalities have been the major contributing factor to women's proportionately greater victimization, but other factors related to urban planning (such as insufficient police staffing and transport, and narrow alleys that are hard for police to secure against local criminal groups) are also relevant.

The World Bank finances the Kinshasa Multisector Development and Urban Resilience Project, which aims to use digital solutions and other tools to improve urban management capacity, access to select infrastructure and services, and socioeconomic opportunities. Based on stakeholder consultations, the World Bank team asked the Global Smart City Partnership Program (GSCP) to assist the project by designing a georeferenced citizen engagement application that can report and map crime and violence in Kinshasa.

APPROACH

GSCP experts first looked at how Kinshasa might utilize a Smart City approach, and whether a Smart City platform

could help it achieve its goals. Digital tools can enhance security by receiving and processing real-time incident data, thus serving both the police and crime victims. A Smart City/District model was therefore suggested as a systematic security measure for fostering a more peaceful society. The experts then assessed the market, stakeholders, and local crime and violence situation, and also conducted a benchmarking exercise that looked at a number of international and local crime-related platforms, before preparing the design parameters for an online crime and violence application, and a proposal for its development, as part of a Smart City Lab. It is particularly targeted at victims of sexual or gender-based violence (GBV), given its prevalence in the targeted neighborhoods and lack of formal avenues for reporting or addressing it.

RESULTS

This engagement has introduced stakeholders in Kinshasa to the Smart City concept and its potential benefits. Furthermore, with the GSCP support, the City of Kinshasa can move forward with the proposal for the development of the crime-and-violence application, and the terms of reference for hiring a firm to develop a Smart City Lab. The application will inform victims of their rights; enable them to report incidents; and direct them toward civil society organizations and public services that can offer assistance. The application will also inform urban strategies and interventions in targeted Kinshasa neighborhoods. More broadly, the Smart City

Lab is envisioned to support digital and innovative urban development projects, and analyze how they improve the city. It will be hosted by the Kinshasa Urban Planning and Architecture Institute (ISAU) and include ISAU doctoral students and professionals specializing in digital technologies, Internet of Things (IoT), or entrepreneurship.

LESSONS LEARNED

- An engagement on Smart City should introduce approaches that are tailored to developing country contexts. It should emphasize the importance of starting small and articulating the vision and how a smart approach can contribute to achieving it. Similarly, it is important to find benchmarks that are relevant to target cities in terms of size, infrastructure, and challenges. It is also important to address feasibility, including what a proof of concept would be, and look at things through a fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) lens.

- It is helpful to build on relationship between the World Bank and academic partners such as universities and scientific/technical institutes, which can host a Smart City Lab to ensure academic relevance and long-term commitment and ownership.

MOVING FORWARD

The online crime and violence application and the Smart City Lab will be developed as part of the larger World Bank project.

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