

Benchmarking City Surveying Offices as a Tool for Development

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ABSTRACT

Knowing what you produce, production costs per unit, who the customers are and what preferences they have is essential questions for an efficient organisation. Three years ago an initiative was taken to use benchmark methods as a driving force for development in some Swedish city surveying offices. Up to now, 15 medium-size cities co-operate on a yearly base comparing approximately 40 key figures and indicators which makes it possible to learn from the best performers. Examples are cost per inhabitant for updating basic mapping, delivery time for a property formation matter and customer satisfaction index. Great efforts have been laid on developing standardised division of working procedures, time reporting systems and customer and staff inquiries. Interesting results of political importance are e.g. big differences in taxpayers yearly costs for basic surveying services, ranging from 3 US\$ to 10 US\$ per inhabitant and the fact that high cost cover for fee-charged services not always correspond to low cost production. Evaluation of customer needs shows that keeping delivery times are more critical than low costs. Staff inquiries indicate the importance of good leadership and need for more focus on developing personnel competence. One of the most appreciated activities has been the regular thematic meetings that have been arranged between the participating cities. These possibilities for person-to-person studies of more specialised professional work is not always so easy to achieve without the framework that the benchmark project has created.

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