



Urban Agenda Platform

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Guangzhou 12345 Government Service Hotline

Award Scheme

Guangzhou Award

Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Summary

In order to eliminate the Silo Effect between and among governmental organizations and public institutions, and in accordance with SDGs 10,11 and 16, the Municipal Government of Guangzhou established a coordinated mechanism to improve the quality of government service for the public called “Co-construction, Sharing, Co-governance”.

Background and Objective

For the inhabitants of Guangzhou this is known as the “12345” Government Service Hotline or platform which offers 24/7 one-stop shop service with one easily-memorized phone number. With the purpose of providing “convenient, intelligent and efficient” service, the hotline is established to solicit people’s suggestions, solve people’s livelihood demands and channel their discontent to the appropriate professionals for resolution. Since establishment, we have collected 13.98 million cases of people’s livelihood demands and coordinated relevant departments to resolve 1.753 million cases of demands in education, health care, transportation, water, electricity and gas supply, and community management. We have submitted nearly one hundred analysis reports and statistical reports to the Municipal Government and government departments. It has now become an essential part for Guangzhou to make itself a livable city of “Co-construction, Sharing, Co-governance”. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION** In the chapter of “Making Innovations in Social Governance System” in Decision of the CPC Central Committee on Some Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Deepening the Reform, it clearly instructed to “establish an open and orderly mechanism under which people’s grievances are expressed, psychological intervention conducted, conflicts mediated and rights and interests guaranteed”. This corresponds closely to the goal of the SDG16. Several Opinions on Promoting Fair Market Competition and Safeguarding Normal Market Order issued by the State Council put forward an instruction to “integrate and optimize the function of government departments as a complaint and report platform, establish a convenient and efficient platform where consumer complaint, report of illegal actions on economic affairs and complaint about administrative efficiency are properly handled”. This corresponds closely to the goal of SDG 10 to reduce inequalities. It is clearly stipulated in the Planning for Building a Market Regulatory System of Guangzhou that “based on the Guangzhou 12345 complaint and report platform, the government should integrate and optimize complaint and report resources of government departments, and establish a public service platform with the functions of government affairs consultation, people’s livelihood demands, government-people interaction, complaints and reports, and efficiency monitoring”. This corresponds closely to the goal of SDG 9. In response to these demands, Guangzhou 12345 Government Service Hotline was thus established and gradually became a major channel for the public to voice their concerns and safeguard their legitimate rights and interests. **ORIGINS** The general public has a pressing demand for government service. Governments at different levels of Guangzhou and government departments were operating, as recently as 2014, 91 special lines. This was overwhelming for the inhabitants of the city and caused chaos and confusion in the public administration. In summary, there were too many authorities in charge, too many phone numbers to remember and, as a result, everything got bogged down and nothing got done in a timely or efficient manner. The lack of horizontal coordination and sharing of information between departments led to wasteful practices and a culture that had little to do with the concept of “public service”. This led to high levels of complaints and discontent among inhabitants of the city and to high degrees of frustration for those working in public services. In 2014, upon the directive of the Mayor, Municipal Government decided to engage the inhabitants of the Guangzhou to help establish a “Co-construction, Sharing, Co-governance” concept and governance environment. Suggestions from and supervision and participation by the general public were deemed essential in such an undertaking so as to ensure that the system is conceived as and remains centred on people’s benefits and welfare. The Municipal Government put in place a robust platform for taking in the suggestions of all women, men and children, to listen to what they had to say and to envisage together new benchmarks, performance indicators and other means of assessing user satisfaction. Trends in industry and urban development both demand more transparency, accountability, opening up and use of new technology. As an international metropolis, an international commercial center and an international transportation hub, Guangzhou needs to build a good environment for business, tourism and quality of life, which is crucial to the city’s long-term development and sustainability. Therefore, it is essential to establish a channel that offers convenience to and answers questions of people coming from other all walks of life and from all places. Guangzhou has witnessed very rapid growth in recent decades with a large portion of the growth coming from migrants from other parts of China and from abroad. The 12345 platform is a “24/7” call reception guaranteed to answer all calls including peak-hour contingency plans to make sure that calls are answered in a timely manner. We platform includes telephone hotline 12345, a WeChat public account, 12345 WeChat online customer service, Guangzhou 12345 self-service inquiry mini program, and 12345 government service hotline special column in the portal website of the municipal government. In this way, all modes of communication are made possible from telephone to messaging and on-line. There is also an independent callback mechanism. Under this mechanism, citizens are called back to rate the service of the operator and the efficiency of the competent authorities so as to



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oblige them to improve their quality of handling cases reported. We organize staff of government departments to conduct training and on-site guidance, formulate and standardize modes of reply and work order input, so as to make sure that explanations and guidance are provided correctly and work orders transferred in a standardized way. We transformed the traditional comprehensive call reception mode to a new one combining “professional” service and selective “integrated” service. We also set up 5 call reception teams respectively responsible for consumer affairs, land and urban administration, labor and social security, public security and hukou (registration) affairs, and comprehensive affairs, so as to promote pin-point and efficient service. We integrate the administrative information bases of all government departments, make them more practical and smart, improve call operators’ ability of resolving problems on one phone call, and shorten the duration of answering calls. We open an efficiency monitoring function and share statistics of the government service hotline to achieve real-time monitoring of the hotline by supervisory departments and improve the service and administrative efficiency of government departments. Guangzhou 12345 Government Hotline Center. The Center is responsible for the unified administration of: accepting citizens’ complaints and demands, transferring cases to the appropriate government offices and services, coordinating difficult, complicated cases which do not clearly fall within the purview of a specific department, and collecting citizen’s feedback on how satisfied they are with resolving the problem. 123 government departments and public service enterprises in Guangzhou. These include 11 district-level governments, 50 municipal government departments, 62 state-owned enterprises or public institutions, Guangzhou branches of central authorities, and people’s organizations, etc, ranging from the Bureau of Public Security, Bureau of Education, Transportation Commission, Power Supply Bureau, Gas Group and Consumer Council which cover the demand for security, education, transportation, health care, water, electricity and gas supply of every citizen. It is responsible for accepting and resolving inquiries, complaints, reports, suggestions and requests for assistance raised by citizens in a coordinated manner. Service outsourcer --China Telecom. China Telecom participates in the construction and operation of the government service hotline to establish a sound service system and offer quality customer service to citizens. It plays a critical role in guaranteeing a failsafe system and the use of latest technological innovation. The program is funded by the fiscal expenditure of the municipal government, which includes the cost of operation and management, and venue rental, etc. The program is managed by the Guangzhou 12345 Government Service Hotline Center, which now has 34 administrators. The program has integrated 76 special lines of 51 government departments. Now it has 506 reception booths and 759 phone operators. The program is operated by China Telecom, who has service teams including the operation team, multimedia team, supporting team, quality supervision team, special campaign team, feedback team, and work order team, etc. The construction of the information system of the program is coordinated by the Municipal Industry and Information Commission. And Guangdong Eshore Technology Co., Ltd. is the outsourcer providing technical support.

Outcomes and Impacts

The program achieves continuous innovation in the perspectives of philosophy, strategy and governance, which facilitates Guangzhou’s efforts in building a livable city of “Co-construction, Sharing, Co-governance”. Firstly, we have made prominent success in making breakthrough of the Silo Effect. We manage to make government resource use more effective and statistics more integrated, and improve the government’s administration capacity. Up to now, we have integrated 76 lines of 51 government departments and submitted hundreds of analysis reports on issues to the great concern of the inhabitants in the fields of labor and social security, noise, pollution, etc. These reports offer important reference for government decision-making, urban administration and public service management. The establishment of the coordination mechanism has helped solve thousands of reported cases about education, food safety, urban flooding, and fallen trees, for example. We solve livelihood demands for millions of Guangzhou citizens. By June 30, 2018, the platform has received 13.98 million cases reported by citizens, among which 85% were answered and solved immediately, and coordinated and facilitated to resolve 1.753 million cases of livelihood demands. The platform is a boost to the establishment of new urban management mode. With this unified platform, governments, public enterprises and public institutions and citizens are better integrated, and citizens can participate in the urban management system featuring “co-construction and co-governance” in an orderly fashion. Meanwhile, governments at different levels can directly and effectively respond to the demands and suggestions of the citizens, and enterprises offering public service are also included in urban management as the operator of the government service hotline. In this way, the whole society is mobilized to actively participate in urban management, which helps facilitate a positive interaction of government supervision and social self-adjustment, and bridge the communication between governments and the general public. We should also speed up our efforts in creating a good environment for urban management where citizens actively participate and shoulder due responsibilities, so as to achieve a sustainable urban development mode of “Co-construction, Sharing, Co-governance”. Citizens’ evaluation. After completing cases reported by citizens, we will send a satisfaction rating text message to them and conduct satisfaction survey on a voluntary basis. For unsatisfactory evaluation reported by citizens, the case will be returned to the same department for further handling. We engage professional third-party agencies to evaluate the platform from the aspects of project establishment and funding, project management, project performance and social benefits, and to issue performance evaluation reports. We hire volunteer supervisors to conduct supervision on the platform’s daily operation on a regular basis. We invite media to make coverage on the hotline center. By collecting media coverage, we gain better understanding on the platform and make further improvements. To facilitate the implementation, We conduct callback of satisfaction survey. With the callback mechanism, citizens may rate on the satisfaction of handling results and effectiveness. In response to unsatisfactory assessment on departments handling the cases, we follow up by making calls, communicating with voice messages or on WeChat. Taking these measures, we can have a better understanding on the reasons for dissatisfaction. Unsatisfactory work orders which competent authorities should take responsibilities will be returned for further handling, and the department responsible will be asked to conduct an assessment on the returned case. It will force competent government departments to improve their sense of responsibility and service efficiency. We conduct multi-level coordination. In response to problems whose subject of responsibility is ambiguous, jurisdictional area is unclear, and attempt to resolve the problem is ineffective, we intervene in advance and conduct active coordination. Complicated problems whose



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competent authorities cannot be determined after coordination will be jointly reviewed and determined by the Municipal Commission Office for Public Sectors Reform and Municipal Legislative Affairs Office so as to clarify the responsibilities of different departments and improve supervision. If coordination proves ineffective, a special report will be formulated and submitted to the Municipal Government to facilitate the promulgation of universal solutions, policies and mechanisms for addressing major problems and difficulties. We make full use of new technologies such as internet. We open various service platform including Guangzhou 12345 WeChat public account, 12345 WeChat online customer service, self-service mini program for searching, Guangzhou government affairs WeChat account and a special column of 12345 government service hotline on the portal website of the Municipal Government, to provide all-weathered and 24/7 convenient service for our citizens. This initiative contributes to the improvement of the city. By unifying hotline number and conducting closed-loop management, we significantly save the time for addressing citizens' demands and highlight the efficiency of Guangzhou. Foreexample, in March this year, a Mr. Duan reported on excessive emission of oil fume by the hotpot restaurant downstairs through the government service hotline. In less than a day, staff from the hotline went on site and helped coordinate the problem solving. During coordination, he shook hands with the restaurant owner and they became friends. Mr. Duan made another call to 12345 to express his satisfaction with the high efficiency of the 12345 government service hotline. Openness and Innovation 12345 government service hotline platform has provided a low-threshold and convenient channel for Guangzhou inhabitants to participate in urban management. It fully demonstrates the openness and inclusiveness of the city. For example, on January 4 this year, a citizen reported on the complicated procedures of transferring his housing accumulation fund from other cities to Guangzhou. He complained that after one on-site application, he had been informed to go back and conduct another application in the service center. He thus proposed that "the transferring procedures of housing accumulation fund can be finished with one application". After receiving this demand delivered by the government service hotline platform, the Housing Accumulation Fund Management Center conducted study on the matter and simplified the procedures from March 1 this year. Since then, applicants only need to go once instead of twice to the management center for transferring housing accumulation fund from other cities to Guangzhou.

Innovative Initiative

The innovation of Guangzhou 12345 Government Service Hotline platform is progressive. The following are main points of innovation: Integrating government service hotlines The innovation of integration of Guangzhou 12345 Government Service Hotline platform adopts a large-scale, all-integrated, single-track, closed-loop management system. Except for emergency hotlines and hotlines for tax affairs which require professional and intensive service, we have been able to integrate 76 service hotlines of 51 municipal government departments. For citizens, dialing only one hotline number can satisfy all their demands for consulting, complaints, suggestions, reports or requests for assistance. And we have thus resolved the problem of "too many authorities in charge, too many phone numbers to remember, and too difficult to get through". Meanwhile, after integration, the old hotlines are no longer in use, which saves a great deal of administrative resources for government departments and public institutions. Guangzhou 12345 hotline is now responsible for integrated management, case handling, transferring cases to competent authorities, and completing cases within a fixed deadline. It is now able to provide "one phone number for all inhabitants", "24/7 online service" and "one-stop service". Handling problems reported by inhabitants a) For call operators, we carry out national standardized pilot construction. Firstly, we establish an administrative information base which is updated on a real time basis and jointly maintained by all departments. Secondly, we categorize this information base to ensure easier search, more standard work order input, and more accurate search results. In this way, we help operators better position citizens' demands, minimize human factors, and avoid unsatisfactory service reply so that citizens who call in can enjoy standardized government service. b) For relevant authorities, we established a single coordinating mechanism. Firstly, we establish a principle emphasizing the authority of the Legislative Affairs Office and the Commission Office for Public Sectors Reform over the handling of difficult, complicated cases and cases that do not clearly fall within the purview of a single specific department. We help government departments clarify their respective responsibilities and fill the gap of regulation. Secondly, we host training sessions, and meetings of exchanging experience and reviewing past cases, to help facilitate communications among departments. In this way, they can draw experience from each other, improve the quality of service and ensure that citizens' demands are effectively solved. c) For inhabitants we offer them with a platform that allows them to quickly, accurately and conveniently participate in community self-governance. Guangzhou 12345 platform not only provides latest policy consulting for citizens, but also coordinates different resources to help them participate in community governance. And this includes nearly all livelihood services such as children's education, community property management, installation of elevators, public transportation, water, electricity and gas supply. Analyzing hotspot demands. Through integration, 12345 platform has established a citizens' demand base. Based on full-sample statistics from the government service hotline, we publish 9 analysis reports on consulting and inquiry, complaints and reports, consumer affairs, and urban administration on a regular basis so as to help governments at different levels identify citizens' concerns and room for improvement at work. In this way, the platform becomes a "CT scanner" for the government to better administer the city. We publish reports on a monthly basis, analyzing livelihood issues which are to the gravest concern of citizens such as nighttime construction, pollution, online shopping, traffic safety, and sharing bikes, etc. We also circulate the ranking of competent authorities' key indicators such as on-time completion rate, citizens' satisfaction rate, and completion duration, so as to oblige them to solve the problems with concrete measures. This innovative practice is used in coordinating policies, eliminating the Silo Effect, and providing the facilities, incentives and systems for horizontal coordination and joint action. While it emphasizes the importance of the platform, participation and integration, it also caters to the demands of every inhabitant and makes their efforts count. In terms of governance and management iteration, it pursues continuous innovation with high standard and in a phased, steady manner. In this way, it can ultimately achieve innovation of sustainable urban governance and build a livable city of "Co-construction, Sharing, Co-governance". In the process of implementation, we have encountered a great many difficulties, which can be summarized into two points: firstly, difficulty in operation. How to control cost and maximize benefit. Since the opening of Guangzhou 12345 government service hotline,



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the volume of calls increases by 54% annually. With no increase in phone operators, the pressure of call reception is mounting, and citizens' perception on service quality is also affected. In the internet era, we accelerate the integrated development of "Internet+ hotline" by developing multiple service channels including WeChat public account, special column of 12345 government service hotline in the portal website of the municipal government, and online customer service. We also developed self-service mini program handling 11 service items such as medical care, express delivery complaints, with the aim to enable citizens to express their demands through other channels and provide quality service. At the same time, Guangzhou 12345 WeChat public account set up 8 complaints templates including sharing bikes, social security affairs and consumer disputes by analyzing citizens' concerns. For example, in the column of "express delivery complaints", key elements such as the mailing address, receiving address, tracking number are preset to ensure that citizens' demands are expressed more directly, work order information more complete and case transfer and handling more accurate. Thanks to these measures, citizens are more apt to use this Internet channels platform which in turn helps divert the traffic of calls. Secondly, difficulty in coordination. How to make best use of the platform. We are also faced with a lot of problems such as unwilling to cooperate or buck-passing when coordinating work orders which involves more than one departments, or have no clear applicable laws or clear responsibilities, or are not resolved after several times of circulation. Meanwhile, because the service hotline has low threshold and is rather convenient, some citizens expect too high of the result of solving problems that they make unreasonable demands by making the same complaints repeatedly or even making false complaints. In order to solve the buck-passing problem, we have established a multi-level coordination mechanism. Through multiple ways such as communication on telephone, on-site investigation, convening meetings involving all interested parties, transferring problems to the Legislative Affairs Office and the Commission Office for Public Sectors Reform for review and determination from the legal and establishment perspectives, we are able to eliminate the Silo Effect and put an end to buck-passing. In order to address the problem of exorbitant and unreasonable expectation from citizens, we take proactive measures by making phone calls and offering patient explanation. Meanwhile, we also formulate corresponding measures of punishment against actions of making false complaints, making complaints with others identity, and wasting administrative resources.

Conclusion

Guangzhou 12345 is more than just a hotline for inhabitants to voice their complaints or to request for useful information and resources. Based on what we saw in other cities, Guangzhou decided to go several steps further and put in place a truly participatory governance system. The system was co-conceived with inputs from people from all walks of life. The system is continuously being assessed, evaluated and ranked by users, service providers, subcontractors and the highest levels of government. Guangzhou 12345 is a commitment by the public authorities of Guangzhou to provide good, reliable and timely services adjudged by the people. It is a commitment to better, more effective, more efficient and most importantly more inclusive governance to help position the City of Guangzhou, its people and businesses to a more prosperous and cohesive city and to better meet the challenges of sustainable urban development going forward. RELEVANCE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable Target 3: Participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management Target 7: Universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces, in particular of women, children older persons and persons with disabilities Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions for all