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Innovative city strategies for delivering sustainable competitiveness

June 2016

Enabling sustainable city competitiveness through distributed urban leadership

pwc

Acknowledgement

In recent decades, the position of decision makers in cities has fundamentally changed, from standing at the helm to steering the development of their cities directly.

Local decision makers have transformed into forerunners in the field of economic and social development, in cooperation with their citizens. As a result, the future of our cities and wider society depends more and more on the quality of leadership of major stakeholders in cities, both in the public and private sectors.

The strength of metropolitan regions is their sheer diversity and a lot more can be gained from this. The advice of the Dutch research institutes is: go with the flow, paddling up-stream is counter-productive. And the flow is with urban regions worldwide. The citizens, businesses and organisations who reside, live and work in urban areas determine the social and economic success of their cities, together with their local governments.

So the initiative of PwC and Euricur to study the issue of urban leadership is very relevant. It generates more knowledge and insight about this crucial element of modern urban management.

This new research by PwC and Euricur is the second publication in the IUrban Series. This started with the research report "Innovative city strategies for delivering sustainable competitiveness", discussed at the IUrban conference in Rotterdam in 2014.

I sincerely hope that PwC and Euricur will continue to join forces to generate new knowledge on urban management, so that decision makers can adequately cope with the increasing number of complex city challenges.

Ahmed Aboutaleb, Chair of the Euricur Advisory Board and Mayor of Rotterdam

Contents

Foreword

Leadership lies at the heart of enabling and delivering sustainable urban competitiveness. It is also critical to place-based strategy development and implementation. As the challenges facing cities in the 21st century magnify, the role and importance of urban leaders can hardly be underestimated nor can the need for a more inclusive approach to those who can help make change happen in a place – lead firms, knowledge institutes and engaged citizens.

However, despite the often-advocated need for urban leaders to be more "entrepreneurial", place-based leadership is very different from leadership in private companies. Cities do not have CEOs in the same way that companies do.

The urban context is often much more complex. It depends on intertwined relationships among a myriad of stakeholders who co-construct urban development but often lack clear mandates to do so.

Moreover, the purpose and operation of local government administrations are intrinsically different from the private sector. This means that many mainstream leadership notions and tools are inadequate to think about the current and future challenges for urban and regional development.

Based on the growing body of literature in urban leadership, including previous joint studies by PwC and Euricur on *Innovative strategies for delivering sustainable competitiveness (iUrban)*, this report zooms into the nuances, practices and evolving challenges of urban leadership in the 21st century.

We believe that a better understanding of urban and place-based leadership is essential to deal with a number of unfolding challenges in cities. For example, in order to deal with new urban agendas – such as digitalisation, climate change, migrations, social inclusion and economic renewal – municipalities are increasingly being called on to work with others, giving rise to increasingly distributed modes of leadership.

While we often recognise good urban leadership when we see it, what is actually involved? Who are the urban leaders, and how do they act? Which processes, strategies and tactics are becoming more important? And how are different types of leaders impacting on the future of cities? These issues are explored in this report.

This also needs to be in the context of the city's DNA – what works in Amsterdam or London may not be as successful in Dubai or Singapore. Urban leaders need to be situationally aware and adapt to different and changing circumstances.

Moreover, in many places around the world, responsibilities are being devolved from the national to the regional and local levels. This is heightening the pressure to achieve results, negotiate deals, guide actors inside and outside public organisations, and find new ways of solving problems locally.

We hope this report provides inspiration and new ways of thinking to make urban leadership happen on the ground.

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Executive summary

Developing new ways of understanding and practising urban leadership[1] in times of change, uncertainty and heightened societal expectations creates new challenges for urban leaders – namely the elected representatives (including mayors), city managers, local government staff and other stakeholders involved in the policy and practice of urban development.
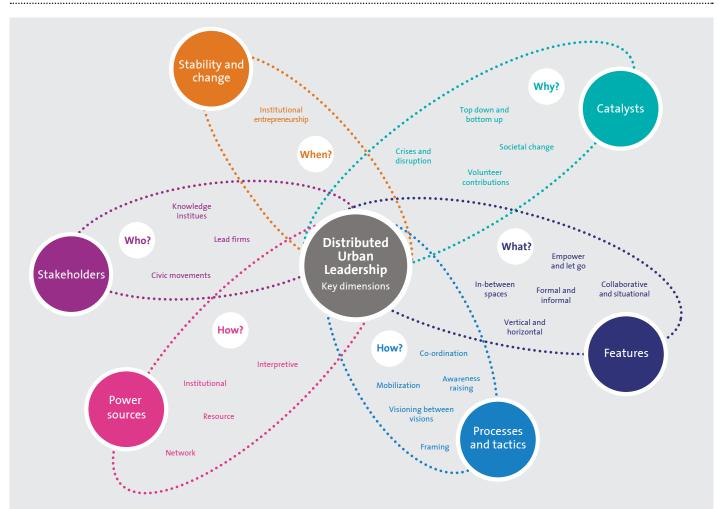
Figure A: Key dimensions of distributed urban leadership

As a result, urban leadership is increasingly shifting from being in the sole hands of strong individual public sector leaders to becoming a **system-like capacity distributed** across the penta-helix of local stakeholders: public sector; private sector; Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs); universities/knowledge institutes; and citizens.

This is not to say that individual urban leaders – covering both elected representatives (including mayors) as well as local government staff – have become unimportant. On the contrary, the range of stakeholders co-creating and leading urban development is actually becoming more nuanced and inter-connected.

Figure A depicts the key features of distributed urban leadership that are discussed in this report.

Key findings

The changing context for urban development (e.g. urbanization forces, new societal challenges, fragmented resources, state retrenchment and devolution) calls for new types of urban leadership. The view of urban leadership based on strong (sometimes labelled as 'heroic') individual leaders (whether born or made) has been changing in recent decades and needs to be complemented with the newer notion of leadership as a **distributed capacity**.

This builds on our finding that **more actors beyond city and local government such as lead firms and knowledge institutes are increasingly active** and ready to be involved in urban leadership. The same goes for **civic movements[2] and other non-institutional players such as committed community leaders** with a mission to change things.

There are good reasons to empower these players but their involvement requires more, not less, skills from urban leaders, with technical knowledge required alongside social skills. Moreover, urban leaders have to **create new knowledge to frame problems** in order to "seduce" and inspire other stakeholders into action.

This clearly needs to be done in the **context of the city's DNA** – what works in Amsterdam or London may not be as successful in Dubai or Singapore. Urban leaders need to be situationally aware and adapt to different and changing circumstances.

Urban leadership is therefore becoming more about mobilising and integrating power sources than creating new leaders from scratch. In this new playing field, the role of networks within and across organisations has become more important.

A shift to more distributed leadership also resonates with the view that urban leaders must find ways to **lead in the "in-between spaces".** These are the cross-boundary urban development domains that may not be taken up by formal organisations as there are often no clear mandates to "manage" those areas.

Examples include dealing with climate change, aging, digital urban development or economic renewal across administrative boundaries. In these contexts, collaborative actions are increasingly pivotal to secure the resources and capabilities to tackle complex urban challenges.

But "picking", "getting" and "appointing" good leaders is, in practice, a very difficult (if possible) task. "Making" leaders may also not be a feasible option in the short run. For example, while networking and leadership skills can eventually be learned at business schools and on training programmes, **a leader's network, the recognised legitimacy to lead by their peers and a tacit understanding of the city's context cannot be built overnight.**

To support distributed urban leadership, and make sure that in-between spaces will be managed, public leaders must therefore strike a balance between surrender and control, giving leeway to act and involve others in urban strategy making and delivery.

The emergence of distributed urban leadership also relies on **creating the space in organisations to be involved** in local community affairs, despite other day-to-day pressures. This is important as, in the absence of formal mandates, urban leadership frequently relies on voluntary and civic contributions and on the actions of non-elected representatives.

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2 Civic movements include both formal organisations (e.g. NGOs) and informal groupings (e.g. social movements and campaigns).

Tight budgets and short-term pressures (within and outside public administrations) pose challenges in this respect. Yet this space to act should not be understood as a passive feature or an aspect of under-utilisation. It often has to be actively created by individuals, for example, by doing things differently or doing different things in order to increase the room for manoeuvre and flexibility to act.

Distributed urban leadership also relies on processes such as awareness raising, mobilisation, framing key issues, coordination and linking different visions to one another. To enable these processes, instead of pushing and controlling, urban leaders need to create new contexts for cooperation, remove hurdles and misunderstandings and clearly define action points and responsibilities. Moreover, urban leaders have to **embrace ambiguity and the ever-changing nature of (formal and informal) networks.**

In this context, urban leaders need to change old routines and mind-sets in a city by acting as **institutional entrepreneurs**. While being influenced by previous institutions, the new urban leader needs to be able to stretch them, span institutional boundaries and establish new ways of doing things.

In this way, urban leadership can become gradually institutionalised rather than simply be imposed or replaced. To be sustainable, urban leadership should also avoid the dependence on key people and work to gradually "creep" change into the organisations in charge and make it stick.

An agenda for action

From our research, it is becoming clear that cities which embrace distributed leadership are most likely to be the ones to succeed in future. By fostering collaboration across the penta-helix of stakeholders in a place, the new urban leader can enable sustainable city competitiveness. But what does this means for those involved?

For **city leaders** (mayors, elected representatives and local government staff), this means striving to see the bigger picture beyond the boundaries of the local administration in order to identify the influential actors in (and for) their city. Under a distributed urban leadership model, the local administration should move from (exclusively) implementing and controlling to guiding and influencing.

The new urban leader needs to ensure that the vision for a place is owned by stakeholders – politicians locally (and nationally, where appropriate), officials, businesses and residents.

In addition, city leaders should empower different types of leaders within and outside the public administration, valuing their different roles and abilities to exert place-based leadership. This becomes pivotal to foster action to cover the "in-between spaces", in which no actor has a concrete mandate.

Regional and central governments also have an important stake in a distributed urban leadership model. Their actions, institutional status and (financial) resources will likely make them important players in urban development as well. Central and regional governments can incentivise distributed modes of urban leadership, for example, by allocating resources in a way that calls for the active involvement of different stakeholders at the local level.

Moreover, by recognising that different cities have different development challenges, they can incentivise tailor-made action at the local level (compared with one-size-fits-all strategies), which in turn calls for the involvement and alignment of different types of urban leader.

Finally, non-governmental stakeholders may gain a more central role **e.g. private sector, knowledge institutes and civic movements**. As such, these stakeholders will need to assess the relationship between their own strategies and the development of the cities in which they operate, and make time for being involved in – and even jointly lead – urban development actions.

By working and acting together, distributed urban leadership can form a new platform for delivering sustainable urban competitiveness in the 21st century.

Introduction

The capacity to get things done in the face of uncertainty is critical for sustainable city competitiveness. Urban leadership is widely recognised as a fundamental capability for cities.[3] Strong visions – and the capacity to make them happen – require active leaders at the city (and project) level.

Leadership is also fundamental to transform old and unfit institutions and to collaboratively work towards more agile councils.[4] Good projects and ambitious urban strategies can easily fail without good leaders.[5]

However, simply acknowledging that leadership is important is not very useful. A key problem is that it is not easy to define what (good) urban leadership is. We often "know it when we see it", but it is often hard to operationalise and enact leadership.

Because of this, and despite its relevance for urban development, many studies and reports implicitly assume simplified and vague notions of leadership.

This is problematic as the enablers of successful urban development strategies – such as envisioning, the formation of strategic networks, communication and prioritisation – do not happen in a vacuum. They require concrete actions from different types of leaders, elected and non-elected, within and outside the city council.[6]

Why leading a city is different

Current thinking on urban leadership tends to focus on the vertical relationships *inside* organisations. But urban leadership today is increasingly dependent on the ability to manage horizontal relationships *across* a range of often fragmented organisations and stakeholders. For this reason, mobilising (instead of creating) leadership in cities is a key challenge.

As such, this report provides a timely review of current perspectives on urban leadership with the aim of providing new lessons and proposals for action. Attributing the success of urban projects to unique and unrepeatable leadership conditions is not suitable for cities that want to learn from each other. It is therefore also timely to distinguish between what is unique to leadership across a place, and what is not, and how leadership processes can be improved more generally.

Report structure

In this report, we explore the key dimensions and changes in the theory and practice of urban leadership. A key notion running through the report is that urban leadership is not in the hands of single strong (or so-called 'heroic' leaders), but is increasingly a system-like, **distributed capacity** that has to be harnessed and sustained, involving new types of knowledge, tactics and power.

We develop this idea in the following chapters and answer a number of questions:

- How has the context for urban leadership changed? (Chapter 2)

- How can urban leadership be conceptually framed and defined? (Chapter 3)

- How can urban leaders ignite, organise and steer policy and delivery networks? (Chapter 4)

- What are the sources of an urban leader's power, and which tactics do they use to exert influence? (Chapter 5)

- How can lead firms, universities, civic movements and other 'unusual suspects' contribute to urban leadership? (Chapter 6)

- How do individuals manage to change institutions, practices and cultures that remain after a leader is gone? (Chapter 7)

Chapter 8 concludes by wrapping up the implications and talking points for urban leaders. Moreover, a number of detailed and inspirational case studies of distributed leadership are presented in the appendix, with key lessons highlighted in the main report.

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3 PwC, 2011; PwC et al., 2014.   4 PwC, 2012a,b; Sotarauta et al., 2012.   5 van den Berg et al., 1997.   6 PwC et al., 2014

2. Changing context of urban leadership

Urban development has changed substantially over recent years. For example, in Europe for most of the middle decades of the 20th century – when the welfare state was being built – leadership in city councils and other public agencies seemed to largely focus on the implementation of visions and policies emanating from higher policy levels, notably at the national level.[7]

Change in local government for many years appeared to be slow with policy implemented in a relatively linear fashion, from design to implementation and with well-defined targets.

During this period, many city departments grew substantially as a result, giving rise to municipal "silos" in areas such as land planning, utility provision, infrastructure and public works among others.

At this time, urban leadership was closely linked to administrative and elected positions. It tended to be hierarchical, within and outside the city administration (e.g. with national governments). In this context, what was essential for urban leaders was the ability to give and follow specific (often national) instructions and intervene in case of deviations.[8]

A shift in urban dynamics

But the context for urban leadership started to change over the last decades of the 20th century. From the mid-1980s onwards, globalisation, the diffusion of information and telecommunication technologies, greater political integration of sovereign states and the shift towards a knowledge based economy dramatically increased competition between cities to attract, among others, talent, capital and investments.[9]

This shift influenced not only cities in Western countries but also in emerging Asian and Latin American economies, which strived to attract new knowledge-based investments and talent to diversify their economies.

In many of these emerging economies, while they have distinct political-institutional and cultural contexts, urban leadership also had to progressively adapt from traditionally centralised and directionist models towards more distributed ways of influencing and involving stakeholders in urban affairs (see Box on Singapore's leadership of water management).

Catalysts for change

This new context had many implications for cities and their leadership. Firstly, economic change speeded up as did urbanisation (and in some cases urban decline). Places became increasingly connected to one another; the pace of technological change and mobility of people and capital has increased, with consequences for the success of urban economies.

Secondly, urban development became a more open-ended process, in which success increasingly depended on the strategic choices of those in charge.

Singapore's leadership of water management

Over recent decades, Singapore's phenomenal transformation has been linked with the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. One example concerns water management. In order to deal with this complex issue, the Singaporean leader established a specialised unit in his office that assessed every government policy through the lens of water management. Yet, this wide-range strategy was not implemented in isolation by government bodies, but in close cooperation with private and academic partners.

The ABC Waters programme is an example of how this approach works. It aims to bring people closer to water through recreational activities, integrating waterways and reservoirs into public spaces like parks and commercial developments, and improving water quality through public education. This programme involves the distributed cooperation of the water agency, the city planning unit, the National Parks Board and multiple sports agencies.

The ABC Waters programme demonstrates an important new role of urban leaders beyond defining and implementing strategies, namely drawing the attention of others to issues that are central to the city's development.

7 Sotarauta, 2002; Pike et al., 2006.   8 Bass, 1991.   9 van den Berg and Braun, 1999

Cities and their managers had to become more proactive and entrepreneurial; they could not wait for solutions to come from the outside and had to find new ways to use urban assets, such as indigenous skills and infrastructure. In this context, urban leadership became a key variable in a city's capacity to sustain economic performance over time.[10]

These challenges to urban leadership became particularly visible in the fields of local economic development. Greater mobility of human and investment capital, paired with city competition, created challenges for investing in infrastructure (e.g. roads, ports, venues) and attracting investments from outside the city (see Box on Amaravati). This needed to be complemented with policies to grow a city's skills and indigenous economic base and fit with the DNA of the city.[11]

New requirements for urban leaders

As a result, urban leadership has become much more about managing, steering and organising stakeholders and networks.[12] At the same time, the resources needed to improve urban wellbeing e.g. knowledge and funding, is no longer in the sole hands of the local public administration. It requires partnerships with public and private actors.

But combining these resources means there is a new requirement for urban leadership: to build the required trust, social capital and mutual understanding to encourage other stakeholders – businesses, knowledge institutes, NGOs and engaged citizens who together form the penta-helix (see Figure 1) – to invest in urban economic wellbeing.

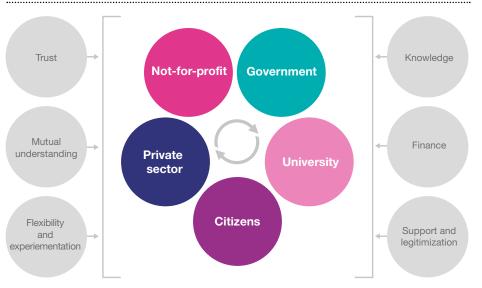## Amaravati: Greenfield 21st Century Capital poised to attract global investments

Amaravati was conceived out of the need for a capital city for the residual state of Andhra Pradesh post bifurcation from Telangana. It will be a pioneer Smart City and economic powerhouse of India and is envisioned to be a People's capital that will lay claim to world-class infrastructure, a high liveability quotient, environmental sustainability, and a rich heritage.

The city has created a dedicated organisation which is enabling leadership to be distributed by bringing in leaders from a variety of urban domains as well as from industry. This is also leveraging the advantages provided by the state and country in order to attract and deploy investments in a phased manner and ensure anticipated outcomes for this greenfield city development.

It has also built a relationship with the Singapore government to leverage lessons internationally in developing this green city development. This extends the concept of horizontal relations to include relations between governments to achieve city development.

In addition, it is engaging with the public by making use of the MyGov platform. This is important as greenfield city development plans must create inclusive destinations to innovate, work, live and play for all parts of society.

Figure 1: The penta-helix of urban stakeholders

10 van den Berg et al., 1997.   11 Rodriguez-Pose, 2013   12 Sotarauta, 2006; Teisman and Klijn, 2002.

Dublin: looking out of the box in times of crisis

Dublin's "Celtic Tiger" growth came to a halt in 2008 with the onset of a financial and banking crisis and the collapse of the construction sector. Unemployment soared, public budgets declined and Dublin faced an apparently grim future.

The discomfort caused by the crisis accelerated the development of a new metropolitan leadership model to deal with economic affairs. This led to the formation of the so-called Creative Dublin Alliance, a governance platform involving municipalities, universities and private companies in the Dublin Region to pool resources and jointly run urban economic initiatives.

Among other projects, this platform launched Dublinked, an experimental initiative to open local government's data with an eye to foster innovation and entrepreneurship. During its first years, the leadership of Dublin's City Manager was fundamental to take it forward.

Firstly, he helped connecting relevant networks outside the City Council (e.g. from universities and the private sector, as well as other municipalities in the region). This was fundamental to gather the necessary financial resources and technical competences while creating consensus and shared visions about Dublinked. Secondly, his close involvement was pivotal in legitimising such an "out-of-the-box" and risky initiative at a time of crisis. Thirdly, and key to its future sustainability, he made sure to delegate power to others, giving them leeway to act and make the initiative reach its final users, such as programmers, software developers, researchers, activists and municipal officers.

Indeed, more than coordinating stable and formal relationships, urban leadership has increasingly to deal with uncertainty, ambiguity, bargaining and compromise.[13] Indeed, urban leadership challenges have been magnified in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis (See Box on Dublin: looking out of the box in times of crisis). New constraints (top-down) and challenges (bottom-up) emerged.

On the one hand, decline in investment budgets and fiscal austerity has impacted on the economies of many cities worldwide, nudging cities to "do better for less". On the other hand, new and complex societal challenges have emerged in many cities, such as the need to combat climate change, digitalization and the impact of social media, aging, migrations, diversity and exclusion and rising citizen expectations.[14]

At the same time, new ways of engaging the private sector in urban affairs e.g. based on shared value creation,[15] are changing the playing field of urban governance within cities. Companies as well as knowledge institutes are increasingly willing to have a stake in the development of their local communities. This calls for more – not less – skills in the local administration.[16]

In addition, urban dynamics are increasingly more difficult to predict. As external changes can emerge quickly and have very strong impacts, urban leaders need to identify early signals, deal with ambiguity and adapt fast to new realities.

Questions to think about:

- How and why is my city changing?

- What are the old issues and the new dynamics to which we need to respond? And how do these fit with the DNA of the city?

- In which sectors can I see early signs of change? And in what direction?

- Who are the new and emerging leaders across the penta-helix? And how are we, as city managers, engaging with them?

13 Lynn et al., 2000   14 https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/industries/government-public-services/public-sector-research-centre/publications/government-19th-annual-ceo-survey.html   15 Porter and Kramer, 2011   16 van den Berg et al., 2014.

3. Dimensions of distributed urban leadership

With the context for leadership changing, where can cities learn about how to do things differently? To date, most of the current understanding on urban leadership draws from business management and public administration literature.[17]

Despite their valuable insights, this literature tends to focus on the vertical relations within organisations (such as City Councils). This poses a limitation when thinking about new forms of urban leadership in which many relationships needed to deliver improvements to cities are increasingly horizontal and operate outside organisational boundaries.

This is not to say that individual leaders are not important anymore, or that vertical relationships within organisations are becoming obsolete. However, it is clear that control over the resources needed to deliver change in a place are becoming much more distributed than in the past.

In fact, geographical places often do not have CEOs in the same way as companies or city councils. So who are urban leaders? What are the dimensions of distributed urban leadership? And how is it distinctive?[18]

Different views of urban leadership

There are three sets of views on what defines leadership. One of the most influential views is the so-called "**great person**" approach. This links the success or failure of strategies and projects – whether in a company or in a city – to the virtues and traits of individuals, namely their charisma, capacities and capabilities.

The implication of this view is that organisations (or cities) should find these people and put/keep them in decision-making positions. Translated to the context of urban leadership, leaders are often thought of as the "strong", "visionary" or "heroic" mayors leading large city transformations (such as Barcelona's Pasqual Maragall or Curitiba's Jaime Lerner).

From this point of view, leaders can eventually be "made" and not only born, through education and practice, but leadership[24] is still considered as an individual capacity.[19]

Another set of views relate individual leaders with the specific situational context. These approaches suggest that different types of leaders are necessary depending on the challenges they are facing. In principle, no single person has the capacity to be a leader across the board and leadership capacity is contingent on time, place and types of strategies.

For example, in one study of the organisation of major urban development projects in European cities[20] it was found that:

- leadership was an essential enabler, but the key individuals in charge often changed during the project; and

- good initiators were not necessarily as good at implementing visions and strategies i.e. effective urban leadership may be a temporary phenomenon and may rely on timely contributions from different people.[21]

These studies also found that a major economic crisis often created the momentum and discontinuities needed for the emergence of new visions and leadership (see Box on the fall and turnaround of Detroit).

Finally, a third set of perspectives on urban leadership focus on **behavioural styles**. Examples are the contrasts between authoritarian, democratic and laissez-faire approaches; ordinary and heroic leaders; and socio-emotional versus task-oriented styles.[22]

The fall (and turnaround) of Detroit

Detroit's 2013 bankruptcy was the crisis the city needed to finally begin addressing decades of economic decline and mismanagement.

But rather than assume total responsibility for Detroit's revitalization, Detroit's city leaders have worked with influential actors from industry and other sectors to expand the reach and impact of their strategies, for example, to revitalise its downtown riverfront. Indeed, projects that connect actors from multiple sectors have helped to expand the influence of the urban leader and provided a foundation for additional regional or local leaders to accelerate their own strategies.

In addition, how a leader frames a story is sometimes as important as the content of the story itself. Detroit's government and business leaders have relentlessly framed the city's emergence from bankruptcy as a success story in order to accelerate momentum around the city's recovery. The conversation among city residents and local businesses is increasingly focused on the city's revival and economic emergence.

While Detroit still faces significant challenges, an increasingly resurgent entrepreneurial spirit is driving much of the current growth and reinvestment across the city.

17 Harvard Business Review, 2009; Svara, 2006; Back et al., 2006   18 Without claiming to be comprehensive, we follow the lines of a recent review by Beer and Clower (2013)
19 Rooke and Torbert, 2005   20 van den Berg et al., 1997   21 Beer and Clower, 2013   22 Beer and Clower, 2013

In this context, some authors distinguish between three styles:

- *policy generalists* – leaders with a general view of the urban policy context and trends;

- *persons of substance* – those with deep knowledge in a specific field; and

- *persons of understanding* – those able to mediate between interests and bridge networks).[23]

These approaches tend to describe how leaders operate and focus less on the sources of leadership. However, a number of other studies analyse the influenc e of the political context on leadership styles. For example, a large international comparative study on the relationship between political structures and local leadership[24] analysed substantial differences in the powers, resources and styles of Western European Mayors – such as ceremonial vs. executive vs. collegial mayor – and on their capacity to effectively exercise and influence urban leadership.

Valuable as they are, these three approaches tend to associate leadership with the action of individuals. Yet, recent studies in the field of urban and regional studies have started to discuss leadership as a **distributed capacity**, i.e. an urban-level (vs. individual) capacity emerging out of a broader network of stakeholders whose actions, one way or another, promote urban and regional development.

For example, it has been argued that "(...) in regional economic development leadership is by definition shared (...); be they as powerful as possible, leaders can usually transform nothing major alone. Therefore, the question is not only how leaders lead their own followers, but also how they influence other leaders".[25]

Such a way of understanding leadership has been gaining advocates in international urban policy spheres, and is seen as pivotal to tackle many of the societal innovation challenges facing cities (e.g. climate, mobility and health).[26]

Defining modern urban leadership

Considering the necessary interplay between individuals and networks, urban leadership can have a number of definitions. (See Box on definition and features.)

From these definitions, however, it is possible to distil four central features and trends of modern urban leadership. Firstly, urban leadership is becoming less about monitoring rules and exerting control, and more about **improving economic outcomes** and a city's long-term performance (see Figure 2).

However, in the medium and long run, sustaining urban economic performance is increasingly interrelated with a place's social and environmental performance (e.g. social equity, quality of life), calling for integrated approaches.[27] Hence, urban leadership is increasingly seen as a driver of transformation which goes beyond reproducing old routines and "getting the basics right".

Secondly, urban leadership can be seen as having **situation-based** properties.[28] This means that there is not a specific and "best" type of leadership. The quality of urban leadership results from the fit between leaders and the challenges that are to be tackled (e.g. economic, social, environmental and their combinations). Urban leaders should possess situational awareness and adapt to the specific challenges at hand and know when to take charge and when to involve others.

Thirdly, all of the earlier definitions imply that urban leadership has a central **collaborative dimension**. In order to pave the way for urban change, horizontal dimensions are more important than vertical, intra-organisational links. This is not to say that vertical relationships inside organisation structures are not important, they are still highly relevant, but not sufficient to assure leadership at the city level.

Several different sorts of collaborations have to be nurtured between actors and fragmented organisations that work independently from each other and control different types of resources. Therefore, notions of trust and common understanding are key to make urban leadership work. As such, it has been suggested that inspiring others to cooperate is one of the most important roles of urban leaders (see Chapter 5), with a close relationship between collaboration and delivering local economic outcomes.[29]

Fourthly, it is often the case that some leaders effectively lead with no specific formal mandate, as is often the case with high-level representatives of universities, lead firms and committed community leaders. And, on the flip side, there are many actors in formal positions and with mandates (e.g. in the public administration) to which "nobody really listens".[30]

23 Sotarauta, 2006   24 Back et al., 2006   25 Sotarauta, 2006, p.2   26 e.g. Urbact, 2014 27 PwC et al., 2014   28 e.g. Hersey and Blanchard, 1977; PwC, 2013a, b, c. 29 e.g. Collaborate and PwC, 2015   30 Sotarauta, 2006

Urban leadership: definitions and features

There are three distinct yet convergent definitions of "place-based" leadership:

- "Place-based leadership is the tendency of the community to collaborate across sectors in a sustained, purposeful manner to enhance the economic performance or economic environment of its region" (Stough et al., 2001, p. 177, cited in Beer and Clower, 2013)

- "Leadership for regional economic development will not be based on traditional hierarchical relationships; rather it will be a collaborative relationship between institutional actors encompassing the public, private and community sectors – and it will be based on mutual trust and cooperation. (Stimson et al., 2002 p. 279, cited in Beer and Clower, 2013).

- "In policy networks [such as in the case of cities and urban development], leadership is more or less an interdependent process. It consists of individuals, coalitions and their capabilities exercised in interaction to achieve joint and/or separate aims, …. Therefore, leadership needs to be shared. No one can master all the pressures and all of these spheres of knowledge alone. Individuals with different knowledge from different walks of life are needed, and they ought to be able to pool their knowledge to show shared leadership (Sotarauta, 2006, p.5).

In addition, there is the notion of "organising capacity", a concept whose elements largely resemble a distributed approach to urban leadership:

- "Organising Capacity is the ability to enlist all actors involved and with their help generate, develop and implement a policy designed to respond to fundamental developments and create conditions for sustainable urban development" (van den Berg et al., 1997, p. 272).

All in all, urban leadership tends to **combine formal and informal networks** of actors, with and without formal "urban leadership" mandates.

Moreover, transformational urban leadership requires leaders and policy-makers to step out of their comfort zone and embrace ambiguity. This occurs because:

- many policy goals cannot be defined with precision beforehand;

- the resources for delivery may come from one organisation while the benefits show for another;[31] and

- the perceived (or actual) responsibility can be at the city level, while the resources are controlled at the national/regional levels.

The challenge becomes how to create metrics and agree on how contributions to the delivery of benefits (financial and non-financial) elsewhere in the local system can be attributed appropriately.

For these reasons, there is an increasing need to lead and manage in the "in-between spaces".[32] Those are often at the margins of the organisation's core and traditional responsibilities, but are the arenas in which many and often crucial urban challenges take place, such as fighting climate change, dealing with aging, inclusion and economic renewal.

Managing in these spaces often requires collaboration between the public and private sectors and between actors with rather different motivations and value creation models and goals. Moreover, there are often no specific mandates to intervene in those areas.

Figure 2: From vision to outcome – leadership is a core capability

Capability to make it happen

- Inspirational leadership
- Resilient city brand
- Social intelligence
- Innovation
- Financing and financial management capability
- Collaborative partnering
- Prioritisation and implementation planning
- Programme and project management
- Comprehensive performance measurement and risk management
- Simplified and streamlined organisation

External stakeholders

Clear, ambitions and widely shared vision

Internal stakeholders

Successful execution of strategy

Delivery of outcomes

Source: Making it happen, PwC, 2011

31 For example, investing in dealing with cracked pavements or air quality (City Council responsibility) may reduce falls of the elderly and asthma, and so reduce costs in the health budget.   32 PwC, 2013a

Why is distributed leadership distinctive?

So what are the distinctive elements of distributed (or shared) urban leadership? Some authors highlight two key features: **emergence** and **openness to diversity.**[33]

Firstly, distributed leadership is an emergent capacity resulting from the actions of groups of individuals. This draws largely from complexity theory[34] which highlights the unpredictable functioning of systems of actors, e.g. the unexpected rise of new leaders and organisations that challenge previous views and solutions to an urban issue.

However, this feature also means that the result of the group's actions is often larger than the sum of its individual parts.[35] The emergence (or withdrawal) of leaders and interests in a place cannot be avoided, but can be put to good use by urban leadership.[36]

Secondly, distributed leadership is underpinned by the willingness to expand conventional networks of leaders (e.g. within local government) to other realms, involving e.g. universities and lead firms (see Chapter 6). However, distributed leadership is not only about involving formal and easily identifiable actors in urban affairs.

Urban leadership can emerge from unexpected places, for example, through new entrepreneurs, grassroots organisations and civic movements. In an age of digitalisation, even bloggers with many followers can become relevant players in urban affairs, setting issues and agendas despite lacking a clear mandate to do so.

Distributed leadership as a relational capacity largely resonates with the leadership practices observed in successful urban development strategies.[37] Yet, a question remaining is under which conditions distributed leadership can emerge in cities?

It is clear that just "picking" and "getting" good leaders is, in practice, a very difficult (if possible) task. There is a time dimension involved and so "making" leaders may also not be a feasible option. For example, while networking skills can eventually be learned, a leader's network cannot be built overnight as it requires, among other things, trust and social capital.

Even if theoretically possible, "picking", "getting" or "making" would likely not suffice to make leadership a truly distributed and self-sustaining capability. This is the case because urban leadership sometimes emerges in communities e.g. through passionate individuals with an individual mission to change something and not inside formal organisations. There are risks, however, that leadership roles will not be taken, and so a key problem for cities is not only one of poor leadership but also of absence of leadership.[38]

So an important notion is to create space to enable leadership emerge.[39] This proposition derives from a strand in the management literature that this increases the ability to take risks, experiment and innovate.[40] Many cities and local administrations are increasingly engaging with this philosophy, for example, by creating "design-thinking" units and other sorts of innovation labs.

Urban leadership may also rely on voluntary time contributions from experienced people from outside the local government, meaning that enough time to work on urban development issues has to be available in different organisations.

In times of austerity and budget cuts, resources are also scarce in local governments, which may hinder the ability to foster urban leadership and engage in long-term envisioning (versus short-term problem solving). Yet, often this space has to be actively created by individuals, for example by doing things differently or doing different things in order to increase the time, capabilities, and room for manoeuvre to act as urban leaders.

Questions to think about:

- Is place-based leadership limited to our own organisation?
- If not, how distributed is it and where are the gaps?
- Where and what are the 'in-between' spaces?
- What does a distributed leadership model look like for our place?
- How can we, within this model, deal with flexibility and ambiguity without compromising accountability?
- How can my organisation change ways of working to create the space for urban leadership?

33 Bennett et al., 2003   34 Uhl-Bien et al., 2007; Teisman, 2000   35 Bennett et al., 2003   36 Beer and Clower, 2013 37 e.g. van den Berg et al., 2014; PwC et al., 2014   38 Beer and Clower, 2013   39 Beer and Clower, 2013, referring to the notion of "slack" resources in a city and region's organisations.   40 Cyert and March, 1963; Geiger and Makri, 2006

4. Processes and tactics: how to nudge collective efforts

If leadership is becoming an increasingly shared effort, what can urban leaders actually do to nudge collective efforts to deliver place-based outcomes?

One of the main conditions is that leaders are willing to share their power and resources, and sometimes even "let it go". This may be particularly problematic within public administrations, in which there is a well-entrenched "instinct to control and constrain, in order to provide certainty".[41]

Yet a study covering more than 40 public sector-initiated development projects across the United States, Canada and India (including many local projects on promoting employment, economic development and poverty alleviation) suggests that sharing power is fundamental to making such initiatives work.[42] We believe sharing power should go hand-in-hand with insisting on integrated approaches, which remains a key role for urban leaders. Overall, sharing power can be seen as a mix of "strength and surrender".

So which actions can urban leaders undertake to organise and steer policy and delivery networks into place? The results of a number of studies of regional economic leadership in Finland proposes a number of actions associated with five key interrelated processes: *awareness raising, mobilisation, framing, co-ordination and visioning between visions*.[43] These processes are at the core of distributed leadership which is a key variable in delivering the city's visions and strategies and urban development outcomes (see Figure 3).

Awareness Raising

More than commanding and enforcing, a key role of urban leaders is drawing the attention of others to key issues in an engaging way, for instance, as happened in Singapore on the ABC Waters programme. This involves providing other actors with a context for their strategies e.g. raising awareness about a city's economic challenges and the key actions needed to forge new growth paths.

This includes the capacity to make sense of situations and create shared narratives around urban development issues.

In this respect, urban leaders should be able to promote new ways of seeing things and a shared vocabulary (e.g. through the media, seminars, conferences and other events). This is a time consuming task, but essential to put different leaders and actors on the same page and to create visible and sound interpretations of reality.

Roger Marsh, chair of Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership in the UK, neatly illustrates this leadership role by stressing that:

"(...) You need to be very clear about purpose, having a narrative that is uncomplicated, not ambiguous, but leaves room for interpretation to accommodate differences of view. And that's not just about creating a consensus, not just creating a capsule of collaboration and cooperation; but also an authenticity of determination about what we can do."[44]

Mobilisation

In addition to raising awareness, a key role for urban leaders is to selectively activate and enrol actors in a place with relevant resources for urban development, such as knowledge, time, finance and energy. This means doing something different from trying to enforce visions and top-down city plans. This in turn requires strong sensitivity and the ability to understand the *values, goals and strategies of different players*. Stockholm's eco-district provides a good illustration of the need to mobilise relationships across stakeholders ranging from utilities to real estate and knowledge institutes.

Figure 3: Mediating visions and outcomes: key processes of distributed leadership

Source: Inspired by Sotarauta (2006)

41 Miles and Trott, 2011, p. 7   42 Miles and Trott, 2011   43 Sotarauta, 2006   44 http://www.pwc.co.uk/en_UK/uk/government-public-sector/ceo-survey/what-is-the-role-of-the-local-enterprise-partnership-in-delivering-growth.jhtml

Too often the players mostly involved in urban and regional development strategies are closely-knit groups of "old boys" networks, with vested interests that do not necessarily overlap with the city's long-term interests. In this respect, urban leaders should be able to involve unusual suspects and progressively embed new players with new ideas in these networks, mobilise them to act and (co-) implement solutions and not just invite them to legitimate previously taken decisions, as so often happens in many public consultation exercises.[45]

However, it is often not clear if some players are willing to participate in urban development platforms, and "forcing" participation is not an effective strategy. Moreover, the entrance of new players in policy and delivery networks may destabilise previously formed coalitions. It is therefore the role of leaders to sense and understand the strategies of many actors, mobilising the right players and forging the most appropriate coalitions for different types of projects.

Framing

Framing is about the ability to organise coordination spaces for conversation, discussion and interaction between stakeholders. An important role for urban leaders is to create common ground as has happened over slum pacification in Rio de Janeiro (see Box).

In order to nudge the emergence of shared leadership, leaders should frame conversation spaces around topics that are seen as of common interest and conducive to the creation of true "public goods" and desired outcomes. For example, urban leaders should create discussion platforms on topics that are relevant to the interests of many stakeholders, in which their visions and strategies can progressively converge around common frames and not compete with each other (e.g. sustainable mobility and health conditions in a place).

Rio De Janeiro: innovation in slum pacification

In order to sharply reduce crime, social problems and bring favelas back to formality, a new innovative programme has been deployed by the State Government of Rio de Janeiro (Secretary for Public Safety) since 2009, called "Pacifying Police Units" (UPPs). This consists of i) reclaiming territories controlled by drug gangs and crime barons, and, once pacification has been secured, ii) the permanent installation of Social UPPs.

It is possible to see that the early leadership work behind UPPs had to deploy several types of tactics (framing old problems in new ways, building coalitions and mobilising staff in the process) and enact several types of power (notably institutional, but also interpretative). In fact, the ability to re-interpret the slum's problems through a pacification lens was pivotal.

Moreover, the case of the UPPs brings back the key role of "momentum" (Olympic agenda) and crisis (the unsustainability of the violence and crime in the city) to enact new leadership. This goes hand in hand with the need to ensure social and political support for controversial initiatives.

The case also shows that leadership is not only played at high-level policy echelons, but needs to have many parallel concerns at the operational level. Often, the devil can be in the details (e.g. quality of communication and trust in the community).

Framing requires openness and disclosure, which is challenging because some governance arenas can involve opportunistic behaviour, suspicion and secrecy, with many participants over emphasising short-term results.[46]

Co-ordination

Coordination primarily involves the reconciliation of interests among different leaders and stakeholders. As urban strategies and projects evolve (often through considerable periods of time), the strategies of different organisations may change; some leaders resign while others step in.

This is an intrinsic part of the urban development process and can hardly be ruled out, giving rise to several rounds of decision-making.[47] Hence, leadership requires constant work and re-work of networks and relationships to reduce mistrust, remove blockages, align interests and steer between the strategies of the players involved.

Creating frequent dialogue with old and new urban stakeholders is increasingly relevant. This is particularly the case for urban development projects that deal with societal challenges (e.g. climate change and economic transitions), for which implementation processes are more relevant than setting specific (often unrealistic) targets beforehand.

Stakeholder management therefore becomes increasingly important as one of the competencies of urban leaders.

45 Arnstein, 1969   46 Piore and Lester, 2004 (cited in Sotarauta, 2006)   47 Teisman, 2000

Visioning between visions

Vision-building should include wider stakeholders where cross-boundary collaboration is needed along with a compelling and engaging vision.[48] Such "visioning between visions"[49] consists of transforming broad ideas and "blue-sky" views into concrete visions and strategies that are shared by different stakeholders who might have their own, as shown in The Randstad in The Netherlands.

It is not infrequent to define visions and strategic plans that are just too broad to guide action, or that purposely avoid choosing clear directions in order to avoid conflicts with other actor's visions.

Urban leadership should be able to guide visions and provide direction. To make this happen and nudge behaviours, leaders need to value other's views, and not just pay them lip service. This means finding ways to include important elements of different visions in urban development processes, and help transforming them into specific initiatives and projects.

Questions to think about:

- How do other stakeholders in my city engage with urban development?
- Are their own visions and strategies linked with public urban development objectives? Are there big gaps?
- Is the city's staff able to "speak the language" of other stakeholders?
- How can we frame problems in new, clear and inspiring ways?
- How can public leaders lead beyond their own organisations?
- What competencies should I as an urban leader develop to be able to manage these actions?

5. Urban leaders: sources of power

It is clear that the tasks and challenges facing urban leaders are complex, and require a great degree of social intelligence.

In this chapter, we look more deeply into the ways of influencing a variety of "types" of urban leaders, as well as the tactics used to nudge policies and strategies in new directions.[50]

Types of urban leaders

Urban leadership is becoming a distributed phenomenon, but, in practice, there are still different individual leaders in each organisation, all with their own styles which can either help or hinder the drive to improve urban wellbeing.

To discuss this issue, Markku Sotarauta introduces the notions of influence and power. Power is considered to be constantly changing, and is a key attribute to exert influence, i.e. "[the] process [through] which the actor, by using interaction skills and other social skills, makes other actors see things, people, functions, etc., differently from before and thereby voluntarily do something that they would not otherwise do."[51]

To illustrate this issue, he developed a provocative typology of urban leaders comprising *technocrats, network shuttles, visionaries, handcraftsmen, political animals and battering rams*. These types are distinguished according to:

- *Focus on attention*, i.e. their behaviour, traits and world views concerning urban leadership;

- *Core of influence* i.e. the sources of their power and influence; and

- *Role in (urban-) regional development* i.e. the resources and knowledge they bring to urban and regional development processes.

Table 1 explores each type in detail with a number of important conclusions. Firstly, it is suggested that there are no clear dividing lines between some of the typologies, meaning that the same leaders may use different types of influence and contribute to urban and regional development in different ways. In other words, efficient and agile leaders may activate different types of leadership (e.g. according with the context), not being restricted to a unique or "best" leadership formula (see also Chapter 3).

Secondly, the different types of power and influence modes seem, in the main, to be complementary to each other. Indeed more integrated urban development strategies are likely to need them all.

Thirdly, despite their complementarity, Sotarauta argues that more "visionaries", "network shuttles" and outcome-focused "battering rams" are increasingly needed in urban and regional development (as opposed to the "technocrats" and "handicraftsman" that largely influenced urban management over the last decades).

Shared urban leadership and its key processes (e.g. coordination, framing, creating innovative environments and new knowledge) seem to be increasingly reliant on those types of urban leaders and on combining the virtues they bring to urban development processes.

50 Sotarauta, 2002; 2009   51 Sotarauta, 2002, p.189

Table 1: Typology of leaders and ways of influencing

	Focus of attention	Core of influence	Role in urban-regional development
Technocrats	Roles and details Rule-making to organise action See cooperation as a threat Attention on issues (vs. people) Promote lock-in and continuity	Control on official strategies, decisions and institutional settings	Maintain stability and make sure rules are followed
Network shuttles	Networks and interactions, outward-looking Compromise their aims to make the network work better (and improve their organizations in the long-run) Potential detachment from the organization context (staff, internal challenges, structure)	Mobilisation – access to networks Understanding of actor's strategies and network dynamics (renewal) Generate new knowledge and interpretations of urban and regional problems	Bring new knowledge, resources and expertise to the city/region Open up new opportunities
Visionaries	Imagination, ability to see the big picture (Potentially) superficial and impatient; "daydreamers" Get bored with details and hardly understand the rules and the depth of socio-economic structures Wish to "educate holders of formal power"	Envision new futures, and try to involve people to make it happen Influence thinking on how issues, problems and new activities can be handled	Open-mindedness; think about issues that others don't think Ability to envision completely new types of futures
Hand-craftsman	Needs of the moment Smooth processes and working solutions (vs. best solutions) Predictable and trustworthy, see networks and open-end situations as potentially out of control Focus on the present and existing models Are there to "clean the mess" of network shuttles and "big mouth" visionaries	Know the logic of small things Smooth processes behind rules and institutions; tinkering capacity Make things progress, know the nature of processes and small details	Keep various projects running Attend to the many details
Political animals	Focus on their own position, now and in the future Make sense of changes in context Frequently seek new cooperation partners and networks, keeping as many open doors as possible	Know how power works in practice	May help to forge new institutions and networks, if in their own interests (which may or may not be those of the city)
Battering rams	Action-oriented Hate plans that remain unimplemented and the bureaucracy that stops action Coordinate networks if needed, but only relevant ones	Focus on reaching goals Exploiters of information and knowledge	Drivers behind the implementation of visions and strategies

Source: adapted from Sotarauta (2002)

Tactics and sources of power

The previous typology implicitly underlines that urban leaders do not necessarily have to be elected politicians. In many cases, they are not, but still exert substantial power and influence on urban development strategies. A subsequent study[52] analysed more in-depth the types of tactics used by a broader group of urban and regional appointed officers to gain influence (including e.g. chief executives in city councils, directors of public-private associations, senior city staff in city and regional councils).

Table 2 synthetises the types of tactics used by these appointed officers. An important conclusion of this study is that direct influence tactics (e.g. enforcing laws, invoking legislation and a sense of responsibility of actors) seem to be much less relevant than other sorts of indirect tactics, more related with almost unconsciously inspiring and incentivising the action of others.

As suggested in the previous chapter, the single most important type of tactic to induce action has to do with the construction of the context for cooperation, namely through mediating complex relations, removing communication obstacles and clarifying the roles of different actors. In second place comes the "indirect activation of actors" (e.g. positively involving them in speeches and written media pieces, or presenting alternative views of development) and "strategic work", which largely captures the essence of "visioning-between-visions" and consolidation of shared strategies (see Chapter 4).

Besides the type of tactics used, an important question concerns the type of power mobilised to influence urban and regional development. A clear result from the analysis is that invoking the authority of formal positions is the less used – and thus perhaps less effective – power resource.

The analysis reveals that the most relevant sources of power used to influence urban and regional development are interpretative and network power, which are closely linked with the ability to bring expert knowledge, out-of-the-box thinking and new visions to the policy arena, as well as the ability to connect and involve other actors and networks in development processes (see Table 3).

The patterns found in the study are stable across (Finnish) regions by gender, age, position and type of organisation, hinting towards the relevance and consistency of the findings. However, they are based on the urban and regional development actions of Finnish officials and agents, and are therefore in the context of a specific socio-political system (highly democratic, strong welfare state). More research is needed, however, to validate these findings in other places.

Yet, as urban societies move into move advanced development stages and more complex societal challenges emerge, it is likely that the sources of power used in urban development will become increasingly more soft (beyond command and control) and distributed.

Table 2: Influence tactics used by regional development officers

Influence tactics	Core variables
Construction of context for co-operation	• Arbitrating conflicts that complicate development work • Removing communication obstacles between actors • Organising development work so that the roles of individual actors are clear
Direct activation of actors	• Invoking legislation and/or official development programmes • Invoking the sense of responsibility of the key actors
Indirect activation of actors	• Encouraging other actors in public speeches and written pieces • Presenting alternative views on futures, and promotion of regional development, thus influencing other actors • Influencing other actors by production of new information • Affecting the general atmosphere via the media
Strategy work	• Creating a vision to guide development activities of several actors • Organising collective strategy making processes

Source: adapted from Sotarauta (2009)

Table 3: Power sources used to influence regional development

Resources of power	Core variables
Institutional power	• Official position that provides me with power to demand that other actors act differently
	• Official position that provides me with power to change institutions guiding development work
	• Official position that provides me with authority to organise official strategy processes
	• Official position that provides me with authority to change the ways the development work is organised
Interpretive power	• Such expert knowledge that enables me to convince the key persons of changes needed
	• New concepts, models and thinking patterns that make other actors see things differently
	• Such expert knowledge that enables me to convince the key persons of my own role in the development work
Resource power	• Power to decide how regional development funds are used
	• Authority to reward other actors for work done for the region
	• Enough time and money to achieve objectives set for me
Network power	• Such personal networks that enable me to pull initiatives through
	• Respect of the other actors towards my expertise
	• Good relationships with representatives of the media
	• Such personal networks that provide me with new information

Source: adapted from Sotarauta (2009)

Questions to think about:

• Which types of leaders exist in our organisations?

• How does their influencing style help or hinder tackling urban problems and delivering the city vision?

• Which tactics can be deployed to nudge collective behaviours in the right direction?

• Which power sources are becoming more important in our city?

• How can we activate different types of leaders for different types of situations?

6. New stakeholders and urban leadership

It is by now clear that urban leadership can (and in many cases should) go beyond the action of elected representatives and city council mandates, involving "unusual suspects". In many cities, urban leadership has to be discussed in the light of the actions of other influential groups of stakeholders.

In this chapter we pay attention to three of such groups – universities/knowledge institutes, lead firms and the public – and analyse the impacts (and threats) of their actions in urban leadership.[53]

For example, large private companies tend to have an enduring strong influence in urban policymaking and leadership – they are placed "at the driver's seat" of local economic policy to signal future development needs. And the same goes for universities and knowledge institutes, namely in cities with very high shares of student population.

Lead firms and universities are, in many cases, ready to collaborate, influence and take a strong role in urban leadership. But is that a good or a bad thing for urban development? What can local governments do to make the most out of firms and university involvement in urban leadership? And how can the public and civic movements be best engaged?

Lead firms

The involvement of lead firms in urban management is framed in two rather contrasting ways in the urban studies literature.[54] One influential research stream looks at private companies (namely large corporations) as purely profit maximising agents, which put their own short-term, self-interest above the greater, long-term urban good.

They are seen as only committed to urban development to the extent that they can reap benefits from city assets (e.g. labour and land) and influence policy agendas in a way that it serves their own interests.[55]

From this perspective, corporate involvement in urban development is linked with 'urban boosterism' (e.g. flagship urban redevelopment projects). Corporations can reap most of the benefits on the basis that the developments will create jobs and other economic multipliers in the city, in a "trickle-down" fashion.

In a classic example, it was demonstrated that the industrial elites of the German Ruhr area were powerful enough to influence the regional economic agenda in the 1970s in way that they could maintain privilege (support to the declining steel industries) at the expense of delaying much needed economic transition.[56] This perspective highlights the conflicts between private interest and (long-term) urban benefits and advocates against private involvement in urban leadership.

In other literature strands, however, the role of lead firms is viewed rather differently. An urban study about the relationship between city and enterprise framed the city as the "competitive context" in which companies operate, who see it in their own interest to contribute to improving the urban context in the long-run.[57] The study analysed how European and North American corporations contributed to social improvements in local communities (such as physical regeneration, crime prevention and youth unemployment) under corporate social responsibility (CSR) schemes.

More recently, it has been suggested that companies are increasingly moving beyond "tokenism" and often piecemeal CSR initiatives to embrace "shared value" and "purpose" propositions, i.e. putting the development of the communities in which they operate at the core of a company's strategy.[58]

From this perspective, improving urban development is not a peripheral concern of the company but integral to competing and making a profit. So lead firms would have considerable incentives to support urban leaders in a way that favours city and enterprise long-term prospects.

These two views represent the extreme ends of the schools of thought on the types of private involvement in urban development, but call our attention to important issues when involving lead firms in strategic urban leadership. The potential conflicts between private interest and sustainable urban development should not be eschewed, and call for enhanced accountability and governance systems to ensure a system of checks and balances.

Yet, it also clear that many of the contemporary urban development challenges require the knowledge, skill and resources of private companies – large and small, long established and also new start-ups – many of them with honest ambitions to improve their "competitive urban environment" in order to strengthen the company's profile.

Two examples epitomise the challenging relationship between lead firms and urban leadership. One concerns the involvement of large private companies in the design of "smart city" strategies. For example, leading IT providers have significant technical knowledge that can support cities in the development of new urban solutions.

53 Beyond lead firms and universities, there are other types of actors whose role has been increasing in urban (distributed) leadership, such as the one of enthusiastic individuals who can catalyse action in their local communities, acting from e.g. social and voluntary organisations. To find more on this and other types of stakeholders, please see Collaborate and PwC (2015).   54 van Winden, 2013   55 Swyngedouw, 2002   56 Grabher, 1993   57 van den Berg et al., 2004 58 Porter and Kramer, 2011

Manchester: making space to explore new directions

Manchester's Digital Strategy (recently merged into Manchester's Smart City Programme) has had multiple orchestrators within and outside the City Council – such as universities, private companies, independent activist groups and NGOs. These and other stakeholders are bound to an overall "road plan" of the city to which their individual strategies contribute.

Lead firms and technology companies are involved testing new digital solutions (e.g. in "The Corridor"). Yet, the capacity to act is unusually distributed, making digital /smart city strategies much more socially spread, beyond the "hype" and the control of sole groups of experts and technology providers.

To make this possible, the coordination of Manchester's digital strategies had long benefited from the city leaders and officer's permanent efforts to try out new solutions, attend events, participate in working groups, meet new stakeholders, and become connected to grassroots movements and conduct "fieldwork" in the city. For urban leadership, this is a plea to re-think the trade-off between short-term efficiency and making space to explore new directions.

Distributing leadership for science park development (Cantanhede, Coimbra)

Biocant is a science and technology park exclusively dedicated to biotechnology, near the Portuguese city of Coimbra (Municipality of Cantanhede). It is now widely considered as a very successful initiative, hosting many start-ups and research centres, being closely connected to global biotech hubs across the world.

But despite the strong drive and entrepreneurial profile of the Mayor of Cantanhede, Biocant only took shape when a research institute from the University of Coimbra stepped in (CNC) and influenced the park's vision (i.e. from a general science park to a biotech dedicated hub).

The Mayor had to distribute leadership and "let it go" to get the resources to make Biocant a success. It is clear that without the leadership of the new Biocant's director (a professor from CNC) – namely his access to international networks and deep knowledge of the business – Biocant would have hardly started.

Overtime, the experience of Biocant contributed to gradually change institutions in the region (e.g. the way to look at technology transfer and the relationships and discussions between high-level representatives) and influenced other initiatives in the field of health innovation.

If IT companies envision selling their proprietary solutions, this may hamper a city's resilience in the long-run through technological lock-ins.[59] Therefore smart city strategies need to embrace more inclusive and user-driven approaches (see Box on Manchester making space to explore new directions).[60]

Other examples concern the involvement of companies signalling the direction for regional innovation policies. Companies are the main innovators and are well positioned to identify promising market and innovation opportunities for a region, and thus the plea to involve them to the full, even in the "driver's seat".

However, lead companies also have incentives to influence policies to fit their own interest, which makes the involvement of companies in innovation policy a very challenging issue, namely in cities and regions with weaker economic and industrial bases.[61]

Universities/Knowledge Institutes

The involvement of universities and knowledge institutes in urban leadership is much less contested in the literature: it is often seen as positive,[62] perhaps due to their typical not-for-profit nature. As urban economies become increasingly knowledge intensive, the role of universities and their influence in urban development has been heightened (see Box on distributing leadership for science park development in Coimbra).

Just like firms, universities and research institutes are well positioned to spot innovative trends, and their researchers are often (yet not always) connected to relevant business and knowledge networks, which are increasingly fundamental for urban development.

59 Townsend, 2013   60 Carvalho, 2014, WEF/PwC 2016   61 Boschma, 2013   62 Russo et al., 2007; van Winden, 2012

The involvement of universities in urban development issues can also be seen from a "shared value" perspective, namely in fields in which their interests may overlap although this can also increasingly be seen as the case for some lead firms as well. For example:[63]

- *The promotion of the local and regional economy, entrepreneurship and innovation*: the city has interests in new firm and job creation, exports and in enhancing the local tax base, while the university has growing interests in commercialising their research, e.g. through the support of incubators, science parks and knowledge transfer schemes;

- *Marketing, attractiveness and internationalisation*: the brand of the city and of the university often become intertwined, and both have an interest in strengthening it, for example, to attract businesses and students;

- *Finding solutions to societal problems*, such as urban mobility, health, inclusion and greening the city: universities may see cities as test-beds for new applied research in these domains, while cities may benefit from universities' knowledge bases to tackle some of those pressing issues;

- *Urban planning and student life*: Universities have an important stake in typical urban planning actions and public provisions (e.g. public spaces, mobility, housing) as they directly affect the academic population. At the same time, cities may benefit from the involvement of students in city life (e.g. leading to cultural and economic vibrancy, political activism).

For all of these reasons universities may exert their power and take important roles in urban leadership (see Box on Brainport). However, their involvement is also not always conflict-free. For example, students and other residents can contest the use of limited space in a city, and universities may exert their power to assure that their specific interests are met in the first place (e.g. through land ownership and accommodation).

Public engagement and civic movements

There is a long history of the public, particularly through civic movements, exerting influence in urban development and local politics.[64] Those have been widely documented in cases of controversial urban renewal projects (e.g. Jacobs, 1969) and NIMBY (not-in-my-backyard) reactions against transport and environmental infrastructure (e.g. wind turbines and waste treatment stations). For these reasons, it has been argued that getting public support early on is a critical variable behind successful urban development strategies.[65]

Yet, beyond protesting and engaging in radical politics, many civic movements as well as individual members of the public are becoming increasingly involved in urban development initiatives. In Barcelona, for example, emerging movements against housing evictions in the aftermath of the financial crisis became institutionalised and are now represented in the city council on a very high level (e.g. through the Mayor Ada Colau, a well-known social activist).

Moreover, new IT and social media developments have been empowering and facilitating the involvement of new unusual suspects in urban leadership (see Box on Stockholm's eco-district development). There are many examples across contemporary urban development domains, such as in:

- Energy and the environment, including the involvement of cooperatives of citizens in producing and aggregating renewable energy; or movements of citizens claiming for and championing new environmental improvements in their districts;

- Economic affairs, including the development of new "smart" software solutions (e.g. apps) for cities based on open data, freedom of information and distributed communities of IT developers and communitarian co-working spaces; and

- Social inclusion, including charities, time banks and social innovation.

In addition, engaging with some civic movements is easier said than done. Compared to lead firms and knowledge institutes, civic movements can be more unstable, distributed and their representatives are not always as easy to find, calling for new ways to engage and involve them in urban leadership.

The Brainport initiative

In Eindhoven, "Brainport" was set up as a "triple-helix" collaboration with partners in business, knowledge institutions and government. The goal is to strengthen the region's distinctive economic and innovation ecosystem and connect and integrate the regional economic development agendas. The region has 740,000 inhabitants and 400,000 jobs focused on high-tech industries and innovation.

Leadership has been provided by:

- the Brainport Foundation, which focuses on cooperation of industry, educational and knowledge institutes and government; and

- Brainport Development, an economic development organisation working to strengthen the urban region by stimulating regional and (inter)national projects and programs, promoting the Brainport Region, and supporting innovative firms and startups with advice, financial means and incubation in high-tech business centres.

Grounded on innovative projects and policy approaches, thriving on joint lobbying and branding of the whole urban region, Brainport has deepened collaboration across municipalities in the urban region and avoid unfruitful inter-municipal competition. Long-term commitment and high trust between the leaders of these organisations has enabled the development of long-term, feasible strategic goals and ambitions (long term vision) and the resources to make it happen.

New voices in Stockholm's eco-district development

Stockholm is a renowned world leader in eco-district development. Yet, the way urban leaders play a role in their planning is changing. In opposition to the early developments in the 90's (e.g. in the district of Hammarby Sjöstad), the City Council cannot be in charge of everything. The sources of power and expertise required became much more dispersed, involving utilities, real estate developers, industrial players and knowledge institutes (e.g. as currently witnessed in the eco-renewal of the Royal Sea Port area).

Green advocacy movements have been playing an increasingly important role as well. For example, at Hammarby Sjöstad, a new district advocacy movement has currently emerged (called Hammarby Sjöstad 2020: "renew the new city") aiming to push a new generation environmental investments in the area, such as electric charging points and smart grid solutions. This requires civic officers and urban leaders in general to have negotiation skills and the ability to speak different in the language understood by their civic groups.

63 van Winden et al., 2012   64 Jacobs, 1961   65 van den Berg et al., 1997

Skills need for distributed urban leadership

In a knowledge-based economy, lead firms and universities are certainly among the most powerful stakeholders in urban development. They create jobs, attract students, produce qualifications, conduct research and bring vibrancy to city life. They also often know their ways into the city hall and can exert significant influence in urban leadership, for good or ill.

But civic movements and other unusual suspects are becoming increasingly relevant in many economic, environmental and social spheres in cities while the public as a whole is engaged in urban affairs when voting for their local leaders. How can places make the most of their much needed involvement?

The wider involvement of stakeholders in urban leadership requires the deployment of new skills from city officials. This is fundamental so that cities reap the benefits of their participation and avoid latent threats. Moreover, involvement should not be confused with replacement or "take-over" of a council's tasks and responsibilities towards assuring the public interest.

New skills from city officials seem to be increasingly necessary in this respect, namely the ability to "speak different languages" (of business people, academics and activists), agility, and mediation and conflict management. Moreover, the involvement of new stakeholders in urban leadership may give rise to out-of-the-box initiatives, obliging city officials to step outside their comfort zones and embrace risk. Urban leaders need to be able to balance risk with the need to keep accountability for their initiatives.

Dubai: connecting leadership to its people to deliver their vision

Since its inception, Dubai has been led by rulers who have actively engaged the people in the city's projects. Sheikh Rashid demonstrated a key quality of good leadership: attentiveness to his people. From his early days as Emir of Dubai, he remained approachable in his informal quarters, known as the Majlis. This connection and participation with the public allowed for the leader to remain close to the pulse of the emirate and needs of the people.

This inclusive approach, aligned with greater coordination between key players and with holistic decision-making and strong vision, has led to the creation of one of the world's most innovative cities. This approach has served Dubai well, even in times of crisis where its resilience has been most extensively tested.

Moreover, city leaders and officials need more "urban intelligence" in order to interact with lead firms and universities, as well as to identify and mobilise civic movements (see Box on Dubai). This consists in knowing better what is going on in the city, and permanently assessing new trends, identifying new actors and the implications for a city. This may involve quantitative indicators and comparative rankings, but that is rarely enough to spot more subtle changes.

For example, some cities have put in place systematic economic trend watching and foresight initiatives, and their staff attend conferences, meetings of informal groups and communities to pick up 'weak signals'. This helps to spot new economic fields and entrepreneurs beyond "old boy's networks" and open urban leadership to new players.

Moreover, the involvement of lead firms and universities in urban leadership should go hand-in-hand with the development of systematic discussion platforms to identify and explore opportunities for "shared value" creation. In the case of civic and distributed grassroots movements, the role of digital and social media is becoming absolutely central.

Questions to think about:

- What competencies can stakeholders from outside, beyond the public sector, offer to solve urban issues?

- Which firms and knowledge institutes could be working better, and more collaboratively, with the public sector?

- Which other firms and knowledge institutes should be involved in urban leadership?

- How can we reach out to involve "unusual suspects" e.g. through social media?

- What civic movements can we engage with?

- How can we inspire and incentivise their involvement in urban development affairs?

- And how could we best create synergy in combining the individual efforts of each of these stakeholder groups into a joint initiative?

7. Urban leaders changing institutions

Leadership is fundamental to make things happen in a city, and requires multiple, distributed efforts from many players before it can become 'common practice' in a place.

However, leaders do not act in a vacuum like other agents, their behaviours and decisions are also influenced by regulations, routines, habits and culture – "rules of the game"[66] – which influence future action and change slowly.

For example, even the most proactive urban leader is accountable and cannot ignore national regulations and the policymaking routines of a city, or radically change citizen involvement culture in the short run. Directly or not, these structures and institutions influence the degree and content of a leader's actions. But, paradoxically, urban leadership is precisely about acting to change outdated regulations, routines and behaviours.

Institutional entrepreneurship

But is it the institutional context that shapes what leaders do, or the leaders that shape a city's institutional context? This is a well-known conundrum not only in leadership studies[67] but also in social sciences more generally. Hence, the concept of "institutional entrepreneurship" has been proposed to understand how agents can provoke change in the very same institutions that influence them.

Institutional entrepreneurship is now a well-established notion and has been defined as the "activities of actors who have an interest in particular institutional arrangements and who leverage resources to create new institutions or to transform existing ones".[68]

Translated to our field of interest – urban leadership – institutional entrepreneurship is an important part of an urban leader's work, as they often need to shape new ways of working in the city.

However, not all leaders are institutional entrepreneurs – some are particularly keen on maintaining the status quo and current working routines, even if that can hinder sustainable urban development (see Chapter 5).

In this sense, a distinction can be made between policy entrepreneurs and institutional entrepreneurs: while the first are the "champions of a certain policy" within current institutional settings, the latter are "the people who consciously attack institutions, perhaps with several policies and means".[69]

What are the enablers?

Breaking institutions and established routines is a very tough job. So why and when do leaders do it? And what encourages them to act? A review of several management studies refers to two types of enabling conditions:[70] field level conditions and organisational level conditions. How can we interpret them for the study of urban leadership?

- **Field level enablers** relate to external contextual features, at a certain point in time. For example, a major disruption or crisis in a city (economic, social or environmental) or a new national regulation can be an important catalyst for action and change. It creates turbulence and disturbs consensus, giving rise to the emergence of new ideas and actions. Moreover, during those moments, institutions often become more unstable and prone to change.[71]

The Randstad – creating platforms

'The Randstad', a large urban area in the West part of the Netherlands, was found by an OECD report in 2007 not to be exploiting the full potential of the proximity of its four large cities (Metropool region Amsterdam, Den Haag-Rotterdam, Utrecht and Brainport Eindhoven). It did not represent an integrated functional urban system, i.e. urban regions forming a coherent whole in terms of economic specialties.

The OECD report concluded that collaboration is an important driver to improve the (international) competitiveness of the whole area requiring new organisational and leadership modes.

Since then, the region has come a long way: from single city strategies to today's urban region level of economic development strategies. In particular, each urban region has a development board, a programme council and/or a foundation that forms the driving force for mobilising and integrating resources and networks for urban and regional development.

These are new platforms, which provide an infrastructure (e.g. project organisation), a set of guiding principles, and a place where different parties can offer and take services and discuss strategies and coordinate actions.

66 North, 1990   67 Sotarauta, 2010   68 Maguire et al., 2004, p. 657   69 Sotarauta, 2010   70 Battilana and D'Aunno, 2009   71 Streeck and Thelen, 2005

- **Organisational level enablers** relate, for example, to the position of actors within organisations or structures (see Box on The Randstad). Actors at the margin, or in-between different organisations, are more likely to act to change institutions than long established players who prefer to retain the status quo. This resonates with the previous views on urban leadership, calling for the involvement of new players and boundary spanners[72] in urban leadership – these agents have more incentives to shape new institutions than established players, who will struggle to maintain them.

Leaders can therefore change practices, cultures and ways of working by acting as institutional entrepreneurs. They are still influenced by previous institutions, but able to stretch them and establish new ways of doing things. But can those changes last, or will they bounce back once a key person is gone?

This is a likely outcome, if new practices are overly reliant on single people. On the one hand, withdrawal and emergence of new leaders and ideas is a natural process in urban governance processes and can hardly be avoided. Moreover, this variability has been heightened in many places as seasoned city officials move to early retirement or to other organisations and few positions are stable.

On the other hand, as leadership becomes increasingly reliant on horizontal collaboration and soft skills, replacing leaders is often not a smooth process. It is not anymore about training bureaucrats but about competences and networks acquired through a lifetime.

This suggests that new practices have to become gradually institutionalised and cannot simply be imposed or replaced. New ways of working have to permeate much deeper in organisations and cities than being embodied in single leaders.

An important implication is that sustainable urban management should avoid the dependence on key people and work to gradually introduce and implement change.

Questions to think about:

- Is there a history of entrepreneurship in our local public institutions?

- If not, why not, and how could an entrepreneurial spirit be fostered?

- How can we introduce significant change in our organisation without endangering its stability?

- Who are the boundary spanners in my organisation and in my city?

- How can I involve them to deliver shared outcomes?

72 Tushman, 1977

8. Conclusions and implications

The insights from the previous chapters coalesce in the message that successful urban leadership is becoming an increasingly distributed capacity. It still relies on specific capacities of individuals, but increasingly depends on distributed networks of actors that co-create and influence urban development. As the locus of the most pressing societal challenges move to urban areas, the expectations placed on urban leadership have been heightened.

What does this mean for the practice of urban and place-based leadership? As argued, new modes of urban leadership cannot be implemented overnight or by decree. Yet, there are a number of actions that can be taken to "walk the talk" for distributed urban leadership, concerning different types of actors and organisations.

For **city leaders** (mayors, elected officials, executive officers), it is essential to consider that no urban actor has the monopoly on urban development. The local government is only one in a complex network of actors, and its de facto influence will vary widely across places. Hence, urban leaders should strive to see the bigger picture beyond the boundaries of the local administration in order to identify who the influential actors in (and for) their city are. Under a distributed urban leadership model, the local administration should move from (exclusively) implementing and controlling to guiding and influencing. Moreover, it should empower different types of leaders within and outside the administration, valuing their different roles and abilities to exert leadership. This becomes pivotal to foster action "in-between spaces", in which no actor has a concrete mandate.

Regional and central governments also have an important stake under a distributed urban leadership model. Their actions, institutional status and (financial) resources will likely make them important players in urban development as well. Central and regional governments can incentivise distributed modes of urban leadership, for example, by allocating resources in a way that calls for the active involvement of different stakeholders at the local level. Moreover, by recognising that different cities have different development challenges, they can incentivise tailor-made action at the local level (vs. one-size-fits-all strategies), which will call for the involvement and alignment of different urban leaders.

Under such a model, other types of non-governmental stakeholders may gain a central role **e.g. private sector, knowledge institutes and civic movements**. Yet, for example, most companies still equate cities as "markets" to sell their products. Even if they recognise the relevance of urban assets (such as skills, quality of the environment, social development, trust) for their activities, their contributions to urban development issues and strategies are still limited. This is a plea for companies and other stakeholders to frequently analyse the relationship between their own strategies and the development of the cities in which they operate, and make time for being involved in – and even jointly lead – urban development actions.

An agenda for action

To conclude, we highlight **ten questions and action challenges** for urban leaders and organisations willing to embrace distributed leadership models:

- What is the nature and extent of distributed leadership in a place (e.g. where do the sources of formal and informal power lie), now and in the future?

- What is the "heat map" of leadership in my city?

- Which types of urban leaders are there both in my organisation and in my city/region (including unusual suspects and civic movements)?

- Which type of urban leader am I?

- Which new types of soft skills and capabilities are needed to enable distributed urban leadership across my place?

- How can we 'vision the vision' and make things happen including doing things differently and doing different things to create the time needed for urban leadership?

- How can we build collaborative ventures in a city to lead in-between spaces?

- What strong, yet agile, alliances and joint delivery vehicles can be built between lead firms, universities and public institutions to create the platform for combining resources and making things happen?

- How can we design and deliver the change programmes to upskill urban and place leaders and develop them into institutional entrepreneurs?

- How can we involve the public and civic movements to make change happen, and stick?

Appendix: Case studies

This appendix contains in-depth case study illustrations of the key points raised in this report (see Table 4). Each of them introduces a specific urban challenge, as well as the influence exerted by urban leaders and how leadership was formed/enacted to deal with it.

The illustrations look at contemporary urban development challenges (e.g. the "smart"-digital economy, the development of technology parks and innovation, safety and inclusion, environmental retrofitting, inter-regional cooperation). They are based on original evidence collected by the authors in a number of international comparative studies,[73] as well as on new interviews and original work, covering cities in different geographies and across development levels.

Notably, as a disclaimer, it is worth mentioning that the way urban leadership in enacted may vary substantially across cultures and political economies.

For example, the balance between formal and informal leadership, the accountability and the degrees of freedom of different types of stakeholders to act may be substantially different across cultures and nations (see also Chapter 3).

But the evidence in this report suggests that the dynamics and leadership "pieces" depicted in Figure A (executive summary) are becoming increasingly relevant across the board. The objective of the case study illustrations is therefore not to suggest "best ways" or induce copycat solutions across cities, but to provide enough "food for thought" for applications in different cities.

Table 4: Case studies

City	Case
Amaravati	Greenfield 21st Century Capital poised to attract global investments
Coimbra	How distributed leadership brought a bio-cluster into life
Detroit	Mobilising stakeholders to reinvent motor city
Dubai	Visionary leadership and resilience bringing the future closer
Dublin	Urban economic leadership during the financial crisis
Manchester	Leading a digital strategy over time
The Randstad	From disconnected urban regions towards integrated urban systems?
Rio de Janeiro	Leadership and innovation in slum pacification
Singapore	Urban leadership transforms vulnerability into opportunity
Stockholm	Urban leadership in eco-district development

73 PwC, Euricur and IHS, 2014; Vale and Carvalho, 2013

Amaravati: Greenfield 21st Century Capital poised to attract global investments

Amaravati was conceived out of the need for a capital city for the residual state of Andhra Pradesh post bifurcation from Telangana. The foundation stone for building the new capital was laid on 22nd October 2015 amidst half a million people, with state dignitaries and delegations heralding the largest green field city development in modern times.[74]

Amaravati will be a pioneer Smart City and economic powerhouse of India. It is envisioned to be a People's capital that will lay claim to world-class infrastructure, a high liveability quotient, environmental sustainability, and a rich heritage stemming from its dynastic history as an erstwhile capital city.

Key to this has been a formal agreement relationship developed with the Singapore government through which a draft master plan has been built under a Memorandum of Understanding. The masterplan envisages three milestones for Amaravati: the capital city (c.217 sq. km); the capital region (c.8,603 sq. km); and a seed capital which will be the first section developed for administrative and commercial purposes (c.16.94 sq. km). The demand for the Greenfield city will be driven by the relocation of Government staff in the near term and by sustainable economic development in the longer term.

As the scale of infrastructure investments needed sets an unprecedented price tag and creates pressure on public finances, the state government is looking to achieve the developmental goals through private sector collaboration.

Multiple sources of funding include: public expenditure focused on government buildings and critical infrastructure; public private partnerships where construction, operations and maintenance will be passed on to private partners; and private investments in demarcated land parcels for development by private players focussed on creating jobs and cash-flow generating assets.

Translating the vision into reality has begun with visible action plans including:

- Replicating previous success and lessons of other global cities under the guidance of a committed leader – the Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu – whose track record includes transforming Hyderabad to an investment destination, giving him both first mover advantages as well as lessons for reliable follow-on advantage.

- Establishing the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority[75] to decentralise planning, co-ordination, execution, supervision, financing and promoting and securing the planned development of the capital region.

- Adopting the largest, and by far the most successful, land pooling scheme in India to acquire land, clearly demonstrating the people's desire for a world-class capital for the state.

- Bringing in leaders who are experts in various urban domains and industry from across the country to manage the planning and development of infrastructure and technology initiatives.

- Ensuring a public voice in the city gene by creating a poll around Amaravati's Smart City plans at MyGov, a participatory governance platform provided by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology where citizens are invited to contribute ideas for the city development.

- Facilitating staff commitment by accelerating building of social infrastructure and providing monetary incentives to work in a city that is being built ground up.

- Demonstrating commitment to create a level playing field for international firms interested in doing business by creating competition among global architecture firms under the Swiss Challenge Method to conceptualise the smart government complex.

- Leveraging the state's ranking with ease of doing business[76] in India by implementing a single desk policy, including single window labour, land and tax initiatives. Results of this status is evidenced by the state receiving investments from multiple countries with several more committing to accelerate the capital city building effort.

What lessons can be learnt?

Firstly, the city leadership has created a dedicated organisation which is enabling leadership to be distributed by bringing in leaders from a variety of urban domains as well as from industry. This is also leveraging the advantages provided by the state and country in order to attract and deploy investments in a phased manner and ensure anticipated outcomes for this greenfield city development.

Secondly, it has also built a relationship with the Singapore government to leverage lessons internationally in developing this green city development. This extends the concept of horizontal relations to include relations between governments to achieve city development.

Thirdly, it is engaging with the public by making use of the MyGov platform. This is important as greenfield city development plans must create inclusive destinations to innovate, work, live and play for all parts of society.

Coimbra: how distributed leadership brought a bio-cluster into life

Primarily known for its University, Coimbra is a Portuguese medium-sized city with 140,000 inhabitants. The economic base of Coimbra and its surrounding towns is fragile and has been in decline over the last decade. It was only during the last decade that the University of Coimbra started to commercialise applied research in the fields of engineering and IT. Yet, since 2005, the neighbouring town of Cantanhede (25 Km from Coimbra) started to turn this situation around by creating what is today one of the most successful science and technology parks in the country – and fully specialised in biotechnology.

Besides office and laboratory space, Biocant provides distinctive services for its tenants, such as early-stage validation of biotechnology projects, informal brokerage, mentoring and access to multiple international networks. Contrary to other cases of "high tech fantasies" that turned into ordinary business parks, Biocant presently hosts eight specialised technology transfer centres, 30 dedicated biotechnology firms in start-up and early growth stages, and its companies have attracted plenty of international venture capital. It largely outperforms other biotech concentrations in Lisbon and Porto. Many commentators consider Biocant a successful example of local economic diversification.

But who was behind it? The former Mayor of Cantanhede is widely recognised as a driving force during the early stages of Biocant. He epitomises the proactive, business-oriented and entrepreneurial type of mayor of many urban leadership stories.

The first moves behind Biocant date from the late 1990s, and the Mayor's idea was to develop a technology park to attract high-tech firms. Yet, due to its generalist profile and overly high ambitions for a rural municipality, the project failed to get national and European funding and support. Despite this drawback, the Mayor decided that the park would be developed anyway, yet at a much slower pace and based on the Municipal budget only. Yet, in practice and despite the ambitious narratives, the project had largely stalled.

In 2004, the project got a boost when the Mayor approached the vice-director of the Center for Neuroscience and Cell Biology (CNC) at the University of Coimbra. CNC was looking for a place to conduct applied research and technology transfer activities outside the university's straightjacket, and became interested in joining the Mayor's project, but with one condition: the park had to be specialised in biotechnology (in order to differentiate itself and achieve critical mass), and provide unique services to its tenants.

Under this new partnership with an academic partner, the name Biocant emerged and successfully re-applied for European funding. At this stage, the leadership of the project became clearly distributed between two players: the Municipality of Cantanhede (Mayor) and CNC (through its vice-president, now Biocant's director).

Biocant's director was a still young but experienced academic, with a large international network and with deep knowledge of two different areas: academic research and technology commercialisation.

His role was fundamental to create the conditions to attract young star scientists within his network (e.g. former students) to start their ventures in Biocant, some relocating from leading US universities (e.g. MIT, Harvard or University of Texas at Austin). In his words, "what we offered with Biocant was not office space but a new life project".

Over time, with the presence of experienced entrepreneurs, specialised services and localised mentoring networks, Biocant kept attracting companies and new resources, which largely explains its success today.

Could all this have been possible in the Municipality of Coimbra? Looking back, Biocant's director doubts and explains:

"The entrepreneurial drive of the Mayor in Cantanhede could hardly be compared with others in the region; moreover the Coimbra's rector was also not particularly interested in the project, and there are traditionally very close – yet sometimes tense – relations between City and University leadership (...); all this would raise too many hurdles to the project that were absent in Cantanhede".

"Now the University's leadership speaks about Biocant enthusiastically, and the City of Coimbra embraced many initiatives that are linked with the health economy. (...) [However, at the time], the Mayor of Cantanhede faced – and resisted – very strong pressures from his council, namely as he was investing in high-tech when parts of the municipality's sewage system were still missing!".

What lessons can be learnt?

First, the role of the heroic entrepreneurial Mayor was very important, but he could not change anything alone. He had to distribute leadership and "let it go" to get the resources to make Biocant a success. It is clear that without the leadership of CNC and the new Biocant's director in particular – access to international networks and deep knowledge of the business – the development would have hardly started.

Second, his actions exemplify what institutional entrepreneurship is about. They contributed to gradually change institutions in the region (e.g. the way to look at technology transfer; the discourse of high-level representatives). But those actions were only possible in the first place because of the director's intermediary position in-between two institutional fields: academia and high-tech entrepreneurship.

Detroit: mobilising stakeholders to reinvent motor city

In 2013, the city of Detroit filed the largest municipal bankruptcy in US history. Detroit's estimated total debt exceeded $18 billion. While bankruptcy provided the opportunity for a fresh start, Detroit's financial troubles were deeply rooted in systemic challenges that could never be erased in a courtroom.

Between 1950 and 2013, the population of Detroit fell from more than two million residents to little more than 700,000. Globalisation and decades of mismanagement slowly chipped away at Detroit's industrial and economic foundation. At the time of its bankruptcy, Detroit led all major US cities in only three categories – unemployment, poverty, and crime.

But by 2016, in only three brief years, Detroit has begun to slowly but steadily reverse these trends. Citywide unemployment dropped from a stubbornly high average of 20% to 11%, suggesting that residents are finally beginning to take part in the broader US economic recovery. And while poverty and crime remain above national averages, leading indicators are beginning to head in the right direction for the first time in decades. For example, recent census data revealed that the city's population loss has slowed to a halt.

When we analyse the factors that contribute to these trends, it is easy to identify examples of city leaders who continue to embrace the tactics of urban leadership. Notably, Detroit's leaders have prioritised investments that raise awareness around the city's revival. They have then leveraged these investments to mobilise additional public and private actors to accelerate redevelopment.

With regards to raising awareness, Detroit has prioritised funding for highly visible projects that have helped restore public and commercial confidence. For example, the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy initiative has revitalised a sector of the city that was once regarded as an industrial wasteland. The Detroit riverfront now provides residents and international visitors with a welcome attraction as they navigate downtown.

City leaders and businesses also gained approval for the M-1 Rail project, a public-private partnership to build a major streetcar system that will connect northern neighbourhoods with downtown attractions. Projects such as this serve to connect historically segregated neighbourhoods. A secondary vision for the M-1 Rail project is to attract younger residents, who increasingly prefer to live and work in close proximity to urban amenities.

All of these projects helped build the momentum and public support required for Detroit's leaders to negotiate even bigger projects. Most recently, Detroit successfully negotiated a historic deal with the US and Canadian governments to secure foreign financing to rebuild the Detroit-Windsor Bridge, the busiest international border crossing in North America.

Urban leaders recognise that large, strategic projects such as these often serve as a catalyst, raising awareness among smaller actors. Young entrepreneurs are now pouring into Detroit to capitalise on the recent economic revival. As just one of many examples, the Detroit Bus Company addressed massive cuts to public bus services by establishing a privately operated bus service that now provides vital transit services to residents within historically underserved neighbourhoods.

Finally, today's urban leader must recognise the importance of positioning their city's brand in the global economy.

The world's mega-cities increasingly compete for financing and talent across borders. Detroit's leaders and businesses continue to capitalise on a grass roots "Made in Detroit" movement that reflects an America that is deeply proud of its industrial heritage but that recognises the importance of developing diversified, sustainable urban economies. Perhaps more important, the Made in Detroit movement has helped city leaders, business owners, and residents alike restore a sense of purpose that will ultimately help reinvent motor city.

What lessons can be learnt?

Most crises involve elements of uncertainty and ambiguity that allow the urban leader to formulate new visions and introduce major change. Detroit is a classic example of how the urban leader may choose to use a crisis to his or her advantage, with Detroit's bankruptcy serving as the much needed catalyst for change.

Additionally, the city's current leadership recognises the different power sources within the broader community. Rather than assume total responsibility for Detroit's revitalisation, city leaders have worked with influential actors from industry and other sectors to expand the reach and impact of their strategies. Projects that connect actors from multiple sectors help to expand the influence of the urban leader. They also provide a foundation for additional regional or local leaders to accelerate their own strategies.

Finally, how a leader frames a story is sometimes as important as the content of the story itself. Detroit's government and business leaders have relentlessly framed the city's emergence from bankruptcy as a success story in order to accelerate momentum around the city's recovery. The conversation among city residents and local businesses is increasingly focused on the city's revival and economic emergence. While Detroit still faces significant challenges, an increasingly resurgent entrepreneurial spirit is driving much of the current growth and reinvestment across the city.

Dubai: Visionary leadership and resilience bringing the future closer

Dubai is one of the seven emirates that constitute the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the second largest emirate after Abu Dhabi. Dubai's rather limited reserves have always driven its leadership to diversify its economy and create innovative ways to position the city at the forefront of the race towards the future. Today, Dubai is a Global 'City of Opportunity'[77] and serves as a beacon of inspiration to not only the region, but the world.

The city's current standing is rooted in the leadership and foresight of the late Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum, remembered as the Father of modern Dubai. His astute decision-making reshaped a small fishing village into one of the world's largest trade hubs. A true visionary, Sheikh Rashid recognised Dubai's potential and worked towards developing Dubai even in the face of uncertainty.

During the pre-oil era, the Emir mobilised revenues from trade activities to build up the city's infrastructure. With the discovery of oil in 1966, he pushed for the expansion of Dubai's two main ports, Rashid and Jebel Ali. While his advisors urged him against the decision, citing only a manageable increase in forecast demand, Sheikh Rashid's institutional and network power allowed him to take the first steps towards creating an increase in capacity that in turn would meet until then untapped demand.[78]

A strong believer in his father's vision, the current Ruler of Dubai, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum launched the Dubai Strategic Plan (DSP) 2015 in the first year of his rule. The plan took a results-orientated approach and drove the accomplishment of hundreds of vital national achievements in economic and social development sectors, infrastructure, land and environment, security, justice and safety and government development.

Dubai's leadership created two government mechanisms that provided strategic decision-making and planning support – the Executive Council and the Executive Office. With the mandate to make and update strategic plans, draft and implement laws, as well as determine the annual budget of the Government of Dubai, these institutions galvanised achievements that made it possible for the city to follow its development journey and formulate the current Dubai Plan 2021, armed with confidence, extensive experience and competent national human resources.[79]

It is the nature of the Government of Dubai to come together and work towards a common goal during times of fortune as well as misfortune. On several occasions, Dubai's leadership has demonstrated resilience and the ability to make bold decisions, both strategic and tactical.

For example, during the global financial crisis of 2008/9, Sheikh Mohammed put his trust in the people around him and, not only did he and Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, CEO and Chairman of the Emirates Group, make a strategic decision to proceed with the expansion of Emirates Airlines, but Sheikh Mohammed also created a committee to study the feasibility of hosting the Expo2020 in Dubai.[80]

After extensive preparation, Sheikh Ahmed, also Chairman of the Committee, announced the decision to go forward with the bid. Sheikh Mohammed's progressive outlook and results-orientated approach paid off as Dubai won the bid in 2013 after strongly campaigning for 'Connecting Minds, Creating the Future'.

More recently, Dubai's leadership was put under high pressure to make a tactical decision while the international community looked on. On New Year's Eve 2015, a 63-storey luxury hotel near the Burj Khalifa, the Address Downtown Dubai, caught fire just a few hours before midnight. While panic ensued on the boulevard, local and global spectators were sure that this meant Dubai's universally celebrated fireworks show would be cancelled.

However, thanks to the immediate and professional support from the Dubai Municipality, Dubai Police, and Dubai Civil Service, the fireworks went on as planned. With many questioning the need to celebrate, Emirati State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Anwar Gargash, endorsed the decision as "courageous" and "in favour of normal life against fear and pessimism."[81]

Designed to streamline the emirate's decision-making, Sheikh Mohammed has very recently formed a host of government committees that indirectly boost the performance of the Executive Council through coordinating between government entities and monitoring their performance.

To supplement this effort, the 'Qarar' (Arabic for 'decision') system was launched in 2014. This system improves the quality and efficiency of Dubai's public decision-making by providing the Executive Council and the committees with key strategic information and data platforms that enable faster, better informed decisions.

Dubai's leadership appreciates the importance of enabling technology and its role in creating efficiency. To this end Dubai has created a single focal point, the Dubai Smart City Office.

This goes beyond technology with the Director General of Dubai Smart City Office, Dr. Aisha Butti Bin Bishr, explaining that Dubai's vision for a smart city is building the happiest city in the world through smart housing, health, education, and economy.[82] Sheikh Mohammed's eagerness to remain innovative is shown through a particular smart initiative that creatively bridges tradition and modernity: the 'Mohammed Bin Rashid Smart Majlis'.[83] This integrated platform connects government entities to nationals, residents and visitors, giving them the ability to contribute to the development process.

What lessons can be learnt?

Since its inception, Dubai has been led by rulers who have actively engaged in their city, projects, and people. Sheikh Rashid demonstrated a key quality of good leadership: attentiveness to his people. From his early days as Emir of Dubai, he remained approachable in his informal quarters, known as the Majlis. This connection and participation with the public allowed for the leader to remain close to the pulse of the emirate and needs of the people.

This inclusive approach, aligned with greater coordination between key players and with holistic decision-making and strong vision, has led to the creation of one of the world's most innovative cities. This approach has served Dubai well, even in times of crisis where its resilience has been most extensively tested.

77 PwC, 2014   78 Hvidt, 2009   79 The Executive Council, 2015   80 Emirates 24/7, 2014   81 Daily Mail, 2016   82 Telecom Review   83 Arabian Business, 2015

Dublin: urban economic leadership during the financial crisis

Dublin is Ireland's national capital and represents about 40% of the Irish economy. During the "Celtic Tiger" years (1990s-early 2000s), the Irish Economy grew at 6-8% per annum. However, in 2008 Ireland and Dublin's growth came to a halt with the onset of a financial and banking crisis and the collapse of the construction sector. The economy contracted fast, unemployment soared, and Dublin faced an overall grim mood. What did the City Council do to deal with this situation?

Dublin's officials have long called for more power and competences to intervene in economic development issues, and this plea gained momentum during the crisis. One important step was the creation of the Creative Dublin Alliance (CDA) in 2007/2008 in order to organise cooperation between key stakeholders, represented at the highest level (including City Managers, University Deans and company CEOs). This partnership was championed by Dublin's City Manager, and used as an umbrella to discuss and launch a number of new joint local economic development projects, focusing on innovation and new network creation.

One example was "Innovation Dublin", a yearly festival to showcase several types of innovations (in a broad sense) developed in Dublin. Another was Dublinked, an "open data" initiative releasing urban data (e.g. transport flows, energy use) to spur digital innovation and new business creation in the city. Dublin's City Manager was the major orchestrator behind these projects, harnessing the relevant networks outside the City Council, but also legitimising the actions of other leaders and departments within the Council.

Let's look into Dublinked. The City Manager ignited the initiative, but the City Council couldn't do it alone – it required the expertise and involvement of other players like the National University (to curate the data, organise events, managing relations with prospective users and run the platform) and an IT provider (technical back-office support). Moreover, in order to gain scale, Dublinked involved the four Municipalities in Greater Dublin region from the onset as open data providers. All these efforts required considerable skill and time from the City Manager, as well as previously built trust and mutual understanding.

Yet, in order to make it happen, the initiative had to be legitimised within the City Council, as it would require resources (time, people, and money) that became increasingly scarce during the crisis. Moreover, releasing open data was no easy or straightforward task. Many vested interests were involved and "people were afraid that their holes would be spotted by others". In addition, it required cultural changes and new ways of working within the Council to embrace risk taking.

In order to facilitate the process, the City Manager tasked a newly created design-thinking unit within the Council (called "The Studio") to manage Dublinked on a daily basis, which had less ingrained routines and vested interests and the appropriate user-involvement mindsets. This unit reported directly to him which increased the commitment of other departments to prepare and release data. In this way a group of executive managers (with the right technical and communication skills) could emerge and act as central facilitators of Dublinked, bridging within and outside the Council and driving the process forward.

Although "Innovation Dublin" has been discontinued and the Creative Dublin Alliance lost momentum, Dublinked is still being championed by the City Council which now has a more stable budget from its different partners. In the meantime, "The Studio" as such has been dismantled. At the time of this writing, "following a change of governance and organisational structures in the council, Dublinked was reintegrated into core Planning and Development functions, reporting directly to the new Chief Executive as part of a more co-ordinated city wide approach to 'smart city' projects".

What lessons can be learnt?

Firstly, the case of Dublin shows that a deep crisis opens up room for discomfort and new ideas, and those are important enablers for the emergence of new urban leadership. Also, the example of the Creative Dublin Alliance illustrates distributed urban leadership, with contributions from different stakeholders.

Despite recently losing momentum, the fact remains that it contributed to bringing stakeholders together at a time in which new modes of cooperation were badly needed. In Dublin, an economic crisis together with the commitment of City's resources and voluntary contributions coalesced into the formation of a new model of urban leadership.

Secondly, the role of the City Manager epitomises a number of important urban leadership features. Among others, he was able to:

- connect relevant networks outside the City Council – those were fundamental to gather the necessary resources and competences while creating consensus and shared visions about Dublinked;

- legitimise an out-of-the-box and risky initiative at a time of crisis; and

- delegate power to other people, giving them leeway to act.

Manchester: leading a digital strategy over time

Over recent decades, Manchester has been the paradigmatic example of a city in transition from manufacturing towards more knowledge-based activities. The digital economy is now an increasingly important economic branch, and the city has managed to attract many international companies in this field. However, despite all the progress, persistent skills mismatches, unemployment and social exclusion are still heavily felt.

In order to simultaneously improve the city's economy and tackle social exclusion, the City Council has been very active (since 1989), championing a number of digital and IT-related initiatives including the roll out of broadband infrastructure, training schemes, job matching, digital experimentation.

Until recently, Manchester's digital initiatives were promoted from within the Council's Regeneration Unit (as they linked up to economic, social and physical reconversion challenges). From 2008 onwards, a "Digital Strategy" was recognised as an independent high-level priority and given the symbolic status of a "master plan".

Among others, it aimed to position Manchester as a competitive player in the global digital market whilst still tackling local-rooted and persistent socio-economic challenges. Therefore, it became an "umbrella" strategy to be conducted by many stakeholders within and outside the City Council. Recent outcomes include:

- the securing of National Urban Broadband Funds;

- the engagement of civic volunteers and many formal and informal stakeholders dealing with training, jobs and digital inclusion in the city ("digital skills strategic framework");

- the progressive digitalisation and establishment of an open data philosophy at the city council;

- the legitimisation of other organisations dealing with digital issues; and

- creation of a shared digital vision/narrative for the city.

What was the role of urban leadership in all this? How was it enacted, and who has been involved? As expected, the implementation of the Digital Strategy relied not on one but a number of leaders and orchestrators. For this reason it is better to speak about collective or distributed leadership, working at different levels within the City Council.

First, the Digital Strategy – and before that, other IT-related initiatives – were strongly supported at higher echelons of local policymaking, namely by the leader of the political cabinet (Sir Richard Leese). As put by one interviewee, "he is an industrial chemist and knows little about digital but understood very well the role of knowledge and technology". Moreover, the long-serving Chief Executive (Sir Howard Bernstein) was personally involved in the city's regeneration agenda, thus providing visibility for the IT-digital initiatives over time. In 2013, a newly appointed Assistant Chief Executive spearheaded the "Digital Strategy", so providing it with the status of a roadmap/master plan.

Secondly, the development of the Digital Strategy was coordinated and led on a daily basis by Manchester Digital Development Agency (MDDA), an arm's length organisation of the Council to deal with digital-related training and test-bedding. MDDA inherited and expanded the competences of the former Manchester's Technology Group (Economic Department). It was staffed with both "creative and business development" and "tech/IT programming" people, allowing the tackling and monitoring of different dimensions of the Digital Strategy.

For many informal IT-tech communities in the city, MDDA provided a gateway to access the City Council and raise awareness for new developments (e.g. open data). MDDA supported these groups by facilitating their own services but also by providing them legitimacy and visibility within policy spheres. One example is the "MadLab", a grassroots initiative that provides working space for informal tech community groups.

MadLab benefited from MDDA's support to formally apply for a start-up grant from the UK government, and since then it has been cooperating with the City for the organisation of several initiatives.

The (now retired) Head of MDDA was a highly respected, experienced and passionate city officer who had been involved in the development of IT strategies in Manchester since the beginning. His role was essential to assure stability, while simultaneously allowing for smooth transitions and to gradually permeate the Digital Agenda (e.g. living labs, user involvement, a new business attraction orientation).

Moreover, as the Digital Agenda become "everybody's business", his role was pivotal as a boundary spanner who could connect, bring together and understand the "languages" of different worlds (public administration, universities, companies, community groups, and IT activists). As many stakeholders became co-responsible for the implementation of the Strategy (yet not compulsorily), this type of leadership has been of utmost importance to pool up and leverage financial and organisational resources.

Recently, MDDA became again part of the City's internal structure, and the city's Digital Strategy has been merged into the new Manchester's Smart City Programme. Yet, the new programme follows similar ambitions, namely, according to the City, to "provide a coordination and strategic role to identify, encourage and support projects and initiatives that can contribute to making Manchester a Smarter City."

What lessons can be learnt?

Manchester's Digital Strategy – recently merged into Manchester's Smart City Programme – depended on multiple orchestrators within and outside the City Council. It relied on vertical (within the council's structure) and horizontal relations (formal and informal relations between the Council and other players in the city).

Beyond high-level policy supporters, the long-term success of digital affairs in the city's strategies relied on the "hands-on" leadership provided by MDDA, and before that, by the Technological group at the Regeneration/Economic Development Unit. The stable stewardship and gradual institutionalisation of digital work in the City over the years made it possible to have a smooth transition when a new leader emerged and took office (the Assistant Chief Executive).

The success of Manchester's digital strategies relied on the continuous ability to mobilise different leaders, with varied yet complementary sources of power, namely institutional (high positions in the council), interpretative (ability to convince others) and network (access to multiple stakeholders). This went hand in hand with a number of key processes, such as raising awareness and framing a joint narrative (for Manchester's digital future), mobilising and coordinating actors and visioning between visions (aligning different strategies of multiple stakeholders around a common digital strategy for the city, finding common points). All of this largely contributed to make the strategies really turn into action.

Last but not least, the case of Manchester illustrates that sound leadership (e.g. of MDDA) benefited from the existence of the space and necessary resources (time, leeway) to explore new directions, attend events, participate in working groups, meet new stakeholders and conduct "fieldwork" in the city. For urban leadership, this is a plea to re-think the trade-off between short-term efficiency and making space to explore new innovative directions.

The Randstad: from disconnected urban regions towards integrated urban systems?

Since then, the region has come a long way: from single city strategies to today's urban region level of economic development strategies. Three of the urban regions (see below) have developed their own economic specialisations using different approaches. These regions are complemented by a fourth, Utrecht, which together form the Randstad.[85]

Eindhoven, is where "Brainport" was set up as a "triple-helix" collaboration with partners in business, knowledge institutions and government. The goal is to strengthen the region's distinctive economic and innovation ecosystem and connect and integrate the regional economic development agendas.

The region has 740,000 inhabitants and 400,000 jobs focused on high-tech industries and innovation. Leadership has been provided by:

- the Brainport Foundation, which focuses on cooperation of industry, educational and knowledge institutes and government;

- Brainport Development, an economic development organisation working to strengthen the urban region by stimulating regional and (inter)national projects and programmes, promoting the Brainport Region, and supporting innovative firms and startups with advice, financial means and incubation in high-tech business centres.

'The Randstad', a large urban area in the West part of the Netherlands, was found by an OECD report in 2007[84] not to be exploiting the full potential of the proximity of its four large cities. It did not represent an integrated functional urban system, i.e. urban regions forming a coherent whole in terms of economic specialties. The OECD report concluded that collaboration is an important driver to improve the (international) competitiveness of the whole area requiring new organisational and leadership modes.

Grounded on innovative projects and policy approaches, thriving on joint lobbying and branding of the whole urban region, Brainport has deepened collaboration across municipalities in the urban region and avoids unfruitful inter-municipal competition. Long-term commitment and high trust between the leaders of these organisations has enabled the development of long-term, feasible strategic goals and ambitions (long term vision) and the resources to make it happen.

The **Rotterdam-The Hague** metropolitan region is not only known for Rotterdam's seaport, but also for its strong medical research cluster ("medical delta"), the national safety and security cluster ("The Hague security delta") and its "greenport". Covering 2.2 million people, the 23 municipalities agreed on a Common Regulation in 2015 to combine forces to improve accessibility and the conditions for establishing businesses. This movement is strengthened by the recent 2015 OECD Territorial review of the metropolitan region.

The metropolis Leidse Regio, the Drechtsteden Region, the province of South-Holland and a number of business leaders and knowledge institutions established an Economic Program Council Zuid-vleugel (EPZ). The EPZ focuses on strengthening the economic competitiveness of the southern part of the Randstad by executing the economic agenda "Koers 2020." It forms a platform where "triple helix" partners from the broader urban region can put forward their problems, challenges and policies in a coordinated way instead of each working in a vacuum and search for better solutions together.

The execution of projects is done through, for instance, the regional development organisation – "InnovationQuarter"– which forms a strong regional development organisation to strengthen innovation, fund innovative companies, and perform international marketing of this region. Other execution parties include leading firms (like Siemens), employers' organisations (VNO-NCW West) and universities.

The "**metropolis of Amsterdam**" (MRA) is an informal partnership of local and provincial governments in the northern part of the Randstad, encompassing about 2.4 million inhabitants. Not only through its airport, but recently as an internet nexus (AMS-IX) Amsterdam is becoming an important driver for the Dutch economy. Amsterdam and the region aim to be the ultimate innovator on 'Quality of Life' by focusing on five major themes: digital connectivity, health, circular economy, mobility and jobs of the future.

To do so, the Amsterdam Economic Board has been established to stimulate collaboration between firms, knowledge institutions and government. Leading entrepreneurs, representatives of knowledge institutes and regional government representatives are united in the Board, chaired by the mayor of Amsterdam. The members of the Board define the strategy and pool their resources (finance, skills, institutional power) to facilitate implementation. The executional organisation behind the Board coordinates the projects in collaboration with triple helix stakeholders.

In each selected urban challenge, a development strategy is drawn up from which a range of innovative, connecting initiatives arise. The Board advises about the investments needed and supports a number of 'breakthrough initiatives'. People and businesses are connected online, in clusters and during (network) meetings. Knowledge about each cluster is shared during meetings, and cross-overs between clusters are stimulated.

What lessons can be learnt?

Firstly, each urban region has a development board, a programme council and/or a foundation that forms the driving force for mobilising and integrating resources and networks for urban and regional development. These are new platforms, which provide an infrastructure (e.g. project organisation), a set of guiding principles, and a place where different parties can offer and take services and discuss strategies and coordinate actions.

Secondly, these platforms and associated strategies (e.g. Brainport Network and Koers 2020) provide inspiration about opportunities lying ahead for the urban region, bringing together and articulating different visions of stakeholders. Such a strategy has to be specific but also flexible enough to act as an umbrella for different local agendas. There is a powerful role of informal leadership for these platforms. Regional collaborations often need an ambassador who does not necessarily hold formal power but who is widely considered an authority within the right network, committed to the region and willing to take effort for society (which can be a mayor, but also other leading social figures).

Thirdly, an important issue is clarity about ownership of the initiatives and projects set within these platforms. Ownership does not need to lay with government as other stakeholders may take the lead.

Lastly, these platforms increasingly show a combination of a bottom-up and top-down way of working: ideas and problems are collected from triple helix partners and shared at a forum on a higher level where they are reviewed and coordinated with formal government strategies, before they are then executed by organisations. This reflects the trend of more actors, such as lead firms and knowledge institutes, being increasingly more active and involved in urban leadership. The same goes for other non-institutional players such as committed community leaders with a mission to change things.

The way forward for the three regions and Utrecht is to strengthen their own specialisation and quality of life in a triple helix approach, in joint mission to bring the Randstad as main metropolitan area in the Netherlands to a higher level of sustainable competitiveness on a European and global scale. Urban leaders in the regions must find a balance between competition and cooperation at a cross-regional level. This means leaders looking beyond their own boundaries to develop the competitiveness of the urban system as a whole.
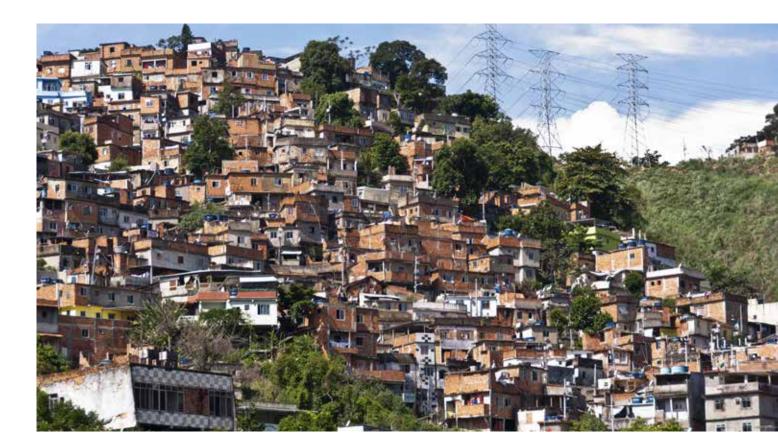
Rio de Janeiro: leadership and innovation in slum pacification

Rio de Janeiro is known as the "wonderful city" for its natural beauty, but also as a dangerous, crime-plagued Latin American metropolis. After decades of decline, the city has bounced backed and the economy has been improving since then.

In 2016, Rio will host the Summer Olympics and many investments are taking place to catch up with decades of underinvestment. The city has hundreds of slums or "favelas", traditionally afflicted by dilapidated housing, crime and violence, many of them under the siege of drug gangs and corrupted policemen.

Over the years, several repressive policing measures have been tried out and failed; social investments in sports infrastructure and schools have also been far from successful. Moreover, Rio's slums are not only socially problematic and physically dilapidated areas – a lot of money circulates as part of an informal economy (including housing rents, transport services, utility supplies), which governments and corporations envision bringing back into formal circuits.

In order to sharply reduce crime, social problems and bring favelas back to formality, a new innovative programme has been deployed by the State Government of Rio de Janeiro (Secretary for Public Safety) since 2009, called "Pacifying Police Units" (UPPs). In a nutshell, the UPP programme consists of i) reclaiming territories controlled by drug gangs and crime barons, and, once pacification has been secured, ii) the permanent installation of Social UPPs, that is, specially trained and permanent police units that create room for the delivery of other social programmes, infrastructure and the legalisation of services.

So far, despite the controversial crime displacement from UPPs to other city region areas, the results of the programme have been markedly positive. For example, homicide and other types of crime declined sharply in UPP slums; school and health care attendance increased substantially and many services could start to be formalised (e.g. electricity provision).

Changing ideas, mindsets and the inward-looking culture of police operations in Rio for such a transformative programme has been a daunting task. Previous attempts to change policing operations and "new public management" therapies had backfired.

Therefore, not surprisingly, the success of the programme has been attributed to sound leadership, namely of the Secretary of Public Safety. However, beyond saying that leadership was important, it is key to understand how it was important and which steps were taken to make it happen.

A recent study[86], from a scholar involved as adviser of the Secretary of Public Safety, identified a number of key actions and steps that enabled the early stages of such a process.

Firstly, the Secretary of Public Safety (and his group of assistants) could identify a clear set of priorities and show the sense of urgency to tackle them. The collection and communication by the Secretary of relevant data was important to demonstrate that the pacification issue was a serious problem that could only be addressed by joint action. In addition, the Secretary of Public Safety and his team could select and communicate an articulated and consistent set of ideas for the UPP policy, instead of plugging in the theoretical debate about what pacification is or should be about.

Secondly, the Secretary of Public Safety negotiated and formed a wide and solid coalition to support his visions behind UPPs. This was essential to assure that the process would not get blocked by the many different sensitivities and interests around the issue (e.g. police, human rights associations, community leaders and local government). Finding common points of interest was important to achieve consensus areas, such as social inclusion and safety. Moreover, due to the scarcity of resources (available police staff and financial constraints), it was essential to demonstrate that the UPP process could also be financially sustainable for the government.

Thirdly, the Secretary of Public Safety could clearly communicate the objectives of the new policy within and outside the State Government, and paid special attention to public opinion. He could clearly relate the means and the instruments to achieve the objectives through a simple and clear language instead of using conceptual jargon. Moreover, leadership was also critical at a more operational level. For example, UPP field leaders have been chosen with an eye to foster trust between the newly established police units and the local residents.

What lessons can be learnt?

It is perhaps too early to judge whether the changes implemented under the Secretary of Public Safety's leadership will become institutionalised as a model to deal with safety and slum policing. Moreover, as a number of corruption scandals are being uncovered in Brazil at the time of writing (April 2016), the levels of trust in the government have shown to be decreasing overall.

However, it is possible to see that the early leadership work behind UPPs had to deploy several types of tactics (framing old problems in new ways, building coalitions and mobilising staff in the process) and enact several types of power (notably institutional, but also interpretative). In fact, the ability to re-interpret the slum's problems through a pacification lens was pivotal.

Moreover, the case of the UPPs brings back the key role of "momentum" (Olympic agenda) and crisis (the unsustainability of the violence and crime in the city) to enact new leadership. This goes hand in hand with the need to ensure social and political support for controversial initiatives.

The case also shows that leadership is not only played at high-level policy echelons, but needs to have many parallel concerns at the operational level. Often, the devil can be in the details (e.g. quality of communication and trust in the community).

Singapore: urban leadership transforms vulnerability into opportunity

With a population just over five and a half million people and land area of 719 square kilometers, Singapore is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. As such, urban planning has always been an important tool in managing its land use. Due to its limited land area and lack of natural resources, the water challenge has been a national priority from the first days of its independence. By chasing a singular focus with determined leadership and cross-sector efforts, Singapore has transformed a particularly important vulnerability into an economic opportunity.

This transformation has been driven largely by the visionary leadership of its founding father, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. Understanding the implications of being heavily dependent on imported water from Malaysia, he took a special interest in water considering the management of this valuable resource not only a strategic issue but an existential one.

Asserting that "every water policy has to bend to the knees of our water survival"[87] the Prime Minister established a specialised unit in his office that assessed every government policy through the lens of water management. Prioritising water self-sustainability for the country laid the foundations for the remarkable global hydrohub that Singapore is today with over 130 water companies and 26 research institutes operating within its borders. The results are remarkable: between 2003 and 2014, Singaporeans successfully reduced their daily per capita water consumption from 165 litres to 151 litres, targeting 140 litres in 2030.

Further examples of the integrated and holistic approach to urban planning and land use management is articulated in a Concept Plan that lays out the long term directions for Singapore's land use and transportation plans over the next half century.

Leading this constant effort is the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Singapore (URA), leveraging the participation and cooperation of many government agencies and the public. Integrated urban solutions such as Marina Bay, an environmentally-friendly mixed use development that also serves as a freshwater reservoir that will add to the local water supply by 10%, is an example result of the collaborative planning process.

In 2009, current Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong established the Economic Strategies Committee, which has leveraged Singapore's Global Asia position to establish itself as a location for future-ready urban solutions. Not only does this require the involvement of all government ministries, but encourages the participation of private sector players and particularly lead firms.

For instance, Singapore's Public Utilities Board (PUB) and Toray Industries Inc. are co-developing water treatment technologies and products that will provide solutions to the anticipated global water shortage. The collaboration between public and private entities in Singapore emphasises that development initiatives depend on triple-helix partners that have a shared interest in strengthening economic development.

Another aspect is raising public awareness and inspiring behavioural change. Singapore's water supply comes from its Four National Taps: local catchment water, imported water, desalinated water and highly purified wastewater i.e. NEWater. In parallel, there are multiple water projects that ensure sustainable water supply.

One such programme goes beyond achieving adequate water supply and aims to receive public buy-in and an increase in water ownership: the ABC Waters programme. Its objectives are to bring people closer to water through recreational activities, integrating waterways and reservoirs into public spaces like parks and commercial developments, and improving water quality by minimising pollution through public education. This programme will potentially include over 1000 projects by 2030 through the cooperation of PUB, URA, the National Parks Board, and multiple sports agencies.

With the ultimate goal of drastically reducing Malaysian imports, approximately 80% of water supply will be sourced from NEWater and further desalination efforts by 2060, just one year before the 1962 Water Agreement expires. Advances like these are made possible through forward-looking research and breakthrough technologies. The National Research Foundation has invested S$470 million into multiple progressive initiatives led by PUB and involving other government agencies such as EDB, SPRING Singapore, and International Enterprise Singapore.

These initiatives focus on bringing in overseas companies to create a further vibrant water ecosystem, encouraging the number of public and private R&D centres, supporting the commercialisation of revolutionary technologies and co-creating innovative water solutions by expanding Singapore-based companies into the global market. Further, the country is host to the Singapore International Water Week, a global gathering of public officials, industry leaders, water experts, and practitioners who engage in dialogue regarding policies, business solutions and water technologies.

What lessons can be learnt?

Singapore is an excellent example of how remarkable urban leadership can transform both a vulnerability and issue of national security into a source of economic value and competitive advantage for a country. The leadership's clear vision, solid long-term planning, collaborative approach to problem solving with lead firms (like Toray Industries Inc), and transparency with the public has resulted in their tiny city-state blossoming into a water policy and governance centre of excellence for not just its own nation, but the world's largest continent.

This demonstrates how very strong leaders with mandatory plans can be important for cities with similar types of political-institutional regimes. But it also shows how this model is starting to move towards more distributed ways, involving other stakeholders in decisions. The ABC Waters programme is a prime example of Singapore's urban leaders drawing the attention of citizens to an issue that is central to the city-state's development.

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87 The Diplomat: http://thediplomat.com/2015/06/urban-water-management-in-singapore-past-present-and-future/

Stockholm: urban leadership in eco-district development

Stockholm is the capital, and biggest city, in Sweden. It is perceived as one of the cleanest and pollution-free capitals in the world. Among other environmental achievements, the city reduced its carbon emissions by 25% per resident since 1990 and aims at becoming completely fossil fuel free by 2050.

The city has a long track record of environmental and energy-related initiatives, dating back many decades. They include the development of eco-districts: fully-fledged areas in the city dedicated to experimenting with new modes of living and consuming energy. These developments require not only substantial investment but also a lot of organising capacity: multiple stakeholders are involved, and the projects deal with behavioural change. How has the city leadership been managing to plan and implement them?

The planning of one of the most well-known eco-districts in Stockholm (and worldwide) – Hammarby Sjöstad – dates from the early 1990s. The 1992 Rio Sustainability Agenda influenced its features and design, namely through notions of self-sufficiency and re-use. Besides green roofs and the use of recycled materials, among its key features is the integration of water, energy and waste systems in a closed loop system (e.g. using biomass and waste to feed district heating and the re-use of storm water).

The City of Stockholm led the planning and implementation process since the beginning, not only because of its planning power, technical skills and land ownership but also because the City owned the utility companies involved in the development of the closed-loop system. Other external-to-the-City stakeholders – technology providers, real estate developers – were also involved, but essentially as contractors, as the technologies being deployed were rather mature. As one interviewee put it in 2012, twenty years after the planning of Hammarby started, "the City developed the plan and it just landed at the stakeholders' tables". For example, many developers complained about the unrealism of top-down energy efficiency standards.

The area is nowadays still a reference for eco-district development – namely in developing economies – but many developers and providers failed to abide by the City's top-down environmental plans. As a reaction, a new district advocacy movement has currently emerged (called Hammarby Sjöstad 2020 – "renew the new city") aiming to push towards new generation environmental investments in the area, such as electric charging points, smart grid solutions.

A much more recent area-based development in Stockholm – the Royal Sea Port area – has been dubbed "Hammarby 2.0" and represents a new generation of eco-district development in the city. It has been inspired by the contemporary debates on climate change and "green growth" from the late 2000s. The idea is to use the area to test, prototype and scale up a whole new state-of-the-art portfolio of "smart city" and "smart grid" technologies, with the close involvement of several partners, namely technology companies, knowledge institutes, real estate developers and users.

To address this aim, the City maintains a close control on the district's planning and energy efficiency standards, but doesn't work alone anymore. The project's leadership is shared with Fortum, the private Finnish utility that bought shares of the former local utility in the liberalised market. Fortum is the leader of everything that has to do with energy in the district and coordinates a large consortium for the development of smart grid-related appliances.

As the City has no skills on smart grids – and does not want to influence private companies – Fortum is the natural project leader. There are also detailed contracts signed between the City and the different real estate developers; despite the high prices of land and tight requirements, developers were involved from the beginning in designing solutions for the district.

What lessons can be learnt?

Compared with Hammarby, the urban leadership context for the Royal Sea Port has been substantially altered. The general policy debates are distinct (self-sufficiency vs. green growth) and so is the underlying city governance structure. The City Council cannot be in charge of everything anymore, and the sources of power and expertise required became much more dispersed. Utility companies developed as transnational players yet with important local stakes. Moreover, involving real estate developers, industrial players and knowledge institutes from the start became pivotal.

An implication is that the role of leadership across horizontal networks was heightened vis-à-vis Hammarby, in which vertical relations within the Council's structure were dominant (notwithstanding the recent emergence of grassroots advocacy movements). This called for increased coordination, mediation of potential conflicts across the involved parts, and considerable work to find consensus (e.g. the strategies of different players may collide). Some of these new relations were regulated and abided by formal contracts, for example, technological consortiums. Nevertheless, the formation of new networks for developing the Royal Sea Port required time and effort, volunteer contributions, exploration, trust, and the ability to speak and understand each other's strategies by the involved partners.

The Royal Sea Port illustrates new types of private involvement in urban development and leadership, which should not be confused with the privatisation of urban development. For example, the objectives of Fortum and the involvement real estate developers is not (just) to sell buildings, grids and technologies to the city, but to jointly learn and experiment in a fast changing technology field. In this sense, the City of Stockholm benefits from the company's knowledge, but also the other way around.

It is however worth noticing that the power and planning competences of the City of Stockholm's are, for many reasons, higher than the average City Council, which makes the relationship between city and private enterprise relatively even. This is a plea to make sure that civic officers in general have enough competence and skills (technical abilities, knowledge on urban dynamics, negotiation skills, power and legitimacy) to make the most out of private involvement in urban leadership and ensure that balanced horizontal networks and partnerships emerge.

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