

2010 In Review

Traffic Monitoring in Dar es Salaam



Figure 1: A cartoon from the Citizen News Paper 11th May 2010

The Center for Economic Prosperity, started traffic monitoring process in Dar es Salaam in March 2010 involving three key routes, namely, Mbezi Tankibovu to Posta, Mbezi Louis to Posta, Airport to Posta and vice versa.

To assess how much time it takes for residents of Dar es Salaam to travel to the city center the Center identified three popular routes: Airport-Posta, Mbezi Tankibovu - Posta and Mbezi Louis – Posta. For each of these routes a number of automobile drivers was asked to fill out a form every day reflecting travel time from home to town and vice versa.

Reports on Dar travel time

The Center published three briefs on Dar travel time. The first report was published at the eve of the World Economic Forum held in Dar es Salaam, 3-5th May 2010. The second and third brief were published in August and September 2010

Figure 2: A cover page for Dar es Salaam travel time report



Parallel to the publication of the report, a billboard containing the message “It takes 1 hour 21 minutes to drive 16 km... Supportive business environment?” was flighted on 3rd May 2010 only to stay on for 8 days.

Figure 3: A billboard at Namanga along A. H Mwinyi road



The billboard was de-flighted on the midnight of 11th May, 2010 on the premise that, it was, reportedly, controversial, and the Center was branded as instigators, says a message from A1 outdoor official, conveyed to her general manager by the undisclosed person (to Center) from the government.

Feedback on the report from the public

The report got a good public limelight, from individual level, institutions and media coverage ranging from print, radio and television. The report was well featured in The Citizen Newspaper on 10th May 2010 with heading “How Dar is bogged down in endless traffic jams” citing the report published by the Center.

Fig 4: Excerpt from the Citizen Newspaper cited traffic report



The editorial of The Citizen Newspaper also featured the report on 11th May 2010 with heading “Dar traffic jams crisis need urgent solution” .

The Center was also featured on TBC-1, the National Television Program called “This Week In Perspective” with the host Adam Simbeye discussing the topic “Traffic Jams and Congestion in Dar es salaam City. Any solution?”

Fig. 5: Photo: This Week In Perspective Program on Traffic Jams



The stakeholders invited to the program were, Prof. Theophil Rwebangira-College of Engineering and Technology, University of Dar es Salaam, Nicholas Mbwanji –Tanzania Transport Resource Center, ACP Johansen Kahatano – Police Traffic Division, Dar es Salaam

Fig 6: CEP’s Executive Director on This Week In Perspective



The Executive Director, Mr. Thomas Maqway, was also interviewed twice on East Africa Radio on the Morning Breakfast Program with Jimmy Kabwe discussing the traffic report and what could possibly be the solution towards the perennial endless traffic jams in Dar es Salaam

The Center received e-mails from individual people working in public and private institutions, proposing what can and could be done to ease the congestion in Dar es Salaam. The report was also widely shared on different blogs such as <http://issamichuzi.blogspot.com/> and <http://blog.daraja.org/> It was from these feedback, another brief was prepared in the name of the “People’s Views; Nine solution to ease congestion in Dar es Salaam”

The brief on people’s Views was published in its entirety in the Business Times Newspaper on 30th July 2010 with heading “NGO re-visit costless traffic congestion - easing ideas”.

Figure 7:A cover page for brief on People's Views



The Center also looked at the time spent on crossing Kigamboni ferry and while highlighting profiling of tax payers based on whether they are government or non government employees to board on the ferry. The brief was also published in its entirety in the Business Times News Paper on 10th September 2010 with heading “Openly Eating the forbidden Fruit in a hurry to board Kigamboni Ferry”

Figure 8 : Excerpt from the Citizen Newspaper cited 2nd traffic report



The travel time in Dar es salaam between the period of March and April-July 2010 was revisited. To assess the difference in travel time, Mbezi -Posta route via A.H Mwinyi road was used. The brief appeared on the Citizen Newspaper on 3rd October 2010.

On social Networks

The Center has 1,840 people following on her facebook page. All publication by the Center has a total of 1,009 reads on Scribd

Traffic Monitoring process

Challenges

At first instance, the reception from the respondents filling in the questionnaires was promising but as the time goes by, that spirit of enthusiasm went down significantly, along with cases such as loss of questionnaires, misplacement, not responding to calls on collection of questionnaires, travel, forgetting, to mention but a few.

These developments posed a great challenge in collection of data and timely preparation of the report as agreed by the partners. The confidence on data from some respondents was very low.

Solution

The Center, to address the above challenges, yet maintaining the focus on the intended output, embarked on harnessing of the technology. To start with, the usage of SMS for timely record of the travel time. From February 3rd 2011, the collection of travel time data using SMS system have started and the 3rd report will be published soon.

The other way, after the evaluation of SMS system, the Center is looking at in data collection, is usage of IVR, the Interactive Voice Response system, which is hassle free (dialling instead of writing text). In this system, the center will be using the freedomfone, the already developed, an open source, free software. The application of IVR system, will not be limited to travel time only, but it will go as wide as on collection of data on roadblocks and other red-tapes on business environment in Tanzania.