



INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

Linking Health Priorities to the Rwandan National Budget

Rwanda's public health system was among the many casualties of the country's 1994 genocide. In the aftermath of the violence, health workers were in short supply, maternal and child mortality rates spiked, and infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis often went untreated. By 2011, Rwanda had made enormous progress in remedying the situation, but much more remained to be done. From 2011 to 2016, officials in the finance ministry and health ministry worked together to develop five-year plans for public health, to translate their new priorities into annual budgets, and to monitor spending so as to ensure progress toward national goals. The officials revised the budget calendar to improve the planning process, helped local authorities build medium-term public-health strategies, and reformed the tools used for tracking spending in the health sector. They met or surpassed more than half of the top targets they had set for 2015, cementing the gains the country had made since 1994.

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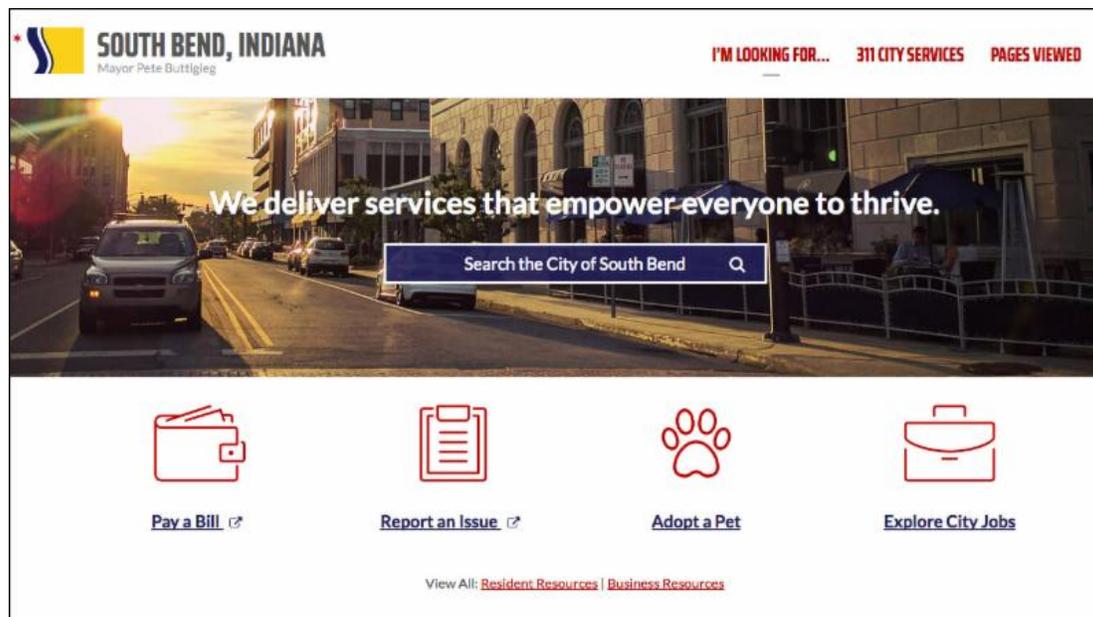
As a part of its public health reforms, Rwanda launched RapidSMS, a mobile technology tools that saves lives by tracking pregnant women, newborns, and children in 15,000 villages. Photo from UNICEF Rwanda.

Rebooting a Rust Belt City: South Bend, Indiana's

Innovation Office

When Pete Buttigieg became mayor of South Bend, Indiana, in 2012, the city was struggling to overcome its image as a dying community. More than a thousand abandoned homes blighted urban neighborhoods, and the unemployment rate was more than 10%. Although these problems had their roots in the changing structure of the US economy, Buttigieg said he believed that more-efficient and more-effective government could help the city attract new businesses and residents, charting a path forward. In 2013, he hired Santiago Garces, a 2011 graduate of nearby University of Notre Dame, to create a new office that would identify opportunities for improving city operations and saving money. On a tight budget, Garces assembled a small team of business analysts, who used new technologies to help streamline and modernize the city's code enforcement department, greatly accelerating the process of dealing with abandoned homes. Garces's team then took on dozens of other projects to improve service delivery while consolidating the city's information technology resources, including outsourcing certain services to cut costs. The unit Garces created produced millions of dollars in savings during its first years and helped the mayor achieve some of his top policy goals.

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The City of South Bend, Indiana redesigned its website with an emphasis on better connecting residents with services, facilities, and information.

Featured ISS Interview

In his interview with ISS, South Bend, Indiana Mayor **Peter Buttigieg** discusses how his administration used innovation and technology to improve municipal government. He explains how his background in consulting informed his use of data to make government more effective and describes the role that civic innovation can play in solving the toughest problems his community faces. Buttigieg advises other cities to build partnerships with external actors who can help them harness data and innovation and stresses the importance of government employees having a results mentality, as opposed to a compliance mentality.

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