



Geospatial technology to help make Malaysia's government programs more targeted

Aug 10, 2016 -- Geospatial technology will play a crucial role in helping agencies achieve the goals set out in the 11th Malaysia Plan (RMK11), according to a panel of Malaysia's most influential industry leaders.

Converging at the annual National Geospatial Information Symposium yesterday, senior leaders from the National Space Agency, Malaysian Centre for Geographic Data Infrastructure, the Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit, Department of Surveying and Mapping, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi MARA and Esri Malaysia have underscored the increasingly important role of geospatial technology in developing inclusive socio-economic programs.

"As the national government drives the economy and the people forward, better tools and improved capabilities are required to ensure decision-makers have actionable plans for sustainable and inclusive growth," Esri Malaysia Chief Technology Strategist Joanne Loh said.

"In this area, geospatial technology goes beyond making maps of just land cover. It enables decision-makers to combine layers of information, and study the spatial relationships between selected indicators to get a more holistic view of places or regions they are working to develop," Ms Loh said.

"With this technology, policy makers are able to create economic development programs that match the local community's demographics and environment."

"Locally, it has helped streamline business processes, and improve productivity and operational efficiencies in organisations – and we are seeing more decision-makers from the country's major commercial, government and non-government enterprises embrace it to deliver their mandate in smarter ways," she said

Ms Loh cited the State of Sarawak as an example, which recently made headlines for using geospatial technology to drastically shorten the state's property registration process from one month to a single day.

"The solution significantly reduced field operations and also lowered the cost and time of processing land applications. By doing so, the State has made itself a more attractive place for entrepreneurs and investors to do their business," Ms Loh said.

In addition to helping improve economic viability and creating economic opportunities, the use of geospatial technology has also enabled cities to equip communities with the capability to make their neighbourhoods a great place to work, live, and play.

The State of Penang's Geographic Information System (GIS) centre for example, has extended the benefits of their cutting-edge e-Peta app to advance and support the advocacies of not-for-profit organisations such as George Town World Heritage Incorporated (GTWHI), the Penang Botanic Gardens, Penang Women's Development Corporation, and alms collection organisation Pusat Urus Zakat, among others.

"With the use of e-Peta, Pusat Urus Zakat mapped the location of Muslim households and analysed the corresponding demographic data in order to determine their needs and identify who should give and receive alms," Ms Loh explained.

"By using geospatial technology, Pusat Urus Zakat was able to complete their study in half the time they would have otherwise taken," she added.

In a similar way, GTWHI has been using e-Peta to monitor and enhance conservation efforts in Penang's historic George Town.

"With 2020 just a few years away, organisations are now called to be agile in order to enable the interoperability and integration of siloed systems that will facilitate better collaboration across departments and agencies," Ms Loh said.

"Collaboration breeds innovation. By accessing powerful geospatial tools, organisations have the capability to support the development, design, and growth of our communities in more impactful ways than ever before," she said.

For further information on how geospatial technology can strengthen RMK11 programs, visit esrimalaysia.com.my