Report on the Rapid Assessment of ICT Utilization for Participation in the Philippines[1]

Introduction

The advent of Information Communication Technology (ICT) provided a new platform and medium in the sharing and exchanging of ideas and knowledge in recent times. In the not so distant past, people are contented with what the tri-media services have to offer as modalities of social information networking. Engaging with other people in other places would suffice the use of print, radio and television as tools for simultaneously sharing information to a large number of audiences. Recently, however, ICT has emerged to become the fourth medium for mass communication and knowledge sharing. Unlike the previous three media whose possibilities have almost all been saturated, ICT's potentials are merely being discovered and are progressively being tapped.

What makes ICT different is its interactive nature. The flow of communication in ICT is multidirectional. Hence, information exchanges could be simultaneously done from various points at any given time. This is a quantum leap from the unidirectional character of tri-media devices. Because of ICT, the role of tri-media in the new information environment is gradually being reengineered. The intention is not for traditional and conventional devises to compete with recent devises but to complement whatever functions and modalities are offered by ICT. New devices such as computers have now incorporated the functions of the tri-media services in its usage.

ICT is becoming an indispensable tool in our everyday lives. Computers, as basic gadgets of ICT, have become omnipresent fixtures not only in offices and schools but also in our homes. Likewise, cellular phones as personal telecommunication devices are also quickly becoming another tool for ICT, having been reinvented to function not only as two-way communication equipment but also to process information for mass communication. Hence, the information age and its real meaning have obviously dawned upon us. Nonetheless, the hardwares such as computers and cellular phones are only partial components of what ICT means. Their usefulness can only be measured by the manner by which they could be reconfigured to provide responses to peoples' daily needs.

The Philippines could not be left behind in the application of ICT in everyday life. The Filipinos' penchant for anything that is new and western as well as the flare to adopt and be adept at new technology may have given us an edge in the use and mastery of ICT. The invention and popularity of "Chikka" as a social internet-communication tool, the tag of being the texting

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capital of the world and the proliferation of various ICT-based business process outsourcing schemes in the Philippines can only show how well the Filipinos could become experts in ICT if we choose to focus on it.

Due to the expanding embrace of ICT, its significance has gradually permeated into the areas of governance and public service. Though the trend may have started from among technologically advanced countries, the reach of ICT's relevance has undoubtedly spilled-over even into less developed countries. As a matter of fact, it has even become a crucial tool in order for developing countries to catch up with the trends of development in more progressive countries considering its borderless reach and application. The use of ICT is perceived to have elevated governance into a new level of effectiveness, efficiency and economy, which are the primordial goals of public administration. It has therefore assumed an indispensable role in every country's effort to keep phase with the global trend for development and make lives of people more convenient and productive. ICT, nonetheless, could not be a panacea to poverty and other ills of the society. It may just provide the means for a faster response to some immediate needs of the community.

This study therefore aims to provide a quick glimpse at how ICT is being utilized in Philippine public administration strategies through e-governance and e-participation initiatives. It is surmised that through a rapid assessment of the extent of ICT's utilization in public administration we could possibly provide a broad awareness of how existing initiatives may be replicated, improved or popularized in order to intensify the use of ICT in the delivery of public service in the Philippines.

Background of the Study

E-Democracy

The current utilization of ICT in public administration emanates from the basic groundwork of Democracy. The freedom of speech and self expression provided for by the tenets of democracy made possible the birth and growth of information sharing and advocacy that initially began from the citizen's individual rights. Article 3, Section 4, of the Philippine Constitution categorically stipulates the inviolability of a person's right to speech, expression, the press as well as the right to peaceful assembly to complain or share grievance to the government and other people. Likewise, Article 3, Section 7, guarantees the rights of people to information on public concerns. Access to official records, documents and papers pertaining to official acts, transactions, decisions, as well as to government research data used as basis for policy development should be made available to citizens, though subject to some limitations provided by law.

ICT merely provides an updated medium by which the principles of democracy may be further experienced and exercised. Though rules and laws are fundamental and more or less permanent, it does not prevent the possibility for innovations by which they are made

operational. ICT is an innovative tool for people to be able to exercise their rights more efficiently on a wider scale. Thus, the word e-democracy is coined to impress upon people the electronic medium by which ICT is utilized in the parameters of democracy. E-democracy allows the blending of two complementing matrixes, i.e., the domain of democratic space and the realm of cyberspace.

The vastness of cyberspace allows democracy to prosper minus temporal and corporeal limitations. E-democracy's reach can thus extend to a global setting, even if many of its objectives are primarily meant only for local audience and stakeholders. Its boundaries are fenced only by the limitations of devises, interconnections that permit its operation and the technical know-how that accompanies it. When all of these requirements are met, e-democracy works virtually on its own to facilitate the steady flow of ICT. Unlike conventional democracy, e-democracy does not need representatives or a long hierarchical arrangement for people to connect and interact with one another. Just like in any democracy, however, overlapping of rights occur in the same manner that negative elements could exist in any society with the primary intention of being nuisance to others. Thus, one current setback of e-democracy is the lack or limitation of ways by which to control cyberspace delinquencies.

E-Governance

An offshoot of e-democracy is the evolution of the concept of e-governance. E-democracy ushers in an updated paradigm for governance which requires the upgrading of its parameters to the realm of cyberspace. Whether it is online campaigning, lobbying, activism, political news or citizen discussions, the politics and governance of today are going online around the world (Clift, 2004). This new paradigm would allow the entry and operation of ICT in the field of governance, hence transforming it to e-governance. Conventional governance in a democratic system reminds us of the essential interaction and collaboration of the three basic component sectors of state, civil society and the private sector (UNDP, 1997). In e-governance therefore, the three sectors are also elevated to the electronic realms of cyberspace. Meanwhile, stakeholders in e-governance are subsequently called e-citizens.

E-citizens play a vital role in a healthy and progressive e-governance. Fundamental to the existence of e-citizens is the required knowledge and capacity to understand the importance of ICT as a tool for socio-politico-economic interaction. Though not all citizens of a state may be familiar with the technology and know-how relevant in electronic interaction, it is the responsibility of e-citizens to help other citizens realize how ICT could be beneficial to them. E-citizens are also by nature orthodox citizens, hence physical interpersonal relationships are not to be set aside as essential elements of social cohesion. It should be firmly recognized that ICT is merely a tool of convenience.

The state as a regulatory and supervisory component of governance should permit and make possible, through government initiatives, the utilization of ICT in e-citizens' transactions with government entities. Leaders and managers in the state should make certain that the resources and authority given to them by citizens, as their representatives, are properly utilized according

to the general welfare and benefit of everyone. Likewise, they should guarantee that order and system are in place to assure a more comfortable life for people. If the state is unable to provide the necessary environment for ICT to prosper and be of use by people due to lack of essential resources, it should be open to the possibility of assistance from the civil society and the private sector through partnerships and collaborations.

Private sector involvement in e-governance is initially born with the lure of financial incentives. True to their nature as business enterprises, the private sector offers collaboration with government entities to be of service to them as ICT hardware suppliers and service providers. Enterprising as they are, businesses are usually the first to command expertise on the rudiments of anything, including ICT, which they eventually offer to everyone with a corresponding price tag. The role of the private sector, therefore, may appear to be motivated by vested interest. Nevertheless, they are just probably performing their basic and fundamental role in the society. Looking at the bigger picture, it should be realized that it is by the efforts and motivations of the private sector that ICT prospered as a new age tool for development. Through private-public partnership schemes, business interaction with the state are made more manifest. The businessmen's collaboration with the state is thus legitimized by mutual benefits. While businesses earn from the commodities they provide the state, the state in turn is able to gain the convenience and efficiency from the goods and services that businesses have to offer. Occasionally, the private sector offers more than simple business to the partnership. Enlightened and socially conscious businessmen, aware of their obligations as responsible citizens, reach out to the tri-sectoral nexus through various corporate social responsibility activities that are provided free to citizens.

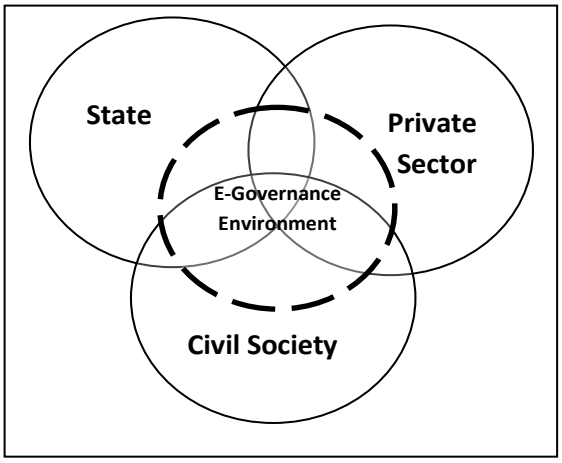


Figure 1. E-Governance Environment

Significantly assuming the social conscience role in e-governance is the civil society. It reflects the e-citizens' group consciousness and aspirations in e-democracy. There is a need for the civil society to act and be heard as a group in order to elicit enough influence from both the state and the private sector. There may be occasions when an individual e-citizen is able to conceive of valuable areas for reform and innovation in e-governance. However, initiatives of individual e-citizens would not normally gain enough strength to develop clout without the support of

other e-citizens. Advocacy and proper information dissemination are necessary in assisting individual e-citizen initiatives to gain support and results. An active civil society in an e-democracy environment guarantees a dynamic interplay that leads to good e-governance, where the elements of transparency, accountability, predictability and participation are deemed vital (ADB, 1999).

E-participation

This study revolves around the critical role of participation in the e-governance milieu of ICT. The special function put upon participation rest on the assumption concerning its prerequisite character over the other elements of governance. Although e-participation, as an aspect of e-democracy, has been studied and experimented with for more than a decade, it is still an emerging discipline (Macintosh, 2006). Participation is required to ascertain the conditions of transparency, accountability and predictability in the good governance process. Through the participation of citizens in the governmental process, leaders and managers in the state are put on their toes to make sure that they are doing what is expected from them.

Transactions in government would most likely be transparent and over board if citizens, especially the civil society as a group, are made privy to agreements and activities that the state and the private sector venture into. Likewise, predictability of public policies and services are more assured and less ambiguous if there is participation among stakeholders in the crafting of these policies. Mutually drawn guidelines relieve the stress of suspicion between providers and recipients of public services. Meanwhile, citizen participation in socio-political vigilance helps secure accountability among political leaders and public managers. Unscrupulous public officials may be deterred from their selfish motives if citizens and civil society makes them aware that they are being watched and that people knows what they are doing.

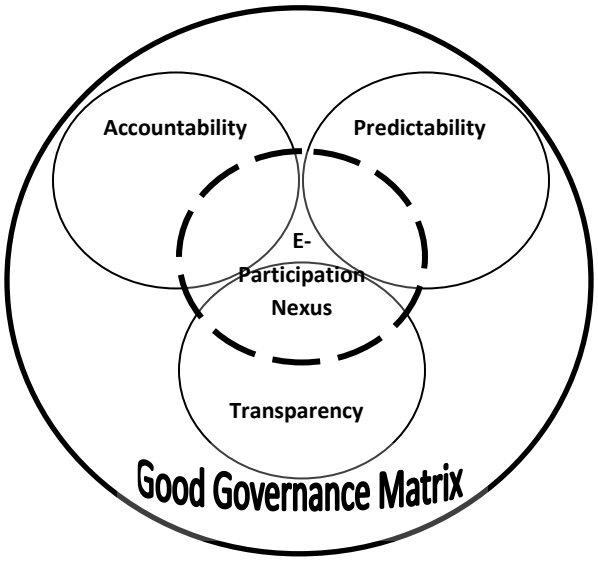


Figure 2. Good Governance Matrix

The technique of e-participation in governance as a modality of ICT is derived from the ability of e-citizens in extending the participative practice of governance to the area of cyberspace. There are two directions by which e-participation may be utilized in e-governance. The first of these directions is policymaking. Through ICT, e-citizens and civil society groups may be able to directly reach and engage policymakers as regards the directions of certain policies that could affect them. This process, however, may only take place if the policymakers are open to ICT interactive tools that could allow free ICT exchanges between the policymakers and his e-citizen constituents. Some of these tools are emails, social networking and discussion forums, SMS, blogs and twitters. There is no guarantee that policymakers would subscribe to all the suggestions and ideas of e-citizens gathered from ICT exchanges. Nevertheless, the healthy interactions that could ensue will certainly help in ventilating possible areas of disagreements and their corresponding compromises prior to the finalization of policies. At the end of the day, it is still the policymaker who has the final say concerning the actualization of policies. With the availability of ICT exchanges, however, e-citizens and civil society groups would have felt more kinship to the policies that have been created.

The second direction in the utilization of e-participation is through service delivery or policy implementation. This is somewhat a follow-through of e-participation in policymaking. E-citizens may push further their participation in e-governance by making use of mechanisms that would provide a more convenient way of implementing policies that have earlier been formalized by the state. Government programs drawn from public policies adopted by the state may be made more efficient with e-citizens' access to information and procedures through the aid of ICT. For instance, instead of physically lining up to get and file application forms for various government permits and transactions, it would be less arduous for people to simply use ICT in filing and submitting required information prior to the processing of documents. The procedure will definitely be more efficient and economical. It saves not only processing time and money but it also motivates productivity. The time and money that may be wasted in the lengthy conventional process could be channeled to other productive pursuits of e-citizens and the government.

There may be existing e-governance initiatives and strategies in some of the government offices in the Philippines today, especially with the recent creation of the Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT). However, it could still take a while before a comprehensive e-participation structure in policymaking and service delivery is experienced in the Philippine e-governance environment. Some of the assumed reasons connected to this scenario are the following: lack of financial resources to provide more extensive computerization in government offices; lack of ICT experts in the government; absence of enlightened leadership on the use of ICT in governance; absence of e-citizen and civil society involvement in advocating the use of ICT in governance; and, a disinterested private sector participation in e-governance, traumatized by the "National Broadband Network ZTE-deal" fiasco.

Framework of the Study

The primary goal of this study is to give a rapid assessment of the existence and utilization of ICT in the e-democracy environment of the Philippines. Given the diverse understanding of what ICT means, the study hopes to provide a clearer perspective of what Filipino e-citizens, both providers and users of ICT, mean by the terminology that goes beyond computers and cellular phones, which are used as basic devises in ICT. Likewise, the study hopes to get a perspective of the various operations or softwares and applications that permeates the use of ICT in the Philippines.

Following the e-democracy loop, it would be of interest to know how citizens are able to make use of e-participation as inputs to policymaking and service delivery, which are fundamental attributes of public administration and governance. The study would superficially dwell on some of the aspects by which citizen e-participation may be influencing the governance interface of the state, private sector and civil society. The extent of e-participation clout and influence may not be covered intensively by this study. Nonetheless, the initial objective is merely to assess the leads by which e-participation are being presently utilized that could facilitate further realization of how it could be improved, polished, expounded and advocated in the future.

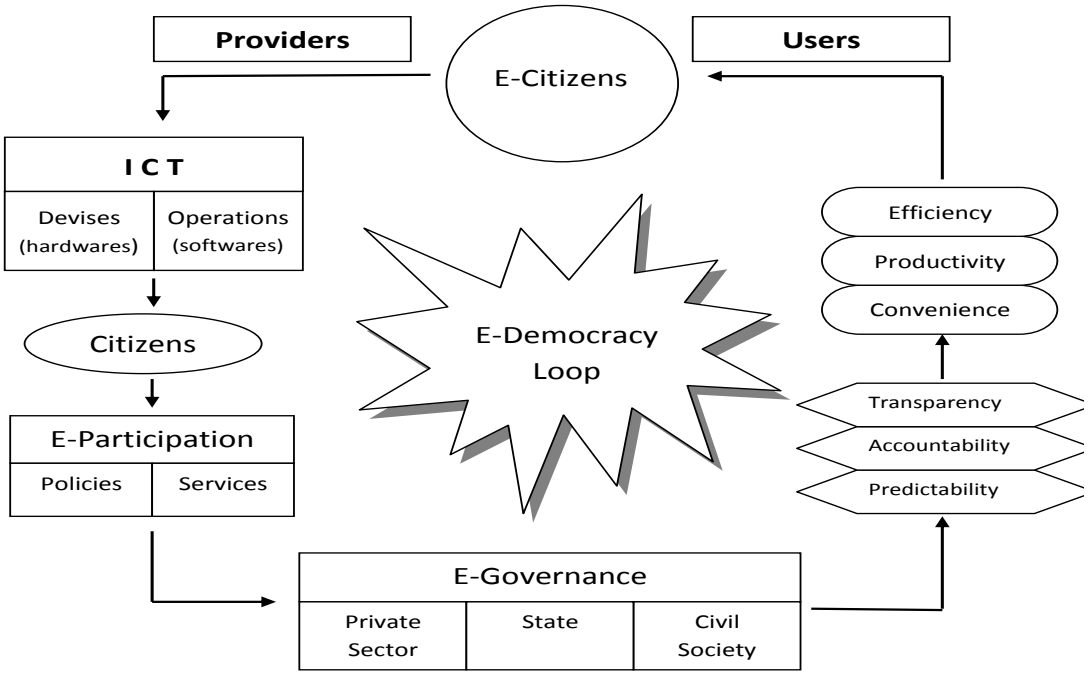


Figure 3. E-Democracy Loop

Some evaluations will be given as regards the effects of e-participation on good governance that leads to the inclination of decision makers and public managers to be transparent, accountable and predictable. Finally, aspects of efficiency, productivity and convenience as outputs of the use of ICT would be looked into prior to a quick recommendation on how ICT may be further utilized and advocated for the greater benefit of e-citizens and governance in the Philippines.

Research Methodology

The study's rapid assessment method will help determine how e-participation is currently harnessed in citizen to citizen (C2C) and citizen to government (C2G) engagements in the governance processes. The procedure consisted of (1) literature review on ICT utilization for e-governance and e-participation in both global and domestic environments; (2) focus group discussion of resource people from select members of the Association of Schools of Pubic Administration in the Philippines (ASPAP); and, (3) purposive survey on ICTs utilization from key stakeholders also from the academe, government and NGOs.

The literature review indicated the situation, developments and challenges of ICT in the global arena and in the Philippines. It provided the springboard in benchmarking and fine-tuning the study's framework vis-à-vis other countries' experiences and that of the Philippines.

The focus group discussion explored the varying perspectives and nuances of opinions regarding ICT utilization and consensus on e-participation. It aimed to obtain in-depth information on the knowledge and experiences of NGOs and academic community members (teachers and students) with ICT for participation. Three focus group discussions were organized in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. These were conducted in the three hubs of the ASPAP Exchanges Project: 1) UP National College of Public Administration and Governance, Diliman, Quezon City, with 17 participants; 2) West Visayas State University in Iloilo City, with 22 participants; and 3) Western Mindanao State University, with 15 participants. Those invited to participate in the FGDs came from the ranks of the civil society, government and academe in the area. The FGD revolved around the following questions:

1. In what ways is ICT used for e-participation in the Philippines by government, civil society organizations, and local citizens?
2. What types of ICT are used? How are these ICTs used for e-participation in the governance process?
3. How effective are these ICTs in promoting e-participation?
4. What are the challenges in using ICTs for e-participation?
5. What good practices in the use of ICT for e-participation can be identified? Can we identify examples where ICT is used for e-participation?

Meanwhile, the study's survey used a questionnaire that explored two key areas: (a) an indicative profiling of ICTs in terms of types, access, usage, and purposes for use of ICT devices; and (b) a probe into the effectiveness of ICTs as e-participation tools in governance. Purposive sampling was applied to the identification of respondents. The respondents came from four (4) member-schools of the ASPAP. These schools were: Western Visayas State University (WVSU), Western Mindanao State University (WMSU), University of the Santo Tomas (UST), and National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG-UP) of the University of the Philippines. Except for UST, the aforementioned ASPAP-member universities constitute three of the six core regional universities that presently serve as ICT hubs of the 120 ASPAP-member colleges and universities. Respondents from the WVSU and WMSU were heterogeneous groups coming from various sectors (academe, NGOs/POs, national government agencies and local government units) within the metropolitan and nearby areas. The respondents from the UP-NCPAG and UST are homogenous group comprising part-time graduate students who, in their professional full-time capacities, are working with national government agencies, local government units, nongovernmental organizations or with the private sector.

The questionnaire contained items that elicit data on respondents; data on ICT devices and their utilization, purposes for and benefits derived from use, means and frequency of access and use, access and use of government website; and, data on actual use and assessment of ICT devices for participation in governance areas.

The survey had a total of 215 respondents. Since the study is simply a rapid assessment to get an idea of the use of ICTs for e-participation, which is essentially exploratory in nature, the statistical tools applied are basically descriptive statistics. To a certain extent, cross-tabulation was also utilized as it is deemed necessary and appropriate.

Related Literature and Studies

The Global Reach of ICT

The expanding sphere and influence of ICT in contemporary times cannot be simply undermined. Since the inception of internet technology in the 1960s, countless studies have been done to plot the development and the growing interface of ICT in our everyday lives. Computer technology has outgrown itself from the independent and stand-alone machines meant initially to compute and process data to repositories of electronic information that may be freely accessible to e-citizens anywhere in the world at any given time. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), an organization attached to the United Nations (UN) family of organizations (www.itu.int), has a continuing study and information gathering mechanism as regards the status of ICT in the world today. Strengthened by the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) held in Geneva in December 2003, ITU has been given more impetus with the creation of a WSIS Plan of Action.

ITU maintains a database of statistical ICT profiles of various countries around the world. As a UN agency, ITU's mandate is to identify, define, and produce statistics covering the telecommunications/ ICT sector. In order to ensure a more interactive collaboration among various international organizations in the monitoring and advocacy of ICT utilization for development around the world, ITU promotes its recent program on Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development. The program is a collaboration of the following 11 UN organizations: ITU, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), World Bank, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat). The Partnership's primary motivation is to help close the global ICT gap among countries in the world by monitoring the information divide through statistics and analytical reports between and within countries.

ICT facts and figures provided by the ITU report a consistent upward trend in the growth of mobile cellular subscription since 1998 which is estimated to reach 4.6 billion by the end of 2009. Also in 2009, about 1.9 billion people, over a quarter of the world's population, have been known to have access to computers and internet at home. Mobile broadband subscription has significantly risen, overtaking fixed broadband subscribers in 2008, demonstrating huge potentials for mobile internet. Nonetheless, these do not necessarily translate to equal distribution of ICT opportunity for all. The report also illustrates a dramatic broadband divide among rich and poor countries. For instance, there is only one fixed broadband subscriber for every 1,000 people in Africa while there are 200 subscribers for every 1,000 people in Europe.

One of the basic literatures made available by ITU refers to a guide on how to measure the ICT access of households and individuals (ITU, 2009a). The manual is a relevant tool by which data collection and gathering on ICT may be standardized among the Information Society (OECD, 2009). The material helps in-country statistics to cohere with data that are gathered from various countries and thus provide internationally comparable and consistent information. It is primarily intended for official statisticians of developing economies so they could facilitate more effective ICT benchmarking strategies with those of developed economies. Some of the ICT indicators covered by the manual include areas of infrastructure, products, demand and supply, and information and electronic content. Related to the ITU manual is another ICT standardized measurement guide relating to some of the other ICT components, namely: ICT demand by businesses and ICT supply, contained in the UNCTAD 2009 Manual on the Production of Statistics on the Information Economy (UNCTAD, 2009).

The ICT Development Index (IDI) may be regarded as another modality that affords additional perspectives of ICT capability comparisons among countries (ITU, 2009b). Its publication is in response to requests from ITU members to develop a single ITU index to track the digital divide and measure countries' progress towards becoming information societies. The Index captures the level of advancement of ICTs in more than 150 countries worldwide and compares their

progress made between 2002 and 2007. Its main objective is to provide policy makers with a useful tool to benchmark and assess their information society developments and to monitor progress that has been made globally in order to close the digital divide. Indicators are grouped according to the three areas of ICT access, ICT usage and ICT skills. While access and usage are given equal weight of 40%, skills is given a 20% rate of relevance. Some of the indicators included in the index are the following: fixed telephone lines, mobile cellular telephone subscription, internet users, fixed broadband subscribers, mobile broadband subscribers, adult literacy rate, secondary gross enrollment ratio and tertiary gross enrollment ratio.

The IDI noted significant improvement in all countries covered by the index in the five-year period between 2002 and 2007. This lucidly shows that global ICT access and usage are progressively improving. Overall findings of the study reveal that growth in ICT usage can only follow a high level of ICT access. Hence, those countries that already had high access value in 2002 have developed more ICT usage in 2007. On the other hand, countries with low ICT access values in 2002 merely struggled to increase their ICT access in 2007 with the development of ICT usage lagging behind. There thus exist an obvious correlation between ICT level and GDP status among countries. Economically developed countries show higher ICT levels compared to developing and less developed economies. For instance, there is marked disparity that exists between internet users of developed countries and developing countries. While developed countries registered 55.4% user rate in 2007, developing countries barely had 13% user rate for the same year.

The digital divide between have and have-not countries remains huge (Sciadas, 2005). Their difference is vastly separated by decades of development. Least developed ICT countries are notably concentrated in Africa and some areas of Asia where state resources are directed merely for basic survival. Nevertheless, though it does not in the large picture show the closing of the digital divide, Sciadas' study still exhibits significant improvement in the ICT status of many countries from 1995 to 2003. Some semblance of a closing gap appears considerably between countries in the middle and those on the top.

Venturing further at the ICT status of developing and developed economies facilitated the publication of *The Global Information Society: A Statistical View* (UN, 2008a). The literature's primary motivation is to help countries measure the role that the information society plays in economic and social development. As a precursor of the IDI, it may be considered as the first coherent attempt to rationalize the aggregation of the global ICT status and practices since the creation of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development in 2004. It included a core list of ICT indicators in education that is not included in earlier ICT statistical publications. Initial result of the study, however, bares the fact that ICT in/for education is not prominent in many country's public policy agenda. This finding paved the way for the "partnership" to re-engineer ICT survey instruments to elicit more explicit basis of the global status of ICT in education.

Complementing the studies on the global trend of ICT is another ITU publication that aims to look at how countries may be able to monitor and measure ICTs in villages and rural areas in order to help analyze the digital divide not only between countries but also within countries

(ITU, 2008). The literature provided perspectives by which ICT in villages may be measured in spite of the problems faced by the scope and definition of villages in various countries around the world. Among all indicators, the study makes known the lowest access to internet connectivity as most pronounced. This is understandable, considering the fact that electrification, which has been made part of the study, has not yet even reached substantial portions of Asian and African countries.

ICT for Governance and Participation

A considerable number of studies have already been done to facilitate the connection between ICT and governance around the world. Most of these studies are firmly anchored on the belief that ICT is one of the most efficient, if not most effective, tools to good governance. ICT's role as a participative mechanism for development could not just be taken for granted. Apparently, from an incremental evolutionary perspective, e-government already impacts participatory democracy in the following areas: where there is active interaction between civil society and government; where the technology allows and affords emerging interest in participatory democracy; and, where the political environment encourages the institution of online democracy (Clift, 2004). The assumptions bring one to a realization that ICT knits people closer to democracy in the same way that democracy allows wider use of ICT for development.

Steven Clift identifies 10 practical steps for e-government support of democracy (Clift, 2007):

1. Timely and personalized access to information that matters
2. Help elected officials receive and sort information, then better understand and respond to e-mail
3. Dedicate at least 10% of new e-government developments to democracy
4. Announce all government public meetings on the internet in a uniform manner
5. Allow citizens to look-up all of their elected officials from the very local to national in one search
6. Host online public meetings and dialogues (e-consultations)
7. Embrace the rule of law by mandating the most democratically empowering online services and rights across the whole of government
8. Promote dissemination through access to raw data from decisionmaking information systems
9. Fund open source sharing internationally across e-government
10. Localize ICT access and utilization to close the gap of the digital divide

There have been claims, however, that point to the limiting sphere of ICT. Other than its elitist tendency of being exclusive only to those who can afford and understand the technology, there is also an impression that current ICT practices are impoverishing democracy since most government websites do not provide interactive modalities where people could freely share their thoughts to the government and much less to one another (Clift, 2008). There is therefore a need to broaden the embrace of e-participation in order to ascertain the democratic privileges that ICT provide. ICT for governance does not mean that only a limited group of

experts and decisionmakers should possess the control and power of technology and merely inform the others later of decisions and directions taken. The e-participation component of ICT requires the need to empower citizens and individuals in the political, socio-technological and cultural milieu to make them more capably involved in e-governance (Fuchs, et al, 2006). Hence, e-participation efforts should initially be directed to developing people's awareness and capabilities in ICT and governance in order to allow them the opportunity to co-operate and self-organize for the purpose of good governance. A bottom-up strategy in ICT e-participation development is deemed as a more appropriate approach to facilitate e-governance. Apparently, there is an obvious need to first close the knowledge gap in order to bridge the digital divide.

Responding to the realization for a bottom-up approach to ICT participation to development, a collection of case studies in India looks at how efforts should initially be focused on closing the rural-urban or north-south divide in the attempt to close the digital divide (Harris and Rajora, 2006). Its primary motivation is to look at how ICT could help in the government's goal in alleviating poverty by empowering the poor and making them direct participants of development. For instance, in 2002, the United Nations Development Programme in collaboration with the Department of Personnel and Training organized the Janmitra Project in Jhalawar, Rajasthan. The Project aimed at building the capacity of public authorities for improving citizens' access to information to achieve transparency and accountability in governance at all levels. One of the primary objectives of the project was to establish one-stop contact points for citizens to access various government services and information. In this regard, a rural intranet of 30 Community Information Centers (CICs) was established in some 17 villages to provide e-governance, e-education, e-health and e-commerce services to the villagers. To complement its services, and to serve as extra income to the operators, the CICs also function as stamp vendors, petition writers, computer education providers, and desktop publishing providers. The project was considered a success owing to the growing number of CICs soon after the project was launched and the expanding patronage and additional services that the network catered to.

A similar approach was done in Gangtok, Sikkim which was sponsored by the joint efforts of the Department of Information Technology of the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, National Information Centre and the state governments of the North-Eastern states of India in September 2000. The project entails the set up of 40 CICs in various areas of Gangtok. Through the CICs, rural folks are able to participate equally in the contemporary world of cybernetics that bridges the gap between the connected elite and the non-connected masses. In addition to Government to Citizen (G2C) services, each CIC provides internet access, e-mail, document printing, data entry and word processing, and ICT training of the local populace. One of the key realizations of the Sikkim project is that without community involvement and participation, no government intervention can help in alleviating poverty and providing efficient governance through the use of ICT. Likewise, due to the lack of government resources for its sustainability, management and operation of the project should be given to local bodies or voluntary organizations. There is a prevailing impression that private organizations and non-government organizations are much more capable in ICT initiatives for

development (Jagadish, 2004). The private sector often has a stronger economic motivation to make things work while NGOs seem to play its role more perfectly in developmental works.

In yet another program contained in the Harris and Rajora study, a non-government organization led the initiative in the utilization of ICT for community development. The Vidyal Information Service Provider (VISP) project in Tamil Nadu was created in 2003 through the initiative and sponsorship of the Activist for Social Alternatives (ASA). ASA is a registered non-government organization working for more than 17 years as Grameen microfinance replicated in South India. Its thrust is anchored on the empowerment of the rural poor and socially disadvantaged through microcredit and education programs. It has about 60,000 women members in the five districts of Tamil Nadu. The VISP project piggybacks its ICT effort on the positive synergy developed by its microfinance scheme among women members that has been adopted from the success of the Grameen Trust in Bangladesh. It highlights the current efforts for gender equality in India, with the understanding that ICTs are not gender-neutral, i.e., they are not accessed, managed and controlled by all men and women equally (Hijab and Zambrano, 2008). The project facilitated the establishment of Community Technology Centres (CTCs) in several villages through soft and long-term loans provided by ASA to member women entrepreneurs. Through minimal charges imposed on users, CTCs' services included the access to prevailing prices of agricultural commodities, information on horoscopes and rural market places, healthcare services, grievance redress, provision of government forms, web browsing, job search, basic computer education, etc.

The ASEAN Region reflects an extreme representation of ICT usage for governance among its member countries. It is an interesting case study of an enormous digital divide that is brought about by financial and political diversity among neighboring states. The ICT status in Southeast Asia ranges from the high-tech sophistication of the wired city-state of Singapore and the struggling technological capability of Laos or Cambodia. As early as 2001, Singapore was already considered as one of the most advanced telecommunication networks in the world with very high level of access (Minges, Ismail and Press, 2001). It is also one of the first countries in Asia to get an internet connection in the 1980s. Understandably, this has been due to its small size as well as the rising level of income of its citizens. Early internet connection to the outside world was largely facilitated by the academe, with the National University of Singapore leading the way in exchanging electronic knowledge and information with the City University of New York in 1987 and Princeton University in 1990. Most recently, Singapore is considered by international benchmarking studies as a leading e-government that other countries could emulate.

The success of e-governance strategy in Singapore comes in several phases (www.igov.gov.sg):

> *First Phase: Civil Service Computerization Program (1980 – 1999)*
> The primary aim of the Civil Service Computerization program was the improvement of public administration through the effective utilization of ICT. The program involved the automation and paperless internal operation of the government for greater efficiency. It

eventually evolved to one-stop services for private sector interaction with the government and the consolidation of government computing resources.

Second Phase: E-government Action Plan I (eGAP I: 2000 – 2003)
The conceptualization of eGAP I rationalizes the vision of Singapore to become one of the leading e-governments in the world. This was actualized through the following programs: Electronic Services Delivery, Knowledge-based Workplace, Technology Experimentation, Operational Efficiency Improvement, Adaptive and Robust ICT, and ICT Education.

Third Phase: E-government Action Plan II (eGAP II: 2003 – 2006)
The goal of eGAP II is to carry on with the earlier effort of eGAP I and develop a more user friendly and accessible ICT interface among citizens and the government of Singapore. Its outcome is focused on three fundamental aspirations: Customer Delight, Connected Citizens and a Networked Government.

Fourth Phase: iGov2010 (2006 – 2010)
iGov2010 is the Singapore government's five-year masterplan for a continuing national ICT plan. It is founded on four guiding thrust: Increasing Richness and Reach of E-services, Increasing Citizens Mindshare in E-engagement, Enhancing the Synergy and Capacity in Government, and Enhancing the National Competitive Advantage.

Fifth Phase: iN2015 (2010 – 2015)
Intelligent Nation 2015 or iN2015 builds on the accomplishments of iGov2010. It aspires for the vision of Singapore as a Global City that is powered by ICT. It strolls along the guiding objectives of innovation, integration and internationalization. iN2015 sets a new leverage in the development of ICT for governance around the world.

Singapore's continuing accomplishments in the utilization of e-governance is only matched by their determined thrust to outpace themselves in the arena of ICT, as shown by their conspicuously planned intentions to make Singapore number one in ICT development. The country has already received various awards and accolades from different institutions and organizations worldwide as a flourishing example of the use ICT for good governance.

Least developed countries in Southeast Asia like Laos and Cambodia, however, have unfortunate difficulties in catching up with the e-governance advancements of Singapore. Laos, for instance, was one of the last Southeast Asian countries to adopt the internet. Other than the obvious lack of resources and know-how, one of the main barriers to internet development in Laos is the lack of coordination. Initially, there was no clear definition which government agency should be directly in charge of ICT policies (Minges and Gray, 2002). Some semblance of an ICT plan for e-governance was only made available in 2007 at a UNESCO conference on Asia Pacific Information Network in Malaysia (Saysuliane, 2007). From November 2007 to November 2009, the National Authority for Science and Technology, in collaboration with a Chinese ICT company through a concessional loan from the Chinese government, has been mandated to realize the following ICT components in order to catch up with the global trend of e-

governance: establish an e-government infrastructure; acquire ICT equipment for government organizations; develop appropriate and cost-effective e-government applications; and, enhance ICT human resource development (Phissamay, 2009).

Cambodia's ICT predicament may just be similar, if not worst than that of Laos. As late as 1999, the Cambodian government did not yet have an explicit ICT vision with which to promote the use of the internet, and much less, how the government could utilize ICT in public service and governance (Minges, Gray and Firth, 2002). Other than Myanmar, where data and study on ICT is negligible due to its peculiar socio-political situation, Cambodia has the distinction of having the lowest internet penetration in Southeast Asia. This was due mainly from the exorbitant cost of internet access, which at US$3.99 per hour was considered the highest internet service price in the world in 2001. It was only after the creation of the National Information Communications Technology Development Authority in August 2000 that the government started to give sense to ICT and e-governance development in Cambodia (Phu, 2006).

E-governance and E-participation Experience in the Philippines

The status of ICT and e-governance in the Philippines cannot be put comparably close to Singapore's recent experience. Nonetheless, the country is considered better-off than any of its neighbors in Southeast Asia in its early attempts to utilize ICT for governance. Government computerization in the Philippines goes as far back as 1959, when an IBM mainframe computer was installed in the Bureau of Lands (Minges, Magpantay, Firth and Kelly, 2002). The National Computer Center (NCC) was established in 1971 as an agency in charge of government computerization, earlier than any of its neighbors in Southeast Asia. Somewhere along the way, however, the Philippines had gradually been overtaken by world development in e-governance. In 2003, the Philippines still ranked sixth among the top 20 countries in the e-participation index of the World Public Sector Report (UN, 2003):

Table 1. E-participation Index 2003, Top 20 Countries

Country	E-participation Index
1 United Kingdom	1.000
2 United States	0.966
3 (tie) Canada	0.828
3 (tie) Chile	0.828
4 Estonia	0.759
5 New Zealand	0.690
6 Philippines	0.672
7 (tie) France	0.638
7 (tie) Netherlands	0.638
8 Australia	0.621
9 Mexico	0.603
10 (tie) Argentina	0.586
10 (tie) Ireland	0.586
10 (tie) Sweden	0.586
11 Germany	0.534
12 Republic of Korea	0.483
13 (tie) Italy	0.466
13 (tie) Singapore	0.466

14 (tie) Switzerland	0.466
15 Denmark	0.448

The e-participation Index assesses the relevance and usefulness of per country website assessment and the e-government Readiness Index from the point of view of people's ability to engage in dialogue with their government as consumers of public services and to participate in the political process as citizens. Three criteria were followed in ranking the indexes based on existing government websites: e-information, as regards the contents of government websites; e-consultation, in reference to consultation mechanisms that appear in government websites; and e-decisionmaking, in relation to government actions and feedback to citizens' ICT inputs. In the same study, however, the Philippines ranked only 33rd globally and 4th in South and Eastern Asia with regard to the e-government Readiness Index where one of the major consideration is the capability and willingness of countries to provide ICT in government institutions.

Table 2. E-government Readiness Rankings in South and Eastern Asia, 2003

Country	E-government Readiness Index
Singapore	0.746
Republic of Korea	0.744
Japan	0.693
Philippines	0.574
Malaysia	0.524
Brunei Darussalam	0.459
Thailand	0.446
Indonesia	0.422
China	0.416
Viet Nam	0.357
Mongolia	0.343
Myanmar	0.280
Cambodia	0.264
Lao People's Democratic Republic	0.192
Timor-Leste	0.087

In 2008, the Philippines made a tremendous downslide in the E-government Readiness Index, falling to 66th place globally. It kept its 4th spot in Southeast Asia but was significantly overtaken by Malaysia and Thailand in a grouping where Japan, Korea and China have been transferred to another regional group (UN, 2008b). In the same year, the Philippines completely lost its status in the global standing of the E-participation Index where it is found nowhere among the top 35 countries. The Philippines performed poorly due mainly to the lack of new and more significant strategies, especially in the area of e-consultation. The quality and relevance of e-participation in the country has gone down compared to other countries where more innovative and efficient mechanisms have been put in place. The decline may have also been brought about by the lack of a champion who would aggressively push for sustained e-governance development efforts, unlike in the 1960s and 1970s where then Executive Secretary Alejandro Melchor was considered instrumental in the facilitation of the use of ICT for governance (Minges, Magpantay, Firth and Kelly, 2002).

Table 3. E-Government Readiness for South-Eastern Asia

Country	2008 Index	2005 Index	2008 Ranking	2005 Ranking
Singapore	0.7009	0.8503	23	7
Malaysia	0.6063	0.5706	34	43
Thailand	0.5031	0.5518	64	46
Philippines	0.5001	0.5721	66	41
Brunei Darussalam	0.4667	0.4475	87	73
Viet Nam	0.4558	0.3640	91	105
Indonesia	0.4107	0.3819	106	96
Cambodia	0.2989	0.2989	139	128
Myanmar	0.2922	0.2959	144	129
Timor-Leste	0.2462	0.2512	155	144
Lao People's Democratic Republic	0.2383	0.2421	156	147

The Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT) acts as the primary policy, planning, coordinating, implementing, regulating and administrative body in charge of developing and promoting a strategic ICT system for the Philippines (www.cict.gov.ph). Though created only in 2004, hence postdating the creation of the NCC, CICT has taken responsibility in the general direction of ICT development in the country, not only for its more extensive commercialization but also for its effective utilization in governance. Through the National Computer Center (NCC) as the e-governance arm of the Philippine government, the CICT is able to monitor the state of ICT in the Philippine government (www.ncc.gov.ph). In 2004 – 2005 NCC conducted a series of studies on the extent of e-governance in the Philippines. The studies were categorized into 5 parts, namely, availability of ICT resources in government, ICT human resources and organization, barriers to the adoption of ICT, application of ICT resources, and investments in ICT resources.

The NCC study on the availability of ICT resources in government gave an assessment of the extent of ICT hardware and connectivity in government agencies (Bautista, et al, 2005a). The study covered all national government agencies, including regional offices, government-owned and controlled corporations and financial institutions of the country. The ensuing report of the study was divided into 6 segments corresponding to response rate, local area network, intranet, internet, email address and website. Respondents of the study came from 57% of targeted central offices, 52% of attached bureaus and agencies and 48% of regional offices. Findings of the study revealed that 94% of the respondents from central offices, 87% from attached bureaus and agencies and 74% from regional offices have local area network in their respective offices. The use of internet is present in all respondents of central offices, 97% of attached bureaus and agencies and 64% of regional offices. Surprisingly, though internet connectivity is high among central offices, only the National Economic and Development Authority registered a 100% official email address for all its employees. All other respondents from other central

offices had less than 50% of their employees with official email address, with the Department of Public Works and Highways registering the least number at 3%. Also, while all central offices were found to have official websites, only 88% of attached bureaus and offices and 27% of regional offices were reported to have official websites.

With regard to the ICT human resources and organization study, the final report gave an account and description of the manpower components of government agencies in 2004 (Bautista, et al, 2005b). All central office respondents indicated the existence of ICT units in their respective agencies. However, only 73% of attached bureaus and agencies and 35% of regional offices have specialized ICT units. The study also showed that the most needed but deficient ICT skill in central offices is systems analysis and design, while programmers are found most inadequate in attached bureaus and agencies and training managers insufficient in regional offices.

The NCC study on the barriers to the adoption of ICT gave three outstanding rationalizations to the apparently slow development of e-governance in the Philippines. It appears that the foremost constraint to the more active adoption of ICT in Philippine government is the high cost of both equipment and technology involved. The second reason given by the respondents is the low level of ICT skills among employees, while the third most frequent reason given is the difficulty of recruiting or retaining ICT personnel in government (Bautista, et al, 2005c). The other components of the NCC series of studies are still to be finalized and have not yet been released for public consumption as of the writing of this paper.

Congruent to the NCC e-governance studies, the Center periodically releases a report on the status of the utilization of Short Messaging Service (SMS) in the government. As of the last quarter of 2009, NCC reported that 60 out of 324 identified national government agencies are making use of SMS for e-participation in order to augment traditional public services of the government (NCC-CICT, 2009). The services are available to the general public through the mobile phone 'texting' modality. The mechanics varies from simple access of information; sending of complaints, comments or recommendations; downloading of graphics or ring tones; reporting of crimes; and, payment of taxes. This scheme merely highlights the country's reputation as the SMS capital of the world, given the Filipinos' fondness for text-messaging. As mentioned in another study, SMS may also be utilized in elections to mobilize political actions (Lallana, 2006).

Several actions have already been done to localize e-governance in the Philippine. In this regard, a number of studies relating to e-governance in the local government units have also been accomplished. One of these studies made an assessment of city government websites in various regions of the country (Siar, 2005). It particularly looks at the extent by which cities, as local governments, are able to implement e-governance with websites as their medium. There were 114 cities included in the study. The website relevance and interactivity of each city was assessed by looking at three primary parameters: website content, usability and responsiveness. Results of the study revealed that website contents of cities are normally insufficient and quality is mediocre. Most of the websites contain only superficial information

about the cities' physical, cultural and political characteristics. The more substantive information such as e-government transactions and policy guidelines are usually wanting. With regard to usability, though physical appearance ratings are high, they are ranked low in the availability of search tools and site maps. Most pathetic, however, is the very poor responsiveness rating of city government websites where 72% of test-emails sent to website registered email addresses did not get any response.

A study on the localization of e-governance highlighted e-participation as an essential tool to make possible more significant improvements in ICT for governance among local government units (LGUs). The study specifically analyzes the importance of people's participation in the Jumpstarting Electronic Governance in Local Government Units (e-LGU) project of the NCC (Alampay, 2006). The e-LGU project was conceived by NCC as a mechanism to expedite computerization and e-governance in LGUs of the country. The study examines how e-participation should be made a necessary component of website development, revenue generation systems and the Community eCenter (CeC) of the e-LGU project. As a major recommendation, the study suggests that a culture in government that values information and knowledge sharing should be created to warrant a more successful e-governance not only at the national level but also at the local level.

With the goal to harmonize and put coherence to the government's e-participation effort, the CICT conceptualized the CeC roadmap to serve as a guide for a more rational approach to e-participation in the Philippines (CICT, 2008). CeCs are patterned after India's CICs, where a more bottom-up approach to e-governance is attempted. The roadmap is perhaps what Alampay's study was referring to with its goal to make local e-governance more responsive to the needs of the people who access them. There must be a diverse yet harmonious direction in the implementation of CeCs, which in July 2007 already numbered at 755. Hence, the CeC roadmap has adopted as guiding principles the following values: Participation and inclusion, where stakeholders are included in all levels of the program; Focus on the unserved, underserved and vulnerable groups specially children, women and senior citizens; Global perspective but Filipino in spirit; and, Respect and promotion of socio-cultural values and cultural diversity.

In a related study on the CeC, an assessment was conducted to evaluate the success of the CeCs and how the system could be best optimized for e-governance in the Philippines (Alampay and Umali, 2007). The study identified two types of modalities in e-governance, i.e., top-down approach and bottom-up approach. The top-down approach is a government led initiative where ICT techniques and services are provided by the government institutions to various stakeholders or the general public as its client. Bottom-up approach, on the other hand, is a community or civil society led ICT activities that aim to fill up the gap between government and public service. Other than the basic computerization and ICT services provided by CeCs to its target clients such as computer data processing, internet access, ICT trainings, internet telephony and other allied business and office services, the study identified other "killer e-governance applications" that could uphold the real interactive governance goals of CeCs. Using either the top-down or bottom-up approach of e-governance, this may be done through the following programs:

Education and Human Development

Some of the more known strategies under this program are distance learning, where CeCs may be used to hook up to a government centralized hub in facilitating knowledge transfer through the usual internet exchanges or with the use of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) mechanisms; skills enhancement, where participants may go to CeCs to be trained by LGU experts on ICT skills; accreditation, a scheme where CeCs are made as extensions of skills accreditation agencies such as the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority; and, special education ICT centers, where specialized ICT skills development may be offered to persons with disability.

Citizen Empowerment

CeCs may be utilized to provide more focused information on socio-economic concerns such as in agriculture, education, environment, health and other relevant topics for development. As a modality for self-expression, CeCs could teach the people how to use emails, blogs and websites as tools on how to reach out to others and be heard. A community-based monitoring system, that it could eventually share in the internet, may also be initiated by the Center in relation to understanding better the population profile of a given community.

Direct Government Services

CeCs could serve as one-stop-shops for government transactions such as applications for birth certificates, barangay clearance and permits, passport renewal, payment of utilities and community taxes, and other government documents that may be processed on-line.

Public Health

In collaboration with community health centers, the CeCs may assist in the information dissemination of preventive medicine, reproductive health care and traditional herbal medicines. It may also be utilized by the health centers to exchange expertise among them, as well as to request assistance of medical experts from advance medical institutions.

Agriculture Promotion

CeCs may partner with government agricultural institutions to provide necessary information to rural folks on more beneficial schemes and technology on farming, fishing and livestock raising that could encourage agricultural productivity and competitiveness.

E-commerce and Small and Medium Enterprises Development

Facilities and services of government business and economic agencies such as the Department of Trade and Industry, Technology Resource Center and the Center for International Trade, Exposition and Mission may be tapped by the CeCs to harness their existing programs for community entrepreneurial development.

Marketing and Tourism

The One Town One Product program of the government as well as various tourist destinations of the country may be further advocated by utilizing the CeCs' capability in sustaining and maintaining internet websites that are devoted to their information campaign.

Jobs Creation

Linking the CeCs with the Public Employment Service Office of the LGUs and the Department of Labor and Employment's job assistance offices would facilitate a more efficient way of job matching. VoIP may also be used to interview applicants through the CeCs. Hence, recruitment and selection would be made easier and cost effective.

Results of Focus Group Discussions

The FGD aimed to obtain in-depth information on the knowledge and experience of the NGO and academic community members (teachers and students) using ICT for participation in governance in the Philippines. The findings from the FGD are discussed along the following key topics:

- Types of ICT used and Areas of Governance
- Effectiveness of ICT as tool for participation
- Challenges and constraints in the use of ICT for participation

Types of ICT and Areas of Governance

Information

One of the major uses of ICT in governance identified in the FGD is for information. In particular, the internet has been cited as the most common means by which information is accessed. Data and information needed for research work was one of the major reasons for accessing the internet. Many types of digital content like text-based materials, pictures and videos can be downloaded from the internet. This finding coincides with the survey results where website/webpage is identified as the most common participation tool used by citizens for getting information on any topic.

The FGD participants cited how government agencies that maintain a website are able to inform the public about the kinds of program and services they provide. Students with research assignments about government offices and their policies and programs found this very useful. The necessity of physically going to specific government agencies to get information has been reduced and can thus be subsequently converted to savings in time and transport fares.

Among the NGO participants, internet is a very useful and easy means for sharing information with each other. Emails, social networking and blogs are very popular media for information exchanges. This has also been found true among students and youths.

Employment

Information about job opportunities is also conveniently facilitated in the internet. It was noted, particularly in the Metro Manila FGD, that the government actively promotes employment in ICT such as BPOs and call centers. It was mentioned, for example, that the Commission on Information and Communication Technology has initiated a convergence of efforts in Region 3 with BPOs to create job opportunities for the youths.

Public services

Increasingly, a number of public services provided by government can already be availed of through the internet. Application forms for specific services can be downloaded and submitted online. One of these is getting a passport. Participants shared that it is no longer necessary for them to go to the Department of Foreign Affairs to apply for a passport. Application can already be done through the internet. And with the use of special courier, passport can be delivered to one's residence. The same is true with birth certificate. Application can also be done online and delivery may be done through special courier arrangements.

The ability of ICT to provide instant response mechanisms has also been mentioned. The FGD respondents noted that mobile phones are popularly used by government agencies to provide information to its specific clients. For example, some respondents pointed out that as GSIS members, the agency notifies them through text messages that their yearly dividends are already released. The Philippine National Police also has hotline mobile phone numbers that can be accessed for assistance or for reporting crime or other incidents. Other agencies that have been cited that provide hotline cell phone numbers to the public include the LFTRB and the LTO.

Mobile phones are popularly used for text messages. But if one wants to talk to someone at the other end, telephones remain an important communication technology alternative for quick response at least cost. As a hotline connection, the effectiveness of the tool can only be realized if there are people specifically assigned to directly answer citizens' report, complaints or queries. In the words of one participant, *"ang galing kasi yung tao wala siyang gagawin kundi sumagot"* in reference to MMDA's public assistance action hotline number where a person is assigned specifically to respond to public questions and complaints regarding accidents and traffic involving the C-5 Kalayaan road. This builds good impression of the efficiency of the agency and assures the public that government is taking action on citizens' reports or complaints.

Some government to government transactions are also done online. For example, a participant from the local government narrated that they are using the internet for submitting reports to the Bureau of Internal Revenue and loan applications to Government Service Insurance System. Office memos and communications are also circulated widely when uploaded in their website

Policy advocacy

One of the most promising uses of internet that emerged in the FGD is in the area of policy advocacy. There is much popularity in the use of online petition/advocacy by civil society groups. NGOs in the south particularly the Moro NGOs have used online petition in advocating peace process and cessation of hostilities. Using this medium has enabled the group to target a bigger audience. The online petition is able to extend its reach not only locally but to international groups as well. As shared by an NGO representing the Moro people, their online petition has reached the European Commission and has interested the Commission enough for it to send a representative to observe the peace process. They think that international participation even through observation alone can help in pushing for their advocacy and contribute in finding solution to the peace issue.

Fund raising

Social networking and blogs have also served as mechanism for generating financial contributions in support of local projects and causes. This is the experience shared by the NGO from Mindanao. A typhoon that visited the place had destroyed the local 'madrasa' but the local community did not have funds to rebuild it. The NGO launched a one-peso fund raising campaign in the internet. By just posting it in the internet, the fund campaign quickly circulated in the social network and blogs. In just two weeks, the group was able to generate an amazing Php 200,000.00.

Agriculture

ICT has also been applied in agriculture. The West Visayas State University in Iloilo City has implemented an agricultural project with West Visayas Agriculture Resources and Research Consortium with funding from PCARRD in Los Banos and in partnership with a private internet service provider. The project deployed ICT equipment and internet connection to selected local government units for the purpose of giving farmers a facility that they can use to access information and expert advice on agriculture. Farmers also used the cell phones to text queries to agricultural experts.

Education

The use ICT in education has repeatedly been mentioned. Some educators in the FGD shared that the Department of Education and Commission on Information and Communication Technology have undertaken a joint program to enhance elementary and high school education

using ICT. The program called 'iSchool' aimed to equip public high school teachers and students with ICT literacy skills and provide them access to relevant digital content and applications in education to enhance learning.

The Iloilo participants from the academe have also pointed out that the faculties are increasingly using computers and internet for teaching. Some faculty members upload their lectures in the internet so that their students in satellite campuses, or those enrolled in the distance learning mode, can download and work on them.

Some academics noted that with the advancement of ICT, students have become more assertive in demanding that their school use ICT applications in procedures such as subject enrolment and tuition fee payments. And as students increasingly use their own laptops in schools, they have also been vocal about asking their school administration to provide 'wifi' connections in the campus.

Disaster Risk Management

A participant from Iloilo City recounted how the city government is already using ICT in the conduct of flood hazard and vulnerability mapping of the Iloilo river system as part of its disaster risk reduction and management program. Flooding is a serious issue in the city and the province. It may be recalled that the city had experienced devastation and severe flash-flooding spawned by destructive storm Frank in June 2008. In the aftermath of this tragedy, it was also mentioned in the FGD that some private individuals have initiated putting up 3D map of the city in the internet to help inform and make the public aware of the city's vulnerable areas.

Some FGD participants likewise observed that ICT is also being used in other areas of disaster risk management such as volcano activity mapping in Albay and applying GIS in Guinsaugon, Leyte. The participants have also noted that the government has introduced high resolution satellite imaging and photos of Metro Manila in the aftermath of Ondoy. The participants expressed that there are already existing areal maps of many cities in the country available in the internet. These are information that can make citizens aware of the vulnerability of their areas to different threats of disasters, especially that of flooding and soil erosion.

Awareness and appreciation of local environs and culture

The palpable benefits of ICT applications in business and government processes, media and entertainment industry and private individual uses are already established and cannot be overemphasized. There is one interesting contribution of ICT that may perhaps escape recognition simply because it is not too obvious and visible. This relates to how awareness and interest in one's local environs and happenings can be stimulated and mediated by the internet through blogs and social networks.

One participant in the Iloilo City FGD, for example, cited that his encounter of the city pictures that were posted in the blogs encouraged him to actually visit and explore the place and later

post and share his own thoughts and reactions about what he saw. Participation in the exchanges of thoughts and ideas about the goings-on in their city has been an amazing experience for the person.

It can be drawn from the above experience that internet blogs can create and offer the opportunities for creating awareness and appreciation of local culture as well as encourage articulation and participation in the exchange of ideas and personal musings and reflections about what is going on in the community.

Automated elections

Political participation through automated elections has also been mentioned by participants as one governance area where ICT is applied. This is in reference to the upcoming 2010 automated elections and the pilot implementation of a fully automated election system in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao in 2008. But it has also been pointed out that election automation does not necessarily stamp out possible corruptions that may be associated with elections.

Effectiveness of ICT as Participation Tool

While there is a broad range of ICTs that are available and that can potentially be used for participation in governance, the FGD participants have pointed to the internet and the cell phones as commonly used ICT participation tools in relating with government. They use the cell phone hotline numbers provided by government agencies to report complaints or feedback via text messages or voice calls. The complaints may not necessarily be directed to the government but to other entities like abusive public transport drivers. By reporting, they expect the government to act on the reports of complaints.

Accessing information from government websites and other sources have also been mentioned by the respondents as one major use of the internet. To the participants from the Mindanao region, particularly the NGOs representing the Moro people, the internet presents a lot of potential for mainstreaming issues and circulating their petition and mobilizing support via online network. As they confirmed, ICT is very popular among NGOs in their work and advocacy. Setting of meetings and circulating agenda are facilitated with the use of emails and SMS messages and voice calls using the mobile phone. Walkie-talkie is used also in some areas in ARMM. They found these ICTs as effective means of communication. Considering that their area consists of island provinces, they find the use of mobile phones very effective for communicating with their members and the people in the communities.

Blogs have also become popular among the NGOs. They find these effective in spreading their advocacies and getting news and developments among their ranks and sharing information with POs. The reach also goes beyond local as they are also able to reach international groups and NGOs.

The youth council participants in the FGD expressed that they actively use the internet and emails for communicating among members and sending memos and letters. Social networks have also made them more exposed to what is happening around them and made them more interactive as well. Most of the participants also expressed that forums in the internet provide useful channel for expressing one's views. They find that forums give them time to think and organize their thoughts, unlike in online chats where conversations happen spontaneously.

Majority of the participants strongly believe that the internet provides the potential of promoting good governance. They noted for example that online public bidding promotes transparency in government transactions, which could hopefully lead to reduction in corruption in government.

Limitations and Challenges

While the benefits of ICT are well known and acknowledged, the constraints, limitations and challenges for its use for participation in governance have also been noted by the FGD participants. Many government agencies and local government units maintain a website. Quite a few however are able to update their sites on a regular basis, particularly their data and information. And notwithstanding the importance of giving information, the participants also observed that government sites are rarely interactive. While some services are provided online and information can be downloaded from the sites, there is really no active interaction that happens between citizens and government in this medium.

To some people, however, the sophistication of being able to do transaction online is less important. The need to contact government face-to-face remains significant to them. What they want to see is that they are able to talk to the government and the assurance that government is able to listen to their voice.

Online petitions for certain causes have gained mileage in the internet, and these are much aided by the social networks and blogs which are very popular media for advocacy. But as fast as petition spreads out in the internet, the results of these petitions are seldom known to those who signed them. They do not know what happens after they have signed. For example, the participants from Mindanao shared that online petitions addressed to President Aquino regarding the Maguindanao massacre circulated in the internet but those who signed never knew for sure what happened to the petition. There is no feedback mechanism that will inform those who signed about the fate of their petition. In the words of one participant,

> *"social networking is one way, walang bumabalik if you sent your support. They just open doors but "hanggang dun na lang, hindi talaga yun ang nagtitrigger ng gusto mo ma-achieve na results."*

Some people also expressed reservations about ICT's effectiveness. They are not sure if their petitions have reached the government and whether government has acted on these or not. There are those who think that government may not honor these petitions and consider them

as hearsays. Some others also expressed apprehensions that the purpose of petitions may be defeated and its authenticity undermined by people who sign several times because they have multiple social networking accounts.

The generation gap as a limiting factor in ICT use has also become apparent in the discussion. Some participants said that the older generation is apprehensive in using computers and the internet. Computers are expensive and they fear that their unfamiliarity with it might cause them to ruin it. They also find some ICT terminologies incomprehensible and therefore daunting.

Outside of Metro Manila, the bandwidth is quite a problem. Internet connection is slow and cannot usually handle large data during peak hours. It was also observed that in poorer communities, like 5th and 6th class municipalities, internet connections are very limited if not absent. Even in a city like Iloilo, internet connection is painfully slow to the point of being ineffective and wasteful on one's time.

But as bandwidth may be a problem in some cities and urban centers, the basic issue of access to computers prevails in other areas. This is true particularly in the Moro communities, islands and mountainous villages. Computers are quite a rarity in these communities. Even the people's organizations (POs) that NGOs in the area work with do not have computers of their own. And for the NGOS working with people's organizations (POs) in these communities, educating their ranks in the use of computers and internet and other communication devices is necessary.

Many of the POs have no experience or very limited exposure, to computers and the internet. The very limited access to computers has made computer education training doubly difficult. As one NGO participant described it, teaching the POs how to use computers relied on using a cardboard dummy until the real computers became available.

It is not only the bandwidth that is problematic in the rural areas. Communication signals for cellular phone users are also weak especially in island and mountainous villages.

Local government units (LGUs) do not have positions for IT experts who can maintain and update their websites. It was pointed out in the discussion that LGUs need separate computer person or expert to look after their computerization program. It was also felt that someone responsible for implementing ICT policies or directing the strategic use of ICT is needed by LGUs.

Sustainability of ICT programs, or the lack of it, has also been mentioned in the FGDs particularly in the Visayas and Mindanao. ICT programs initiated by national government agencies in partnership with local governments have met different fates in their implementation. It was cited, for example, that DOH had an ICT program for local units. The implementation arrangement provided that DOH would make available training in ICT applications for local health professionals and the local governments would provide the computer hardwares and internet connection. As the program proceeded, it became apparent

that the participating local governments could not maintain the system particularly the internet connectivity on a long term basis. This has put the sustainability and effectiveness of ICT program hanging in balance. And while the LGUs requested the DOH to include internet connection in their assistance, the outcome of the request could almost be predicted because connection was not part of the program package.

And as the FGDs further showed, the problem of program continuity and diversion from original purpose is repeated in several more cases. Some of these experiences could elicit amused astonishment in the way the program took different routes from original intentions. One story, for example, told of how barangays used the project's computers for pay-per-view and watching cockfights and the solar panels (intended to provide power to the computers) for pig pens. There were also accounts of farmers using a project's computers and internet for videoconferencing with their children who are abroad. In the 'iSchool' program of the Department of Education, it was noted that the public school teachers who had been given the responsibility of safekeeping of the computers have become overzealous to the point that they would rather keep the equipment locked and not use them for fear that these will be damaged or lost. Still some local experiences showed that ICT projects of previous local administration are not carried on or supported by the new political leadership.

It was also observed by the participants that many Filipinos have yet to become aware of and realize that they can use ICT to influence government. The basic problems of access to these technologies and knowledge on how they can use these particularly in affecting government decisions remain to be addressed. Many participants agreed that educating the people is paramount and this can be pursued for example by integrating ICTs and applications in school curricula. The Metro Manila FGD noted that the Philippines lacks a national digital infrastructure like a national broadband infrastructure that can support cyber education. National government attempt in the past to put up such a national infrastructure however has been severely tainted with corruption issues leading eventually to its demise. From the viewpoint of the participants, corruption is a deep issue in the country, and ICT programs, like other programs of the government, are not protected from it.

The digital divide in the country manifests itself in many ways and this has been referred to a number of times in this section. The disparity is further seen among local governments in their ability to acquire ICT hardwares and softwares. Undoubtedly, this capacity is linked to funding constraint which the participants observed is a common problem especially among poorer local governments. This is also one reason why local governments cannot sustain the ICT projects sponsored by outsiders.

A related issue is the obvious disparity in how local governments are able to embed ICT in governance processes. In one end of the extreme are areas that have very limited or no access at all to computers or internet connectivity. As pointed out earlier, it is just through the introduction of ICT programs by external agencies that some local governments get to have the opportunity to gain access to these technologies. On the other end are local governments with a more advanced level of ICT preparation and utilization in their governance processes that in

turn enables them to connect with and benefit their citizens. An example of this appeared in the Metro Manila FGD particularly the case of the Bulacan provincial government. The local government has established a unit dedicated to the maintenance of its ICT infrastructure program that reaches up to the barangay level. It maintains a website that serves as its arm in disseminating information to the citizens about its programs. And because the barangays have computers and internet connections, it has become much easier for the people to access this information and avail of the programs. Two such programs are the scholarship program which counts, as mentioned in the FGD, about 5000 youths benefitting from it. The other program is microfinance which has attracted the women to apply for it.

Survey Results

The survey aimed to provide a holistic view to the research. The findings and analysis of the survey is divided into three parts: the first part is the Respondents' Profile; the second part is the ICT types and usage; and, the last part presents the assessment of effectiveness of ICTs as *e-participation* tools in governance.

Respondents' Profile

The majority of the respondents came from the combined UP-NCPAG and UST, making up 6o percent of the 215 respondents. Around 26 percent were from the Western Mindanao State University and the remaining 15 percent were from the Western Visayas State University.

The respondents were relatively young. Almost 70 percent of respondents are within the age range of less than 21 to 37 years (Figure 4). A significant number of respondents are in the middle range age of 38-53, comprising almost 22 percent. Meanwhile, a few who are in their senior age made up around five percent of the total respondents.

The respondents were mostly female (56%); single (59%); and affiliated with organizations (73%), particularly government organizations (44%), student organizations (30%) and non-government organizations (7%) [Figure 5].

In terms of highest educational attainment, majority of the respondents are college graduates (37%). There were significant number of respondents with MA units and MA degree – 8 percent and 17 percent, respectively – with a total of 25 percent for this group. Meanwhile, 27 percent of the respondents are college undergraduates.

Respondents were spread among various occupational/professional groups. A sizeable number of them were students (19%) while some were in the teaching profession (18%). Those working in the government comprised 17 percent. The remaining 26 percent were from various professions such as law, information technology, human resources management, health management, police and security management, and non-government development work.

Figure 4. Age Distribution of Respondents (%)

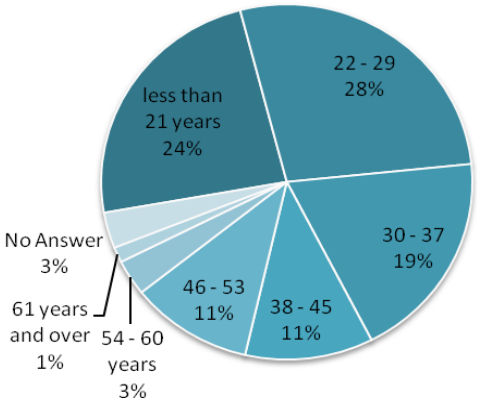
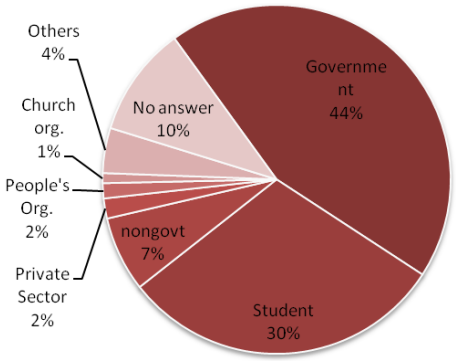


Figure 5. Respondents' Organizational Group Affiliation (% of respondents)



ICT Types and Usage[2]

Respondents were asked about the most commonly used ICT devices. These included the telephone, radio, television, mobile phone, and internet (Table 4). Of these, mobile phone has been everyone's everyday companion, making it the most used device by almost all of the respondents (97%). Internet and Television seem to be of equal standing as an everyday device. Television came in second (84%) and internet was very close third (81%). Radio, telephone and internet were used once a week by at most 15 percent to 19 percent of the respondents. In terms of mean usage, mobile phone is first, with 1.13, followed by television (1.28), internet (1.32), then, telephone (1.72), and the last is radio (1.82).

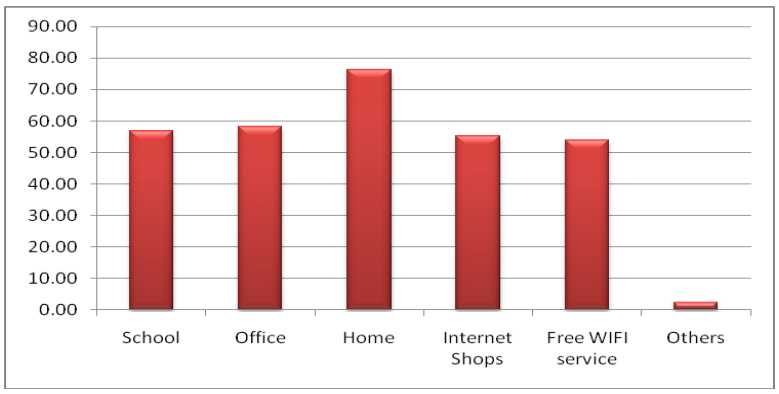
[2] See Annex tables under Part II.

Table 4. Frequency of use of ICT Device

Type of ICT Device	Everyday		Once a week		Once a month		No Answer		Total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Telephone	133	61.86	37	17.21	15	6.98	30	13.95	215
Radio	119	55.35	40	18.60	15	6.98	41	19.07	215
Television	181	84.19	15	6.98	5	2.33	14	6.51	215
Mobile phone	208	96.74	3	1.40	3	1.40	1	0.47	215
Internet	175	81.40	31	14.42	3	1.40	6	2.79	215

Access to internet is made possible largely through internet connection in the homes for three out of four respondents (77%) [Figure 6]. Moreover, a little more than half of the respondents accessed the internet in their offices, schools, and in internet cafes.

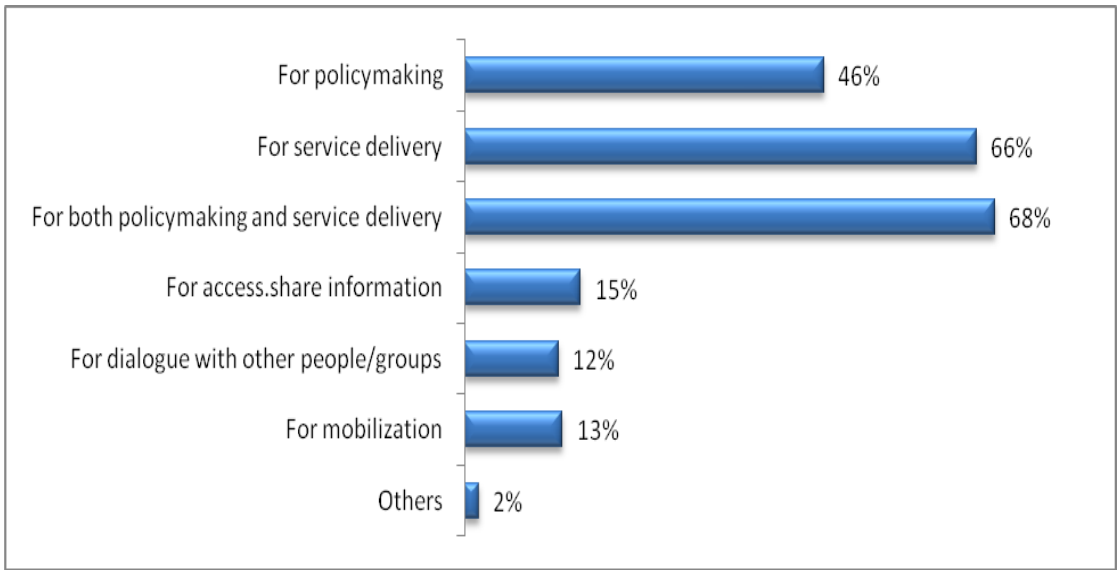
Figure 6. Access to Internet (% of respondents)



Message texting more than voice calls is the mobile phone's feature most commonly used by the respondents. In terms of the manner of use, the internet was largely used for website/webpage search (96%). Other grounds for using the internet that were most frequently mentioned by majority of the respondents were for online communication (85%); for downloading/unloading (84%) of mostly information (83%); for reading news (82%); for social networking (79%); for playing games (53%); and for giving personal comments/feedback/reactions (52%). These numbers indicate that social networking is increasingly becoming a popular activity in internet usage, almost close to online communication, downloading/unloading information and reading news. If one would think about it, people may communicate, download/upload information and read news and current events in the social networking sites.

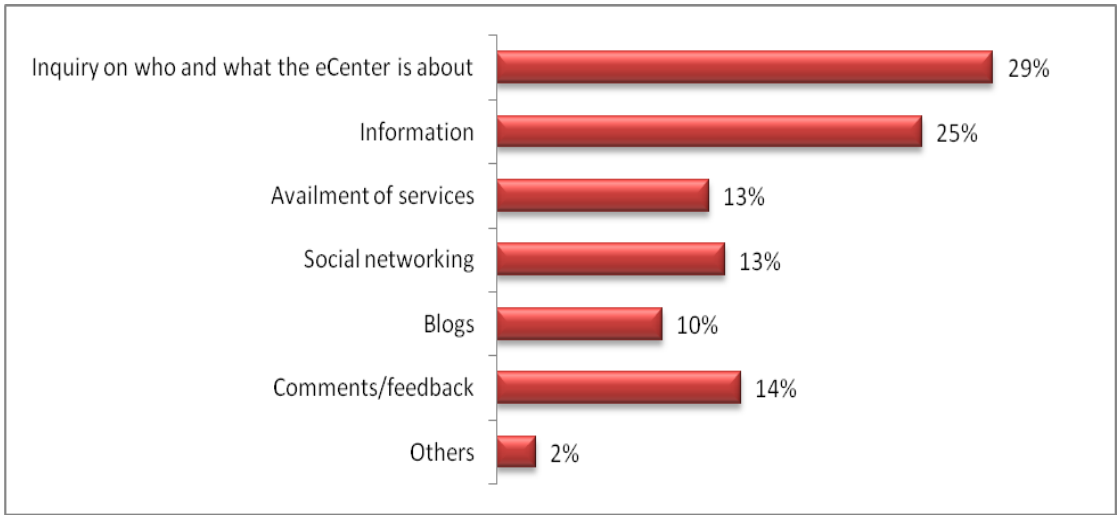
Generally, the respondents perceived ICTs as an effective tool for governance (95%). A large number of respondents indicated that policy making and service delivery (68%), taken collectively rather than as separate governance areas would benefit most from ICTs (Figure 7). Policy making is operationally defined as communicating with politicians and policy makers on certain issues in the community while service delivery is described as transacting with government through online services. Moreover, almost equal number of respondents pointed to service delivery (66%) as one distinct governance area that would benefit the most from ICTs. In essence, the respondents perceive service delivery as a very important governance area where ICTs can be used as an effective tool.

Figure 7. Ways that ITC could be most beneficial (% of respondents)



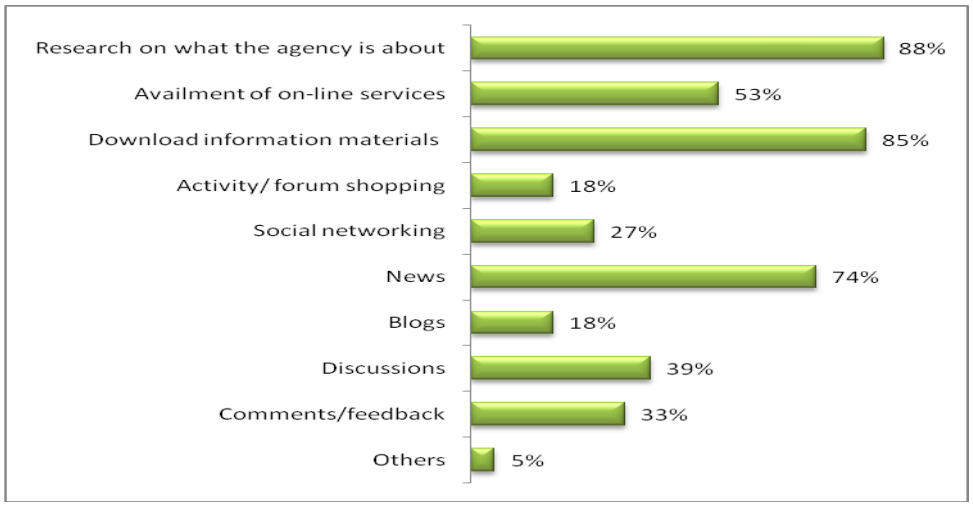
The Philippine Community e-Center (CeC) is yet to make its presence known as only a third of the total number of respondents indicated accessing the CeCs (35%). The sizeable number of respondents did not access the CeCs (46%). Of those who were able to access the CeCs, the respondents' reasons for accessing were mainly directed at inquiries on what the CeCs is about (54%) [Figure 8]. The Philippine CeCs were part of the overall ICT framework of the country that aims to give communities "access, network, and voice" in governance. This framework defines access as the promotion of exchange of relevant knowledge and information for equal opportunities; networking as facilitation of effective communication and cooperation among people and across organizations; and voice as facilitation of broad participation in democratic processes, good governance, cultural diversity and local content. The Philippine CeCs are envisioned to be the facility that would provide communities with a means of communication and access to information that would facilitate collaboration among individuals, groups and communities and promote informed and intensive participation in governance, economic as well as social development.

Figure 8. Reasons for accessing/using eCommunity Center (% of respondents)



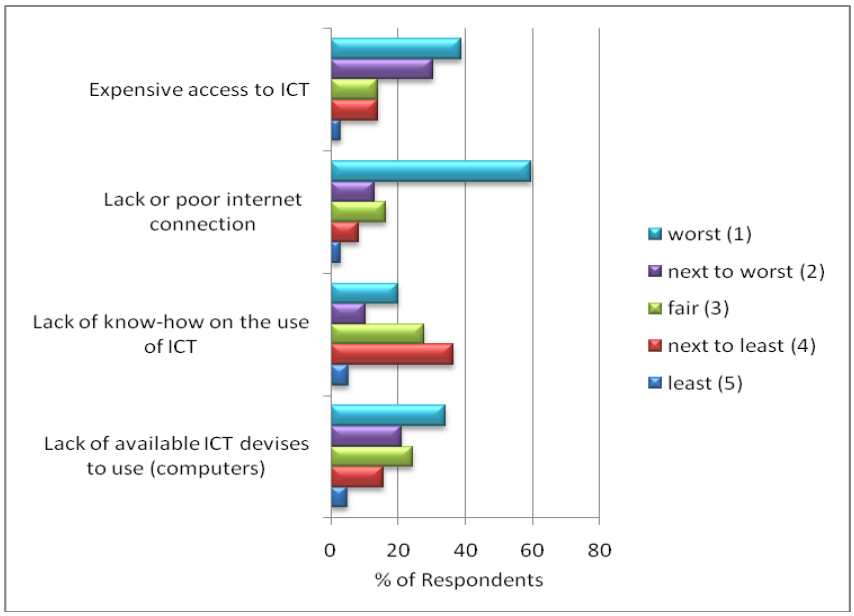
A little over half of the respondents accessed government websites (55%). Considering that 44 percent of respondents are affiliated with the government, this figure indicates that access of government websites is relatively low. It was noted, however, that there was a significant number of respondents who did not answer this question on access of government websites (40%). Inquiry into the frequency of access in the last 12 months revealed that a number of them accessed these websites once a week (25%) and fewer still indicated once a month (12%). Only about 10 percent accessed government websites daily in the last 12 months. The top reasons for access cited by majority were "research on what the agency is about (88%); download information materials (85%); read news (74%); and availment of online services (53%) [Figure 9].

Figure 9. Reason for accessing government websites (% of respondents)



On the problems normally encountered in the use of ICTs, the mean scores based on respondents' rankings[3] showed lack or poor internet connection as the worst problem, with 2.17; followed by expensive access to ICT, with 2.82; then lack of available ICT device to use [computer], with 2.98; and lastly, lack of know-how on the use of ICTs, particularly computers, with 3.50. Figure 10 presents specific rankings given by the respondents.

Figure 10. Problems normally encountered in the use of ITC



Email, Websites, News, and Social Networking comprised the e-participation tools that were utilized most by the respondents for governance.[4] Website browsing stood out as the most frequently used in all aspects of the governance areas that were identified, from accessing information, accessing/tracking service delivery, monitoring government performance, influencing decision making, advocating for certain issues, sharing experiences, building capabilities, to referring/linking to proper authorities.

Examining the use of ICTs as e-participation tools in each governance area, the following are the findings on the top four ICTs:

- In accessing information: website, e-mail, news, and social networking are the four ICTs most frequency used;
- For accessing /tracking service delivery: website, e-mail, news, and SMS;
- For monitoring government performance: news, website, e-mail, and social networking;
- For influencing decision making: news, website, e-mail and social networking;

[3] Ranking: 1 – 5, 1 being the strongest reason
[4] See Annex Table 2.15 under Part II.

- For advocating for certain issues: e-mail, website, news and social networking;
- For sharing experiences: e-mail, social networking, sms, and website;
- For building capacities: e-mail, website, social networks, and SMS; and
- For referring/linking to proper authorities/experts: website, e-mail, news and SMS.

The following statistical results were identified in relation to the various e-participation strategies utilized by the respondents:

1. Website browsing/ surfing is used by 28 to 77 percent of the total respondents most frequently for accessing information, monitoring government performance, referring/linking to proper authorities, and accessing/tracking service delivery.

2. E-mail is used by 29 to 68 percent of the total respondents, largely for accessing information, sharing experiences, advocating for certain issues, and referring/linking to proper authorities.

3. News has a share of 21 to 67 percent of the total respondents indicating that they used this tool for accessing information, monitoring government performance, advocating for certain issues, and influencing decision making.

4. Social Networking is used by 12 to 49 percent of the total respondents largely for accessing information, sharing experiences, advocating for certain issues, and influencing decision making.

5. SMS is used in e-governance areas by a percentage of respondents ranging from 19 to 44 percent of the total respondents and is most utilized by this group in accessing information (45%) and in sharing experiences (36%).

6. Chat is used by 9 to 29 percent of the total respondents and, to a large extent, for accessing information, sharing experiences, advocating for certain issues, and influencing decision making.

7. Discussion boards are used by 14 to 28 percent of the total respondents to a large extent for accessing information, advocating for certain issues, sharing experiences, and building capabilities.

8. Newsgroup is used by 5 to 25 percent of the total respondents for accessing information, monitoring government performance, influencing decision making/ advocating for certain issues, and referring/linking to proper authorities.

9. Online survey is used by 12 to 22 percent of the total respondents at most for accessing information, advocating for certain issues, monitoring government performance, and influencing decision making as well as building capabilities.

10. Blog is used by 9 to 21 percent of the total respondents for sharing experiences, advocating for certain issues, accessing information, and monitoring government performance.

11. Online petition is used by 9 to 17 percent of the total respondents for advocating for certain issues, accessing information, influencing decision making, and sharing experiences.

12. Video conferencing is used by 4 to 13 percent of the total respondents for accessing information, sharing experiences, advocating for certain issues, and influencing decision making.

Effectiveness of ICTs as e-Participation tools for e-Governance

The respondents generally rated the e-participation tools positively, with most of their responses converging as fairly effective and very effective. The pattern of responses on effectiveness assessment seemed to reflect the frequency distribution of utilization of ICTs for e-governance. By and large, news, e-mail, webpage, social networking, and SMS were rated fairly effective to very effective e-participation tools for e-governance. [5] Findings on mean rate of effectiveness also suggest that majority of the participants perceive news and newsgroup as ICT tools that are most effective in monitoring government performance.

It is worth noting that because of the increasing popularity of Facebook, Twitter and Multiply, social networking is increasingly becoming a venue/tool for e-governance. As previously mentioned, social networking is one of the top four ICT tools in terms of number of responses and in terms of effectiveness. In the recent Presidential elections, a Twitter account was created for the PCOS machine, and it was through this account where, for instance, reports on malfunctioning machines were fed. Moreover, Facebook, another social network, has been used to announce public/government activities or events (via employees who are subscribers) because of its wide and huge base of followers. Social networking has emerged as a highly potential ICT tool to disseminate information, influence decision making and advocate certain issues. It comes as an inexpensive way of starting up and encouraging e-participation among the public.

A small response size for effectiveness assessment of a number of ICTs and a relatively large size of non-response are noted. In all e-governance areas, except accessing information, non-response was more than 50 percent. This finding could imply relatively low awareness of how an array of ICT tools can be used in governance.

The last item in the questionnaire was an open-ended question that elicited reasons for effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the ICTs as participation tools in governance. The responses on effectiveness of ICTs highlighted the features of ICTs in terms of providing easy access to

[5] See Annex table under Part III.

information, wide reach, easy to use, faster communication, real time use/quick response time, convenience, and being user-friendly, among others. On the other hand, the reasons cited for ineffectiveness concerned high cost/expensive; absence or slow internet connection; problems related to quality, adequacy, credibility, and timeliness of information including outdated information in WebPages; information overload; misuses and abuses in the use of internet; and problems of inadequate knowledge of ICTs and limited supply of and access to hardware such as computers.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study mirrors the slow and lethargic trend of ICT usage and e-participation in Philippine public administration and governance. Though we were initially ahead in the global standing of ICT literate countries, the Philippines has through the years continuously slid down the list. Unfortunately, the Philippines could not do much in terms of expensive state of the art interventions similar to what governments of first world countries do to keep phase with the lightning speed of ICT development. Early segment of the study showed how the digital divide is directly correlated to the economic standing of countries. The poorer one country is, the lesser are its chances of catching up with the global development in e-governance and e-participation. The controversies of the failed National Broadband Network (NBN) project of the Arroyo Administration only made matters worse for the Philippines in our attempt to catch up with the global trend of ICT.

Related literature and studies also bring to perspective the recent efforts of ICT usage in the Philippines. Nonetheless, these efforts and initiatives are usually fragmented and discordant to diverse efforts of the government and the different sectors of society. The conceptualized ICT programs for e-participation and e-governance have usually fallen short of real actualization, which may primarily be due to the absence of a more unified structure that could facilitate integration and coordination of the different initiatives. Lack of proper advertising and marketing in many of the programs also confine it to very specific stakeholders that hinder its widespread use. Sustainability of ICT programs have also appeared problematic not only because of shortness in funding but also due to lack of anticipation for continuous system and hardware upgrading and development that is required by the hyper dynamism of the ICT environment.

The FGD segment of the assessment brings to fore the various potentials and possibilities of e-participation in the Philippines. Despite the challenges of resources and albeit the 'ningas cugon' attitude, the Filipinos are not deterred in conceiving new possibilities for ICT application for governance. Pockets of e-participation initiatives shared by participants of the FGD show promising schemes by which ICT may be utilized for successful e-governance both at the national and local level. The problems of sustainability and proper coordination shown by previous studies have been validated by the FGD as a recurring issue in many e-participation initiatives.

The survey component provided figures and descriptive statistics to the usage and viability of e-participation in governance. It has also corroborated the output of the FGD as regards the relatively high understanding of the Filipinos in the different ways by which ICT may be utilized for governance. Considering that a big portion of the Philippine population are young and that ICT is generally of interest to young people, the country has a lot of potentials as regards the facilitation of ICT to newer trends in participative governance. What is probably most important is the availability of mechanism and resources that would make ICT a more permanent fixture rather than simply an alternative that people could utilize in their dealings and exchanges with other people and the government.

For its recommendations, the study proposes the following points:

- The Philippine government realizes the significance of ICT as a modality and has actually implemented several initiatives in harnessing its potentials for governance and development. There remains however the necessity to pursue more vigorously concrete policies and sustained operational support that would steer direction of concerted ITC efforts towards catching up with development trends in various parts of the world and thus make ICT as one of the priority concerns in the government's development plan and strategies.

- A more cohesive and effective structure in charge of ICT efforts should be established by the government. Hence, the government should seriously consider the creation of a Department of Information and Communication Technology that could provide stronger and clearer policy and program direction to the diversity of ICT mechanisms in governance.

- The FGD and the survey results point to an increased awareness on ICTs as providing easy access to information. However, there is still much to be done in using ICT for policy advocacy, monitoring and evaluation. These processes constitute the opposite direction of the two-way loop that is imbedded in e-participation, from information to receiver to feedback, and thus, triggers potential improvements in governance.

- Simple sustainability is not enough to respond to the continuing changes in ICT. Hence, progressive sustainability should be made an integral part of every ICT e-participation program, i.e., it should not be status quo oriented. This should be provided as a standard procedure by which ICT programs are to be proposed and realized.

- ICT e-participation strategies are only as good as their existence is known by a larger number of people. Hence, it would be most helpful if their presence and availability is known through traditional information campaign using conventional print, TV and broadcast media which are currently still more widespread and popular.

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Annex Tables: Part I

Results of Rapid Assessment on the Use of ICTs as eParticipation Tools in Governance		
Survey areas	**F**	**%**
Iloilo_Visayas	31	14.42
WMSU_Mindanao	55	25.58
NCPAG_UST_NCR	129	60.00
Total	215	100.00
I. Respondents' Profile		
	F	**%**
1.1 Age Level		
Less than 21 years	51	23.72
22 - 29	59	27.44
30 - 37	41	19.07
38 - 45	24	11.16
46 - 53	23	10.70
54 – 60 years	7	3.26
61 years and over	3	1.40
No Answer	7	3.26
Total	215	100.00
	Mean	
Actual Age	30.76	
1.2 Sex	**F**	**%**
Male	91	42.33
Female	121	56.28
No Answer	3	1.40
Total	215	100.00
1.3 Civil Status	**F**	**%**
Single	127	59.07
Married	72	33.49
Widow/Widower	6	2.79
No Answer	10	4.65
Total	215	100.00
1.4 Organizational Affiliation	**F**	**%**
Yes	157	73.02
No	14	6.51
Not sure	1	0.47
No Answer	43	20.00

Total	215	100.00
1.5 Organizational/Group Affiliation	**F**	**%**
Government organization	95	44.19
Students' organization	65	30.23
Nongovernment organization	15	6.98
Private Sector	4	1.86
People's Organization	3	1.40
Church organization	2	0.93
Others	9	4.19
No answer	22	10.23
Total	215	100.00
1.6 Highest Educational Attainment	**F**	**%**
College graduate	80	37.21
College undergraduate	58	26.98
With MA degree	37	17.21
With MA units	17	7.91
With PhD	4	1.86
Postgraduate	3	1.40
No answer	16	7.44
Total	215	62.79
1.7 Occupation or Profession	**F**	**%**
Student	40	18.60
Government employee	37	17.21
Teaching profession	39	18.14
Administrative/HRM staff/officer	18	8.37
Information Technology	12	5.58
Technical	6	2.79
Lawyer	6	2.79
Elected official	3	1.40
Researcher	3	1.40
Health	3	1.40
NGO worker	2	0.93
Police	2	0.93
Others	7	3.26
No answer	37	17.21
Total	215	100.00

Annex Tables: Part II

II. ICT Types and Usage										
2.1 Type of ICT Devise	**Frequency of Use of ICT Devise**									
	Everyday		Once a week		Once a month		No answer		Total	Mean
	F	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**		
Mobile phone	208	96.74	3	1.40	3	1.40	1	0.47	215	1.13
Television	181	84.19	15	6.98	5	2.33	14	6.51	215	1.28
Internet	175	81.40	31	14.42	3	1.40	6	2.79	215	1.32
Telephone	133	61.86	37	17.21	15	6.98	30	13.95	215	1.72
Radio	119	55.35	40	18.60	15	6.98	41	19.07	215	1.82
2.2 Access to internet	**Yes**		**No**		**Total**					
	F	**%**	**F**	**%**	**215**					
Home	164	76.28	51	23.72	215					
Office	125	58.14	90	41.86	215					
School	122	56.74	93	43.26	215					
Internet shops	119	55.35	96	44.65	215					
Free WIFI service	116	53.95	99	46.05	215					
Others	5	2.33	210	97.67	215					
2.3 Usage of ICT Operations	**Yes**	**% of Total Responses = 215**								
Mobile phone										
SMS	206	95.81								
Voice/call	155	72.09								
Internet										
Search website/webpage	206	95.81								
Online messages/communications	183	85.12								
Upload/download	180	83.72								

Read news	177	82.33								
Social networking (chat, friendsters, facebook, etc.	170	79.07								
Play games	113	52.56								
Give personal comments/feedback/reactions	111	51.63								
Read and make blogs	106	49.30								
Online business transaction	89	41.40								
Video conferencing	62	28.84								
Sign petition	44	20.47								
Others	8	3.72								
2.4 Use of Internet to upload/download	**Yes**	**% of Total Responses = 215**								
Information	179	83.26								
Digital photos/video	158	73.49								
Music	141	65.58								
Others	26	12.09								
	Yes	%	**No**	**%**	**No nswer**	**%**	**Total**			
2.5 ICT as an effective tool for governance	205	95.35	3	1.40	7	3.26	215			

2.6 Ways that ICT could be most beneficial	**Yes**	**% of Total Responses = 215**										
For both policymaking and service delivery	146	67.91										
For service delivery (transacting with government through online services)	141	65.58										
For policymaking (communicating with politicians and policymakers on certain issues in the community)	99	46.05										
For mobilization	27	12.56										
For dialogue with other people/groups	26	12.09										
For access share information	32	14.88										
Others	4	1.86										
		Mean Rank										
2.7 Problems normally encountered in the use of ICT												
Lack of know-how on the use of ICT		3.50										
Lack of available ICT devises to use (computers)		2.98										
Expensive access to ICT		2.82										
Lack or poor internet connection		2.17										
	Worst (1)		**Next to worst (2)**		**Fair (3)**		**Next to least (4)**		**Least (5)**		Total	**% of Total Respondents = 215**
2.8 Problems normally encountered in the use of ICT	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		

Lack or poor internet connection	106	59.55	23	12.92	29	16.29	15	8.43	5	2.81	178	82.79
Expensive access to ICT	55	38.73	43	30.28	20	14.08	20	14.08	4	2.82	142	66.05
Lack of available ICT devises to use (computers)	50	34.01	31	21.09	36	24.49	23	15.65	7	4.76	147	68.37
Lack of know-how on the use of ICT	27	20.15	14	10.45	37	27.61	49	36.57	7	5.22	134	62.33

	Yes	%	No	%	No answer	%	Total
2.9 Accessed/used eCommunity Center	75	34.88	100	46.51	40	18.60	215
	Once		**More than once**		**No Answer**		**Total**
	F	%	F	%	F	%	
2.10 Frequency of accessing/using eCommunity Center	9	4.19	57	26.51	149	69.30	215
2.11 Reasons for accessing/using eCommunity Center	**Yes**	**% of Total Responses = 215**					
Inquiry on who and what the eCenter is about	63	29.30					
Information	54	25.12					
Comments/feedback	31	14.42					
Social networking	29	13.49					
Availment of services	27	12.56					
Blogs	21	9.77					
Others	5	2.33					
	Yes	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No answer**	**%**	**Total**
2.12 Have accessed government websites	119	55.35	10	4.65	86	40.00	215
2.13 Frequency in accessing government websites in the last 12 months… at least, every…		**% of Total Responses = 215**					

Daily	21	9.77					
Once a week	54	25.12					
Once a month	26	12.09					
Once in three months	10	4.65					
Once in six months	6	2.79					
Once a year	2	0.93					
2.14 Reason for accessing government websites		**% of Total Respondents = 215**					
Research on what the agency is about	190	88.37					
Download information materials	182	84.65					
news	159	73.95					
Availment of on-line services	114	53.02					
Social network	57	56.51					
Discussions	83	38.60					
Comments/feedback	71	33.02					
Activity forum shopping	38	17.67					
blogs	38	17.67					
Others	11	5.12					

2.15 Usage of eParticipation Tools																								
eGovernance Areas	SMS		E-mail		Webpage		News		Online survey		Discussion board/forum		Chat		Blog		Online Petition		Video conferencing		Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter, Multiply)		Newsgroup	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Accessing information	96	44.65	146	67.91	166	77.21	144	66.98	47	21.86	61	28.37	63	29.30	34	15.81	31	14.42	27	12.56	106	49.30	53	24.65
Accessing/tracking service delivery	55	25.58	80	37.21	88	40.93	58	26.98	25	11.63	31	14.42	21	9.77	20	9.30	17	7.91	13	6.05	26	12.09	11	5.12
Monitoring government performance	40	18.60	67	31.16	109	50.70	123	57.21	38	17.67	35	16.28	20	9.30	29	13.49	20	9.30	11	5.12	43	20.00	36	16.74
Influencing decision-making	46	21.40	64	29.77	63	29.30	70	32.56	33	15.35	40	18.60	29	13.49	27	12.56	28	13.02	8	3.72	59	27.44	31	14.42
Advocating for certain issues	63	29.30	89	41.40	87	40.47	77	35.81	41	19.07	57	26.51	41	19.07	39	18.14	37	17.21	17	7.92	68	31.63	31	14.42
Sharing experiences	77	35.81	98	45.58	61	28.37	46	21.40	26	12.09	42	19.53	60	27.91	45	20.93	21	9.77	19	8.84	92	42.79	20	9.30
Building capacities	42	19.53	62	28.84	59	27.44	56	26.05	33	15.35	41	19.07	27	12.56	23	10.70	20	9.30	14	6.51	45	20.93	26	12.09
Referring/Linking to proper authorities/experts	53	24.65	86	40.00	93	43.26	62	28.84	29	13.49	36	16.74	23	10.70	26	12.09	22	10.23	16	7.44	51	23.72	27	12.56

2.16 Mean Scores of Usage of eParticipation Tools

eGovernance	SMS	E-mail	Webpage	News	Online survey	Discussion Board/forum	Chat	Blog	Online Petition	Video Conferencing	Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter, Multiply)	Newsgroup
Accessing information	**1.75**	**1.21**	**1.10**	**1.11**	**2.40**	**2.22**	**1.90**	**3.21**	**3.72**	**4.09**	**1.36**	**2.48**
Accessing/tracking service delivery	**2.13**	**2.04**	**1.51**	**2.18**	**3.74**	**2.95**	**4.20**	**4.15**	**4.61**	**5.15**	**3.67**	**4.50**
Monitoring government performance	**2.96**	**2.22**	**1.35**	**1.19**	**2.67**	**3.04**	**3.84**	**3.20**	**4.15**	**5.33**	**2.51**	**2.60**
Influencing decision-making	**2.19**	**1.79**	**1.80**	**1.66**	**3.00**	**2.33**	**2.89**	**3.16**	**3.40**	**5.95**	**1.63**	**3.25**
Advocating for certain issues	**1.80**	**1.58**	**1.27**	**1.49**	**2.44**	**1.98**	**2.44**	**2.63**	**2.83**	**4.47**	**1.55**	**3.23**
Sharing experiences	**1.75**	**1.46**	**1.72**	**2.19**	**3.53**	**2.41**	**1.50**	**2.45**	**4.06**	**3.93**	**1.41**	**4.00**
Building capacities	**2.14**	**1.91**	**1.74**	**1.77**	**3.00**	**2.02**	**3.16**	**3.42**	**4.00**	**4.69**	**2.08**	**3.22**
Referring/Linking to proper authorities/experts	**1.81**	**1.52**	**1.33**	**1.48**	**2.89**	**2.30**	**2.87**	**2.88**	**3.32**	**4.02**	**1.71**	**3.16**

Annex Tables: Part III

3.1 Assessment of Effectiveness of ICTs for eParticipation																								
			Rate of Effectiveness of eParticipation Tools																					
	SMS		E-mail		Webpage		News		Online survey		Discussion board/forum		Chat		Blog		Online Petition		Video Conferencing		Social networks (Facebook, Tweitter, Multiply, etc.)		Newsgroup	
G1_Accessing information	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Very effective (5)	40	18.60	58	26.98	55	25.58	69	32.09	14	6.51	21	9.77	16	7.44	12	5.58	6	2.79	14	6.51	38	17.67	20	9.30
Fairly effective (4)	42	19.53	56	26.05	68	31.63	52	24.19	32	14.88	40	18.60	24	11.16	26	12.09	25	11.63	26	12.09	41	19.07	35	16.28
Least effective (5)	16	7.44	17	7.91	17	7.91	17	7.91	25	11.63	13	6.05	24	11.16	21	9.77	17	7.91	15	6.98	15	6.98	13	6.05
Not sure (3)	8	3.72	6	2.79	6	2.79	4	1.86	6	2.79	9	4.19	9	4.19	11	5.12	6	2.79	4	1.86	6	2.79	1	0.47
Not effective (1)	14	6.51	11	5.12	4	1.86	5	2.33	10	4.65	7	3.26	12	5.58	10	4.65	15	6.98	18	8.37	5	2.33	6	2.79
Total Responses	120	55.81	148	68.84	150	69.77	147	68.37	87	40.47	90	41.86	85	39.53	80	37.21	69	32.09	77	35.81	105	48.84	75	34.88
No answer	95	44.19	67	31.16	65	30.23	68	31.63	128	59.53	125	58.14	130	60.47	135	62.79	146	67.91	138	64.19	110	51.16	140	65.12
Overall Total	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00
G2_Accessing/tracking service delivery																								

Very effective	**22**	10.23	**34**	15.81	**28**	13.02	**34**	**15.81**	**12**	**5.58**	**11**	**5.12**	**9**	**4.19**	**6**	**2.79**	**4**	**1.86**	**5**	**2.33**	**17**	**7.91**	**9**	**4.19**
Fairly effective	**47**	21.86	**48**	22.33	**52**	24.19	**36**	**16.74**	**25**	**11.63**	**30**	**13.95**	**18**	**8.37**	**23**	**10.70**	**18**	**8.37**	**15**	**6.98**	**25**	**11.63**	**26**	**12.09**
Least effective	**12**	5.58	**15**	6.98	**14**	6.61	**12**	**5.58**	**23**	**10.70**	**12**	**5.58**	**25**	**11.63**	**18**	**8.37**	**16**	**7.44**	**15**	**6.98**	**11**	**5.12**	**13**	**6.05**
Not sure	**8**	3.72	**8**	3.42	**8**	3.72	**4**	**1.86**	**4**	**1.86**	**7**	**3.26**	**5**	**2.33**	**10**	**4.65**	**7**	**3.26**	**4**	**1.86**	**8**	**3.72**	**3**	**1.40**
Not effective	**11**	5.12	**3**	1.40	**7**	3.26	**5**	**2.33**	**9**	**4.19**	**5**	**2.33**	**11**	**5.12**	**7**	**3.26**	**16**	**7.44**	**18**	**8.37**	**9**	**4.19**	**5**	**2.33**
Total Responses	**100**	46.51	**108**	50.23	**109**	50.70	**91**	**42.33**	**73**	**33.95**	**65**	**30.23**	**68**	**31.63**	**64**	**29.77**	**61**	**28.37**	**57**	**26.51**	**70**	**32.56**	**56**	**26.05**
No answer	**115**	53.49	**107**	49.77	**106**	49.30	**124**	**57.67**	**142**	**66.05**	**150**	**69.77**	**147**	**68.37**	**151**	**70.23**	**154**	**71.63**	**158**	**73.49**	**145**	**67.44**	**159**	**73.95**
Overall Total	**215**	100.00	**215**	100.00	**215**	100.00	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**
G3_Monitoring government performance																								
Very effective	**18**	8.37	**25**	11.63	**37**	17.21	**53**	**24.65**	**18**	**8.37**	**11**	**5.12**	**8**	**3.72**	**7**	**3.26**	**6**	**2.79**	**5**	**2.33**	**19**	**8.84**	**14**	**6.51**
Fairly effective	**29**	13.49	**28**	13.02	**54**	25.12	**49**	**22.79**	**29**	**13.49**	**40**	**18.60**	**17**	**7.91**	**20**	**9.30**	**23**	**10.70**	**16**	**7.44**	**31**	**14.42**	**24**	**11.16**
Least effective	**19**	8.84	**26**	12.09	**19**	8.84	**12**	**5.58**	**18**	**8.37**	**14**	**6.51**	**17**	**7.91**	**23**	**10.70**	**15**	**6.98**	**19**	**8.84**	**13**	**6.05**	**12**	**5.58**
Not sure	**6**	2.79	**11**	5.12	**5**	2.33	**3**	**1.40**	**2**	**0.93**	**3**	**1.40**	**7**	**3.26**	**7**	**3.26**	**4**	**1.86**	**5**	**2.33**	**5**	**2.33**	**7**	**3.26**
Not effective	**16**	7.44	**10**	4.65	**6**	2.79	**4**	**1.86**	**7**	**3.26**	**5**	**2.33**	**12**	**5.58**	**8**	**3.72**	**17**	**7.91**	**12**	**5.58**	**10**	**4.65**	**4**	**1.86**
Total Responses	**88**	40.93	**100**	46.51	**121**	56.28	**121**	**56.28**	**74**	**34.42**	**73**	**33.95**	**61**	**28.37**	**65**	**30.23**	**65**	**30.23**	**57**	**26.51**	**78**	**36.28**	**61**	**28.37**
No answer	**127**	59.07	**115**	53.49	**94**	43.72	**94**	**43.72**	**141**	**65.58**	**142**	**66.05**	**154**	**71.63**	**150**	**69.77**	**150**	**69.77**	**158**	**73.49**	**137**	**63.72**	**154**	**71.63**
Overall Total	**215**	100.00	**215**	100.00	**215**	100.00	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**
G4_Influencing decision-making																								
Very effective	**23**	10.70	**28**	13.02	**27**	12.56	**38**	**17.67**	**14**	**6.51**	**17**	**7.91**	**12**	**5.58**	**8**	**3.72**	**7**	**3.26**	**7**	**3.26**	**22**	**10.23**	**14**	**6.51**

Fairly effective	29	13.49	32	14.88	30	13.95	39	18.14	35	16.28	36	16.74	18	8.37	24	11.16	24	11.16	14	6.51	30	13.95	20	9.30
Least effective	14	6.51	19	8.84	18	8.37	6	2.79	11	5.12	10	4.65	20	9.30	17	7.91	10	4.65	14	6.51	14	6.51	16	7.44
Not sure	10	4.65	13	6.05	7	3.26	4	1.86	6	2.79	7	3.26	5	2.33	8	3.72	7	3.26	6	2.79	7	3.26	6	2.79
Not effective	12	5.58	5	2.33	6	2.79	3	1.40	8	3.72	5	2.33	9	4.19	7	3.26	15	6.98	14	6.51	9	4.19	4	1.86
Total Responses	88	40.93	97	45.12	88	40.63	90	41.86	74	34.42	75	34.88	64	29.77	64	29.77	63	29.30	55	25.58	82	38.14	60	27.91
No answer	127	59.07	118	54.88	127	59.07	125	58.14	141	65.58	140	65.12	151	70.23	151	70.23	152	70.70	160	74.42	133	61.86	155	72.09
Overall Total	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00
G5_Advocating for certain issues																								
Very effective (5)	31	14.42	32	14.88	25	11.63	46	21.40	15	6.98	24	11.16	12	5.58	5	2.33	11	5.12	7	3.26	32	14.88	17	7.91
Fairly effective (4)	33	15.35	43	20.00	44	20.47	34	15.81	29	13.49	30	13.95	22	10.23	34	15.81	31	14.42	17	7.91	34	15.81	23	10.70
Least effective (2)	12	5.58	18	8.37	13	6.05	8	3.72	22	10.23	10	4.65	23	10.70	15	6.98	11	5.12	15	6.98	12	5.58	12	5.58
Not sure (3)	7	3.26	4	1.86	1	0.47	3	1.40	8	3.72	4	1.86	4	1.86	6	2.79	5	2.33	4	1.86	6	2.78	5	2.33
Not effective (1)	11	5.12	7	3.26	7	3.26	4	1.86	3	1.40	5	2.33	7	3.26	7	3.26	11	5.12	16	7.44	6	2.78	5	2.33
Total Responses	94	43.72	104	48.37	90	41.86	95	44.19	77	35.81	73	33.95	68	31.63	67	31.16	69	32.09	59	27.44	90	41.86	62	28.84
No answer	121	56.28	111	51.63	125	58.14	120	55.81	138	64.19	142	66.05	147	68.37	148	68.84	146	67.91	156	72.56	125	58.14	153	71.16
Overall Total	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00	215	100.00
G6_Sharing experiences																								
Very effective	42	19.53	41	19.07	22	10.23	29	13.49	11	5.12	19	8.84	22	10.23	16	7.44	9	4.19	10	4.65	46	21.40	14	6.51

Fairly effective	**26**	12.09	**38**	17.67	**42**	19.53	**31**	**14.42**	**30**	**13.95**	**32**	**14.88**	**24**	**11.16**	**34**	**15.81**	**18**	**8.37**	**17**	**7.91**	**35**	**16.28**	**21**	**9.77**
Least effective	**12**	5.58	**15**	6.98	**15**	6.98	**14**	**6.51**	**17**	**7.91**	**10**	**4.65**	**17**	**7.91**	**12**	**5.58**	**14**	**6.51**	**13**	**6.05**	**8**	**3.72**	**13**	**6.05**
Not sure	**5**	2.33	**8**	3.72	**2**	0.93	**2**	**0.93**	**1**	**0.47**	**5**	**2.33**	**1**	**0.47**	**5**	**2.33**	**3**	**1.40**	**4**	**1.86**	**4**	**1.86**	**5**	**2.33**
Not effective	**12**	5.58	**2**	0.93	**7**	3.26	**4**	**1.86**	**9**	**4.19**	**4**	**1.86**	**5**	**2.33**	**4**	**1.86**	**13**	**6.05**	**13**	**6.05**	**6**	**2.79**	**4**	**1.86**
Total Responses	**97**	45.12	**104**	48.37	**88**	40.93	**80**	**37.21**	**68**	**31.63**	**70**	**32.56**	**69**	**32.09**	**71**	**33.02**	**57**	**26.51**	**57**	**26.51**	**99**	**46.05**	**57**	**26.51**
No answer	**118**	54.88	**111**	51.63	**127**	59.07	**135**	**62.79**	**147**	**68.37**	**145**	**67.44**	**146**	**67.91**	**144**	**66.98**	**158**	**73.49**	**158**	**73.49**	**116**	**53.95**	**158**	**73.49**
Overall Total	**215**	100.00	**215**	100.00	**215**	100.00	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**
G7_Building capacities																								
Very effective	**18**	8.37	**20**	9.30	**20**	9.30	**23**	**10.70**	**13**	**6.05**	**12**	**5.58**	**8**	**3.72**	**8**	**3.72**	**5**	**2.33**	**4**	**1.86**	**22**	**10.23**	**15**	**6.98**
Fairly effective	**29**	13.49	**31**	14.42	**39**	18.14	**31**	**14.42**	**24**	**11.16**	**29**	**13.49**	**16**	**7.44**	**22**	**10.23**	**19**	**8.84**	**15**	**6.98**	**25**	**11.63**	**16**	**7.44**
Least effective	**9**	4.19	**26**	12.09	**15**	6.98	**20**	**9.30**	**16**	**7.44**	**13**	**6.05**	**22**	**10.23**	**14**	**6.51**	**11**	**5.12**	**14**	**6.51**	**10**	**4.65**	**16**	**7.44**
Not sure	**8**	3.72	**11**	5.12	**4**	1.86	**4**	**1.86**	**4**	**1.86**	**5**	**2.33**	**8**	**3.72**	**8**	**3.72**	**4**	**1.86**	**5**	**2.33**	**7**	**3.26**	**6**	**2.79**
Not effective	**13**	6.05	**1**	0.47	**6**	2.79	**4**	**1.86**	**11**	**5.12**	**4**	**12.86**	**6**	**2.79**	**6**	**2.79**	**16**	**7.44**	**16**	**7.44**	**7**	**3.26**	**5**	**2.33**
Total Responses	**77**	35.81	**89**	41.40	**84**	39.07	**82**	**38.14**	**68**	**31.63**	**63**	**29.30**	**60**	**27.91**	**58**	**26.98**	**55**	**25.58**	**54**	**25.12**	**71**	**33.02**	**58**	**26.98**
No answer	**138**	64.19	**126**	58.60	**131**	60.93	**133**	**61.86**	**147**	**68.37**	**152**	**70.70**	**155**	**72.09**	**157**	**73.02**	**160**	**74.42**	**161**	**74.88**	**144**	**66.98**	**157**	**73.02**
Overall Total	**215**	100.00	**215**	100.00	**215**	100.00	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**
G8_Referring/Linking to proper authorities /experts																								
Very effective	**24**	11.16	**34**	15.81	**27**	12.56	**26**	**12.09**	**10**	**4.65**	**16**	**7.44**	**10**	**4.65**	**7**	**3.26**	**7**	**3.26**	**5**	**2.33**	**17**	**7.91**	**15**	**6.98**
Fairly effective	**30**	13.95	**32**	14.88	**36**	16.74	**31**	**14.42**	**23**	**10.70**	**25**	**11.63**	**14**	**6.51**	**22**	**10.23**	**18**	**8.37**	**16**	**7.44**	**21**	**9.77**	**22**	**10.23**

Least effective	**12**	5.58	**20**	9.30	**22**	10.23	**16**	**7.44**	**18**	**8.37**	**13**	**6.05**	**22**	**10.23**	**15**	**6.98**	**15**	**6.98**	**14**	**6.51**	**10**	**4.65**	**14**	**6.51**
Not sure	**5**	2.33	**9**	4.19	**1**	0.47	**7**	**3.26**	**3**	**1.40**	**6**	**2.79**	**4**	**1.86**	**7**	**3.26**	**4**	**1.86**	**4**	**1.86**	**5**	**2.33**	**5**	**2.33**
Not effective	**13**	6.05	**4**	1.86	**7**	3.26	**5**	**2.33**	**11**	**5.12**	**4**	**1.86**	**6**	**2.79**	**8**	**3.72**	**14**	**6.51**	**15**	**6.98**	**10**	**4.65**	**3**	**1.40**
Total Responses	**84**	39.07	**99**	46.05	**93**	43.26	**85**	**39.53**	**65**	**30.23**	**64**	**29.77**	**56**	**26.05**	**59**	**27.44**	**58**	**26.98**	**54**	**25.12**	**63**	**29.30**	**59**	**27.44**
No answer	**131**	60.93	**116**	53.95	**122**	56.74	**130**	**60.47**	**150**	**69.77**	**15**	**70.23**	**159**	**73.95**	**156**	**72.56**	**157**	**73.02**	**161**	**74.88**	**152**	**70.70**	**156**	**72.56**
Overall Total	**215**	100.00	**215**	100.00	**215**	100.00	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**	**218**	**100.00**	**215**	**100.00**

3.2 Mean Rate of Effectivess of eParticipation Tools												
eGovernance Areas	**SMS**	**E-mail**	**Webpage**	**News**	**Online survey**	**Discussion board/forum**	**Chat**	**Blog**	**Online Petition**	**Video Conferencing**	**Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter, Multiply)**	**Newsgroup**
Accessing information	3.17	3.25	3.36	3.37	2.92	3.23	3.01	3.05	2.67	2.76	3.30	3.05
Accessing/tracking service delivery	3.18	3.34	3.32	3.33	2.77	3.24	2.66	3.17	2.73	2.52	3.25	3.02
Monitoring government performance	2.90	3.12	3.27	3.39	2.97	2.95	2.90	2.83	2.75	2.71	3.09	3.34
Influencing decision-making	3.24	3.39	3.33	3.48	3.15	3.24	2.92	3.02	2.81	2.80	3.20	3.23

Advocating for certain issues	3.25	3.12	3.31	3.47	3.14	3.30	2.81	2.91	2.99	2.63	3.35	3.25
Sharing experiences	3.28	3.44	3.12	3.23	2.69	3.31	3.24	3.24	2.72	2.81	3.44	3.24
Building capacities	3.17	3.28	3.20	3.16	2.90	3.10	3.07	3.10	2.64	2.62	3.35	3.22
Referring/ Linking to proper authorities/ experts	3.08	3.33	3.20	3.31	2.77	3.20	2.89	2.95	2.69	2.62	3.12	3.27
Note: Very effective=5; Fairly effective=4; Not sure=3; Least effective=2; Not effective=1												