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ACTIVITY BRIEF

Forum on Local eGovernance in the Philippines

UNPOG Session during the General Assembly of the
League of Municipalities of the Philippines, 26-28 October 2009

eGovernment - broadly defined as the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the public sector - has gained the attention of government leaders, policymakers, and development practitioners in recent years. The use of ICT in public administration is now widely recognized as an effective strategy to transform governance and to promote efficiency, responsiveness, transparency and accountability in the public sector. As a result, many governments have adopted or begun to adopt eGovernment frameworks and strategies to support development targets and promote public sector reform.

At the local government level, the use of ICT offers tremendous opportunities in improving quality of governance and services for citizens. This is because local governments have a more direct interaction with citizens than central governments. In fact, it is said that majority (80%) of citizen-government transactions take place at the local level. While the functions of local governments may vary from one country to another, they typically include service delivery functions (e.g. education and health services); regulatory functions (e.g. town planning; business regulations); participation functions (e.g. elections, civic engagement in local government policies and decisions); etc.

Many international studies on eGovernment focus on the broader national policies, strategies and implementation of central governments. On other hand, eGovernment development and initiatives at the local government level go unnoticed. This has resulted in a dearth of information and resources that may be useful to other local governments that are thinking of using ICT to strengthen their governance systems and make them more responsive to the needs of their citizens.

In light of the above, the United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG) is embarking on a research and capacity-building programme on local

eGovernment in Asia and the Pacific. The principal objectives of the programme are:

1. To examine the local eGovernment situation in Asia and the Pacific, identify challenges and difficulties facing local governments in eGovernment development, with a view to developing a comprehensive capacity-building programme for local eGovernment development in the region; and

2. Provide technical assistance to local governments in developing countries in the region on eGovernment strategy development and implementation.

In support of these two objectives, and as a component activity under UNPOG's local eGovernment programme, UNPOG will organize a "**Forum on Local eGovernance in the Philippines**". The Forum will review and analyze existing approaches and practices by local authorities in the country on eGovernment, and assess the issues and challenges that they face as they advance on their eGovernment programmes. The workshop will also promote the sharing of best practices among local authorities and will also provide the occasion to learn about international best practices, specifically, the Korean experience.

The workshop will also help UNPOG in understanding the intricacies of local eGovernment in a developing country perspective, and will be useful to UNPOG in designing more relevant programmes and activities on local eGovernance in the future.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the Activity are:

● Provide a platform for discussion among experts and practitioners on local eGovernment (from a developing country perspective);

● Elaborate on the issues and challenges that local governments face in implementing eGovernment initiatives;

● Identify and present innovative local eGovernment projects/initiatives – taking into account the factors for their success and lessons learned – that may serve as models/examples for other local governments;

● Present Korean local eGovernment cases and best practices for a sharing of experience with Philippine municipalities;

● Introduce to the participants the Electronic and Mobile Government Knowledge Repository (emGKR) initiative.

Methodology

The Forum will be organized within the framework of the General Assembly of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP), a government-supported association of 1,502 municipal governments.

The General Assembly of LMP will be held on 26-28 October 2009, and the Forum will be held as one of the side-events on 27 October 2009. UNPOG is partnering with the LMP Secretariat in organizing the Forum. The Forum will address the following thematic areas:

Current Approaches and Challenges on Local eGovernment

- This will include expert presentations on local eGovernment situation in the country; identification of innovative best practices by selected Philippine municipalities; and sharing of lessons and experiences among local government leaders and eGovernment practitioners.

Local eGovernment in the Republic of Korea

- The session will include presentations on local eGovernment practices/initiatives in the Republic of Korea, for a sharing of experience with Philippine municipalities.

The Forum will also include a presentation by UNPOG on the Electronic and Mobile Government Knowledge Repository (emGKR) initiative of UNDESA/DPADM which is intended as a useful on learning about eGovernment development in other countries. More importantly, UNPOG's presentation will also aim at encouraging the Philippine participants to contribute their relevant local-level eGovernment documents to the repository.

It is also expected that best practices to be presented during the Forum will be submitted to emGKR.

Expected Participants

Participants of the Forum include leaders of municipal governments as well as eGovernment experts and practitioners. Around 150 to 200 participants are expected to attend.