Global
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eGovernance for Municipal Development in the Philippines

By Robert A. Sagun, Canadian Executive Service Organization, Philippines Partnership Branch

In many municipalities in the Philippines it takes three to five days for a business to secure a permit to operate. This results in reduced government revenues critical for better public service delivery and higher cost of doing business. In fact, the World Bank, in its 2010 Doing Business Report, ranked the Philippines 162nd out of 183 countries in terms of starting up a business.

The e-Governance for Municipal Development (eGov4MD) Project, funded by the Canadian International Development Agency, is a collaborative initiative between the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP), the Mayors Development Center (MDC), the Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO), and the National Computer Center of the Commission on Information and Communication Technology (CICT-NCC). The project, which started last April 2007, is supported by the Department of Interior and Local Government and the Department of Trade and Industry.

The goal is to improve local governance, including increasing efficiency of public service delivery and revenue generation, by promoting human resource development in the field of information and communications technologies (ICTs). Its objective is to build the capacity of selected e-ready municipalities in the Philippines by implementing an e-governance project using NCC's eLGU software package consisting of the open source Business Permit & License System (eBPLS), Real Property Tax System (eRPTS), and Treasury Operations Management System (eTOMS). The e-Gov4MD initiative, now a flagship program of LMP and MDC, provides the municipalities with a package of users and technical trainings for its municipal personnel and advisory services rendered by CESO's Volunteer Advisers.

Some of the milestones that have been achieved are:

1. An enhanced eBPLS in the participating 60 municipalities. Many of them have reported 15–53 percent increases in business permit revenues, an overwhelming reduction in permit application processing time (from 2–3 days to 1 hour), and increased citizen satisfaction with the aid of the eBPLS.

2. Twenty-six municipalities have been trained on eRPTS and are now in the advanced stages of database building.

3. During 2007–2009, participating municipalities have invested about PhP 8,000,000 (approx. US$175,000) in procuring needed ICT hardware. These figures exclude costs incurred for capacity-building training.

4. About 40 Canadian Volunteer Advisers have been deployed in the participating municipalities, LMP, and MDC.

5. Thirty-two municipalities have either established or are planning to set up their ICT Committees or Units, complete with skilled IT personnel, as part of their Information System Strategic Plan or IT Plan, a three-year roadmap in integrating and using ICT for local governance.

6. More than 400 municipal department heads and staff have been trained on open source technologies, use of eBPLS, basic software programming, IT planning, and ICT project management by CESO Volunteer Advisers, eGov4MD member trainers, and a private IT training company. Some of these trainees, with their IT skills enhanced via the eGov4MD Project, have been promoted to become IT Officers of their municipalities.

7. A non-governmental organization (NGO) called eGov4MD Inc. was formed, comprising all municipalities under the eGov4MD Project, to effect sustainability and replication beyond the CESO partnership. In this new association small groups on technical support, system development and enhancement, training, and policy development were established to provide regionally/provincially clustered technical support to the participating local government units (LGUs) and other interested municipalities who aim to venture into e-governance.

8. eGov4MD, Inc. is presently engaged in lobbying for the passage of House Bill 1716 or the Free/Open Source Bill, a law that further encourages local governments, the educational system, and the private sector to use open source technologies.

LMP and MDC acknowledge the support of CICT-NCC, DTI and CESO, especially its Volunteer Advisers, in the implementation of the eGov4MD Program. Furthermore, the sustained commitment and strong support of the Mayors of the participating municipalities is invaluable in the success of the Program. In fact, the participating municipalities have signed a Covenant on Inter-Municipal Cooperation on eGovernance, which covers:

- Mutual cooperation through sharing of technical staff and deploying such personnel with relevant skills to municipalities requiring assistance
- Pooling of finances to build a community of technically able IT-proficient human resources that will attend to our own technical needs as well as assist other local government units
- Supporting the activities and programs of eGov4MD, Inc., a newly established not-for-profit association of municipal staff engaged in e-governance

Based on experience in implementing eGov4MD so far, it is evident that the political leadership, including the relevant department heads, should champion the process — from adopting municipal resolutions, sending staff to trainings, and allocating resources to procure needed IT equipment to having a project management plan. In detail, successful implementation rests on:

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Activities of the IEEE ComSoc Santa Clara Valley Chapter in 2009 and 2010

By Alan J. Weissberger, Chair of the ComSoc SCV Chapter, USA

The telecommunications world has evolved from being telco-centric and enterprise-network-driven to an industry focused on mobile data, wireless broadband, and Internet technologies for growth. Recognizing this paradigm shift, the ComSoc Santa Clara Valley (SCV) chapter gradually changed the nature of our programs at monthly meetings and workshops to reflect this new dynamic. This shift occurred gradually from 2007 to 2010, enabling a smooth transition from academic and theoretical talks to presentations on more practical topics. We also emphasized panel discussions over solo talks to provide our audience with perspectives, different points of view, and to encourage more interaction with speakers.

During 2009 and 2010, our chapter has had many successful presentations and panel sessions on topics that are quite relevant to the communications industry. These included frontiers in Internet law, 4G semiconductor industry trends, the future of wireless communications (Intel's view), the mobile packet core, convergence of Long Term Evolution (LTE) and IP, Clearwire's 4G Developer Network, WiMAX 2.0, WiFi sensor networks + performance measurements, and the FCC's Broadband Plan. In 2009 we sponsored a Distinguished Lecturer from Columbia University who made an excellent presentation on VoIP over wireless networks (emphasizing WiFi, but also addressing mobile WiMAX and LTE). In July we organized a very informative meeting on the network aspects of cloud computing, which was co-sponsored by the IEEE Computer Society.

To get a cross-industry perspective, we recruited speakers who are affiliated with many different types of organizations. These included established network equipment and semiconductor companies, telcos , startups, research laboratories, universities, law firms (Bingham McCutchen LLP), and others. This is a big change from the previous emphasis on academic papers highlighting research results that might be far removed from what is actually happening in industry or telecom policy.

Currently, our meeting topics tend to emphasize a systems and applications view of technology. This is in contrast to the intricacies of a new telecom standard or the "nitty gritty" design details that had previously been presented in years past. Why? Because fewer and fewer engineers are involved in detailed design, while more and more are involved in the systems integration and applications of new technologies. A good example of that systems and applications approach was our April joint meeting on Video Surveillance and Video Analytics: Technologies Whose Time Has Come? At that meeting, this author presented an introduction to the topic, "Wireless Network Architectures for Video Transport." Other presentations were "Video Surveillance, Security and Smart Energy Management Systems" and "The Role of Video Analytics in Video Servers and Network Edge." The common thread of those talks were new video applications over wireless broadband networks.

Panel discussions now follow presentations at our monthly meetings and workshops. This not only provides different perspectives, but also gives the audience a chance to ask in-depth comparison type questions to the panel. It has greatly increased audience participation and interaction with our speakers. We try to have a different panel moderator for each meeting.

Here are a few of the generic topics we might explore during panel sessions: What's the position of the new technology and how does it relate to the systems architecture?

Panel Session on Mobile Apps at ComSocSCV-TiE Workshop, June 24, 2010, Mountain View, California.

(For example, the mobile packet core is actually at the edge of the entire network). How is the new technology being used (e.g. what are the dominant applications)? What are the obstacles and barriers to growth? What are the competing technologies and how do they compare on a cross-functional basis?

To reach a wider community and achieve higher attendance at meetings, we have partnered with several Silicon Valley non-profits to jointly organize and co-sponsor workshops and seminars. Here are a few examples:

* In 2009 we partnered with Silicon Valley Chinese (SVC) Wireless on a very well received workshop on Mobile Broadband in the Pacific Rim.

* On June 24 of this year we had a very successful two-track workshop on Mobile Apps and Wireless Network Infrastructure with The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) of Silicon Valley (see photo).

* On September 25 we have a workshop scheduled with North American Taiwanese Engineers Association (NATEA) at Santa Clara University. It will address machine-to-machine (M2M) communications, smart grid, emerging devices, and "the Internet of Things."

* Additionally, SVC Wireless, TiE, NATEA, Wireless Communications Association (WCA), and ComSoc-SCV co-promote and advertise each other's events related to wireless networks and applications.

But ComSocSCV is much more than an organization that presents lectures, seminars, workshops, and panel discussions. For starters, we encourage all IEEE members (all over the world) to join our Discussion email list. There, we offer comment and analysis of breaking news, pointers to feature articles on relevant communications topics, free passes to San Francisco Bay Area conferences and partner company events, and access to conference proceedings and presentations. We also encourage discussion and debate on topics of interest to our members. Many of our Discussion group members are experts in their field. Some are chairs of various IEEE and ITU-T standards committees. A few are industry and financial analysts. We are very fortunate to get their expert opinions on topics we are discussing on the list.

We have not neglected social networking. We have set up our own IEEE ComSocSCV Facebook page with lots of news about our chapter. Our new LinkedIn Group is used to publicize upcoming events of interest. Our monthly meeting sum-

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Report of the Asia Pacific Board General Meeting at Cape Town in Conjunction with ICC 2010

By Takaya Miyazawa, National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT), and Kohei Shiomoto, NTT, Japan

The Asia Pacific Board (APB) general meeting was held at ICC 2010 on May 24, 2010. This article introduces the content of the meeting, missions or action plans of each APB committee, and so on. This report is an initial and introductory article describing the AP community in communications, and there will be future articles.

At the beginning of the APB general meeting, the APB Director, Prof. Yamanaka, introduced an overview of APB, the board members over the past 10 years, and the structure and the steering committees for 2010–2011. The APB consists of several committees. Each committee has separate missions or action plans for 2010–2011, which were reported at the meeting.

The Membership Development Committee (MDC) is in charge of four missions: (1) managing the AP Regional email system containing all AP Regional ComSoc members, (2) providing information and analyzing statistics related to membership in the AP Region and overall, (3) collaborating with the ISC and AP Office in relation to information distribution, and (4) coordinating with other ComSoc organizations in developing Sister Societies. MDC works together with all the ComSoc AP chapters, participating in the Membership Program Development Board (MPDB) and contacting other membership related ComSoc organizations.

The Chapters Coordination Committee (CCC) is in charge of three missions: (1) planning and coordinating the Regional Chair meeting once a year where possible, (2) collaborating with the AP Office in running the Distinguished Lecture Tours (DLT) program, and (3) supporting the AP Office in organizing Executives' visits to Chapters. In the past several years the CCC members were very successful in accommodating all the above mission items. A good number of DLTs and pilot programs of technical presentations using the IEEE Internet Conferencing Service have been organized in the AP Region.

The Technical Affairs Committee (TAC) is in charge of three missions: (1) managing several technical related activities in cooperation with ComSoc Technical Committees and other APB committees. The activities include proposal of technical sessions/workshops for the ComSoc conferences and fostering session/workshop organizers from the AP Region. Also, the TAC solicits qualified reviewers from the AP Region, proposes them to the Technical Program Committees of ComSoc conferences as required, and also proposes editors and guest editors to ComSoc publications as required. In addition, the TAC fosters AP members' direct involvement in ComSoc Technical Committee activities. (2) Coordinating independent workshops/mini-Conferences in the AP region. The TAC Chairperson shall represent the APB in contacting ComSoc's Technical Affairs Council, Publication Boards, and other technical related organizations. (3) Handling the APB Young Researcher Awards and AP Outstanding Paper Awards.

The Information Services Committee (ISC) is in charge of five missions: (1) managing and updating the AP Region homepage to provide new and important information to AP Regional ComSoc members; (2) publishing and distributing the AP Region email news; (3) publishing and distributing AP Newsletters; (4) providing a liaison to the *IEEE Global Communications Newsletter* (GCN); and (5) collaborating with the AP Office on information service related matters.

The ISC has several action plans: (a) editing and publishing AP newsletters twice a year, and distributing them at AP general meetings held in conjunction with ICC and GLOBECOM; (b) providing a liaison to *IEEE GCN*; (c) enhancing and maintaining the contents of the APB website, including a newsletter archive, upcoming APB meeting announcements, and APB meeting minutes archive, APB Committee activity update, conference information, call for papers/participation, homepage renewal plan, and others; (d) disseminating calls for papers/participation under approval of the AP Director, announcing homepage updates to members (approximately bimonthly), and other related activities by sending APB email news (apb-announcement@ieee.org).

The Meetings and Conferences Committee (MCC) is in charge of four missions: (1) distributing information on IEEE ComSoc supported international meetings and conferences to AP Regional ComSoc members; (2) coordinating and supporting IEEE ComSoc supported international meetings and conferences in the AP region, including APCC, ISPACS, EOCC, and APNOMS; (3) pursuing the visibility of the APB at the above international conferences; and (4) performing statistical analyses for ComSoc's major conferences including ICC, GLOBECOM, and INFOCOM, and the above AP Regional conferences.

The APB sponsors the IEEE ComSoc Asia-Pacific Young Researcher Award. This award honors researchers who have been very active in IEEE ComSoc publication and conference activities over the last three years. One best Young Researcher Award winner of a certificate and US$500 is selected each time. Also, several Outstanding Young Researcher Awards are selected; a certificate and US$250 are given to each award winner. The eligibility criteria is that applicants must be ComSoc members in AP and be younger than 35, among others.

This year, the dates are:

July 1, 2010: Application submission due

October 1, 2010: Announcement of awardees

December 2010: Award ceremony at GLOBECOM 2010

Please send an email for inquiry as to details to the APB Technical Affairs Committee: apb-officers-2010-2011-tac@ieee.org

As for the Industry Now (IN) Program in AP region, the APB needs a team volunteer for an industry group member at a reasonable fee.

The ComSoc office provides support to the ComSoc APB and its committees in carrying out its activities. The office calls for Nominations for a new ComSoc APB Director and transitioning of APB Officers every two years, and does outreach for contact update of ComSoc Chapter Chairs and training information for new Chapter Chairs.

Every year, the APB has general meetings at ICC and GLOBECOM. Any AP regional ComSoc member is invited to the meeting to converge the interests and opinions of AP regional ComSoc members and reflect them through ComSoc's policies and procedures. Participants enjoy a great opportunity to deepen exchange with researchers in the Asia-Pacific region while enjoying wonderful food. The next APB general meeting is going to be held in Miami, Florida, at GLOBECOM '10. Please visit the website of APB for details:

http://chapters.comsoc.org/~APB/

Activities of the IEEE Comsoc Indonesia Chapter

By Kuncoro Wastuwibowo, Indonesia Chapter Chair

Indonesia has a unique position in the digital communication world. When talking about the explosive growth of social network users in Asia, this country is mentioned. The issues of third- and fourth-generation (3G/4G) mobile communications, mobile Internet applications, Internet-based social media, IPTV, and so on are common topics in Indonesian communities. However, Indonesia is mentioned less in academia and research in the field of communications, which is fundamental to make all the realms of possibility happen.

Compared to neighboring countries in the region of Asia-Pacific, Indonesia has among the smallest numbers of IEEE members and activities. Observing the position and condition of Indonesia, the IEEE Communications Society Indonesia Chapter has chosen to carry out its regional activities in the form of seminars, workshops, and technical meetings discussing industry trends in the next few years. The objective is to open the eyes of the public, and to trigger prospective future academics and professionals to perform academic, business, and creative research and development related to the field in the next few years.

The Indonesia Chapter Chair for the period 2009–2010 is Kuncoro Wastuwibowo, and the Vice Chair is FX Ari Wibowo. The main program in this period is to disseminate information on the latest technologies the Communications Society is discussing in its journals, transactions, and seminar series.

The first theme to deliver in this period is Opening the Gates to 4G Mobile Technology. The scope of discussions includes the ITU-T requirements and specifications of IMT-Advanced; some aspects of transmission, such as orthogonal frequency-division multiple access (OFDMA), multiple-input multiple-output (MIMO) antennas, and cognitive radio technology; the implementation of the IP multimedia subsystem (IMS) and the consequences of all-IP network design; the comparison of two strong candidates, LTE/EPS and IEEE 802.16m (WiMAX II); and context-aware applications related to the way we implement and use the technologies. Discussions have taken place in the form of seminars, workshops, and technical discussions, which were held for the campus and professional circles in some cities. The campuses involved, among others, were Institut Teknologi Telkom (ITT) in Bandung, Bina Nusantara University in Jakarta, the University of Pelita Harapan in Surabaya and Jakarta, and Soedirman University in Purwokerto. Off campus, the Chapter has also carried out some public seminars in the cities of Bandung and Yogyakarta. The number of participants varied greatly, from less than 20 to hundreds of people, as at public lectures at the University of Pelita Harapan.

The speakers at the IEEE Seminar on 4G Mobile Technology, University of Pelita Harapan, Surabaya.

Parallel with that theme, the Indonesia Chapter also launched a second seminar series, entitled "Opening The Gates to Digital TV," discussing platforms, infrastructure, interactive contents, and other technical aspects of digital TV, including IPTV. This was done on campuses such as Bina Nusantara University in Jakarta and Hasanuddin University in Makassar; as well as off campus, in the city of Bandung. We are also starting a third theme, which is about e-Money and the next stage of e-Transactions.

In all seminars and lectures, both on and off campus, we also talked about the IEEE as an organization for engineers and those who have interest in developing the technology for humanity, including the network technologies discussed in the seminars. Sometimes those talks also involved some officers and volunteers from the IEEE Indonesia Section. Some results of the campaign are an increase of the members of both the IEEE Indonesia Section and the IEEE Communications Society Indonesia Chapter. Other results are the formation of new IEEE Student Branches. The first IEEE Student Branch was established in 2009 at the University of Indonesia (Jakarta). The first half of 2010 has brought the establishment of two other student branches: ITT of Bandung, and ITS of Surabaya.

Other progress is reported periodically at our website, http://komunikasi.org, our Twitter page, http://twitter.com/ComsocIndonesia, and our Facebook page, http://facebook.com/ComsocIndonesia.

Global Communications Newsletter

www.comsoc.org/pubs/gcn

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maries are posted on the (global) ComSoc Community web site, community.comsoc.org. In the future we plan to use Twitter for short quick discussions of hot topics.

In addition to our networking social that precedes each of our monthly meetings and workshops, we have a couple of standalone socials each year. This April, we had a very successful evening social with the IEEE Computer Society. At that social event, we offered a free $8 voucher for food/drinks upon presentation of a current IEEE membership card. We did this to offer tangible benefits to IEEE members, many of whom no longer get their memberships reimbursed by their employers. That ComSoc-Computer joint social was a super success!

This August, we organized a reception with catered dinner and drinks for ComSocSCV members, meeting participants, and their guests. We strongly believe that the IEEE has not placed enough emphasis on networking and the development of interpersonal communication skills. We are addressing these neglected soft skills during our informal networking hour and social events by encouraging the attendees and speakers/panelists to network and mingle with one another.

ComSocSCV is quite proud of two other achievements:

1. We have steadily increased attendance at monthly meetings and workshops. During most of 2010, we have had 72–85 attendees at monthly meetings — more than triple the attendance in early 2007. Workshops have attracted even larger crowds. We had over 120 paid registrations for our Mobile Apps workshop with TiE on June 24 and almost that number for our Mobile Broadband Pacific Rim workshop with SVC Wireless in 2009. Our joint seminar with NATEA in 2008 drew 110 attendees.

2. We have increased ComSocSCV membership in the past year. There were 1254 ComSocSCV members at the end of May 2010 vs. 1143 at the end of 2009 (source: John Pape, IEEE ComSoc, New York, NY).

For a complete list of ComSocSCV programs, please visit the archived section of our web site (http://www.comsocscv.org), where we post presentation slides and meeting summaries. Instructions to join our Discussion group for IEEE members are also posted on our web site. All IEEE members are invited to join that email group. And anyone can join our IEEE ComSocSCV Facebook page.

Panelists discussed a variety of hot topics on the development and monetization of mobile applications at this well attended workshop. It was jointly organized by IEEE ComSocSCV and TiE Silicon Valley. Over 120 attendees enjoyed keynote presentations and two panels on mobile applications and wireless infrastructure. There were also great networking opportunities during breaks and a catered dinner.

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- 15 percent technology (in this case, computers, Internet, LANs, and the eBPLS software)
- 20 percent re-engineering business processes (e.g., streamlining the permit and licensing processes)
- 30 percent changing organizational behavior (e.g., the Mayor's support for IT-enabled services, appreciation by municipal staff for moving from manual-based to computer-enabled operations)
- More important, 35 percent well trained municipal staff.

Venturing into e-governance requires long-term political support, institutional maturity, capital investment both in hardware and human resources, and a well designed, visionary roadmap.

It is LMP, MDC, CICT-NCC, DTI and CESO's vision that through the eGov4MD Program, more municipalities will venture into e-governance, thereby making them more globally competitive and business/citizen-friendly.

LMP and its program partners are searching for more local government units, especially municipalities, who share the vision of the Philippines becoming globally competitive; where accountability, transparency, and good governance are the driving forces for private sector development and poverty alleviation.