

DLSU-College of Computer Studies & the Lasallian Justice and Peace Commission

Towards Strengthening Electoral Reforms through ICT

An Assessment of the May 2010 Automated Elections in the Philippines

Prof. Sherwin E. Ona

Director

Center for ICT for Development (CITe4D)

Prof. Allan B. Borra

Senior Research Fellow

Center for ICT for Development (CITe4D)

Discussion Overview

- Rational for Automation: Electoral Reform
- Objectives of the DLS Assessment
- Conduct of the May 2010 Automated Elections
- Analysis Framework
- General Recommendations
- List of Authors and Contributors



Our Partners



- AES Watch 2010
- Center for People Empowerment in Governance (CenPEG)
- AES Caucus for Ensuring Trustworthy and Credible Elections for May 2010
 - **Phil. Computer Society (PCS)**
 - **Association of Schools in Public Administration in the Philippines (ASPAP)**
 - **Advance Research Institute for Computing (AdRIC), College of Computer Studies-DLSU**

Rationale for the Automated Elections

- An on-going effort towards electoral reform
- OPLAN MODEX (1992)
 - Activities identified as priority areas for automation:
 - Voters' Registration
 - Vote Tallying and Canvassing
 - Strengthening of COMELEC's IT organizational capacity



“As far as automated elections are concern, are good intentions enough?”

Objective of the Assessment

“Provide a holistic and objective perspective on the use of the automated election system (AES) during the May 2010 elections”

“Contribute to the continuing discourse on the AES”



Conduct of the May 2010 Elections

- Common observations and reactions:
 - “Iba na ngayon!”- COMELEC
 - “Ang bilis...sobrang bilis”- bedazzled by the immediate results of the precinct tally and canvass
 - “Ang haba ng pila at ang init pa!”- Kawawang Juan at Juana excited pumila dahil sa PCOS
 - “Di ako naka-boto”
 - “Nadaya ako!”- A losing candidate
 - “Nandaya kami!”- Koala Boy
 - “These are common glitches in the system!”- SMARTMATIC





Untying the Gordian Knot

“Was the AES worth the PhP 11 Billion investment?”

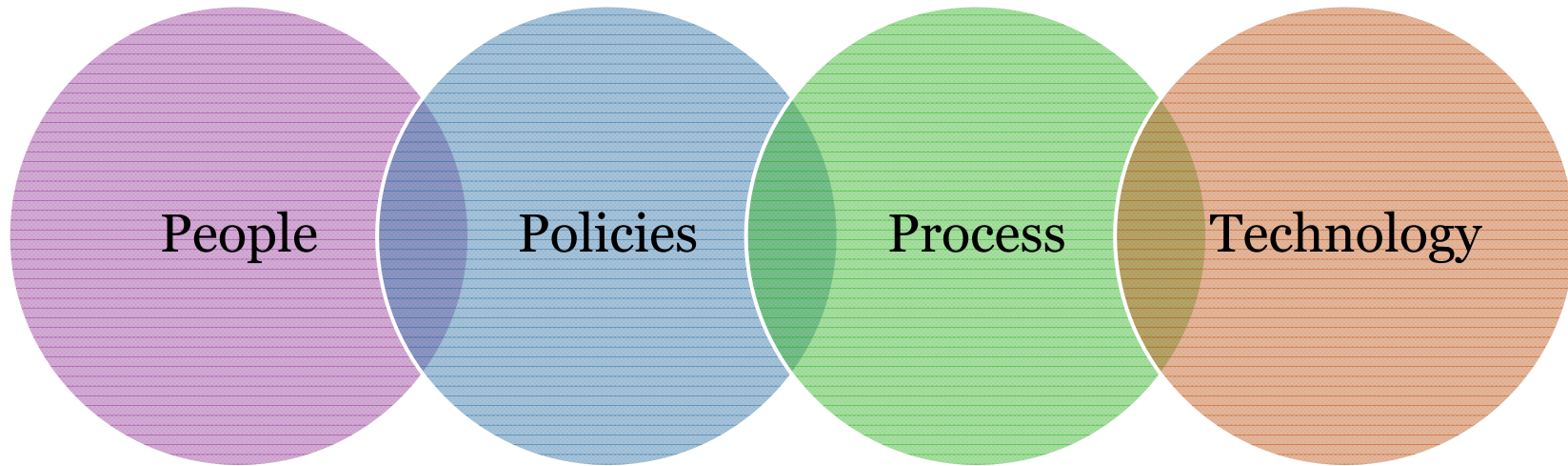


Snapshot: Our take on the matter

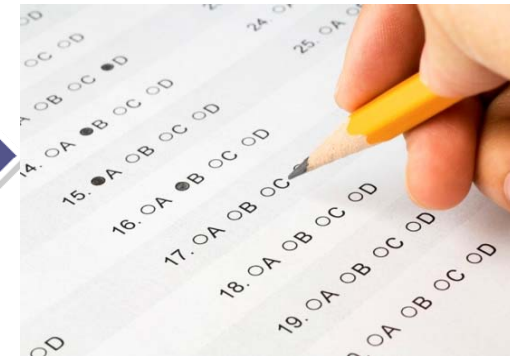
“A gap between the Law and how the AES was implemented”

- Disregard for **transparency** and **participation** which are essential elements of a credible election
- Need to address allegations of manipulation and cheating
- Need to address graft allegations: Who is **accountable** ?
- Need to **adhere to best practices**: project management and AES implementation

Analysis Framework



Good Governance and ICT Best Practices for Credible Elections



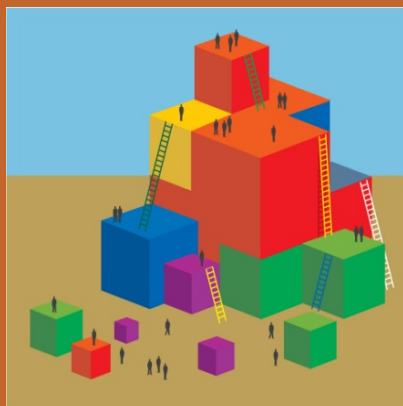
A Closer Look: People, Policies, Process & Technology

People



- **Supply Side:** Improve IT Capacity of COMELEC
 - Need for a Chief Information Officer (CIO)
 - Capacitate the BEI on non-traditional roles
- **Demand Side:** Adequate Voters Education
- Ballot Design Issue
 - Explore possibility of separate national and local ballots
 - Larger CPIs
 - Standardized naming convention

Policies



- Early release of GIs: Implications for BEI training and public review
- Need of sufficient procedures for ensuring AES security and accuracy
- Need to establish basis for election protest and system audit
- Factor mechanisms on transparency, accountability, participation

A Closer Look: People, Policies, Process & Technology



Process

- End-to-End process simulation
- Other ICT tools: SMS, Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Need for seamless integration: Purging of the Voters List (single voters list)
- Smaller precinct size



Technology

Need for an independent AES performance audit

Need for adequate safeguards

- Source code review and stress testing of machines
- Publish maintenance and contingency procedures
- Procedures for an expanded RMA



A closer look at best practices

- Need for consistency in Project Management practices
- Need for a “AES Czar”: No need to outsource to Technology supplier
- 3rd Party Quality partner
- AES is a tool for electoral reform: Thus the need to ensure that mechanisms for Good Governance are in place
- Start Small...Think Big: It might be wise to be more prudent to have the following:
 - Pilot testing of the AES
 - Process Simulation

“Automation efforts by the COMELEC are laudable but the demand for credible elections is greater”

An aerial photograph of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, featuring the Christ the Redeemer statue in the foreground. The statue stands on a rocky peak, overlooking a dense urban area and a large bay with several islands. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The text "Quo Vadis" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

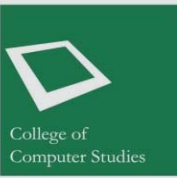
“Quo Vadis”

“The mistakes of past weighs heavily on those who counselled their fears and ignored its lessons”



General Recommendations

- ***People: The Need to Strengthen Institutions***
 - *Need to have an ICT-enabled COMELEC*
 - *Upgrading of Skills, Methodologies, and Infrastructure*
- ***Process: The Need to Ensure Credibility and Voter Convenience***
 - *Use of system simulation and piloting techniques*
 - *Integration of the Voters' list*
- ***Policies: Bridging the gap between the Law and IT implementation policies***
 - *System audit, election protest, Conduct of RMA*
 - *Adherence to Project Management standards*



General Recommendations

- ***Technology: The Reliability and Accuracy Imperative***
 - *Need for an independent performance audit*
 - *Adherence to best practices e.g. source code review, stress testing, etc.*
- ***Importance of Good Governance: Transparency and Accountability***
 - ***“Was the May 2010 automated election worth the investment?”***
 - *On the reported PCOS malfunctions, glitches, and failures: similar to an OJT experience*
 - *Graft allegations must be thoroughly investigated*
 - *Explanations needed: UV lamps, Indelible Ink, CF cards, Secrecy folder, etc.*

Next Steps: Continuation of Research Initiatives on the AES

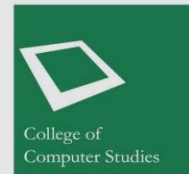


- Compilation of cases: objective assessment of what really transpired on the ground during the May 2010 elections
- Continuous engagements: possible revisions in the Law and creation of more relevant policies
- Continuous advocacy for electoral reform using ICTs and the need for greater involvement
- AES 2013: Need for Vigilance



“Who are the real heroes of May 2010?”

Board of Elections Inspectors
Poll Watchers and Volunteers
Media
AFP-PNP
The Filipino People



List of Authors and Contributors

Overall Project Head: **Dr. Rachel Edita Roxas**

Dean, College of Computer Studies

Authors

Project Team Lead

Prof. Sherwin E. Ona

Director, Center for ICT for Dev't (CITe4D)

Prof. Allan Borra

Senior Research Fellow-CITe4D

Prof. Ma. Victoria Pineda

Senior Research Fellow-CITe4D

Ms. Mary Ruth Delano

Assistant, External Affairs Office

Contributors

Lasallian Justice and Peace
Commission

Ms. Nelca Villarín

Mr. Dexter Basunillo

**Center for ICT for Development (CITe4D), College of
Computer Studies, De La Salle University. June 2010**