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**VOTER'S EDUCATION
TOOLKIT**

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INTRODUCTION

Understanding Suffrage: The Right and Responsibility to Vote

Suffrage refers to the right and duty of every citizen to vote in elections. It is a fundamental political right granted by the Philippine Constitution, allowing Filipinos to participate in the democratic process actively. Through voting, citizens have the power to choose leaders, influence government policies, and shape the future of the country.

While voting is a right, it is not legally required. This means that no one is punished for not voting. However, choosing not to vote can be seen as neglecting one's responsibility as a citizen. Elections determine the officials who will make decisions that affect the nation's progress, from economic policies to social programs. *When people refuse to vote, they allow others to decide for them*, which can lead to leaders being elected who may not truly represent the majority's interests.

The right to vote has not always been granted to all people. In many parts of the world, including the Philippines, certain groups—such as women, the poor, and indigenous people—once faced restrictions on voting. Through years of struggle and advocacy, suffrage became a universal right.

For example, before 1937, Filipino women were not allowed to vote. It was only after a historic plebiscite, where an overwhelming majority of Filipino women voted in favor of their right to participate in elections, that they were finally granted suffrage. This victory was a significant step toward gender equality in the country.

A young voter might think, "My one vote doesn't matter." However, in past elections, there have been cases where a candidate won by only a few hundred votes. If more young people exercise their right to vote, they can influence decisions that directly impact their future, such as education reforms and job opportunities.

Suffrage is not just a right—it is a responsibility. While voting is not mandatory in the Philippines, choosing not to vote means giving up one's voice in shaping the nation's future. History has shown that people fought hard to gain this right, and it should not be taken for granted. By voting wisely, every Filipino contributes to building a better, more democratic society.

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PRELIMINARY ACTIVITY

Prior to the start of any activity, it is essential for the participants to get to know each other first and understand the program's expectations. The participants should utilize the preliminary part of the activity as an opportunity to learn more about the facilitators, modules, and key stakeholders of the program.

Additionally, it is essential to set the tone for the training with exercises that create a conducive learning atmosphere where participants can learn from and alongside one another. These actions help the participants to be cooperative, challenged, and open to new experiences from both the facilitators and their fellow participants. It is hoped that these activities will get everyone in the right frame of mind, inspired, and enthusiastic for the days ahead.

EXPECTATION SETTING (30 MINUTES)

This activity can be done while participants are arriving in the training venue and while waiting for all the participants to arrive. Two (2) Manila papers are posted on the venue. Participants will be requested to answer questions and write their answers on metacards that will eventually be posted on the Manila paper. Participants should answer the following questions in corresponding metacards:

- What do you expect from the workshop? (Pink metacard)
- What can others expect from you? (Yellow metacard)
- What do you expect from your co-participants? (Orange metacard)
- What do you expect from facilitators? (Green metacard)

Upon posting answers, facilitators are expected to assess and summarize the answers provided. This is an opportunity for the facilitator to trigger and excite the participants on what to look forward to during the workshop. The facilitator may also raise clarifications or prompt deeper explanation on the answers provided.

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MODULE 1: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND VOTING



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CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Civic participation is an act of involvement in community affairs by maximizing the opportunity to be part of the decision and action to achieve a common goal (YGOAL and ILO (2022)). Civic participation allows individuals to become “agents” of change by understanding the needs and addressing the gaps or particular issues and concerns that prevail in society. This aims to promote collaborative effort, foster the sharing of knowledge and skills among individuals, and the empower various sectors for the betterment of the community.

The 1987 Philippine Constitution highlights the role of the following sectors in nation-building and their participation in civic affairs, making decisions and managing programs:

- Youth
- Women
- Farmers and landowners
- Workers
- Urban poor
- People’s organization
- Indigenous people’s community

A democratic society is thought to be built on the principle of civic participation, which can be achieved through activism, volunteering, membership in groups and organizations of civil society, humanitarianism, and political involvement, among others. It is vital to instill active civic participation of youth, women, farmers, workers, urban poor, people’s organizations, and indigenous communities because it promotes awareness of individual rights and existing societal issues and concerns. Furthermore, civic activities are essential grounds for social and cultural interaction among individuals that opens the door to a deeper understanding of the heterogeneity of communities and will help in plotting interventions to achieve societal sustainability.

Civic Education and Civic Engagement

Democracy relies on effective civic education because "the competence to participate in democratic communities, the ability to think critically and act deliberately in a pluralistic world, the empathy that permits us to hear and thus accommodate others, involves skills that must be acquired" (Barber, 2023). Civic education provides individuals with the knowledge, values, and skills necessary for active participation in civic life, while civic engagement involves putting this knowledge into action through participation in democratic processes and community initiatives. It is equally crucial for a functioning democracy. Central to civic engagement is the active participation of the youth through community service, political involvement, and collective action to tackle social issues. Youth participation and engagement are enshrined in Article II, Section 13 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, which declares that “the State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being. It shall

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inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs.” The active involvement of youth in the public sphere is essential for civic leadership, a vital aspect of democratic participation.

In the Philippines, the youth population represents a significant number of the total population (28.9% of total), encompassing individuals aged 15 to 30 years. This demographic holds considerable potential to drive the nation’s economic, political, and cultural development.

Efforts to enhance civic education and promote civic engagement among the youth align with AmBisyon Natin 2040 which embodies Filipinos’ collective long-term vision for development. The aspiration of Filipino families to have a “matatag, maginhawa, at panatag na buhay (strongly rooted, comfortable and secure life)” can only be realized through genuine citizen participation in governance, particularly among the youth, who are the primary focus of this long-term vision for social progress. The Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 outlines the government’s strategy to achieve this vision, envisioning Filipino learners as those who “have access to high quality lifelong learning opportunities that develop adequate competencies and character qualities which will allow them to thrive in society and the world of work” (NEDA 2022, p. 46). This requires strengthening education’s contributions to promoting transparency and accountability while fostering respect for human rights and social justice. Proactive and responsible citizenship across all levels—from local communities to national and global spheres—advocating for gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI), sustainable development, and peaceful coexistence is essential for aspiring a transformative future for our society. These goals address fundamental principles of good governance, (Transparency and Accountability), civic engagement (Proactive and Responsible Citizenship), Inclusivity (Respect for Human Rights and Social Justice, GEDSI), and Sustainability (Sustainable Development).

Education serves as a fundamental foundation for developing civic knowledge and acquiring civic competencies necessary to sustain democracy. Moreover, it is important to examine the activities of various institutions outside of school, as civic education includes not only the “everyday lives of young people in homes, with peers and at school” but also the sociopolitical processes, institutions, and values of their communities (Torney & Purta et al., 2001).

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ROLE OF VOTING IN DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

The Philippines: A Democratic Government

Article 2, Section 1 of the Philippine Constitution states that the Philippines is a democratic and republican state. Sovereignty resides in the people and all government emanates from them. Democracy is a form of government wherein a majority of people exercise political power and have the right to choose their representatives through elections. The proverbial quote of Abraham Lincoln “Government of the people, by the people, and for the people” expresses the idea and principle of democracy. When talking about democracy, it also equates with the following:

1. Government by the people

- People in authority should work together with their citizens since it is a part of the social contract between the parties.

2. Rule of the people and by the people

- A democratic government is ruled by the citizens, all are involved.

3. Human rights

- Human rights refer to the rights of the citizens that cannot be taken away by the State. These rights are also stated in the Constitution.

4. Free and fair elections

- The country should promote free and fair elections to everyone. This means that no citizen shall be deprived of engaging in politics or running for office. Moreover, elections should be conducted with transparency and qualified voters cannot be denied their right to vote.

5. Party pluralism

- The political party system is essential to democracy for it provides the medium for citizens to have substantive political debates.

6. Informed and active citizenry

- The government should uphold the concept of “transparency”.

7. Inclusivity and equality

- Rights and access to public resources and services should be equal for all citizens.

RIGHT TO SUFFRAGE

Article 5, Section 1 of the Constitution states that “*suffrage may be exercised by all citizens of the Philippines not otherwise disqualified by law, who are at least eighteen years of age, and who shall have resided in the Philippines for at least one year, and in the place wherein they propose to vote, for at least six months immediately preceding the election. No literacy, property, or other substantive requirement shall be imposed on the exercise of suffrage*”.

Suffrage is the right and obligation to vote. According to Tamayao (2014), suffrage is a political right conferred by the constitution that empowers citizens to participate in the process of government. It is an obligation that should be maximized but it is non-mandatory.

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This means that an individual's failure to exercise their right to vote is not punishable by law, rather, it makes a citizen irresponsible.

The right to vote can be exercised through elections, in selecting representatives in government activities, or in ascertaining the will of the majority through referendum, plebiscite, initiative, and recall. Republic Act 6735 or the Initiative and Referendum Act defines the following:

- a. **Referendum** is the power of the electorate to approve or reject legislation through an election called for the purpose (Section 3 (c)).
- b. **Plebiscite** is the electoral process by which an initiative on the Constitution is approved or rejected by the people (Section 3 (e)).
 - Republic Act 11259, signed into law in 2019, outlines the division of Palawan into Palawan del Norte, Palawan Oriental, and Palawan del Sur. In 2021, a successful plebiscite was announced in Palawan, where residents voted against the division of the province into three separate entities. The Commission on Election's tally revealed that the "no" vote prevailed, receiving 172,304 votes compared to 122,233 votes for "yes," and winning in 19 out of 23 municipalities.
- c. **Initiative** is the power of the people to propose amendments to the Constitution or to propose and enact legislation through an election called for the purpose (Section 3 (a)).
 - In 2011, a barangay in Quezon City achieved a successful local initiative, putting a stop on the ongoing influx of informal settlers and the illegal drug trade in their community. According to the Commission on Elections, 465 registered voters voted in favor of the ordinance, while 384 voted against it.
- d. **Recall** is the power to terminate or remove a local elective official before the expiration of their term. This shall be exercised by the registered voters of a local government unit to which the local elective official subject to such recall belongs (Sec. 69, Local Government Code).

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF VOTING RIGHTS AND SUFFRAGE

Hispanic Era

During the Spanish era, elections were held at the *convento* or friar's residence instead of at the town plaza or casa real. During the 17th century, the regime held elections for the *gobernadorcillo*. On the other hand, the *cabeza de barangay* took up the post either through popular vote or appointment (Filipinas Heritage Library, n.d.)

American Era

In 1899, the United States imposed martial law following Spain's cession of the Philippines. A year later, the commission governing the country reported that its people were not capable of suffrage. Through the passage of the Philippine Organic Act which is also known as the "Cooper Act", the Philippine Assembly was established which is a legislative body occupied by elected Filipino members. The Philippine Commission passed Act No. 60

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to serve as an organic law for all municipal governments in the country. The Act indicates that required voters must be:

1. Male, aged 23 and above
2. A resident of the municipality where they were to vote for a period of six months immediately preceding the elections
3. Any of the following three classes: individuals who speak, read, and write English/Spanish; own real property worth at least P500; or have held local government positions prior to the occupation of the country in 1898 (Tancangco, 1998: 81, as cited by Teehankee, 2002).

1900's: Empowering Women to Vote

The expansion of voting rights for the majority of Filipinos in the Philippines in the early 1900s was a democratic challenge. Fighting for suffrage was as much about freedom from colonialism as about the freedom of women. In 1902, suffragette Clemencia Lopez went to America to lobby for both Philippine independence and women's equality. When the 1935 Philippine Constitution was ratified, women voted for the first time. Through another plebiscite held on April 30, 1937, Filipino women were granted the right to vote and to be voted into office (Samonte, 2022).

To test the leadership skills and civic participation initiatives of the participants, a set of activities will be provided to exercise teamwork and observational skills. This exercise will establish rapport with the facilitators and the participants. The activity below will also allow participants to set the following expectations:

1. *Everyone has a part to play in both workshops. The group is responsible for making sure that everyone participates.*
2. *The emphasis and level of effort required from participants. This will not be your typical lecture-style training where you listen to a speaker teaching you.*
3. *Identify and bridge possible stakeholders in the process.*

ACTIVITY 1: BARANGAY BRIDGE (30 MINUTES)

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Masking tape
- Scissors
- Background music, sound system
- Bond paper with Local Youth Development Plan (LYDP) crafting process (one step per paper)

Participants are told a story

As citizens of a remote barangay, known as Barangay Lapu-lapu, the barangay captain learns that a powerful typhoon is headed to hit your area. Each household must use the stepping stones provided by the barangay captain to cross the surging river and reach safety.

Each household is required to use the stepping stones distributed by the barangay captain to cross the river.

The participants are divided into 3 groups of equal numbers. Groups will be given three (3) minutes to strategize. Each group is provided with one bond paper per member which will serve as a "stone". The 3 groups will be placed behind two lines. The space between two lines will be the river, which no part/shoe/sock of the participant can touch. Participants will only be able to move if they all work together. This is a realization moment for the participants.

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Rules:

1. Someone must always be standing on a stepping stone.
2. Each stepping stone must be placed adjacent to the previous one.
3. No “skooching” or sliding your rock along the ground.
4. If anyone falls in the river (steps off a stone), everyone in the entire group must go back to the starting point and begin again.

The objective of the activity is for everyone to be able to cross the river.

REFLECTION (30 MINUTES)

1. How was the activity?
2. Describe how you strategized before the start of the activity.
 - a. What worked and what didn't work?
3. How did you feel seeing how other people were moving across the river?
 - a. Why do you think you felt that way?
4. How did you feel whenever you had to start from the beginning?
 - a. Why do you think you felt that way?
 - b. What made you want to try again?
5. Describe what happened when the group started to realize that they had to work together.
 - a. What made you realize that you had to work together?
 - b. What did the members of the other group feel when they heard the suggestion to try crossing together?
 - c. Why did you agree to join with the other groups?
6. What did you feel when you all started to cross together as one team?
 - a. Why do you think you felt that way?
7. What lessons did you learn from the activity?
 - a. How can you apply these lessons to your life as an LYDP stakeholder?
 - b. How can you apply these lessons in developing the LYDP?

Play #DemocracyEveryday video: [Para Po! Pilipinas](#) which highlights civic education as a shared responsibility.

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MODULE 2: UNDERSTANDING THE PHILIPPINE POLITICAL SYSTEM



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STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT (EXECUTIVE, LEGISLATIVE, JUDICIARY)

The Philippines is a democratic and republican state. The government is divided into three co-equal branches: executive, legislative, and judiciary. These branches cannot function without the other and are bound to the principle of separation of powers.

THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

The executive branch of the government carries out the will of the people. It is composed of the President and the Vice President. They are elected by direct popular vote and shall serve for a term of six years. The executive power is vested to the president who has the authority to appoint cabinet secretaries that shall supervise and oversee the operation of executive departments such as the Department of Health, Department of Interior and Local Government, and Department of Foreign Affairs, among others.

THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The legislative branch is the lawmaking body of the government which can be bicameral or unicameral. The legislative power is vested in Congress which consists of a Senate and a House of Representatives. Congress is responsible for making, changing, and/or repealing laws that set the general rule of the government.

The Senate is composed of twenty-four (24) senators who were elected at large with six (6) years term of office. On the other hand, the House of Representatives is composed of not more than two hundred fifty members (250) members that are elected from legislative districts. Moreover, twenty percent of the total number of representatives comes from party lists. The members of the House of Representatives shall be elected for a term of three years and shall serve for not more than three consecutive terms. These legislative bodies come out with two (2) main documents: bills and resolutions.

THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

The judicial branch is in charge of the interpretation of laws. It is composed of a Supreme Court which is the highest court of the land and lower courts. The judicial branch is in charge of resolving disputes concerning legally demandable and enforceable rights. Additionally, it determines whether or not there has been a grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction on the part and instrumentality of the government. The judiciary branch of the government is headed by the Supreme Court, which has a Chief Justice as its head and 14 Associate Justices, all appointed by the president on the recommendation of the Judicial and Bar Council.

SEPARATION OF POWERS AND CHECKS AND BALANCES

As mentioned above, the three branches of the government have their specific functions and responsibilities and are bound by the concept of separation of powers. The doctrine of separation of powers means the separation of the three branches of the government and that specific functions, duties, and responsibilities are vested in institutions with defined manner of competence and jurisdiction (Mojapelo, 2013). This means that if the legislative branch is for law-making, it shall not execute nor interpret laws because the branch does not have the power and jurisdiction to do so. This is to prevent abuse of power.

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In summary, the three branches must exist separately and function independently in their sphere to prevent overstepping the jurisdiction of the other.

Conforming to this, the legislative, executive, and judiciary branches are also bound by checks and balances. Checks and balances on the doctrine of separation of powers hold the three branches of government accountable to each other. This is to ensure that different branches of government act as internal checks on one another (checks) and counterbalance the authority held by other branches (balances).

Aside from the doctrine of separation of powers, the 1987 Philippine Constitution establishes in Article IX-A Section 1 the Constitutional Commissions as independent bodies. independent it secures the government's integrity towards its function and the state, these offices include:

- **COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS (COMELEC)** - An election management body established to enforce and administer laws and regulations relative to the conduct of an election, plebiscite, initiative, referendum, and recall. The COMELEC should be independent, voter-centered and competent, and conducting free, orderly, honest, peaceful, credible, gender-sensitive, and socially-inclusive elections in active partnership with election stakeholders. (Article IX - C, Philippine Constitution)
- **CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (CSC)** – The central human resource personnel agency of the government that shall establish a career service and adopt measures to promote morale, efficiency, integrity, responsiveness, progressiveness, and courtesy in civil service. It shall provide a merit and reward system and integrate an advance and critical human resource development programs for all positions and ranks in the government and institutionalize a management climate conducive to public accountability. (Article IX - B, Philippine Constitution)
- **COMMISSION ON AUDIT (COA)** - Examines, audits, and settles all accounts pertaining to the revenue and receipts of, and expenditures or uses of funds and property, owned or held in trust by, or pertaining to the whole of government. (Article IX - D, Philippine Constitution)

The law further strengthened its system of checks and balance by establishing the following offices to protect the interest of the people from public service officials:

- **OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN** - Shall protect and act promptly on complaints filed in any form or manner against officers or employees of the government, enforce administrative, civil, and criminal liability in every case where the evidence warrants to promote efficient government service.
- **COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS** - Mandated to conduct investigation on human rights violations against marginalized and vulnerable sectors of the society involving civil and political rights. In accordance with the global human rights principles and norms, the Commission pledges to provide prompt, responsive, accessible, and excellent public service for the preservation and advancement of human rights.

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ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES

During elections, it is usual for citizens to hear about the different political parties that a candidate is part of. Under Republic Act No. 7941 or the “Party-List System Act”, a political party is defined as an organized group of citizens advocating an ideology or platform, principles, and policies for the general conduct of government and which, as the most immediate means of securing their adoption, regularly nominates and supports certain of its leaders and members as candidates for public office. There are different types of political parties:

- **NATIONAL PARTY** - when the constituents are spread over the geographical territory of at least the majority of the regions.
- **REGIONAL PARTY** – when its constituency is spread over the geographical territory of at least a majority of the cities and provinces comprising the region.
- **SECTORAL PARTY** - an organized group of citizens belonging to any of the sectors (labor, peasant, fisherfolk, urban poor, indigenous cultural communities, elderly, handicapped, women, youth, veterans, overseas workers, and professionals) whose principal advocacy pertains to the special interest and concerns of their sector.
- **SECTORAL ORGANIZATION** - a group of citizens or a coalition of groups of citizens who share similar physical attributes or characteristics, employment, interests, or concerns.
- **COALITION** - aggrupation of duly registered national, regional, and sectoral parties or organizations for political and/or election purposes.

As mentioned above, membership in a political party is an avenue for candidates to advocate their viewpoints and platforms. Furthermore, political parties pave the way for different sectors to advocate their specific interests and concerns through their representatives who will represent them in the government. However, the country’s political landscape is heavily characterized by shifting alliances and a lack of genuine ideological or policy-driven platforms. Political parties often function as mere vehicles for electoral convenience rather than as institutions rooted in consistent principles or long-term visions for governance. Traditional party loyalty is weak, with politicians frequently switching affiliations based on personal or strategic advantages rather than ideological alignment. This results in a highly fluid and transactional political environment to a coherent social or economic agenda. The political party system in the Philippines is marred with shifting alliances and no real political and social stance. Nonetheless, being part of a political party is not a requirement for public office. One can still run and be an independent candidate.

Independent candidates are candidates who are not affiliated with or are not running on the ticket of any political party whether it be national or local. A candidate may choose to run independently when his or her viewpoints, ideals, and aspirations do not align with any of

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the existing political parties. Furthermore, Section 7 of Comelec Resolution No. 6453 states that a candidate who accepts nominations from more than one registered political party, the nomination of several candidates by a political party for the same position or in excess of the number of persons required to be noted for an elective position or whose nomination was filed after the last day of filing of certificates of candidacy shall be considered as an independent candidate.

The activity below will allow the participants to open up to being challenged, guided, and cooperative with their fellow participants and facilitators. This activity is also contingent on the participants setting a personal time and goal for themselves or the big groups. The “Take Off Your Shoes” activity will allow mechanisms that give the group and participants a sense of ownership and autonomy over their leadership process which is also essential in this module in understanding the political system.

ACTIVITY 2: TAKE OFF YOUR SHOES! (30 MINUTES)

EXPERIENCE

- Gather all participants into one big circle, standing shoulder-to-shoulder
- Participants are requested to remove their shoes and place it in front of them
- Ask participants to count off from 1 - x no. of the participants. Ask them to count off their numbers again as loud as they can and challenge them to shout even louder than the previous one.

Changing configurations

- Remind the participants that their current position is their “home position”.
- Ask the participants to arrange themselves according to height. Participants are requested again to count off from 1 - x, starting with the shortest member of the group.
- Ask the participants to arrange themselves according to age. Participants are requested again to count off from 1 to x, starting from the youngest member of the group.
- Finally, ask the participants to arrange themselves according to the alphabetical order of the names of their barangays. If their barangay’s name are in numbers, let the numbers go first followed by the non-numbered.
- Ask the participants to do one full cycle. A cycle is composed of the following:
 - a. Home position (yell number)
 - b. Height (yell number)
 - c. Home position (yell number)
 - d. Age (yell number)
 - e. Home position (yell number)
 - f. Barangay (yell number)
 - g. Home position (yell number)
- Take note of how much time it would take to finish one cycle.
- After establishing the initial or first round, challenge the group to suggest a new lower target time for them to complete one full cycle.
- Repeat Step 5 and see if the participants are able to meet their lower time target.
- If participants fail to meet their lower time target, ask them if they can meet the target time.
- If participants are able to meet their lower time target, ask them to give a new lower time target then repeat Step 5.
- Continue until the group reaches their goal and chooses to stop.

EXAMINE

1. How was the activity? How did the group initially decide on the target time?
2. How did it feel achieving your goals? How did it feel NOT achieving your target time?
3. What change did you notice in the latter attempts of the group to beat their original time?
4. What caused the change?
5. What were some of your main insights while going through the activity?
6. How can you use these learnings and insights for the next few days of the training program?

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EXPLAIN

Taking off of the shoes signifies a feeling of beginning on equal footing and establishing the underlying realization that each person has much to contribute to the process. The exercise ought to promote receptivity to what the program and their fellow delegates have to teach and share with them.

Participants might be less constrained and delve deeper into their own leadership journeys once they reach a certain degree of comfort and openness to the group process.

Everyone's involvement is anticipated. You won't be listening much during this session, unlike a typical lecture. The goal of the activity is to make sure that everyone takes part in the conversations and the exercises. We are merely here to assist you, you will be doing most of the work and speaking.

Play Civic Education Animated Series episodes on [Structure and Responsibilities of the Philippine National Government](#) and [Checks and Balance Mechanisms in the Government](#)

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MODULE 3: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE VOTING

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VOTERS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES / RESPONSIBILITIES OF A VOTING CITIZEN

As mentioned in the previous module, Article 5 of the 1987 Constitution guarantees and protects our democratic right to vote. This empowers citizens to participate in the process of government and in all of the election season in the country which is divided into three, including the national elections (presidential and vice presidential elections), the mid-term elections (senate and house of representatives), and the barangay elections (including the Sangguniang Kabataan). Given this, it is our obligation to exercise our right and adhere to its associated responsibilities. According to the 2003 module for citizen-voter education by the Institute for Political and Electoral Reform (IPER), here are the following responsibilities of a voting citizen:

➤ PREPARING FOR THE ELECTIONS

Voting citizens should engage in preparatory activities that will allow them to exercise their right to vote and their right to an informed and free choice. These “preparatory activities” are:

- **Register to vote** to secure your participation in the electoral process.
- **Be informed about political candidates.** This includes awareness about their issues and controversies, advocacy, reforms, programs, and reforms.
- **Set specific guidelines in choosing government leaders.** This can be based on their competence, achievements, performance record, and morality.
- **Conduct and/or participate in debates.** Debates inform citizens and allow them to assess the commitment of candidates in incorporating and prioritizing public interest and welfare on their programs and platforms.

➤ DURING ELECTIONS

Voting citizens should stay vigilant and should exercise their right to vote.

- **Vote based on informed judgment and personal values.**
- **Exercise vigilance** by safeguarding the integrity of your vote from any improper influence, volunteering for groups that promote fair and peaceful elections, keeping an eye out for incidents of election fraud, and alerting other voters to similar actions.

➤ POST ELECTIONS

Maintain vigilance and participate in governance.

- **Monitor the accurate reporting and verification of election results.**
- **Participate in local governance** by engaging in public hearings and consultations.
- Most importantly, **maintaining vigilant on the actions of elected officials** and holding them accountable to their promises during the campaign.

VOTING AND CANDIDATE CRITERIA

In every election, there are different factors influencing a voter's choice of candidate. It can be their political experience or track record, their political stand and platforms, familiarity with the candidate, their reputation, personality, and even good looks. In the

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survey conducted by Statista on voters' considerations when choosing a candidate during elections, the survey showed that approximately sixty-four (64) percent would consider a candidate's political experience or track record when choosing to vote (Statista, 2022). Taking this into account, choosing a candidate should also be based on the voter's principles and values. When choosing among the political candidates, the following questions can help in assessing the similarities of the candidates with voter's principles and values:

QUALIFICATIONS / COMPETENCE

- Is the candidate qualified for the position that they are running for?
- Has the candidate proven themselves in public service?
- What have they achieved for the country, province, city, barangay, or sector that the voter belongs to?
- Do they have experience of engaging with communities and addressing grassroots concerns?
- Are these achievements useful to the country, province, city, barangay, or the sector that the voter belongs to?
- Are their achievements, programs, or projects tainted by controversy? If so, how did they handle the controversies?

MORALITY

- Do they have any validated record of conviction and wrongdoing?
- How does the candidate handle situations where ethical lines may be blurred?
- Do they value truth and honesty over political convenience or personal gain?
- Does the candidate publicly support, is known to support, or commit themselves to immoral acts like drug addiction and pushing, theft, corruption, murder?
- How do the candidate hold themselves accountable for their decisions, especially in high-stakes situations?
- Have any of their family and relatives previously committed immoral acts? If yes, how did they handle these?
- How does the candidate show empathy for the struggles of ordinary people, especially those in need?
- Is the candidate likely to tell attitudes that reveal their true personality such as lying, vote buying, obvious bigotry, discrimination of the poor and marginalized sectors?

VALUES

- Does the candidate embody the virtues of humility, patience, simplicity, consideration of others, regard for the environment, and respect for imperfections?
- Do they show and uphold integrity and honesty?
- How do they handle issues related to transparency and accountability?
- Do they value family?
- Does the candidate exercise sincere faith, regardless of denomination?
- Do they exercise and advocate the Filipino values of *Maka-Diyos*, *Makatao*, *Makabansa*, and *Makakalikasan*?
- Does the candidate value democratic principles, including free speech, free elections, and the rule of law?

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- How does the candidate prioritize the protection of human rights in their policies and actions?
- Are they an advocate for the environment?

CAPABILITIES

- Is the candidate intellectually/mentally/physically capable of the position they aspire to hold?
- Do they have the academic credentials, qualifications, and relevant experience that exemplify the type of leader that voters desire for the position?
- Are they psychologically and/or mentally fit?
- Are they able to handle the mental and intellectual pressures of the position they are running for?
- Are they suffering from any terminal illness that may affect their performance of their duties? If yes, have they sought medical treatment or made his/her condition known to the public?
- Have they shown intellectual excellence and capacities when making critical decisions in the past?
- Are they capable of adapting to new challenges and implementing effective solutions?
- Can they effectively manage conflicts and negotiate solutions?
- Have they clearly stated and laid out their plans for the country, province, city/municipality/ barangay, or sector that the voter belongs to?

POLITICAL WILL

- Is the candidate a strong advocate of the voter's ideals and aspirations?
- Has the candidate acknowledged and addressed problems and issues experienced by common Filipinos and the various social sectors?
- Do they have a plan to address such problems and issues or has addressed them in their incumbency?
- Have they successfully pushed for laws or policies that address long-standing societal issues?
- Can the candidate act independently, despite political pressure from powerful interest groups, political dynasties, business elites or opposition?
- Does the candidate have the reputation to vigorously promote changes, programs, or initiatives for the sectors that the voter belongs to?
- Do they have a clear, actionable plan for the reforms they advocate?

PATRIOTISM

- Is the candidate the embodiment of a true Filipino?
- Does the candidate respect and abide by the law of the land?
- How have they demonstrated their dedication to protecting and promoting the welfare of the country?
- Do they patronize everything and anything Filipino?
- Does the candidate prioritize national interests over personal or political gain?
- Have they taken a stand on critical national issues, such as sovereignty, economic independence, or national security?

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- Are they an advocate for the protection of the Philippine territory?
- Do they stand against discrimination against fellow Filipinos?
- Do they stand for programs and projects that promote the protection, fostering, and preservation of Filipino cultures and traditions?

FAIR AND TRANSPARENT ELECTIONS

Philippine elections are often marred by violence, fraud, and irregularities. Polling stations ran out of ballots, ballot boxes were missing, names of legitimate voters were not on the voting list, dead people remained on the list that had not been updated, and stations ran out of ink that keeps voters from voting twice (Velmonte, 2019). Moreover, issues of vote-buying have been perpetuated especially in rural areas, political dynasties, alliances and partisans, voter manipulation and intimidation, and misinformation. As explained in Module 1, one of the principles and manifestations of a democratic government is the conduct of a fair and transparent election. It means that all eligible citizens have the right to vote or run for office regardless of their socioeconomic status and religion. Elections should also be done in a peaceful and transparent manner. To ensure the conduct of fair and transparent elections, the election period is bound by election laws. Election laws set the guidelines for the conduct of an election including the qualifications for candidates, procedures on voter registrations, political campaigns, and canvassing of votes. Without these laws, the election is vulnerable to fraud, voter manipulation, intimidation, and overall failure.

“FAIR ELECTION ACT” (REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9006)

Republic Act 9006 or the “Fair Election Act” provides numerous opportunities for candidates to campaign and use different kinds of election propaganda. The Act allows all registered political parties, national, regional, sectoral parties or organizations under party-list and all bona fide candidates to distribute or make use of election propaganda whether on television, radio, newspaper, or any other medium. Campaign materials can be through pamphlets, leaflets, handwritten or printed letters, cloth, posters, and paid advertisements in print and broadcast media.

“OMNIBUS ELECTION CODE” (BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 881)

Batas Pambansa Bilang 881 or the “Omnibus Election Code” governs the conduct of elections. The election code covers the election and campaign periods, guidelines for postponement, failure, and calls for special elections, election for officials for national and local government, qualifications of candidates and the filing of certificate of candidacies, precincts, and polling places, casting and counting of votes, the proclamation of winning candidate, and most especially the responsibilities and the vital role of the Commission on Elections.

COMELEC RESOLUTION NO. 10728

The Omnibus Election Code, vested upon the Commission on Elections the enforcement and administration of all laws relative to the conduct of elections for the purpose of ensuring free, orderly, and honest elections. To prevent the occurrence of election-related violence and incidents, Comelec Resolution No. 10728 is being implemented during the election period. Resolution 10728 states that “No person shall bear, carry or transport

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firearms or deadly weapons outside his/her residence or place of business, and in all public places, including any building, street, park, and in private vehicles or public conveyances, even if he/she is licensed or authorized to possess or carry the same, unless authorized by the Commission, through the Committee on the Ban on Firearms and Security Concerns (BBFSC).”

AVOIDING VOTER MANIPULATION AND INTIMIDATION

Philippine elections have always been subject to and accused of election fraud, vote manipulation, and intimidation. Voter intimidation and harassment can be through threats, physical violence, or other forms of coercion. Given this, interventions such as the utilization of automated vote-counting machines and participation of election watch groups have been taken. The efforts to modernize the voting system in the country began in 1992 when COMELEC launched “Operation MODEX” (Modernization and Excellence) where one of its eight components was the modernization of the electoral process. Since then, further efforts have been taken by the COMELEC. Pilot tests of the computerized election system and automated polls were conducted, and on May 10, 2010, the automated elections came in full blast and were considered a successful implementation of the Automated Elections.

During elections, law enforcers (Philippine National Police), COMELEC, and election watchdogs groups such as the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), National Citizen’s Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL), and civil society groups like *Kontra Daya* and Automated Election System (AES) Watch join together to ensure the conduct of clean and peaceful elections. These groups monitor the counting of votes, set up hotlines, and use social networking sites to receive and transmit reports of electoral fraud, manipulation, voter intimidation, and election-related violence.

The facilitator shall test the decision-making skills of the participants and how they ensure inclusivity in the process.

ACTIVITY 3: PERFECT TRIANGLE! (30 MINUTES)

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Blindfolds
- 2 ropes

EXPERIENCE

Instruct the group to put on blindfolds. Lead them to the activity and invite them to form a circle. The facilitators will then leave a rope at the center of the group.

Instruct the group that they will be given 20 minutes to form a “perfect triangle” using the rope. Instruct them that they are allowed to talk among themselves throughout the process of the activity unless there are other instructions.

Instruct them that it is the group itself that will decide whether they have formed their “perfect triangle” upon which they will take off their blindfolds. At this point, they may not yet touch the rope.

Ask the group if they have any questions. Address the questions by repeating the instructions above. If all questions have been answered, you may tell them that the 20 minutes have begun and that they may pick up the rope at the center.

REFLECT (10 MINUTES)

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To end the activity, the participants shall go back to their respective groups to process the activity through the following questions:

1. How was the activity?
2. What did you feel when you were instructed to wear a blindfold?
3. What is the strategy of the group before the start of the activity? Does it change as you go for another round?
4. How did you feel when the other group got the point? How did you feel when your group got the point?
5. If given a chance to do it again, what do you think you will do to form the perfect triangle?
6. What did you learn from this activity?

FACILITATOR NOTES

Throughout the activity, the facilitators can take note of the decision-making process of the group and the inclusivity of the group in their process and in deciding what a perfect triangle is.

Remind them of the time limit at the 10-minute mark and at the 5-minute mark. If the group has one minute left, let them know. If the group believes they have finished their perfect triangle, ask if the group has all agreed. If so, invite them to remove their blindfolds and observe their triangle. Take note of their reactions.

Note: If participants are unable to form a perfect triangle, the facilitator can emphasize the challenge of blindly proceeding. It can be further explained how "seeing" their actions could make the task easier, but in moments of difficulty, they can use their voices to communicate and to act as one.

VOTER'S EDUCATION TOOLKIT



MODULE 4: THE ELECTION PROCESS

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WHO ARE QUALIFIED TO VOTE?

- All citizens of the Philippines 18 years of age and over (for general elections) and 15-30 years old (for Sangguniang Kabataan elections)
- Resident of the Philippines for at least one year
- Resident for at least six months in the place where he/she proposes to vote preceding the election

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Any person who has been sentenced by final judgment to suffer imprisonment for not less than one year. However, the right to vote can be reacquired upon the expiration of five years after service of sentence.
- Any person who has been found guilty by final judgment of a competent court or tribunal of any crime involving disloyalty to the duly constituted government, such as rebellion, sedition, violation of anti-subversion and firearms laws, or any crime against national security, without being restored to their full civil and political rights in accordance with the law, provided that they will automatically regain their right to vote after five years of service of sentence.
- Insane or incompetent persons as declared by competent authority.

VOTER REGISTRATION

Voter registration is the first step to exercising the right to vote and choosing the next leaders who will carry out the will of the people and address prevailing concerns on public health, economy, poverty, and other national issues. Voter registration is the process where qualified voters file a sworn application before the election officer of the city or municipality where the applicant lives.

VOTER REGISTRATION PROCESS

1. Prepare the necessary documents.

- For first-time voters, voter registration requires having at least one valid ID (National ID/PhilSys ID, Postal ID, Student ID, SSS ID, or any valid ID with photo and signature)
- Additional requirement: Original and photocopy of birth certificate for applicants turning 18 years old on the upcoming election day

2. Accomplish the Voter's Registration Form

- Fill out the information needed on the Voter Registration Form. Application Form can be accessed and downloaded from the COMELEC website so you can manually fill them out at home. Submit the accomplished voter's registration application form to the designated office for checking.

3. Biometrics Capture Area

- After checking if the Voter's Registration Form was completely filled out, you will be asked to proceed to the biometrics capture area for photo, fingerprint capture, and signature capture.

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4. Acknowledgement Receipt

- After the biometrics capture, you will be requested to write down your name and sign on the logbook. Afterward, you will receive an acknowledgment receipt.

However, you are not a registered voter yet. Your application will be reviewed and approved by the Election Registration Board (ERB) during its scheduled quarterly hearing. After the ERB hearing, your information will be recorded in the book of voters of your district, city, or municipality. By then, you are considered to be a registered voter.

ACTIVITY 4: PAINT ME A PICTURE! (30 MINUTES)

EXPERIENCE

Instruct the participants to form a group with 6-10 members. All groups will be given 10 minutes to strategize and discuss the roles of each of the members. They are allowed to talk among themselves throughout the process of the activity unless there are other instructions.

The facilitator will provide a concept under the election process which the group members should act or pose to paint a picture of the concept mentioned by the facilitator. Two minutes will be provided for the groups to illustrate the scene and paint the picture where all group members should be able to act/pose using only their bodies.

At a given signal by the facilitator, everyone freezes. The group that makes the best scene wins.

Following are the concepts/illustrations:

- Voting
- Automated election
- Election campaign

EXAMINE:

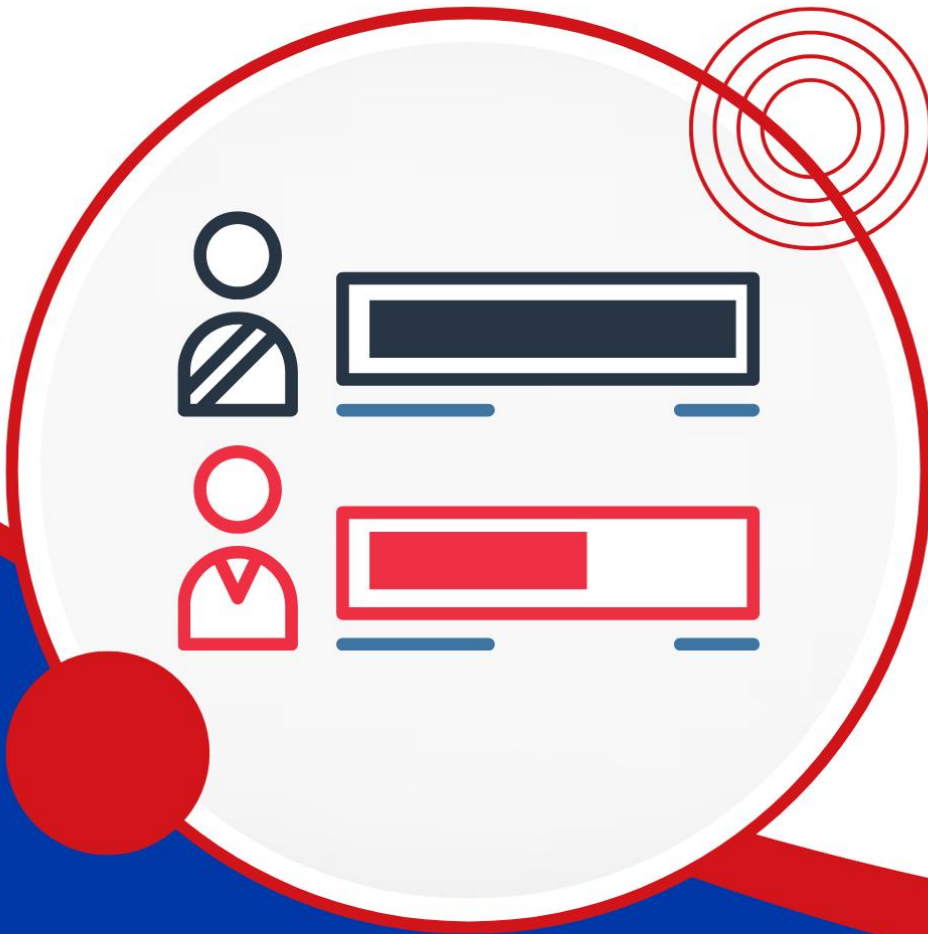
1. How was the experience?
2. What is the strategy of the group?
3. What did you find difficult?
4. Do you feel included in the process?
5. How did you feel when the other group got the point or when your group got the point?
6. What did you learn from the activity?

FACILITATOR NOTES

Throughout the activity, the facilitators can take note of the decision-making process of the group and the inclusivity of the group in their process and in deciding the final illustration of the group.

Remind them of the time limit. If the group has one minute left, let them know. If the group believes they have finished their picture perfect, the group shall agree.

VOTER'S EDUCATION TOOLKIT



MODULE 5: ELECTION COUNT AND TRANSMISSION

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OVERVIEW OF THE AUTOMATED ELECTION PROCESS

The **Automated Election System (AES)** was first implemented in the Philippines during the 2010 presidential elections by virtue of Republic Act 9369 which is popularly known as the “Act Amending Republic Act 8436 entitled, “An Act Authorizing the Commission on Elections to use an automated election system in the May 11, 1998 National or Local Elections and in Subsequent National and Local Electoral Exercises to encourage Transparency, Credibility, Fairness and Accuracy of Elections, Amending for the Purpose Batas Pambansa Bilang 881, as Amended RA 7166 and other Related Election Laws, Providing funds therefore and for other purposes.”

The COMELEC Advisory Council recommended the use of the **Optical Mark Recognition (OMR)** technology to facilitate the AES. This type of technology is a hardware-based system that collects data from people by identifying markings on a paper which were usually utilized in various types of student quizzes, polls, assessments, evaluations, and numerous other forms. Smartmatic’s Precinct Count Optical Scan (PCOS), a variant of the OMR, bagged the contract for the 2010 elections and has been utilized by the government since then.

A machine that uses an OMR senses reading receipt or any similar advanced technology to count the ballots is called the Vote Counting Machine (VCM). Prior to elections, the COMELEC prepares the VCMs, which undergo final testing and sealing (FTS), a procedure to test the counting capacity of the machine, and a mock voting process of 10 actual voters will hold a real voting procedure instead of using dummy ballots. The PPCRV identified common issues on the current VCMs such as the failure to initialize, misread ballots, invalid ballots, fake and duplicated ballots and paper jams. These malfunctions were provided with basic troubleshooting mechanisms with the accredited electoral personnel.

In the publication, *Understanding the Automated Election System* which focuses on the processes of the AES, presented were the following steps and mechanisms particularly on how the AES was implemented during the election proper:

- In the PCOS system, all candidates’ names are preprinted on the ballots. The ovals next to the candidates’ names are marked by voters as they make their selections. The voter then brings and feeds the ballot into the PCOS machine which reads and assesses the ballot to store it in its memory. The ballot will then be marked “read” and falls into the ballot box. Upon conclusion of the voting period, the BEI hits a key in the voting machine to begin the counting of the markings that represent votes. The computed totals for each candidate are then stored.
- The election returns are printed in eight copies and examined for any obvious flaws. If there are none, the BEI presses a key to electronically send the ER data to the City/Municipal Board of Canvassers server (computer), a COMELEC central server, and a transparency server. The transparency server provides copies of the results to the ruling party, ruling opposition, citizens’ arms, and media (represented by the Kapisanan ng Brodkaster ng Pilipinas or KBP). PCOS then prints an additional twenty-two (22) copies after the transmission for distribution to the city/municipality’s political party members from the ER. Before being distributed, the BEI members sign each printed copy as a requirement of Republic Act 8436.

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- The C/MBOC server receives precinct ERs, saves the data, canvasses and aggregates all the votes reported, and produces the Statement of Votes and the Certificate of Canvass for the city/municipality after all precincts have submitted their ERs. The soft copy of the COC is electronically sent to the server of the Provincial Board of Canvassers if the C/MBOC detects no obvious flaws in the two reports. Based on the COC, the candidates for mayor, vice-mayor, and councilor garnering the highest votes are proclaimed winners.
- The PBOC server receives a COC from a C/MBOC, records the information, canvasses and aggregates all the votes submitted, and publishes a Statement of Votes and Certificate of Canvass for the province after all the C/MBOCs have reported their COCs. The soft copy of the PCOC is electronically sent to the server of the National Board of Canvassers (NBOC) if the PBOC detects no obvious flaws in the two reports. Based on the PCOC, the candidates for governor, vice-governor, members of the provincial board, and congressmen garnering the highest votes are proclaimed winners.
- The NBOC server receives a COC from a PBOC, records the information, canvasses and aggregates all the votes reported, and publishes the National Statement of Votes and Certificate of Canvass after all PBOCs have submitted their COCs. However, as they had done in the previous three automated elections, Congress amended these methods. Instead, the NBOC members chose to personally canvass and combine the votes cast for each presidential and vice presidential candidate in each printed COC as they were received from the PBOCs, then post the results on a whiteboard. Being done in front of the people in attendance at Congress and the television cameras have increased transparency in the final consolidation.
- The victorious national candidates are announced, bringing the election period to a close, after Congress and the COMELEC have completed the two NCOCs and have signed all the paperwork. In the previous three automated elections, the entire process—from Election Day to the announcement of the winners—took between two to three weeks.

Random Manual Audit and Alternative Audit Processes

In ensuring the accuracy of the election results, a **Random Manual Audit (RMA)** was conducted as provided in Section 24 of Republic Act 9369. There shall be a random manual audit in one precinct per congressional district randomly chosen by the Commission in each province and city. Any difference between the automated and manual count will result in the determination of root cause and initiate a manual count for those precincts affected by the computer or procedural error.

This process involves opening the ballot boxes and counting the actual ballots to compare them against transmitted and printed election returns. The RMA of national and local elections (NLE) of 2022 is spearheaded by Legal Network for Truthful Elections (LENTE)¹ and participated by COMELEC, PSA, NAMFREL, and many other election monitoring groups.

¹ The first and only non-partisan, nationwide network of lawyers, law students, paralegals, and grassroots volunteers engaged to do election work

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Other controls are done during and after election to ensure that the voting materials and its functionalities complied with the election qualification standard. One of which is the **Election Day Poll Watching**, usually composed of volunteers from various election and civil society groups. The PPCRV recorded 500,000 election volunteers from the 2022 NLE. These poll watchers are allowed at every precinct countrywide, volunteers keep an eye on the election process as it happens, and make sure they have the fourth printed copy of the results. Poll watching is driven by a large number of volunteers and is the most crucial and significant of our election-related operations.

An **Unofficial Parallel Count (UPC)** was also conducted and executed by the PPCRV, which guards against electronic “dagdag-bawas”. The UPC was done by matching the electronically transmitted Election Returns (ERs) with the physically printed ones which are both generated by the Vote Counting Machines (VCMs).

Election Watchdogs and Citizen Groups

Election watchdogs monitor and observe the conduct of elections and ensure that the electoral process adheres to its legal and regulatory implementation guidelines. Various civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Philippines have actively offered and sought external support for election reforms over the years. The Kilusang Mamamayan Para sa Repormang Elektoral (Citizens’ Movement for Electoral Reforms, KUMARE-KUMPARE)² is the broadest network of local CSOs advocating for electoral and political reform in the country. The network is composed of 17 organizations, among these are the Philippine Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), the National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL), the Caucus for Development NGO Networks (Code-NGO), the National Consultative Council for Local Governance, the Trade Union Council of the Philippines (TUCP), the Federation of Free Workers (FFW), the National Movement for Young Legislators (NMYL), the Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies (PHILSSA), the National Peace Conference and the Democratic Socialist Women of the Philippines (DSWP) (Agra, 1997a: 73) were active in the advocacy of electoral reforms leading to the 1995 elections. Eventually, the Institute for Electoral Reforms (IPER) organized another network, the Consortium for Electoral Reform.

In recent years, election campaign groups continue to strengthen its reforms, mechanisms, and support to ensure that the election will be conducted judiciously. The following are the apparent campaign groups:

- NATIONAL CITIZENS MOVEMENT FOR FREE ELECTIONS (NAMFREL) - A pioneer in election monitoring, which established its commitment to clean elections during the 1986 snap elections with over 500,000 volunteers to protect the sanctity of ballots. Since then, the group was accredited by the COMELEC as its citizen arm to conduct a parallel manual count called operation quick count (OQC) to help prevent fraud in election. This motivate citizens to watch polls, counting and consolidating of election results, deter manipulation of results at the counting and canvassing by

² Electoral politics in the Philippines - friedrich ebert foundation. (n.d.). <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/01361006.pdf>

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releasing accurate advance (unofficial results), and enhance the acceptability of the results of the elections.

- PHILIPPINE PASTORAL COUNCIL FOR RESPONSIBLE VOTING (PPCRV) - A non-partisan, non-sectarian non-profit organization connected to the Roman Catholic Church and one of the trusted partners in promoting free, fair, and election-fraud-free elections. Since 2010, PPCRV has handled the Unofficial Parallel Count of returns following an election. PPCRV's activities include promoting electoral reforms, carrying out parallel manual auditing in automated elections, coordinating parishes to conduct poll-watching, offering legal support regarding elections, reporting electoral violations, offering voters' assistance services, and educating voters.

Reporting Election Anomalies

Omnibus election code Article XXII Sec. 261 identifies the prohibited acts considered as guilty of an election offense³. Over the years, COMELEC ratified its existing implementing rules and regulations to adhere with the demands of the status quo—the demand for an innovative and inclusive elections while implementing health and safety protocols brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. COMELEC Resolution 10730 provides the IRR of RA 9006 which is also known as Fair Election Act for the 2022 election exercise. This latest IRR provides more regulations on social media campaigning and the inclusion of health and safety guidelines of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The new rules of the COMELEC provides prohibition on the microtargeting of voters in the 2022 polls. This is a practice on social media analytics to analyze a person's online usage and serve ads to specifically cater preferences. Further, in 2019, COMELEC introduced that paid online influencers and content producers who utilize their platforms to support or disparage a candidate should disclose to the polling organization the sums received for those posts.

Despite the new guidelines and provisions, campaign mechanisms are still similar from the past elections, which include (1) the spending ceiling for every registered voter, (2) lawful and prohibited election propaganda as identified by the Omnibus Election Code, (3) airtime duration for broadcast advertisement, and (4) the documentary and reporting requirements by mass media entities, contractors, and business firms for campaigning payments.

Other than the prohibited election acts that may be conducted by the candidates, one of the perennial acts of violation in the Philippine election is vote-buying and vote-selling. In a memorandum issued by Commissioner Aimee Ferolino in 2022, it reiterated the consequences of committing vote-buying and vote-selling. Any individual who gives, offers, or promises money or anything of value, any office, employment, franchise, or grant, whether public or private, or who makes or offers to make an expenditure, directly or indirectly, or causes an expenditure to be made to any person, association, corporation, entity, or community in order to persuade anyone or the general public to vote for or against any

³ Complete list of Prohibited Acts/Election Offenses

<https://comelec.gov.ph/?r=References/RelatedLaws/OmnibusElectionCode/OECart22>

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candidate, or to withhold his vote in the election, is violating the law. Similarly, any individual, association, business, organization, or community that solicits or accepts, directly or indirectly, any payment for or promise of employment in any public or private office.

To mitigate and avoid these types of circumstances, a Citizen Complaint Center (CCC) was established by the COMELEC as a means of communication for citizens to report instances of vote-buying and vote-selling that they have personally observed. Complaints may be filed personally or through the official email addresses of the local field offices, the Law Department of the Commission, or the offices of the provincial, city, and municipal prosecutors. The local election offices are required to provide a report of all cases of vote-buying and vote-selling brought before their individual field offices to the Comelec's Law Department. The Department of Justice's (DOJ) prosecuting division must also provide a biweekly report detailing all instances of vote-buying and vote-selling that have been reported to the appropriate local and federal prosecution offices.

How to report election anomalies?

Using cameras, cellphones, and CCTVs to record as much photo and video evidence as they can in the event of voter violation situations and reporting them right away are the best strategies to document election irregularities. When reporting incidents, don't forget to include the following details:

- What day/time did the incident happen?
- What location did the incident occur in? A specific barangay, landmark, school, or precinct should be mentioned, if possible.
- Provide clear and concise context as to what happened to the incident. Reporters should include all relevant details that can be used to confirm or further explain the incident.
- Additional evidence—photo or video—that an incident occurred.

Vote-buying, vote-selling, election-related violence, and campaign violations are only a handful of forms of election offenses. Only if election-related irregularities are recognized and promptly fixed can a fair election be accomplished.

ACTIVITY 5: CONSULTING COMMUNITIES (30 MINUTES)

EXPERIENCE

Presented is the overview of the automated election process, the facilitator should ask as to how many times the participants have experienced voting - either manual or electronic. Participants will then be distributed into three (3) groups.

Participants will then be asked to discuss their experience (for those who already experienced voting) and their expectations (those who have not yet experienced voting) in the voting process. Identify issues that should be raised during the voting process and what can be done to these issues.

Based on what has been discussed, please cluster the issues based on the process (automated election, manual election, election watchdogs, audit process, reporting anomalies). The facilitator will request someone who wants to moderate the discussion. The result will be the basis in drafting possible strategies in enhancing youth participation in the election process.

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Each group will be requested to provide a summary of their output followed by a lecturette.

FACILITATOR NOTES

During the discussion, it is important to work with the group in clarifying questions and identifying issues. It is imperative to emphasize their participation in the process and consider critical strategies in addressing the issues and ensure the participation of each of the participants in the discussion.

Participants should be able to identify mechanisms they deemed relevant in the election process.

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MODULE 6: CANDIDATE SELECTION AND EVALUATION



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Elective Posts, Terms and Qualifications

The 1987 Constitution provides the basic qualification of an elective official includes, 1) a natural born citizen of the Philippines, 2) a registered voter (particularly in the district/city/municipality a candidate will run), and 3) able to read and write. Specifically, the following are the positions, its pertinent qualifications, and its respective role for public elective positions in the country:

Position	Age (on the day of the election)	Residency/Other Qualification/s	Roles and Responsibilities/Functions
National Elective Positions			
President, Vice President	at least 40 years old	resident of the Philippines for at least 10 years immediately preceding the election.	Serves as the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines; Power of Control over the Executive Branch; Power of ordinance; Power over aliens or non – Filipinos; Power of eminent domain, escheat, land reservation and recovery of ill-gotten wealth; Power of appointment; Power of general supervision over local governments; and, Other powers enumerated in the constitution and those which are given to him by law. <i>The Vice President assumes the duties and responsibilities of the President in case of death, disability, or resignation of the incumbent President.</i>
Senators	at least 35 years of age	resident of the Philippines for not less than 2 years immediately preceding the day of the election.	Drafting enabling laws to ensure that the constitution's spirit is preserved throughout the nation and amending or changing the constitution. Resolutions and bills are the two primary documents produced by the legislative body.
Congressmen (District Representative)	at least 25 years of age	resident of the Philippines for not less than 1 year immediately preceding the day of the	

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		election.	
Party-list Representative	on the day of the election is at least 25 years old BUT in case of youth sectoral representative, at least 25 years and not more than 30 years old at the day of the election	resident of the Philippines for not less than 1 year immediately preceding the day of the election. bona fide member of the sector he/she seeks to represent (must belong to their respective sectors, or must have a track record of advocacy for their respective sectors)	
Local Elective Positions			
Governor, Vice-Governor, Member of Sangguniang Panlalawigan/Board Member	at least 23 years old	resident thereof for a period of not less than 1 year immediately preceding the day of the election	<p>The Governor shall serve as the chief executive of the provincial government and exercise the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● oversee the execution of initiatives and programs undertaken by the provincial government. ● oversee the application of the province's laws and ordinances ● initiate and increase the province's revenue generation ● initiate projects and programs to assist his or her constituency, maximizing the use of resources in their execution. ● ensure the provision of essential services and suitable facilities for constituents. ● observe the province development plan's execution <p>The Vice Governor shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● preside over the Provincial Board, or Sangguniang

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			<p>Panlalawigan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● appoint all officials and employees of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan aside from those appointment is prescribed in the LGC ● in the event of a permanent vacancy, assume the role of governor for the remaining years of the term, performing all duties associated with the position. <p>The Provincial Board shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● pass laws and resolutions relative to planning and budgeting initiatives of the province and other necessary laws for the functionaries of the provincial government ● adopt the provincial government's supplemental and yearly budgetary provisions. ● authorize licenses and permits, and provide franchises.
Mayor, Vice-mayor, Member of the Sangguniang Panlungsod in highly urbanized cities	at least 23 years old	resident thereof for a period of not less than 1 year immediately preceding the day of the election	<p>The Mayor/Local Chief executive shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● oversee all of the city government's initiatives, projects, services, and activities ● enforce all laws and regulations related to local administration ● implement all city policies, programs, initiatives, services, and endeavors ● start and optimize resource and money development, then employ those things to carry out your ideas ● make sure the city has appropriate facilities and fundamental services. <p>The Vice-mayor shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● preside over the <i>Sangguniang</i>
Mayor, Vice-mayor, Sangguniang Panlungsod in independent component cities and municipalities	at least 21 years old	resident thereof for a period of not less than 1 year immediately preceding the day of the election	

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			<p><i>Pambayan</i> (city council) or <i>Sangguniang Panlungsod</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● sign all of the city's or local council's planning and budget orders ● appoint members of the city or municipal council and other personnel ● in the event of a permanent vacancy of the Mayor, take up the role of mayor of the city or municipality. <p>The <i>Sangguniang Panlungsod</i> shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● approve ordinances and pass resolutions for an effective city government and delivery of basic services and facilities ● generate resources and revenues for the city's development plans, program objectives, and priorities ● enact ordinances that grant franchises and authorize the issuance of permits or licenses ● regulate activities in relation to the use of land, buildings, and structures
<p>Members of the Sangguniang Panlungsod, Sangguniang Bayan and Sangguniang Barangay and Punong Barangay</p>	<p>at least 18 years old</p>	<p>resident thereof for a period of not less than 1 year immediately preceding the day of the election</p>	<p>The Punong Barangay shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● enforce all laws and regulations that keep the barangay in a state of peace and order ● ensure the provision of fundamental social services and access to resources ● engage in actions that advance the barangay's welfare in general ● the barangay secretary, the barangay treasurer, and other elective barangay officials may be appointed or removed <p>The Sangguniang Barangay shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● enact ordinances as may be

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			<p>necessary to discharge the responsibilities conferred upon it by law or ordinance and to promote the general welfare of the inhabitants therein</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide for the construction, regulation and maintenance of barangay facilities and projects
Sangguniang Kabataan	at least 15 years old and not more than 24 years old	resident thereof for a period of not less than 1 year immediately preceding the day of the election	<p>The Sangguniang Kabataan shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adopt the resolutions required to implement the barangay's youth's goals • launch initiatives to advance the members' moral, spiritual, intellectual, moral, political, and physical development • consult and work in tandem with all the barangay's youth organizations to develop and implement programs and policies

Republic Act 7166 or the Act providing for synchronized national and local elections reiterates that in accordance with the election policies, President, Vice President, and the twenty-four (24) senators shall serve for six (6) years while all elective members of the House of Representatives, and all elective provincial, city and municipal officials shall serve for three (3) years.

Evaluating candidates qualifications, platforms and track records

Prior to evaluating candidates, the law provides criteria in disqualifying a person in running for any elective positions, generally, the Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines Sec. 12 provides that *“Any person who has been declared by competent authority insane or incompetent, or has been sentenced by final judgment for subversion, insurrection, rebellion or for any offense for which he has been sentenced to a penalty of more than eighteen months or for a crime involving moral turpitude, shall be disqualified to be a candidate and to hold any office, unless he has been given plenary pardon or granted amnesty. This disqualification to be a candidate herein provided shall be deemed removed upon the declaration by competent authority that said insanity or incompetence had been removed or after the expiration of a period of five years from his service of sentence, unless within the same period he again becomes disqualified”*.

Further, at the local level, the Local Government Code of 1991 disqualifies any person in running for local position on the following bases:

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- Those sentenced by final judgment for an offense involving moral turpitude or for an offense punishable by one year or more of imprisonment, within two years after serving sentence
- Those removed from office as a result of an administrative case
- Those convicted by final judgment for violating the oath of allegiance to the Republic
- Those with dual citizenship
- Fugitives from justice in criminal or nonpolitical cases here or abroad
- Permanent residents in a foreign country or those who have acquired the right to reside abroad and continue to avail of the same right after the effectivity of the LGC
- The insane or feeble-minded

To be able to evaluate and identify the candidates' qualifications, platforms, and track records, one must know the qualifications and functions and powers of the elected officials vis-a-vis their take on issues and their leadership qualities and experience.

During the campaign period, slogans and nicknames of candidates often come through in campaign materials including catch phrases to persuade voters and form a certain image or create a political climate. To gather as much information relative to the candidates, a variety of resources can be utilized including campaign websites and social media pages, press releases, radio and television ads, candidates' speeches and debates, and statements of support from various groups.

In reading and navigating available materials, one must keep a journal and record the candidate's stand on a person's priority issues. Do the materials present a comprehensive picture of the candidates to you? What particular inferences can you make about their positions on various issues? This area can be subjective and may vary from one person to another.

On the other hand, leadership qualities and experience can be identified and validated. It is recommended for voters to examine the candidate's leadership abilities by (1) fact-checking their background and experience (e.g., Have they passed laws in Congress? What are their previous projects and programs), (2) their readiness to face the public and the role (such as their presence and participation in debates and other discussions and consultations that will introduce their views and agenda), (3) check the campaign materials (presenting their accomplishments, priority concerns and issues, and other relevant information in position he is campaigning for).

Fact Checking and Identifying misinformation

The possible negative impact of misinformation on elections has received more attention in recent years. The broadcast of "fake news" to attack opponents or affect the voting process, the falsification or manipulation of polling data, and the deployment of phony election monitoring and observation are some of the most prevalent ways that misinformation is used during elections (Bader, 2018).

According to Bader, the useful definition of fake news is "information that mimics news media content in form but not in organizational process or intent." In America, it has been recorded that one out of four Americans visited a fake news website weeks prior the 2016 presidential elections, while 1/3 of people in the United Kingdom admit to have been fooled by a fake news story at least once. Disinformation only succeeds when it is widely

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disseminated. Between actors distributing false information, the key difference is whether they do it knowingly or not. The majority of people that aid in the dissemination of false information are likely ignorant that the pertinent tales are false, and they so serve as machinery of the false information.

Political misinformation campaigns are said to take place in three stages: the creation of core narratives; the onboarding of influencers and false account operators; and the diffusion and amplification on social media. In 2022, it was reported by international media⁴ that trolling has become profitable, and it picked up steam during this year's elections. According to local news reports, a troll in the Philippines may make between 30,000 and 100,000 pesos (S\$740 to S\$2,480) per month. According to communication expert Jason Cabanes of De La Salle University, this is how "politicians are weaponizing disinformation now."

In an environment of misinformation and fake news, it is imperative for individuals to conduct a critical and investigative inquiry to verify existing information. Social media and the Internet has broadened the sources of information and the construction of narratives that may manipulate the behavior and consent of the people.

Given the recent years of media and disinformation, fact-checking should be prevalent. The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)⁵ provided steps and mechanisms to mitigate the spread of misinformation, sort out facts, weigh information and being knowledgeable both online and offline:

- **Check Credentials.** Is the author an expert in the subject matter of the article? Is their job related to what they wrote about? To find out if the author can speak on the topic with authority and accuracy, check LinkedIn or conduct a quick Google search.
- **Check the source and details.** Does the source/s exist? Is it true or fictional? All trustworthy websites will have some kind of *About Us* section and a mechanism for you to contact them, whether it's on a tab at the top of the page or a link at the bottom. Information should also be up-to-date.
- **Check the bias.** Does the article seem to favor one point of view over another? News or Opinion? Does it provide links to pages, documents, or pictures that appear to lean left or right? Is the information biased? Is there evidence supporting what it claims? You might not be getting the complete story from biased articles.
- **Check-out supporting sources.** It's a good idea to investigate sources that are cited in an article. Official-sounding organizations are occasionally actually biased think tanks or merely represent the extreme viewpoint of a sizable population. If you are unable to locate references, read as much as you can on the subject to acquire a sense of what is already known and determine whether or not the piece is accurate for yourself.
- **Cross-check identified URLs.** Nowadays, domain manipulation is very common. For instance, a website that appears to have a .edu domain followed by a .co or "lo" is

⁴ CNA News and Los Angeles Times

⁵ IFLA is the global voice of libraries, representing the interests of the profession and working to improve services worldwide.

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probably a phony or misleading one. Do some research if you notice a slightly different variation of a well-known URL.

- **Be wary of the sensational.** It is much more vital to remain skeptical when you see something posted that seems sensational. The use of overly emotional language or exaggerated, provocative headlines raises severe red flags. If it's overly emotional, exaggerated, or seems like clickbait--be critical!

RECOGNIZING MISINFORMATION

There are three types of Misleading information:

- Misinformation - Incorrect or inaccurate information. Example: The unintentional sharing of false information.
- Disinformation - Deliberate deception or fake news. Example: Fake news about COVID-19 to confuse the public.
- Malinformation - Spreading information with malicious intent. Example: Leaked private information to damage a candidate's reputation.

Four Types of Misinformation:

- Propaganda - Information with the purpose of controlling public opinion.
Example: A fabricated or exaggerated story about a politician to boost their public image.
- Partisan - News with a strong bias towards one side.
Example: An article that only favors one political party and attacks the other side.
- Satire - Imitation or satire that may be mistaken for real news.
Example: News that is intended to be humorous about a politician but is mistaken by others as true.
- Fake News - Invented information to deceive.
Example: News about a fake project that isn't true.

Four Strategies of Misinformation:

- Sponsored Content
Paid articles designed to look like regular news stories, but are actually advertisements meant to promote a particular product, service, or individual, often without clearly labeling them as such.
- Clickbait
Attention-grabbing headlines or titles designed to attract clicks or views, often misleading or exaggerated, to generate revenue or increase traffic, but the actual content may be trivial or irrelevant.
- Conspiracy Theory
Unfounded claims or stories that suggest secretive, often sinister actions by governments, organizations, or powerful individuals, typically without credible evidence.

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- Trolling

Deliberate disruption or provocation on social media or online platforms by posting controversial, inflammatory, or misleading content to cause chaos, incite arguments, or manipulate discussions. Example: Fake accounts spreading false information to stir arguments and conflicts online, often with the intent to mislead or upset others.

In the Age of Fake News, the Power of True Information is Real.

In a world overwhelmed by misinformation, seeking and sharing accurate and credible information is more crucial than ever. By verifying facts, questioning sources, and promoting truth, we can combat fake news and make informed decisions that contribute to a better, more responsible society.

RESPONSIBLE DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

Digital technology in modern society has been playing an important role in various sectors, from entertainment to education and industry jobs. The digital world has changed how citizens behave and function as citizens of the “real” world, where interaction is not only limited to physical and face-to-face but in a digital and virtual world. Digital technology should be more than a collection of toys or gadgets; it should be a tool that enables people to interact and, ultimately, build a society.

Digital citizenship is said to be the ability to participate in society through technology (Mosserberg *et al*, 2008). Being a responsible digital citizen, one must adhere with appropriate norms, and responsible behavior with regard to the use of technology (Ribble and Bailey, 2007). A digital citizen shall advocate and adhere to the responsible use of technology, promote pleasant and healthy interactions while remaining alert to harmful or prevalent online frauds.

A responsible digital citizen fits the following criteria⁶:

- **Analyze and manage digital footprint.** Google yourself and check your online footprint. The internet may present social media information, personal or work website, online subscription and any photo or videos you uploaded with your name that can be found and tracked by others.
- **Protect privacy and information.** Do not overshare online and assume that everything posted in social media can be seen and shared by others. In providing data, share only the necessary information requested, be mindful of sharing year of birth, mobile number and e-mail address and never share passwords. Regularly update privacy settings on social media sites and check your profile as to what is and isn't publicly available.
- **Be aware of scammers and con artists.** Digital media enlarged opportunities to connect and collaborate. Citizens should be wary of people with bad intentions. Common scams in social media include phishing, fake websites, and tech support scams. To be able to avoid these, be cautious especially as to what to share with strangers. It is recommended to check through online fora scams and hoaxes

⁶ Presented University of Michigan and Australian Christian College

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sites/personalities, be cautious in clicking website pop-ups, and to not share personal and financial information.

- **Respect others.** Treat people how you would like to be treated and practice empathy online. Respect their privacy and personal information as well. Obtain consent before downloading or sharing someone else's data, images, or creative output. Respect copyright by not plagiarizing by learning to cite resources.
- **Be critical with information.** In the digital environment where anyone can post anything, it is imperative to question the reliability and truthfulness of information and willingness to be wrong. Social media puts the world at your fingertips, and that should be managed well. Check the facts before posting.
- **Combat cyberbullying.** Cyberbullying is bullying carried out through the use of the internet and technology (devices or gadgets). This may include insulting or threatening messages, posting of inappropriate images and sharing someone's personal information online, among others. For cyberbullying to stop, it should be reported. Social media platforms offer tools to restrict comments/view posts, block, mute or report cyberbullying. Taking initiative, raising your voice, calling out bullies, and reaching out to trusted adults may combat this crucial issue⁷.

A better online environment will result from responsible online citizenship. Citizens should be taught the right and responsible ways to interact with the online world even at an early age in order to form a community that respects one another, promotes healthy self-image, and leaves a positive digital footprint.

ACTIVITY 6A: GET TO KNOW YOUR LEADERS! (30 MINUTES)

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Manila paper
- Masking tapes
- Metacards with roles and responsibilities of officials

EXPERIENCE

1. Participants will be given a set of cards that contain the roles and responsibilities of the Presidents, Vice Presidents, Senators, Congressmen. These will be called the Role Cards.
2. Post a manila paper in front with columns labelled: Presidents, Vice Presidents, Senators, Congressmen
3. Put the Role Cards on a table in front of the manila paper.
4. Ask the participants to form two lines in front of the table with the role cards and the manila paper.
5. Ask the participants to get one card from the table and to place it under the correct column. Allow only two participants to go at a time. The next pair will only be able to go after the preceding pair has placed their answers. Give the participants 5 minutes to finish placing all metacards. **DO NOT ALLOW PARTICIPANTS TO TALK TO EACH OTHER DURING THIS TIME.**
6. Once participants have placed all metacards on the table, gather the participants in small groups and allow them to discuss their answers and finalize their table.
7. One representative per group will present their finished table to the plenary. The lead facilitator then corrects all tables and provides input on the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

REFLECT (30 MINUTES)

1. How was the activity?
2. Describe what happened in the first round?
3. What worked and what did not work?
4. What happened during the time you were given to strategize?
5. How did you come up with your strategy?

⁷ <https://www.unicef.org/end-violence/how-to-stop-cyberbullying>

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6. How were you able to determine where all the right answers were?

ACTIVITY 6B: GET TO KNOW YOUR LEADERS! (30 MINUTES)

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Manila paper
- Masking tapes
- Metacards with roles and responsibilities of a Local Youth Development Council

EXPERIENCE

1. Participants will be given a set of cards that contain the roles and responsibilities of the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK), SK Chairperson, SK Secretary, SK Treasurer, Local Youth Development Council (LYDC), Local Youth Development Office/ Officer (LYDO), and Katipunan ng Kabataan (KK). These will be called the Role Cards.
2. Post a manila paper in front with columns labelled: Sangguniang Kabataan (SK), SK Chairperson, SK Secretary, SK Treasurer, Local Youth Development Council (LYDC), Local Youth Development Office/ Officer (LYDO), and Katipunan ng Kabataan (KK)
3. Put the Role Cards on a table in front of the manila paper.
4. Ask the participants to form two lines in front of the table with the role cards and the manila paper.
5. Ask the participants to get one card from the table and to place it under the correct column. Allow only two participants to go at a time. The next pair will only be able to go after the preceding pair has placed their answers. Give the participants 5 minutes to finish placing all metacards. **DO NOT ALLOW PARTICIPANTS TO TALK TO EACH OTHER DURING THIS TIME.**
6. Once participants have placed all metacards on the table, gather the participants in small groups and allow them to discuss their answers and finalize their table.
7. One representative per group will present their finished table to the plenary. The lead facilitator then corrects all tables and provides input on the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

REFLECT (30 MINUTES)

1. How was the activity?
2. Describe what happened in the first round?
3. What worked and what did not work?
4. What happened during the time you were given to strategize?
5. How did you come up with your strategy?
6. How were you able to determine where all the right answers were?

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VOTER'S EDUCATION TOOLKIT



MODULE 7: POST ELECTION ENGAGEMENT

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Acknowledging Election Outcomes

At the national level, as provided by the Omnibus Election Code, Sec. 20, upon the completion of the canvass of the votes by the Batasang Pambansa, the persons obtaining the highest number of votes for President and for Vice-President shall be declared elected. In case two or more shall have an equal and the highest number of votes, one of them shall be chosen President or Vice-President, as the case may be, by a majority vote of all the Members of the Batasang Pambansa in session assembled. In case there are certificates of canvass which have not been submitted to the Speaker of the Batasang Pambansa on account of missing election returns, a proclamation may be made if the missing certificates will not affect the results of the election.

No proclamation needs to be made if the missing election returns would have an impact on the certificates of canvass that were not filed. As soon as possible, the Speaker must give the boards of canvassers concerned instructions to ask the boards of election inspectors for any missing election returns or, if the returns have been lost or destroyed, to use any authentic copy of those election returns with prior Commission approval in order to conduct the canvass and then issue the certificates of canvass. The Speaker of the Batasang Pambansa must receive the canvass certificates right away.

Only when all certificates of canvass have been submitted or when the absence of any certificates of canvass will not change the outcome of the election may a proclamation be made.

In securing that swift implementation of the election and safeguard its turn-around process, the law also provides the grounds for the failure of elections. OEC Sec. 6 provides that if, on account of force majeure, violence, terrorism, fraud, or other analogous causes the election in any polling place has not been held on the date fixed, or had been suspended before the hour fixed by law for the closing of the voting, or after the voting and during the preparation and the transmission of the election returns or in the custody or canvass thereof, such election results in a failure to elect, and in any of such cases the failure or suspension of election would affect the result of the election, the Commission shall, on the basis of a verified petition by any interested party and after due notice and hearing, call for the holding or continuation of the election not held, suspended or which resulted in a failure to elect on a date reasonably close to the date of the election not held, suspended or which resulted in a failure to elect but not later than thirty days after the cessation of the cause of such postponement or suspension of the election or failure to elect.

Upon proclamation of elected candidates, civil society organizations are encouraged to continue vigilance and participate in governance through the following mechanisms:

- **Local government participation.** Encourage participation and engagement in local governance through development planning on the barangay level, LGU consultations, public hearings and representation in local special bodies.
- **Legislative advocacy participation.** Legislative advocacy is a process of interacting with the legislature and other governmental and social institutions to ensure that the concerns and welfare of the general electorate are articulated in the deliberations of bills and other legislative measures as well as in the final versions of laws. Advocacy building and participation in existing legislative advocacy is an alternative to the direct exercise of legislative engagement.

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- The citizen voter has additional options for participating in the political and electoral process such as:
 - seeking public office
 - promoting/campaigning on behalf of a political party, candidate, or party-list organization
 - assisting civil society organizations in their efforts to promote fair and secure elections
 - expressing opinions to elected officials

Holding Elected Officials accountable

One of the pillars of democracy is election, and by electing government officials, it is imperative that accountability be imprinted in elected officials, electoral mechanisms and functionalities. An accountable political system is one in which the elected members and its administration both have the greatest responsibility to their citizens. Voters must have the power to change the composition of the government on a larger scale, either by changing the alliance of parties in power or by ousting a single party that has performed poorly. Both of these goals are facilitated by well-designed electoral systems. Accountability entails much more than just holding regular national elections; it also depends on the degree of geographic accountability, which is largely based on the size and territorial makeup of districts, as well as on the freedom of voters to select candidates over parties, and district size.

In holding elected officials accountable, 30 days upon assumption of office, newly elected public officials must submit their Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN) with a Disclosure of Business Interests and Financial Connections that includes the following information:

1. real property, its improvements, acquisition costs, assessed value, and current fair market value
2. personal property and acquisition cost
3. all other assets such as investments, cash on hand or in banks, stocks, and bonds
4. liabilities
5. all business interests and financial connections

Every year, public officials must file their SALN as well as a Disclosure of Business Interests and Financial Connections by April 30 at the latest. A violation of Section 8 or failure to file the SALN or dishonesty in doing so is penalized by up to five years in prison, a fine of up to P5,000, or both. At the discretion of the court with jurisdiction, the offender may also be barred from holding public office. When necessary, it might also result in the forfeiture of illicit or mysterious money.

In addition, all winning and losing candidates in the elections are required to immediately file their Statements of Contribution and Expenditures (SOCE) relative to the campaign and other election-related expenses. Section 14 of RA 7166 states that "every candidate and treasurer of the political party shall, within 30 days after the day of the election, file in duplicate with the offices of the Commission the full, true and itemized statement of all contributions and expenditures in connection with the election."

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There is a limit in campaign spending. Candidates for president and vice president may spend up to P10 per registered voter, while political parties and independent candidates may spend up to P5 per registered voter. Local and other candidates may spend P3 for each voter registered in the constituency where they filed their certificate of candidacy. Campaign expenditures that exceed the limit and those that are not properly reported in their SOC are prohibited. Any individual found guilty of an election infraction shall be punished with imprisonment for a term of not less than one year nor more than six years, and shall not be eligible for probation, according to Section 264 of the Omnibus Election Code. The guilty party will also lose their ability to vote and be barred from running for public office.

Upon formal proclamation to office, the general public has now the responsibility to hold the officials accountable, government is not only the sole actor in local governance. Participation of civil society in public service is also facilitated by various advocacy organizations (such as people's organizations, non-governmental organizations, and special interest groups). In the framework of governance, these organizations make sure that the government prioritizes the needs of the populace and that its programs and services are tailored to meet those requirements. The Constitution makes a point of highlighting the significance of sectoral groups.

Continuing Civic Participation beyond voting

Civic democratic space has been a powerful chance to improve public service delivery and governance since the 1987 Constitution was ratified. It also gives citizens more authority to take part in nation-building. The civil society movement grew rapidly as a result of the change from the totalitarian Marcos rule to the first open Aquino administration.

The involvement of certain people or communities in local, state, and national government is known as civic participation. Voting, political action, volunteering, and community involvement are all examples of civic engagement, and in a nutshell, people's involvement in democratic and governmental processes.

The Constitution emphasizes the importance of the following sectors in nation-building and their engagement in civic affairs, decision-making, and program administration even though all people have the right to participate in our democratic institutions and processes. These sectors frequently face marginalization in the political, economic, and social spheres of society despite their importance to our basic industries and society i.e., youth, women, farmers and fisherfolks, urban poor, people's organizations and indigenous people's communities.

Local representation of sectoral groups is also encouraged at the local level. The Constitution emphasizes the need for participation of civil society in local governance in pursuit of local autonomy and public service delivery⁸, specifically, in LGC, local governments were encouraged to promote the establishment and operationalization of POs, NGOs and CSOs as an active partners in local governance⁹, and LGUs to enter ventures and agreements with said organizations for the promotion of effective and efficient public service delivery and the promotion and enhancement of the economic and social well-being of the

⁸ Article X, Sec. 9 of the 1987 Constitution

⁹ Chapter 4 Sec. 34 of the Local Government Code of 1991

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people¹⁰. Further, LGUs may assist through financial support or otherwise for economic, socially oriented, environmental or cultural projects to be implemented within its territorial jurisdiction¹¹.

Aside from these legal framework that were put in place to ensure that the public through representations be present and engaged with the governance process, the spectrum of public participation was studied to help identify the role of the public in the governance process, planning and decision making and identify the influence of the community.

Non-Participation

- Instrumentalism. At this level, the interests of the decision makers are the primary concerns and problems and issues and concerns are defined by them. The public may or may not understand the issues at hand but the decision-makers present issues to motivate people in participating in governance.

Example: A local government may decide to approve a reclamation project to attract investors and boost economic activity. However, they define the issue in a way that highlights the benefits--such as job creation and increased revenue--without fully addressing the environmental concerns raised by advocacy groups and local communities. The public may not fully understand the long-term consequences, yet they are encourage to support the project through government-led forums and consultations that frame it as beneficial for development.

In this case, decision-makers set the agenda and shape public discourse to align with their goals, while public participation is guided in a way that supports their pre-determined objectives rather than allowing for genuine debate or alternative solutions.

- Adornment. When Representatives are exposed to the public during a performance, event, or other activity planned with a specific goal in mind, but they are unaware of the significance or meaning of their participation. This is usually a band-aid solution to participation where the citizens were present however little to no opinions/inputs were being considered/heard.

Example: When government officials invite community representatives to a ceremonial event, such as the groundbreaking of a housing project for the poor, but without genuinely involving them in the planning or decision-making process. Their presence serves more as a symbolic gesture rather than meaningful engagement, as their opinions were not sought or considered in the earlier phases of the project.

Pre-Participation

- Tokenism. Situations in which citizens appear to have a voice, but in reality have little to no control over the topic or the manner in which it is communicated and little to no opportunity to establish their own opinions. This usually involves phases on:

¹⁰ Chapter 4 Sec. 35 of the Local Government Code of 1991

¹¹ Chapter 4 Sec. 36 of the Local Government Code of 1991

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- Keeping the citizens informed by giving the public the knowledge they require to comprehend the agency decision-making process, not the possibility for any meaningful public participation. This serve as a reminder to agencies that in some cases, there isn't a way for the public to participate in the decision-making process, so the best course of action is to just educate them. The government must act as an open information broker, providing the public all the information they require to fully comprehend the project and decision and come to their own judgments about participating in the process.
- Consulting people in the process which is a "bare minimum opportunity for public input to a decision." In essence, it is gathering input on strategies, concepts, choices, or problems with little interaction. The pledge is to "listen and acknowledge" the difficulties brought up, but not always to take action.
- Making people involved in the issues making clear that the intention is to collaborate with the public.

Example: A city government plans to relocation an informal settler community to make way for a business district. Officials organize a town hall meeting to “inform” residents about the relocation, explaining that the project will improve the economy and city infrastructure. However, the discussion is one-sided, with officials primarily presenting their agenda rather than allowing genuine dialogue.

Participation

- Shared decision making. This level is about collaboration and power sharing. This indicates an interactive process with an emphasis on two-way processes and sets high expectations by promising to include opinions and recommendations "to the maximum extent possible." Although the organization or department still has the last say, community input is considerably more significant. At this level, civil society representatives or a representative have a formal right to be heard in the decision making process.

Example: A local government is planning to build a public park in a densely populated community. Instead of making unilateral decisions, officials form a joint committee consisting of urban planners, local officials, and representatives from community organizations.

- Community-owned initiative. The public is given final decision-making authority where the community may decide particularly having influence over decisions being made and influence program planning and implementation. Limitations under this level involve the reservation of government bodies as they are not permitted to delegate their decision-making authority to the public.

Example: A coastal community that relies on fishing is facing environmental challenges due to overfishing and pollution. Instead of waiting for government intervention, the local fisherfolk association initiates a marine conservation program, establishing a community-

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managed marine protected area. The local government recognizes the initiative and supports it by providing technical assistance and legal backing, but the community retains control over enforcement and management.

ACTIVITY 7: EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMMING! (30 MINUTES)

EXPERIENCE

For this part of the program, we will ask you to answer a set of questions based on your own thoughts and experiences. For each question, choices will be provided. In front of you are five chairs representing choices A, B, C, D, E. After each question has been read, please line up in front of the chair that represents your answer. The participants will be asked the following different questions:

Question 1: Ano sa tingin ninyo ang #LifeGoals ng kabataan?

- Makatulong sa magulang
- Live independently
- Magkaroon ng makabuluhang trabaho
- Makatapos ng college
- Magsimula ng business

Question 2: Ano ang national issue na dapat agarang i-address ng gobyerno?

- Employment
- Poverty
- Pagtaas ng mga presyo/Inflation
- COVID-19
- Korapsyon

Question 3: Ano ang pangunahing source of information natin sa mga kandidato?

- Word of mouth
- TV
- Social Media
- Election Debates
- Ads

Question 4: Para saan ginagamit ng kabataan ang social media?

- Manood ng videos para masaya
- Get updates from family/friends
- Learn something useful
- Play online games

Question 5: Dapat bang tumakbo ang kabataan sa mga elective positions?

- Yes
- No

Participants will be asked to line up in five different lines, according to their answers. The facilitators will take note of the distribution of the answers (e.g. Choice A - 60%, Choice B - 20%, Choice C - 20%). Make quick charts as the participants answer for the presentation later.

After each question, 1-2 participants will be asked to explain their choice. While interviewing the participants, another team member will make quick charts as the participants answer for the presentation later.

Facilitator: We see that ___ of you chose Choice __. (Select 1-2 participants). Can you share with us why this was your answer?

Participant: <Gives answer.>

Facilitator: Thanks for that. Take note of your answers. Let's go to the next question.

<Next question is raised. 1-2 participants are again asked to discuss their answers.>

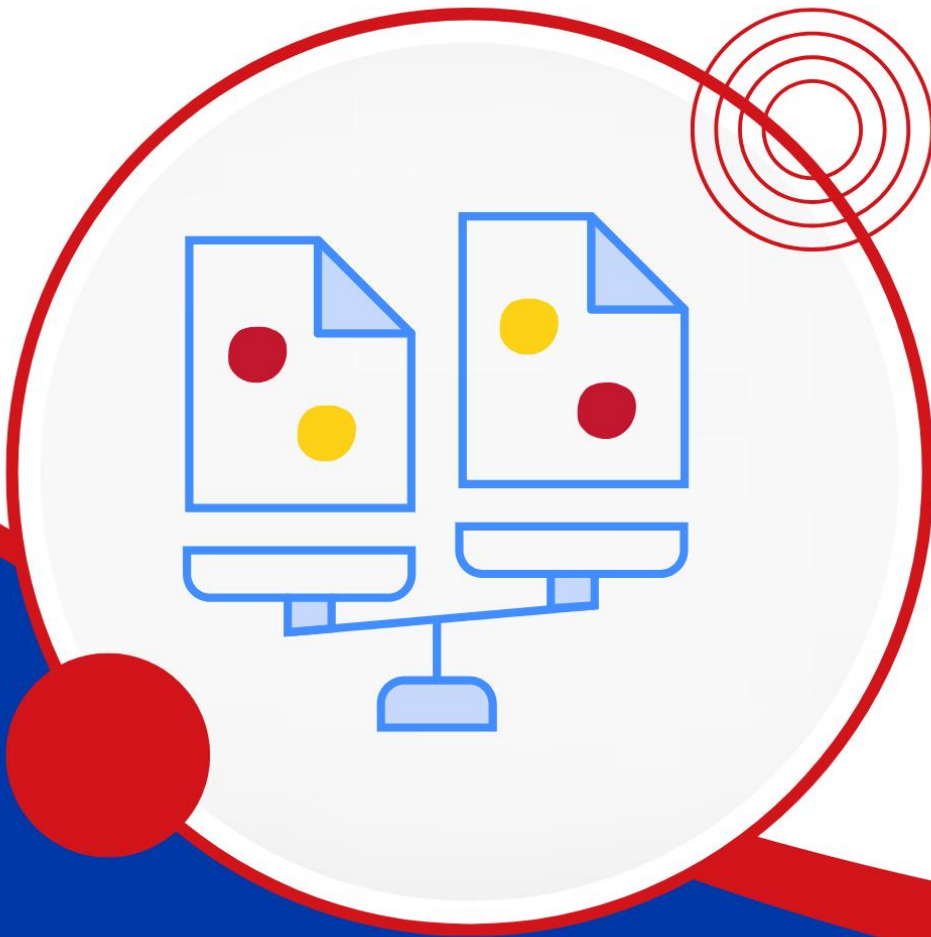
First three (3) Rounds

After each question, the survey findings will be shown. The points for each team will be tallied by the facilitators based on the results of the aforementioned poll (matching numbers of respondents who selected the letter). The teams with the highest points after the 3 rounds (questions 1-3) shall proceed to the final round (questions 4-5).

Final Round

For this round, the remaining teams will compete individually. Players who select the incorrect responses are eliminated, while those who select the right response will move on to the final question. The goal would be to point out similarities and differences in their opinions in comparison to real-life data that has been collected.

VOTER'S EDUCATION TOOLKIT



MODULE 8: INTERNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES

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Contrasting Voting Systems and their Impact

Since the shift of the elections from manual to electronic in 2010, the COMELEC has been using Optical Mark Recognition (OMR), combining aspects of paper ballot voting and electronic counting. Smartmatic has been the election system provider for the country. Globally, a variety of electronic voting and counting technologies are in use. It is challenging to easily classify the used technologies due to their diversity. The following technologies are listed as the most prevalent ones:

- **Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) System.** DRE systems, also known as electronic voting machines (EVMs), allow voters to record their votes electronically using a keyboard, touch-screen, mouse, pen, or other electronic device. In supervised, non-remote sites (polling stations), DREs are utilized. The DRE technology records the voter's selections and keeps a digital record of their vote on the apparatus. To determine the total number of votes cast for particular parties or candidates, the information collected by each individual DRE unit is then transmitted, either electronically (via the Internet, a cellular network, or a memory card) or manually (by printing the results from each machine and tabulating them). This paper record, also known as a voter verified paper audit trail (VVPAT), has been implemented in various ways in different nations and may or may not be produced by DRE systems to allow the voter to validate their voting choices.
- **Electronic Ballot Printers (EBP).** This does not keep track of votes like DREs do. Instead, it generates a token with the selected vote(s) printed on it or a paper receipt. The voter then inserts this token or receipt into the voting machine, which may be electronic and conduct an automatic vote count. This involves two separate machines (ballot reader and vote counting machine) hence may entail higher cost, require greater IT capacity, and might encounter more challenges on sustainability.
- **Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) System.** This kind includes PCOS. Voters mark their selections on preprinted ballots by simply shading the ovals or spaces next to the names of the candidates they wish to support. The voters then feed each ballot individually into the OMR machine. The machine's features may or may not include printed results showing the voters' selections for verification reasons. Disadvantages of this include the non-transparency where voters may not trust the counting, susceptible to manipulation, and there can be issues on shading threshold, this said to have maintenance and storage concerns.
- **Internet Voting System.** The voter uses a computer with Internet connectivity to cast their ballot. Internet voting typically occurs from any computer with Internet access, such as a voter's home or place of employment, in an unattended, remote location. If, for instance, electoral authorities set up Internet kiosks at polling places, it can also happen in controlled, non-remote locales. In this system, a voter logs in to the election administrator's website and authenticates his legitimacy through password. This system is said to provide inclusivity to persons with disabilities and eligible voters living remotely and outside a country. Its limitation is the unsupervised locations putting emphasis on authentication of voters and threat to impersonation of voters. This system might not allow recounts and presents challenges for adjudication and electoral complaints.

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Countries implementing e-voting

Globalization and innovation demonstrate the important roles the Internet has played in the democratic process, and in particular, how it has affected election results in both developed and developing countries.

Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) System

- In India, with 814 million voters and the largest democracy in the world, the country began electronic voting pilots in 1982 and conducted its countrywide adoption in 2004. Same with the Philippines, India has an independent constitutional body that manages and facilitates the election in the country known as Election Commission of India. The country eliminated paper ballots and features a DRE system with VVPAT.
- Brazil launched the electronic voting as a national project in 2000. The nation held a "hack-a-thon" in 2009 where 38 participants from commercial and public information technology companies attempted unsuccessfully to tamper with the software of the equipment. Political parties are allowed access to the voting machine software for auditing. Fingerprint biometric voter identification was added to the system in 2012 as part of the ongoing technology upgrade process, with project completion set for 2018. The country implemented the DRE system without VVPAT.

Optical Mark Recognition System

- Canada implements and uses the OMR in its electoral process. The Minister of Democratic Institutions introduced Bill C-76, the Elections Modernization Act, on April 30, 2018. Through clauses that forbid the use of foreign funding, define offenses connected to misleading statements, and demand that online platforms disclose a record of online advertising, the Act increases Canada's resilience against foreign intervention and cyber threats to its elections.
- Germany initially utilizes optical scan system or the OMR in 2005, however, given that The Federal Election Office (Bundeswahlamt) discovered in public surveys that there was clear popular mistrust of the system following public assertions made in September 2007 by the Fraktion der Grünen/GAL and the Chaos Computer Club that the system was susceptible, hence the cancellation of the system.
- In 2017, Iraq introduced the OMR where voters will insert ID cards into a machine which will link them to individual ballots using machine-readable codes. After voters mark the ballots, they put them into a scanner that will tally and record results.
- Kyrgyzstan is the first Central Asian nation to implement an e-voting system. In 2015 Parliamentary elections, the results were processed using scanning machines, however the results obtained from these scanners were unofficial and were used only for monitoring purposes.

Electronic Ballot Printers (EBP)

- In Belgium, electronic voting began in 1991. Since 1999, it has been regularly utilized in Belgium for both national and local elections. The Jites and Digivote technologies served as the foundation for electronic voting in Belgium. The Jites and Digivote systems both record ballots on cardboard magnetic stripe cards. As a result, they are

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both referred to as "indirect recording electronic voting systems" (IREVS) because they do not directly record and tabulate the vote. Voters place their completed ballots in a ballot box equipped with a magnetic stripe scanner, which tallies the results. If there is a dispute, the cards can be mechanically recounted.

- The Sailau Electronic Voting System (also known as "Sailau" or "Sailauy") was first used in Kazakhstan's 2004 parliamentary elections. The system was utilized in the presidential election of 2005 and the legislative election of 2007, has been referred to as using "indirect recording electronic voting," wherein Sailau system users were given smart cards containing the ballots that needed to be cast. The Sailau touch-screen ballot marking gadget was used by voters to mark their ballots on these cards as they took them into the voting booth.

Internet Voting System

- Estonia is regarded as a leader in electronic voting because it is the only nation that allows all of its residents to vote in national elections through the Internet. This has been accomplished by systematically integrating technology into every sphere of Estonian public life.

The implementation of pilot e-voting systems has opened avenues to reevaluate the use of information technology in voting and elections. In the Netherlands and Ireland, the country suspended the implementation of e-voting given its vulnerabilities to technological manipulation and hackers, further, the system faced criticisms for security reasons. Various parliamentary commissions were established to investigate and conduct studies on the decisions in approving voting machines and the review of the election process.

At present, even those of developed countries experienced challenges in automating its elections. German political scientist Weisner motioned that automatic elections put blind faith in technology hence open to manipulation. Many have dropped the electronic voting used by the DRE system and so are questioning the OMR. Of the 34 countries implementing e-voting, many have gone back to manual given that it challenges and imposes a threat to transparency. Indeed, there is a need for the country to adhere with the demands of globalization and fast paced technology. It is pertinent to have speed in the electoral process. However, is speed really imperative and worth the sacrifice in identifying the election accuracy and transparency?

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ACTIVITY 8: IDEATION (30 MINUTES)

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Powerpoint slides
- Bond papers
- Markers and/or pens

EXPERIENCE

1. Encourage participants to relax and clear minds.
2. Request participants to identify one specific election concern in the community.
3. Participants should list down and identify ideas that can be done to solve the identified concern.
4. Identify a specific persona and provide strategies and ideas that the participant would do assuming a specific persona. Participants should imagine that they are the following:
 - a. Anne Curtis-Smith (with high influence)
 - b. One of the Sy Siblings (with financial resources)
 - c. Tony Stark (highly intelligent inventor and scientist)
 - d. Governor/Mayor (with Full political authority)
5. By the end of the activity, participants should be able to generate strategies and ideas to address the identified concerns.

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CONCLUSION

This module provides the information for youth leaders, non-government organizations, and administrators for mainstreaming the value of voters' education and how the public shall utilize at the full extent their right to suffrage. Educating the public about voting provides a consistent message to various stakeholders of how the public shall benefit from the result of the elections. It is critical for everyone, especially the youth and its leaders to take lead in this initiative to ensure that voting and its supplementary concepts are being delivered to its respective recipient.

VOTING AS CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Voting during elections should encourage and enhance the sense of self-involvement and participation in the community. Every citizen must maximize the opportunity to be part of the decision and action, promote the collaborative effort and empower various sectors to achieve a common goal - in this case, to elect an official deemed fit for the position. During elections, citizens become agents of change by identifying leaders that may or may not address governance issues and concerns that prevail in this society.

VOTING AS IDENTIFYING THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM

As a democratic and republican state, the Philippine administrative system is subdivided into three co-equal branches of the government including the executive, legislative, and judiciary. They are bound with the separation of powers and established a system of checks and balances to hold each branch accountable to one another and to function independently without overstepping their respective jurisdiction.

Systems and institutions were also put in place to ensure that the different branches act as internal audit systems to one another and counterbalance the authority being held. There are independent Commissions to secure the government's integrity towards its function to the state.

Given these systems, it is in the hands of the people to vote for those in the executive and the legislative branch of the government, hence the power to identify the political spectrum. The citizens vote for the President and Vice-President who are the highest positions in the Executive branch, and vote for the legislative officials including our Senatorial representatives and District Representatives responsible for the creation of laws that shall benefit the majority and address the needs of the people. Voting is a very powerful asset of each of the citizens, and when utilized righteously, will benefit the majority and address societal issues of today.

CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN GOVERNANCE

The legal framework of the government encourages the participation of the people beyond voting. The civic democratic space provided is an opportunity for the general public (through representation) to influence and improve public service delivery and governance.

Participation is being encouraged not only at the national level but at the local level where local representation of sectoral groups (youth, women, farmers and fisherfolks, urban poor, people's organizations, and indigenous people's communities) are encouraged in pursuit of local autonomy and making CSOs and NGOs as active partners in governance for the promotion of effective and efficient public service delivery. There is a wide space for

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citizen participation and engagement in governance as there are existing public participation frameworks that influence and identify the role of the public in the governance process.

Beyond voting, as government officials takeover their roles in administration, it is imperative for the citizens to hold them accountable with their positions. Citizens have the leeway to choose whether to just get informed and let things be, or be engaged with how the governance process works, monitor government projects, or collaborate with the government in the implementation of various government initiatives to ensure that the general public will be given what is right and just.

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The activity below put emphasis on the roles of the youth and stakeholders post-election. In the previous activities, issues and solutions were being raised through consultations and team work activities. Below is an activity that aims to comprehend the value of the SMART approach in planning and drafting responsive and inclusive plan.

ACTIVITY : CRAFTING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN (30 MINUTES)

EXPERIENCE

Drafting the Local Youth Development Plan might seem overwhelming, so we need your energies and focus as we try to break it down into simpler components. With that, we will have an activity called **SMART Match**.

Activity set-up:

1. Two (2) chairs that will serve as the starting point of the participants
2. Twenty-five (25) chairs (5x5 rows and columns with space in between)
3. The Metacards will be placed downward in the 25 chairs
4. A board/wall pasted with the categories (in order):
 - a) Youth Development Concerns
 - b) Objectives
 - c) Performance Indicator
 - d) Target (Year 1, Year 2, Year 3)
 - e) PPAs
 - f) Priority area
 - g) Annual Budget
5. Each category has five (5) rolled tapes downward for the participants to paste their answers.

There are 6 rounds for this activity with corresponding categories which are as follows:

- 1st round – Youth Development Issues
- 2nd round – Objectives
- 3rd round – Performance Indicator
- 4th round - Target Year
- 5th round – Projects/ Programs/ Activities (PPAs)
- 6th round – Priority area/s and Annual Budget

Mechanics:

1. The facilitator will give a category for each round and the answers shall be found in the Metacards placed in the chairs.
2. Each playing member shall get only one (1) Metacard as their answer and they should read it loudly.
3. If they believe the answer is incorrect, they should return the metacard to the chair.
4. If they think it is the correct answer, they should attempt to put it up on the board/wall and the facilitator will inform them if they are correct or incorrect.
5. After each turn, the playing member shall tap the other member sitting in the chair from the starting point before finding another answer.
6. Each round will end once all the answers per category are completed and will then proceed to another category.
7. For the 6th round, the participants will find answers for the categories of priority area/s and annual budget but the playing members shall still choose 1 Metacard every turn.
8. The team with the highest point will be the winner.

Note: The facilitator must inform the participants that they must align their responses with the appropriate column and row. For instance, if the topic is related to health issues, the objectives, performance indicator, and other components must also be health-related.

After completing the activity, we now have an overview of the sample accomplished LYDP following its prescribed template. This time, all of the participants are asked to look back at the board/wall and are now part of one group. They will act as a member of their Local Legislative Council, whose role is to identify PPAs they believe should be included in their Annual Investment Program (AIP).

Using the metacard, participants will list the PPA they believe should be prioritized and included in their LGU's AIP. After tallying the result, participants will present it to the plenary and explain why it was chosen by the group.

EXAMINE

1. How was the experience?
2. What did you find difficult?
3. What was easy during the exercise?
4. What do you feel when you put an answer and it was incorrect?
5. What do you feel when you got a correct answer?
6. What do you think about the LYDP template?
7. For you, why is it important that a plan should be SMART?
8. How can you apply this in crafting your LYDP?
9. How was the experience of acting as a member of the Local Legislative Council?

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