MAVC – G-Watch Learning Event

Doing Citizen Engagement Differently: What did we learn and how do we sustain it?

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MAVC – G-Watch Forum-Workshop on Doing Citizen Engagement Differently: *What did we learn and how do we sustain it?*

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Background

The Philippines is home to some of the known approaches and innovation on Transparency-Participation-Accountability (TPA). It has received numerous international recognitions for its TPA work; and some of its leaders are known international actors in the TPA field.

Yet, sustaining the gains of TPA action remains a challenge in the Philippines and there is a feeling that efforts to reform/transform governance and politics in the country are now stuck. Change takes a long time and for innovative solutions to take effect, what was started must be sustained.

Sustaining the gains of TPA action until they achieve their desired impact and become irreversible changes in governance and politics is a challenge that must be grappled with in the Philippines to move forward in deepening democracy. Not to do so might result to democratic rollback and threaten the consensus on democracy and human rights as prerequisites of governance, which may actually be the emerging situation in the country today.

Making All Voices Count (MAVC) is a global program that supports the innovative use of technology that has the potential to support better governance. It also supports research and learning that help build a base of evidence about what works and why in using innovation for accountable governance.

G-Watch is formerly a social accountability program of a university founded in 2001 that is currently rebooting, in transition to being an independent national action research organization embedded in constituencies of civic and advocacy-oriented organizations all over the Philippines aiming to contribute in the deepening of democracy through the scaling of accountability and citizen empowerment.

G-Watch is currently undertaking an action research on the role of adaptive learning and strategic citizen action on sustaining reforms. In particular, it aims to write a think piece on how the ‘gains’ of the MAVC program in the Philippines can be sustained using an alternative approach or perspective on tackling sustainability premised on strategic citizen action.

Objectives

The forum-workshop aims to discuss and reflect on the key lessons learned, evidence and gains on adaptive learning, strategic citizen action and use of digital technologies generated through MAVC support in the Philippines. It particularly targets MAVC grantees, but are also inviting other relevant stakeholders as participants to reflect on related initiatives.

The output of the forum-workshop is a documentation report on the highlights of the discussion that will be used as reference to the research being conducted by G-Watch on the role of adaptive learning and strategic citizen action on sustaining reforms and to be shared to the participants of the event for their own use.
Opening Remarks: Situationer and Context Analysis

II. A. Commissioner Karen Dumpit, Commission on Human Rights (CHR)

Comm. Dumpit began by saying that CHR has had a long partnership with G-Watch and that one of their earliest initiatives together was the development of a monitoring tool on human rights compliance. She further stated that the Commission is setting up a “weather bureau” on citizens’ engagement.

Comm. Dumpit acknowledged that the CHR is now the most bashed agency. For this reason, it is important that she hears the ideas and insights of the participants on citizens’ engagement.

B. Michelle Domingo, MAVC

Ms. Domingo thanked the participants for attending the Learning Event. She added that aside from the Philippines, MAVC is also implementing programs in Africa and other countries of Southeast Asia.

Ms. Domingo concluded by saying that MAVC is about to end, but she hopes that the partnership will continue even beyond the program.

C. Joy Aceron, G-Watch

Ms. Aceron began by saying that we are at stage in history where democracy as a way of organizing society is under threat. We now confront the question whether we still believe in the universality of human rights. And this includes freedom of participation. She further stated that we now have a majority that approves what we do not approve. This situation, according to Ms. Aceron, is both surprising and disheartening.

The country’s current conjuncture forces us to recognize that there is a need for reform advocates to have a conversation, and to be critical as well. This should force us to ask the following questions: “Saan tayo nagkulang? At paano natin mapapabuti ang kalagayan ng ating bansa?”

For G-Watch, the direction is to gather reform advocates to facilitate critical reflection on how to create something new. Ms. Aceron observed that in the past,
the strategy of civil society groups (CSOs) has been to work interdependently with the government. But this has become problematic under the new administration of President Rodrigo Duterte due to the heavy human and social costs of its “War on Drugs.”

Ms. Aceron noted that, “Baka hindi na sapat at akma yung mga dati nating paraan” (Maybe our old ways are no longer adequate and appropriate). She added that, “Ang sagot, andoon pa rin sa mga nasa baba, sa mga kumikilos” (The answer lies with the grassroots, with those who are undertaking practice).

She ended her intervention by emphasizing three key points:

• That representatives from the G-Watch local sites were also invited to participate in the Learning Event so that they can share their experiences, and in the process enable the other participants to learn from and vice versa.
• That G-Watch will document the discussions.
• That the final documentation will be uploaded in the G-Watch website.

Session 1: When do citizens engage?

A. Presentation: Rorie Fajardo-Jarilla, Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)

IWRP began an initiative called Citizens Action Network for Accountability-Scaling Up (CANA-Scale Up) is a 17-month project that ended on July 31, 2017. It was designed to build fiscal literacy and capacity of community groups to make local governments responsive and accountable. Its aim is to help transform citizens from passive spectators of local government behavior into active agents of positive change through community organizing, advocacy, capacity building and mentoring, information, education, media and technology. The project believes that ordinary Filipino citizens can more effectively monitor, shape, and engage their local government if they know how it works.

Based on the IWPR experience, citizens engage because of three reasons:
1. When citizens know how government works.
2. When citizens, as government service consumers, want to improve the quality of life through these services.
3. When citizens want to contribute to the success of the government’s work. Interventions are also needed in order to improve citizens’ engagement, namely: (1) community organizing; (2) training; and (3) mentoring.

IWPR further asserted that citizens’ engagement lead to responsive and accountable government if the following conditions are met:

1. When people engage the government in a professional, disinterested and fact-based way.
2. When government see citizens as partners for change.
3. When both government and citizens use tools and processes that they understand and “trust in.”

IWPR concluded by stating that ordinary citizens are constant sources knowledge of what is needed. On the part of CSOs, integrity is now even more important since there are now a lot of fly-by-night NGOs.

B. Presentation: Aida Dingle, Shontoug Foundation

Shontoug Foundation initiated a nine-month project on disaster preparedness. The initiative attempts to address a felt need of the people of Cordillera since the region is prone to natural hazards. Because the Cordillera is located in the country’s typhoon belt, the area is frequented by prolonged monsoon rains and intermittent typhoons.

This situation is further aggravated by several other challenges, namely: (1) the region’s ecologically fragile, mountainous terrain; (2) the weak coping mechanism of upland communities due to lack of tools and
institutionalized system to mitigate risks and impacts; and (3) the lack of capacity of LGUs, POs and the community.

To address these challenges, Shontoug Foundation initiated a project aimed at installing a village-based and managed Disaster Risk-Reduction and Management (DRRM) Hubs to organize the target communities on disaster preparedness. The project, therefore, shifts the focus from government-led disaster response to pre-disaster community participation. To meet its objectives, several maps were developed and prepared by the villagers themselves. These include: (1) Multi-hazard and Risks Maps; and (2) Capacity and Resources Maps.

Because of this project, the voice of villagers have now been integrated disaster preparedness activities of the local government. Their inputs have also made their way into the local development process, and now has a corresponding budget allocation in their Annual Development Plan and Budget of the LGU. It has also led to the formation of a Multi-stakeholder Preparedness Partnership between the local government and the affected communities.

The project was short but it led to clear positive results. These are:

- positive behavioral change of project partner communities (pilot areas);
- improved state of readiness of villages to disasters as a result of organized, developed and engaged team of duty bearers (LGU), claimholders (communities) and local anchors (NGOs); and
- the creation of operational village-managed DRRM Hubs.

These results became possible because the project was able to address a felt problem of the affected communities. At the same time, the people in these communities remained at the center of decision-making.

C. Synthesis: Joy Aceron, G-Watch

After the presentations, the participants were asked to answer the following questions:

- When do citizens engage? When does citizen engagement lead to responsive and accountable governance?
- What lessons from your experience/MAVC research did you use to improve the ways you enable citizen engagement?
- What lessons from your experience/MAVC research will you use to improve the ways you enable citizen engagement?

The answers were written down on metacards, which were then posted on a board. The answers were subsequently synthesized by Ms. Aceron.

Some of the answers focused on the “demand and supply of citizens’ participation.” Demand refers to the quality of citizens’ engagement while supply can be understood as the openness and credibility of government. She further noted that based on the two presentations, citizens get motivated to engage if their felt needs are addressed. The groundedness and relevance of an issue is therefore important.
It was also raised that the capacity of citizens is equally important, because government does not automatically respond to people’s needs. It was further mentioned that government has no incentive to respond in a country with democratic deficit.

Given the current situation of the Philippines, it was asserted that there is a need for strong active citizens. The capacity of citizens come from being informed and having a clear strategy and knowing what to expect. It is also important to sustain citizens’ action, which lies on how different factors come together. There should therefore be a deeper appreciation of the theory of knowledge.

Ms. Aeron, then, asked if there was a difference between local-level and national-level response to these questions.

D. Open Forum

The first to speak during the Open Forum was Mr. Zack Lee who said that we should know “sino yung mga kasama” (who are our allies)? Coalition-building is important because “kung community lang, kukulangan” (the community cannot do it alone). Thus, there is a need to identify allies in the different agencies and/or branches of government.

Mr. Rechie Tugawin, for his part, compared the Arab Spring in the Middle East and Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) in Tacloban. He said that important lessons can be drawn from these two events. Both were moments of massive impact, and those moments are based on grounded, common experience or felt need. Those two moments created an imagined community since it is a people’s common experience that binds them as one.

Responding to Mr. Tugawin, Comm. Dumpit noticed that Filipinos do not have a sense of a larger community. We found this during Yolanda, but it was not sustained. If we are to address the governance challenges that we now face, then we have to make people move as part of a larger community. While we are moved by the
stories such as Yolanda, we should be able to transform empathy into empowerment.

On the other hand, Ms. Aceron asked, “How did we become so jaded of the national government that we now go to the local because there, the results are palpable?” Ms. Aceron shared the Amazon Forest experiment wherein loggers would leave small patches of trees untouched to preserve the flora and fauna. These small patches, however, eventually withered away because they were no longer part of a larger ecosystem. Applying that example to the context of the Philippines, Ms. Aceron asserted that the country has been exemplary in making islands of good governance. However, most of these islands were not sustained because the larger political ecosystem is not conducive. At present, the Philippines only has islands of good governance in an archipelago of corruption. This makes it important to think of national-level change too.

Mr. Jalton Taguibao, on the other hand, shared a number of insights. He was struck by the proposition that, “Kung nagagawa sa komunidad, baka maari ding gawin sa nasyunal!” (If it can be done at the community level, it is possible to be replicated at the national level). He said that there is a misconception in the notion of micro- and macro-levels—that the macro-level is just a scaled up version of the micro-level. But Mr. Taguibao noted that even if we are able to convince the mayor, it does not follow the barangay captain would immediately follow. He further pointed out that, “Kada antas, iba ang stratehiya, iba ang diskarte” (Every level requires a different strategy and different set of actions). Mr. Taguibao ends by asking, “Do we look at scale as macro- and micro-level strategy? Or do we look at scale as contingency?”

Mr. Jansept Geronimo who said that citizens engage if an issue is “ramdam sa bituka” (felt in the gut). In their case, if they are to mobilize poor peasants, they should be able to deliver the proper mass line. It is therefore important to use the “tamang lenggwahe” (correct language).

The last to speak was Ms. Aceron further synthesizing the discussion. She noted that the previous discussion point to the need for gut-level story telling—to make our narratives simpler and to always go back to the questions “Why and so what?” On the issue of effecting change at the national level, she underscored the point about
scale, the need to develop multi-strategies per level like community organizing (CO) and mass movement building. This is because at the national, to make power respond, citizens must muster the needed numbers, alliances and action across all the levels. Critical engagement requires power in numbers. She also noted one comment on how the gender lens can be applied in a multi-level strategic approach.

Session 2: What have we proven/disproven about the use of digital technologies in advancing responsive and accountable governance?

IV. A. Presentation: Joanne Rosin, Layertech

Project Balangay is a 10-month project that ended last year. It is a Cloud-based information system for disaster preparedness that is now being used by the LGU of Legazpi City. The app is accessible via web and mobile devices. It also has the following features:

- Announcement System
- Hazard Maps
- D-Learning (Dictionary, Encyclopedia, Survival Kit)
- Emergency Hotlines
- Admin Console

Project Balangay was able to prove that the success of a technology-based governance initiative does not depend on technology alone. It also has to factor in people's capacity and culture, and even the infrastructure that is available. It is for this reason why the project team first had to undertake research to determine the technology that is appropriate for the intended users. This includes the language to be used in the app. Because Bicol Daraga is different from Bicol Legazpi, the project team ended up using Tagalog. They also had to find the kind of phone that most people use. Their research revealed that most people used analog and android phones from China since these were cheaper.

Ms. Rosin concluded her presentation with the following insights:

- That hazard maps help enable investment from the private sector
- That we should not isolate the problem that we are trying to address.
- That a holistic approach is needed to address problems.
B. Presentation: Jalton Taguibao, Technology for Participatory Research Initiative (Tech4PRI)

Tech4PRI is an initiative that ended in July 2017. It is a unique research since it is a practitioner research that focuses on the learning process. It targeted initiatives that are implementing action at the community level, focusing on how practitioners utilize the projects.

The research studied 11 case projects, using key informant interviews (with implementers and Users), focus group discussions (with users), and the study of secondary data (documents and/or reports).

The research came up with a number of observations.

1. On Planners and Implementers:
   • They face the challenge of making sense of tools while in the context of implementation.
   • There are occasions when implementers encounter a piece of tech and "make these relevant or useful" in their projects, sometimes to a fault.
   • There is a bandwagon effect or tendency to use the “new” and “latest”, or adapt innovative designs.

2. On Design and Implementation Processes:
   • The blended approach of online-offline needs to be further explored and unpacked.
   • Projects should include a strategy/plan concerning tech/ICT use in order to operationalize digital technology and “offline” approaches.
   • Training sessions are seen as means to prepare citizens to be “tech ready.”

3. On Hardware, Software and Peopleware:
   • Technology improves the capacity of CSOs to operate and achieve objectives, (e.g., projects on transparency).
   • There should be an emphasis on peopleware (i.e., implementers, users, and the performance of technology).
   • There is a menu of technologies but the human factor is key (e.g., use of infomediaries, face-to-face interaction approaches, etc.).

4. On Audience and Users
   • It is not always clear who is the audience and who are the users.
   • Planners often prospect users and audience (i.e., they an “imagined user” which may or may not correspond to actual users once the initiative has been implemented).
   • Implementers adjust once immersed in implementation.

The research also made a number of key lessons. These are the following:

1. The “participatory objective” of a project (e.g., to inform, to engage, mobilize users) has to be decided early on.
• This has direct implications on the technologies that will be employed in a project.

2. The ecology and context of technology use for participation has to be clear.
   • The lack of design thinking and the turnover processes for the design and management of platforms mitigates technology use.
   • Sustained interest and “endurance” of implementers and growth of interested parties enable technology use.
   • Technology over people – overzealous about technology results to a disconnect between the design and advocacy.

3. There are several approaches when it comes to technology and modes of participation (blended, “shotgun,” and targeted approaches).
   • Digital technologies are seen to perform specific functions that complement offline activities.
   • Some use digital technologies as optional mode or platform, other initiatives integrate multiple modes or platforms as part of their interventions called multi-modal (‘shotgun’) approach.
   • Redundancy tends to increase the chances of the user to be informed, engage, be mobilized, and to participate.

4. The ambiguity of “users” and “public” makes targeting-for-appropriateness very difficult.
   • Practitioners select technology tools based on their assumptions about the function of each technology based on past experiences, or based on their ‘feel’ of a particular too.
• Implementers would refer to a variety of “publics”, apart from the what for them is the “general public.”
• While all citizen participation initiatives identify ‘the public’ as their main beneficiary, not many coherently specify their target users.

5. The digital divide in technology use and the sustainability of the projects have to be factored in.

• For implementers, issues and problems mainly deal with costs and expenses attached with the use of technology.
• Costs and expenses are mainly infrastructural in nature.
• Ease of use of technology, functionality of the platforms, and its capacity for wider reach recur in the discussions

C. Synthesis:
Joy Aceron, G-Watch

The participants were again asked to answer a question for reflection using metacards, which were synthesized by Ms. Aceron. The question was as follows:

What have we proven/disproven about the use of digital technologies in advancing responsive and accountable governance?

In her synthesis of the answers written on the metacards, Ms. Aceron started off with the point that MAVC wants to nuance the approach to digital technology. While technological developments could lead to a ‘revolution,’ there is a need to understand how technology works/ does not work and for what. She also shared that prior to MAVC, two studies have been made which showed the dismal results of technology-enabled interventions in governance.

She first noted the positive experience on tech-enabled approaches that were shared: on issues concerning DRRM and on an initiative to fight violence against women and children (VAWC), with technology providing direct access to duty
bearers. “This proves that technology is not just a millennial thing; it’s for everyone,” as written on one metacard. This means, Ms. Aceron said, technology has value-added.

Meanwhile, the other sets of metacards point to the nuances and limitations in the use of technology. It stressed that using technology to reach more people does not automatically lead to mass participation and responsive governance. This entails more efforts. Local technology (local knowledge) is as effective as high-tech and indigenous means and practices can sometimes be better than the new technology. Technology, in other words, is not just digital technology.

It was further pointed out that for technology to work, people should be at the center. “Not only soft or hardware but more importantly, peopleware,” as one metacard says. What people need and their situation must be considered.

For instance, Ms. Aceron shared, the Watch Cotabato’s experience points to the importance of trust and familiarity with the technology. Technology is a tool, and that we should not sacrifice people over technology, says several metacards.

Finally, key challenges shared in making technology work include: access to information, translating information into tech form using language that is understandable and encouraging people to provide/report information.

D. Open Forum

During the Open Forum, Ms. Fajardo-Jarilla said that use of digital technology (just like offline organizing) also has its own risks and unintended consequences. The discussion pointed out several: use of social media for harassment and intimidation, security and privacy issues, dissemination of fake news, perpetuation of existing marginalization of those without access.

Mr. Jumjum Ouano, on the other hand, observed that there are a lot of useful technology that are funded and sustained since technology operates as a business.

Mr. Taguibao also noted that practitioners are disconnected from tech-developers. Therefore, there should be a greater community of practice among CSOs. He also shared Tech4PRI’s initiative to form this.

Lastly, Mr. Mike Ollave saw the need to assess the target audience, so that the technology will fit the audience.
Government Watch conducted a study of vertically integrated initiatives in the Philippines. The highlights of the said research are contained in a research report that was released in October 2016. The study begins by stating that transparency, participation, accountability (TPA) have been used to address governance challenges and issues. However, not all TPA actions have been successful in achieving sustainable change. The research therefore explores why certain TPA actions more successful than others.

The study looked at seven CSO initiatives, namely:

- The campaign for the rights of indigenous peoples (TLWOI)
- The campaign for the passage of the DRRM Law (DRRNetPhils)
- The campaign for the passage of the Reproductive Health Law (RHAN)
- Monitoring of textbook delivery (Textbook Count)
- The anti-mining campaign (ABAKATAF)
- The campaign for housing rights (DAMPA)
- The campaign for agrarian reform (Katarungan/Rights Network)

The gains of these campaigns are as follows:

- Effective implementation of a law.
- Passage of a law/ amendment of a law.
- Effective oversight/ accountability of a program preventing corruption and ensuring efficiency.
- Advancement and protection of rights.
- Effective push back against abuse, violation of rights, discrimination and disempowerment.
- Broad coalition of empowered citizens that have been mobilized and activated.

In addition, the seven campaigns had the following common features:
1. Cognizant of how power is structured and exercised – purpose of TPA actions exists in a context of power

2. Multi-level
   • Strategy of organizing civil society action cognizant of how power is structured and exercised
   • Effective oversight by covering all critical levels of governance

3. Multi-actor (broad, diverse, coalitional)

4. Wide variety of actions – scale through coalition building and by “connecting the dots”

5. Society-state interface
   • Transformation of the state/system change
   • Sustainable change through systems improvement/policy change through advocacy using a wide variety of actions
   • Root causes, not only symptoms by ‘transforming power’ through “virtuous circles” of “state-society synergy”

6. Citizen-led

The seven case studies point to the superiority of strategic approaches to TPA over tactical approaches. By strategic approaches, these refer to citizen-led actions that uses an ‘eco-system’ perspective wherein accountability is viewed as complex, consisting of many inter-related parts that operates in a context of power (“accountability politics”). Tactical approaches, on the other hand, are usually based on the “linear” and “simplistic” logic of “transparency + participation = accountability” that disregards the complexity of context and power dynamics.

**B. Presentation: Arvi Miguel, Bantay Kita**

Bantay Kita launched an initiative that aims to help indigenous peoples’ communities in the management of their royalty share (from mining operations). This is equivalent to one percent (1%) of the gross sales of the mining companies operating in their ancestral lands.

In the course of the project, Bantay Kita identified the facilitating factors that lead to vertically integrated citizens’ action. These are the following:

- Having capacity and partnership building mechanisms; and in situ partners for meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples (IPs).
- Co-ownership and/or collaboration of state actors in the above mentioned mechanisms being established and strengthened—especially for purposes of mainstreaming and sustainability.
- Meaningful engagement (i.e. not just token representation) in LGU-level management decision-making systems.

**C. Presentation: Jennifer Javier, iBudget, INCITE-Gov**
The iBudget Project promotes Open Legislation, which is one of the commitments in the Fourth Action Plan of the Open Governent Partnership (OGP). The aim of Open Legislation is to bring legislation to where people are.

The use of technology is a prominent feature of the said initiative, especially with the uploading of commitments that have to be responded by government. These are then used in local development planning and in the provincial data validation.

In addition, iBudget has adopted the concept of vertical integration, with the integration of subnational commitments to the national action plan. For this reason, they created a CSO secretariat to broaden the base and reach more civil society organizations.

The learnings from the project are the following:

- It takes a while to “trickle down the OGP.”
- “OGP is a journey.”
- It is important to build partnerships.

D. Open Forum

The open forum on session 3 delved on how to make vertical integration more understandable, how to manage political transitions and the debate between constructive engagement and contentions politics. See below for the detailed account of the exchanges.

- **How do we make vertical integration more easily understandable and palatable to move people?**
  - Francis Isaac, G-Watch: Based on our experience, the community got it when we describe it. In Quezon, they even came up with their own term: “tapatan” [paralleling] of power, which reflects what they do.
  - Joy Aceron, G-Watch: In Naga City, they described their engagement vertical integration which they referred to how the city addresses issues that are actually coming from the communities, so the community is informing policies and programs that are being undertaken by the government. They also understood it as engagement of CSOs from planning to evaluation. This resonates with how the application of vertical integration is done in textbook count – from procurement bidding down to actual distribution of textbooks in schools. Vertical integration simply means citizen-led action that is multi-level, coalitional, multi-action, and multi-actors.
  - Eunice dela Cruz, ULAP: How we understand it is that it is similar to systems framework. What we do locally must influence/become policy.

- **In the case of BuB, what were the key hindering and facilitating factors?**
  - Eunice dela Cruz, ULAP: Central is the issue of representativeness. Sometimes, CSOs that become members of mandated bodies lose their linkage to the communities that they represent.
• How did the civil society manage the transition of OGP to the new government?
  o Jennifer Javier, INCITE-Gov: We had to prove the new administration that CSOs have value-added to convince them to CSOs in the table co-chairing this partnership and having CSOs have voice in terms of direction and policy setting. We did all the groundwork independent of the government to prove we have value and we have big help. It is a big help that the government, especially Sec. Diokno, got exposed to how the international OGP works. The Paris trip was a big help to get the buy-in of Sec. Diokno, Grace Poe and Sec. Andanar. OGP is an international platform so there is an international pressure to this current administration to sustain or to continue the partnership so I guess yung international arena has claimed a big role. The joke is because of the Paris summit, we got the buy-in of Sec. Diokno. Maybe because it shows how the other countries experience the harmonious relation ng civil society and government.

• Constructive engagement vs. contentious politics
  o Jennifer Javier, INCITE-Gov: OGP is a platform where the CSOs and the government can work together. What the CSOs can do is limited even in making government comply with what they promised to do. The OGP is not a platform for the CSOs to command the government. We cannot make the government do what we want them to do just to make the relationship work.
  o Eunice dela Cruz, ULP: What matters is quality of representation. Not all of us can be there, so we need representatives who can really forwards and verbalize our concerns and go back to you to report and get feedback. In engaging the government, it is going to the table and offering partnership. It is not demanding. It’s like: “Hi, we’re here, this is what we can offer.” It’s like we want to help, let’s talk. And let’s partner, we will be with you throughout this.
Arvi Miguel, Bantay Kita: Now political transitions are always a concern. But the thing is when we go to the negotiating game or when we get to implement a project, what is actually the spirit of the engagement that you would like to spouse. It cannot be antagonistic: “we will be coming here as CSOs, we will be demanding this and that, and you should do your part, it is your responsibility as the government.” No. What we always want to spouse is the spirit of collaboration. We have these concerns that we would like to be acknowledged as part of the bigger concerns. And if the government doesn’t have an immediate solution, we go back to the table so we can propose what we can do. This way, we will get more buy-in from the state, instead of being competitors or at-arms, we are walking hand and hand to resolve each and everybody’s problem.

Fed Marcelo, DAMPA: But what do you do if the government itself undertakes efforts to undermine participation?

Joy Aceron, G-Watch: Fed’s question is very important. There is limit to what government will respond to. If the government is responsive, there is no need for civil society, especially those that push for needs of the people. The government has a lot of interests to attend to and the interests, concerns and agenda of the people are frequently less priority. This is the reason civil society needs to push. If the bottomline of engagement is engaging on issues/agenda with government buy-in, that automatically limits what can be pushed by civil society. How do we push the boundaries of engagement so that we actually get to claim the rights and take participation as our right and not as something granted to us and given out/allowed by the state. The problem with constructive engagement is that it tolerates and even nurtures a patrimonial state. I totally understand the need to balance, but how do we ensure that we do not look as if we are begging in the process and neglect the disposition that this is our right and responding to us is the duty of government officials as public servants. Civil society is really meant to provide that kind of dynamics that will push the state. The state is specifically created to maintain a specific system at work. Social movements move, state stays.

Shigemi Muramatsu, ANSA EAP: Based on our experience in E-budget, one of the things we can do is strengthen the existing platform where government and civil society converse. For example, strengthening of the special barangay assembly or hopefully later on barangay assembly. We exhaust those existing platforms. Second, the importance ng capacity-building and usual communication that we set this kind of engagement wherein we are on equal footing that will make it easier to attend to the humanistic side of the problem, not technical.

Ms. Joy Aceron facilitated the processing of key takeaways/synthesis points from Session 3:

• In taking strategic action, the challenge is how to maneuver power especially a difficult terrain where you need to balance different, conflicting interests: ensuring that your work is rooted in the needs and demands of the community while avoiding losing the spaces and access to government. What is the best way
to enable us to navigate the terrain in doing and thinking politically? What is the role of a person’s political sense and can we be methodological about it.

- Jansept Geronimo, RIGHTS: We call the framework critical collaboration or critical engagement. If you simply collaborate without being critical, it is possible you have already been eaten up by the system. There is an end to what the current system can respond to. We engage to make things happen, but we must push the boundaries of power. Timing is an important consideration in this.

- Fed Marcelo, DAMPA: In DAMPA, we recognize what we can and cannot do to determine who we should engage and coalesce with. We also look at sectoral issues (such as in our case, housing) as part of a bigger issue of poverty reduction, human development and empowerment. This allows us to maneuver and do actions where there are opportunities.

- Joy Aceron, G-Watch: So we are saying that in thinking and doing politically, critical collective thinking and reflection is needed to avoid losing our way as we navigate a complicated terrain. So learning is key. You should be learning in the process. In DAMPA’s case, learning was part of the action.

- Ms. Cindy Uy, G-Watch Dumaguete: Thinking and doing politically is influencing the agenda-setting of the political leadership. We need to be aligned with the leadership priority and development priority and that’s why for G-Watch, we undertake advocacy starting at the campaign and follow it through in governance engagement.

- Mike Ollave, G-Watch PPS: Thinking and doing politically is being grounded while anchored in a purpose. This is important because as we adapt, we might lose our way.

- Joy Aceron, G-Watch: Grounding and anchoring yourself is very important indeed as you maneuver the fluid and complex terrain of politics, especially in doing alliance, coalition work. The question is what is your anchor? Based on our experience, being grounded on the mass movement, community needs (mass line) is a formidable anchor.

- Arvi (Bantay Kita): In my observation of my client, basically the strategy that we are pursuing, is that we spouse this ownership of the innovation. Bottom line is we get the change inside and mainstreamed to the layer politics.

- Zack Lee, Voice: Our approach is also lateral and horizontal, say across sectors/communities in a given level.

Ms. Joy Aceron summed up the discussion. To do and think strategically,

- One must be grounded in a community and anchored to a clear purpose.
- Learning, specifically critical thinking and reflection, is key so as not to lose one’s way.
- In thinking politically, it should be clear who holds power, where and how is power exercised and who will be losers and winners of your agenda.
- Key challenges to learning how to be strategic is (1) time, (2) capacity and (3) appropriate organizational and support framework and partners to integrate learning in action and to enable and sharpen critical reflection.
Ms. Joy Aceron facilitated the session on sustaining citizen engagement. She asked the participants to give their ideas on how they approach the issue of sustainability. The following are highlights of the discussion:

- **Arvi Miguel, Bantay Kita:** Key to sustainability is integrating and mainstreaming it in governance: passing a policy, instituting systems and processes and making government own the reform. There should also be ownership of the community and plan of action.

- **Joy Aceron, G-Watch:** Though, there is limit to the institutional perspective. Our experience shows that even when we pass laws, those in power can either opt not to implement it, ignore it or change it. Power and who holds power shapes what is the norm even in the bureaucracy. History does not end.

- **Jansept Geronimo, RIGHTS:** The reality is that after achieving gains, the problem will evolve. Change is a long struggle. It takes a long time and it may not end.

- **Francis Isaac, G-Watch:** Collective action problem evolves because the context changes. The goal is to grow along the way, how to leverage knowledge learned to be more effective moving forward.

- **Joy Aceron, G-Watch:** Does this then mean that what needs to be sustained is the collective action? Collective problem evolves because context changes, hence action doesn’t end.

- **Fed Marcelo, DAMPA:** Yes. Organizations must continue to evolve and adjust and grow. Change is a continuing advocacy campaign.

- **Mike Ollave, G-Watch-Puerto Princesa:** In this event I realized that the work continues because the challenges also change even as we gain momentary victories. As the work continues, so does the deepening of my learning and my development as an individual who is part of a collective action for the benefit of society.

Ms. Joy Aceron then took this as an opportunity to transition to the workshop on Scaling Accountability. She shared that the points raised in the discussion validate the emerging thoughts G-Watch is developing on its research on the role of adaptive learning and strategic action in sustaining citizen engagement.

Ms. Joy Aceron shares that G-Watch takes off from the proposition that what needs to be enabled and sustained is the ability and capacity for collective action. This is because meaningful change takes a long time and collective problem evolves over time. This is a point of departure from the mainstream notion of sustainability that is premised on sustaining organization, initiatives/projects and impact that largely relies on access to funding and buy-in of the State. G-Watch points to some of the problems of such a perspective: (1) competition among organizations causing fragmentation and weakening of social capital, (2) too much time and resources spent on technocratic concerns as demanded by donors, limiting time and energy for advocacy and action which is demanding in being strategic, (3) hinders growth and learning as same ways of doing, same players, same problems, same analysis of the
problem and same solutions are reproduced and multiplied, while context continues to change and evolve demanding different action and response.

Ms. Aceron, then, shared what G-Watch is exploring as an “Alternative Approach to Sustainability.”

The mainstream view of sustainability is often equated with the following:

- Financial sustainability
- Organizational sustainability
- Replication (i.e., sustaining the initiative)
- Having some of the elements of sustainability (i.e., capacity, mechanisms, policy, formation)

On the other hand, the alternative view provides a movement perspective on sustainability. It is therefore rooted in citizen needs and harnesses citizens’ power to address those needs. It also goes beyond projects since it sees organizations as part of a bigger whole, whether these are networks, coalitions or collectives. The alternative view also has a clear strategy—it has a clear analysis of the problem, a clear goal or change agenda, and has a well identified set of actors as well as actions/tactics/approaches, which consider important factors such as time and context. Lastly, it also has an eco-systemic view of TPA.

Ms. Aceron further pointed out that any sustainable citizens’ initiative has micro-level strategic practices. The features of these practices are the following:

1. Sound analysis of the problem, power structure and solid planning that identifies the gaps and the needed power shifts.
   - Project as part of a broader program in an organization.
   - Strategically situating the use of ICT in a broader initiative/program.
   - Explicit sustainability plan from the very start.

2. Information/knowledge management and adaptive learning.
   - Publicizing experience and creating constituencies that will use the outputs of the initiatives and carry it forward.
   - Easily accessible knowledge products and policy recommendations owned/understood/adopted by key stakeholders.
   - Adaptive learning practices that allow an organization to adapt.

3. Embedding it in the state.
   - Passage of policy/mechanisms in the State supportive of the goals.
   - Creating allies at the top (middle manager bureaucrats).

4. Embedding it in society/Creating grassroots demand below.
   - Creation of a CSO formation/network
   - Embedding it in a community/harnessing community ownership
   - Creating a repository of knowledge and information and technology for communication
With the premise of looking at MAVC as a whole with the initiatives as its parts, a Scaling Accountability Mapping exercise was undertaken. The Scaling Accountability Mapping Matrix developed by Prof. Jonathan Fox and Joy Aceron is composed of two tables, one on Constituency Building while the other is on Interfacing with the State. The table on Constituency Building maps the civil society actors and the actions that they undertake at each level. On the other hand, the table on Interface with the State points to official spaces and mechanisms that civil society use to conduct monitoring or advocacy campaigns. It also pinpoints where these spaces and mechanisms are located.

In the mapping exercise, the participants were asked to identify the type of action that they undertake per level in both tables. The results are as follows (see Table 1 and to undertake integrated, strategic action. The only question is for what end.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituency-Building Across Scale</th>
<th>Barangay</th>
<th>City/Municipal</th>
<th>Provincial</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>International</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grassroots Organizing</strong></td>
<td>Dampa LayerTech Shontoug</td>
<td>LayerTech Shontoug RIGHTS G-Watch</td>
<td>IWPR DAMPA CODE BK Shontoug G-Watch</td>
<td></td>
<td>DAMPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coalition-Building among Shared Constituency</strong></td>
<td>DAMPA HCS Shontoug RIGHTS</td>
<td>Shontoug HCS CODE RIGHTS G-Watch</td>
<td>IWPR HCS RIGHTS G-Watch</td>
<td>HCS FMA RIGHTS VOICE DAMPA G-Watch</td>
<td>HCS FMA Voice RIGHTS</td>
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<td><strong>Cross-Sectoral Constituency-Building</strong></td>
<td>DAMPA FMA RIGHTS</td>
<td>G-Watch</td>
<td>CODE-NGO Shontoug G-Watch</td>
<td>FMA RIGHTS Voice DAMPA G-Watch</td>
<td>Voice G-Watch</td>
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<td><strong>Mass collective action</strong></td>
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<td>Shontoug RIGHTS G-Watch</td>
<td>IWPR FMA RIGHTS</td>
<td>IWPR FMA RIGHTS G-Watch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public education</strong></td>
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<td>Shontog LayerTech G-Watch</td>
<td>IWPR G-Watch</td>
<td>IWRP FMA G-Watch</td>
<td>FMA IWPR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent CSO Monitoring</strong></td>
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<td>G-Watch</td>
<td>IWPR BK G-Watch</td>
<td>G-Watch</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Horizontal Exchanges of Experiences</strong></td>
<td>DAMPA G-Watch</td>
<td>DAMPA HCS G-Watch</td>
<td>Voice HCS G-Watch</td>
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<td><strong>Use of ICT</strong></td>
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<td>FMA</td>
<td>FMA</td>
<td>FMA Voice G-Watch</td>
<td>FMA Voice</td>
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</table>
Table 2: Interfacing with the State

<table>
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<tr>
<th>CSO Interfacing with the State</th>
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<th>Provincial</th>
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<tr>
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<td>RIGHTS DAMPA IWPR Bantay Kita G-Watch</td>
<td>DAMPA CODE-NGO G-Watch</td>
<td>Heritage Bantay Kita G-Watch</td>
<td>HRC CODE-NGO FMA RIGHTS G-Watch</td>
<td>DAMPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy Advocacy with the Legislative</strong></td>
<td>DAMPA</td>
<td>DAMPA G-Watch</td>
<td>G-Watch</td>
<td>DAMPA FMA HCS RIGHTS G-Watch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal Recourse</strong></td>
<td>RIGHTS</td>
<td></td>
<td>IWPR</td>
<td>RIGHTS G-Watch</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Participation in “Invited Spaces”</strong></td>
<td>DAMPA G-Watch</td>
<td>IWPR G-Watch</td>
<td>G-Watch</td>
<td>RIGHTS DAMPA FMA Voice HCS G-Watch</td>
<td>Voice G-Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engagement with Accountability Agencies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>G-Watch</td>
<td>Bantay Kita IWPR G-Watch</td>
<td>DAMPA RIGHTS FMA IWPR G-Watch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Plenary: Takeaways and Ways Forward

VI.

Prior to the sharing of takeaways among the participants, the representative from the Department of the Interior and Local Government handling the BuB and ADM programs, Mr. Darpaul Santos, shared updates on the grassroots participatory budgeting program, through the current program (ADM). Part of his updates are the enhancements made on the ADM, learning from the previous experiences in the BuB.

The major takeaways of the participants are as follows:

• Ms. Joanne Rosin observed that when you’re developing a tech-solution, you should always consider your environment. She added that if an initiative is to have scale, a group has to act as one and provide pressure at all levels.

• Ms. Ligaya of Shontoug Foundation said that vertical integration is able to amplify the voice of the community. It provides a framework wherein citizens go up the different levels to address governance problems. She also said that grassroots organizations should be treated, not as mere recipients, but as active participants in development.

• Mr. Fed Marcelo of DAMPA said that there is a need for CSOs to continually utilize vertical integration.

• Ms. Rorie Fajardo-Jarilla emphasized the need for the transfer of knowledge and skills to the beneficiaries. She also said that the community should be part of the decision-making process should that they will have a sense of ownership of the project. However, Ms. Fajardo-Jarilla told the participants that we consider how projects can be sustained with or without funding.

• Mr. Zack Lee, on the other hand, said that there should be a way of documenting learnings and practices without burdening CSOs. He also said that the use of technology should always be needs-driven and that there should a combination of online and offline approaches.

• Ms. Aida Dingle stressed the need for communities to engage LGUs in the implementation of programs. To do so, the communities should be capacitated. She also suggested that CSOs adopt a five to 10-year strategic plan, and that their actions should be aligned to these plans.

• Mr. JJ de Guzman of CODE-NGO realized that vertical integration is something that they are already doing. He also added that to achieve lasting reforms, there should be institutional change at various levels.

• Mr. Jansept Geronimo emphasized the need for praxis (combination of theory and practice) of the various social movements. For a long time, the peasant movement has been using the bibingka strategy to push for reform.
However, he realized during the Learning Event that the state will respond simply because there is pressure below and allies at the top. The state responds when the bibingka strategy is utilized at different levels.

• Mr. Mike Ollave said that he would always ask himself, “When will all these work end?” But the Learning Event made him realize that the campaign for lasting reforms will not end and that we are here for the long haul.

• Mr. Jumjum Ouano said that advocacy should not be driven by funding.

• Ms. Joy Aceron said that sustainability has three dimensions: (1) financial sustainability; (2) organizational sustainability; and (3) sustainability of initiative (replication). In the current discourse, sustainability is premised on continuing an initiative and making sure that resources are allocated.

However, there is the danger that a particular initiative will be donor-driven. There is therefore a need to overcome such a perspective. In fact, recent studies have come out criticizing the technocratization of CSOs. To overcome this trend, there is a proposal is to ensure state mainstreaming. But this is also problematic since state policy does not necessarily become the norm in government.

She added that when we take action, we achieve gains. This means that collective action problems evolve, and that the campaign for responsive and accountable governance is a long struggle—it doesn’t end. She also pointed out that, “Hindi dudulo ang kasaysayan, dahil dinamiko ang kapangyarihan” (History will not end because power is dynamic). This is actually a power perspective, and a proper analysis of power is based on: (1) sustaining collective action; (2) continuing the advocacy; and (3) leveraging knowledge.

Ms. Aceron added that movements are sustained because of strategy. One example is Christianity, which started as a popular movement. She also said that a good strategy requires a proper analysis of the problem, the identification of objectives, and a proper understanding of the ecosystem of accountability.
Closing Remarks

A. Vivien Suerte-Cortez, MAVC

Ms. Suerte-Cortez shared her key takeaways from the Learning Event:

1. There should be an alignment of goals and objectives. Projects should not be donor-driven. We support programs that are aligned to our objectives.

2. The initiatives give MAVC a certain pride. MAKING All Voices Count was designed as a learning program. There are lessons that MAVC can learn from the grantees that MAVC can tell its donors.


B. Joy Aceron, G-Watch

Ms. Aceron began by saying that the Learning Event was very fulfilling due to the rich exchange of experiences. She also said that there was a need to go back where we started (“bumalik kung saan tayo nag-umpisa”). The opening remarks by Comm. Dumpit provided a good context.

The current challenge is to address power and change how power is exercised. This is a difficult challenge, which entails a very long struggle. This task is made even more difficult due to the transformations that the state has undergone. There is therefore a need for spaces and processes like these in order to device new strategies and forms of action of citizens’ participation.
Ms. Aceron concluded by assuring the participants that the conversations and learning will continue.
Annex 1: Participants

Affiliated Network for Social Accountability in East Asia and the Pacific (ANS-AEP)
1. Ms. Kristin Mae Baltazar, Project Associate
2. Ms. Shigemi Muramatsu, Project Officer
3. Ms. Gladys Selosa, Operations Manager
4. Mr. Jalton Taguibao, Research Manager

Ateneo de Davao University
5. Mr. Daryl Martin, Student

Bantay Kita
6. Mr. Arvi Miguel

Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO)
7. Mr. John Joel de Guzman, Project Officer

Commission on Human Rights (CHR)
8. Ms. Karen Gomez-Dumpit, Commissioner

Damayan ng Maralitang Pilipinong Api (DAMPA)
9. Ms. Marilyn Bartolome, Community Organizer
10. Mr. Fed Marcelo, Advocacy Officer
11. Ms. Alma Nino, Community Organizer

Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG)
12. Mr. Darpaul Santos, Assistance to Disadvantaged Municipalities-Oversight Project Management Office (ADM-OPMO) Assistant Senior Technical Staff

Foundation for Media Alternatives (FMA)
13. Ms. Thina Lopez, Program Staff

Fellowship for Organizing Endeavors, Inc. (FORGE)
14. Mr. Lester Ouano, Area Coordinator

Government Watch (G-Watch)
15. Ms. Joy Aceron, Strategies and Learning
16. Ms. Mars dela Cueva, Administration and Finance
17. Mr. Francis Isaac, Research and Knowledge Development
18. Mr. Paul Lopez, Local Coordinator (Samal)
19. Ms. Analyn Lumactod, Local Coordinator (San Miguel Bohol)
20. Mr. Rechie Tugawin, Monitoring and Training
21. Ms. Mary Cindy Uy, Local Coordinator (Dumaguete City)

Heritage Conservation Society (HCS)
22. Ms. Decaterina Candelaria, Researcher
23. Ms. Maria Victoria Maglanque, Researcher
24. Mr. Angelito Nino Versoza, Program Manager
25. Ms. Jennifer Javier

Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)
26. Ms. Rorie Fajardo-Jarilla

Layertech (formerly IGNYTE Innovations Lab)
27. Ms. Joanne Rosin, Research and Community Learning Officer

Making All Voices Count (MAVC)
28. Ms. Vivien Suerte-Cortez, Country Engagement Developer
29. Ms. Michelle Domingo, Programme Officer

Rural Poor Institute for Land and Human Rights Services (RIGHTS Network)
30. Mr. Jansept Geronimo, Spokesperson

Shontoug Foundation
31. Ms. Aida Dingle, Program Officer
32. Ms. Ligaya Victoria, Finance Officer

Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP)
33. Ms. Crystal Eunice dela Cruz, Executive Director

Voice
34. Mr. Zack Lee, Linking and Learning Officer
## MAVC-G-Watch Forum-Workshop

**on Doing Citizen Engagement Differently:**

*What Did We Learn and How Do We Sustain it?*

*August 17, 2017 | Astoria Plaza, Ortigas Center, Pasig City*

### Program

8:00-8:30am  
**Registration**

8:30-9:00am  
**Opening Program**
- National Anthem and Prayer
- Open Remarks

Vien Suerte/ Michelle Domingo  
Making All Voices Count (MAVC) in the Philippines

Joy Aceron  
Convenor-Director, G-Watch  
Research Fellow, Accountability Research Center  
Research Outreach Team, MAVC

### Learning Session 1

9:00-10:30am  
**When do citizens engage? When does citizen engagement lead to responsive and accountable governance?**

**Discussants:**

- **Rorie Fajardo**, Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), Citizen Action Network for Accountability- Scaling Up (CANA-Scale Up)
- **Aida Dingle**, Shontoug Foundation, Establishing DRRM Hubs: Developing a model on village-managed DRRM hub focused on disaster preparedness in selected upland, IP communities in the Cordillera

**Discussion:**
- When do citizens engage? When does citizen engagement lead to responsive and accountable governance?
- What lessons from your experience/ MAVC research did you use to improve the ways you enable citizen engagement?

10:30-10:40am  
**Snack break**

### Learning Session 2

10:40am-12:00nn  
**What have we proven/ disproven about the use of digital technologies in advancing responsive and accountable governance?**

**Discussants:**

- **Joanne Rosin**, IGYTNE Innovations Lab Inc., Project Balangay: An open, cloud-based information system for disaster preparedness, response and relief in the Philippines
- **Jalton Taguibao**, ANSA-EAP, Technology for Participation Research Initiative (Tech4PRI)

**Discussion:**
- What have we proven/ disproven about the use of digital technologies in advancing responsive and accountable governance?
- What lessons from your experience/ MAVC research did you use to improve the ways you use digital technology in governance?
- What lessons from your experience/ MAVC research will you use to improve the ways you use digital technology in governance?
12:00pm-1:00pm  Lunch break

1:00-2:30pm  Learning Session 3: What were the facilitating and hindering factors to learning and adapting towards strategic/vertically-integrated citizen action?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussants:</th>
<th>Discussion:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Francis Isaac, G-Watch, Research on Vertically Integrated Civil Society Monitoring and Advocacy</td>
<td>• What were the facilitating and hindering factors to learning and adapting towards strategic/vertically-integrated citizen action?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Arvi Miguel, Bantay Kita, Empowering the IP Community Towards Enhanced Stewardship of its Resources | • What lessons from your experience/MAVC research did you use to be strategic?  
• What lessons from your experience/MAVC research will you use to be strategic? |

2:30-3:30pm  Workshop Discussion: Scaling Accountability Mapping on the MAVC Program

3:30-3:45pm  Small Group Workshop: Takeaways and Ways Forward

Guide Questions:
- How do we sustain the gains achieved by MAVC citizen engagement initiatives?  
- What do we do differently, especially in the use of ICT in citizen engagement?

Evaluation and Takeaways

4:45-5:00pm  Closing

Facilitators:
Mr. Rechie Tugawin, G-Watch Center  
Ms. Cindy Uy, G-Watch-Dumaguete

Government Watch (G-Watch)  
27-A Matapat St., Barangay Pinyahan  
1100 Quezon City, Philippines  
+63909 5685914 | +632 4561976  
government_watch@yahoo.com  
www.g-watch.org
### Annex 2: Result of Participants’ Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Average rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<table>
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<td>A. Methodology and Tools</td>
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<td>B. Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Facilitation</td>
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<td>D. Resource Person/ Inputs</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Logistics</td>
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<td>F. Participation of Co-Participants</td>
<td>11</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL (A to F)** 4.60

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**What do you think were the good things about the activity? What was it you liked about the activity?**

*Ano ang maganda tungkol sa activity? Ano ang nagustuhan mo sa activity?*

- The tools
- The discussants’ knowledge and the program flow
- Vertical integration
- Extracting ideas from active participation/plenary
- The activity was very inclusive and a lot of chances to share. I like that sustainability was the focus.
- Actual sharing of experience by the pax in different areas/places
- I like best the workshops when participants more able to share their approaches and the lessons they’ve learned
- Open discussion among the participants
- Use of discussants for each session
- High level of participation from the participants
- It emphasizes that people should be at the heart of every tech solution.
- The use of metacards is very helpful.
- The activity enabled us to realize that we have to go back to our mission and the reason why out our organization exist.
- The facilitators are effective, the resource persons were knowledgeable and the discussion is so rich with different ideas and shared experience from different CSOs.
• Lahat ay kailangan (everybody is needed) or encouraged to participate.
• Encouraged open discussions all throughout the workshop.
• Kept the presentation brief and straight to the point
• Based the discussion on the grantees’ experience
• Engaging
• Informative
• Yung may like/ heart stickers. It makes the workshop less formal.
• This is a learning opportunity as my NGO has a different approach.

What can be improved about the activity? What did you not like about the activity?
Ano ang pwedeng mapaganda pa tungkol sa activity? Ano ang di mo nagustuhan sa activity?

• Consistency of participants – wish they would stay till the vertical integration mapping, how it can be popularized
• I think the discussion on the guide questions could have gone deeper, but maybe it didn’t due to lack of time
• None
• None the I can think of
• More time devoted on discussing experience of participants on use of technology
• More time to get to know
• Other participants
• Nothing.
• Maybe we can invite youth groups in order to help them be exposed to these kinds of discussions.
• Lessen ‘research-y’ ‘academic’ language which not all practitioners understand
• None

What are your key (1-3) takeaways (what you realized/ learned/ will be using in your future initiatives) from the event?

• The part on sustainability of efforts and integration of technology is something can be expounded and deepen within the organization and locality → it’s a reflections of how much more one can do
• How can we engage technology practitioners/ developers more into sustaining accountability efforts in governance
• Conscious grounding of project engagement vis-à-vis advocacy
• Mindful of ‘sustainability’ in all project engagements
• Vertical integration
• Tech as a solution
• Scaling up citizen action
• Vertical and horizontal engagement
• Sustainability of one’s initiatives/ programs
• People’s participation and linkingage to other agencies
• Being able to step back, reflect and recalibrate strategies/ approaches as needed
• Participation platforms need to take into account access to technology
• Sustainability gone beyond project duration/ donor funding but sustaining the initial gains to continue with social action/ agenda
• Always meet other people even those not necessarily directly related to your work
• Sustain what has been started by the organization with the use of vertical integration
• Focus on the people instead on the fund
• Empower and enable the community members to become active participants rather than merely recipients consumers of government services.
• Building coalitions is important in pushing or participating in governance
• There must be measures to ensure sustainability of the initiative
• Putting the community at the heart of what we do
• Vertical integration
• People at the center of all initiatives
• Ask people what they need and from there design tech approaches
• Citizen engagements (ANSA-EAP)
• Integration of local plans (ULAP)
• OGP (INCITeGov)
• Importance of working together of CSOs in achieving advocacy goals
• Capacity building to sustain initiatives
• Importance of community empowerment towards development

You may write here any additional feedback and comments that you want to share with us.

• Good job G-Watch for this learning session. 😊
• As an agent of change, we still have a lot of mission to do.
• Thank you so much for allowing us to participate! I really learned a lot today. Everyone was friendly and accommodating. 😊
• I like the overall ‘upbeat’ mode of the forum-workshop
• Lessen use of paper 😊
• Good job!