Guidelines for the Sustained National Implementation of CSO Participation in the Department of Education (DepEd)

Strategy Paper

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August 2015
Quezon City
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INTRODUCTION

This strategy paper is a comprehensive guide for the sustainability of CSO-government engagement in the Department of Education (DepEd). While comprehensive –it covers the different avenues of participation in DepEd –it focuses on a mechanism entirely new for both the Department and civil society, the Agency Procurement Compliance Performance Indicators (APCPI). The other participatory mechanisms refer to budgeting and planning, procurement, and school-based monitoring.

The guidelines proposed are an attempt to synthesize the many years of engagement of civil society with DepEd, mainly from those initiated by the Government Watch (G-Watch) program of the Ateneo School of Government, the most recent of which is for the APCPI. This would be of interest to many stakeholders engaged in education governance, in particular, and to those looking into the broader civil society participation in governance, in general.

This will be most helpful to DepEd, being the primary audience of the paper, as it provides the agency a tighter set of guidelines which focus on the tasks and steps required to organize and implement CSO participation in APCPI Confirmation. These practical guidelines will hopefully pave the way for DepEd and CSOs to seamlessly collaborate in the annual APCPI Confirmation, covering the process and selection criteria for selection of CSOs, the methodology and mechanics in the validation itself, and the roles and responsibilities of concerned offices/units with respect to coordination for APCPI.

The CSO engagements in the different aspects of monitoring in DepEd are in a way intertwined and involve the same coordination mechanisms and even people on the ground (DepEd personnel and volunteer monitors), hence the more comprehensive approach taken by this paper in exploring ways to sustain CSO participation. Even so, the most immediate goal is to provide a clear and doable step-by-step guide for APCPI Confirmation of CSOs, bulding on the current windows for engagement. The default treatment of the sections of this paper is that pertaining to the comprehensive approach to sustainability. In Sections E and F, the focus shifts to APCPI Confirmation.

1) THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

People's participation started to flourish in the Philippines when citizens experienced oppression from the government during the Marcos dictatorship. The resistance of the people against the government has been too powerful that it contributed to the birth of 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution, which led to the ousting of Marcos.

When democracy was brought back in the country, legislative measures favoring the development of civil society surfaced. The Article II, Sec. 23 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution provides for a state policy of encouraging the participation of non-governmental, community-based, or sectoral organizations to promote the welfare of the nation.

Also, Article XIII, Sec. 15 states that the State shall respect the role of independent people's organizations to enable the people to pursue and protect, within the democratic framework, their legitimate and collective interests and aspirations through peaceful and lawful means. Section 16 of the same Article states that the right of the people and their organizations to effective and reasonable participation at all levels of social, political, and economic decision-making shall not be abridged. The State shall, by law, facilitate the establishment of adequate consultation mechanisms.

Meanwhile, provisions in Article III magnify the freedom of the people to assembly, freedom of speech, of expression, and of the press as well as establishing its rights to information and right to form union, associations, and societies.

Another legislation that facilitated and mainstreamed participation of CSOs in governance is the passage of Local Government Code (LGC) in 1991. The LGC mandated the representation of CSOs in different local special bodies of local government units (LGUs), such as the Local School Board. This has enabled CSOs to participate in the LGU's public finance management cycle.

Under the "Daang Matuwid" agenda of the Aquino Administration, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) issued the National Budget Memorandum No. 109 in 2011 mandating the national government agencies (NGAs) and the government owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) to involve CSOs and other stakeholders in the preparation of the agency budget proposal, execution of agency budget, and preparation of the national budget for 2012. Since then, this "bottom-up" approach has been undertaken by the government in preparing the annual budget.

This legal framework presents a conducive environment for civil society participation to grow and deepen. In the past decade, this proved helpful in fostering the kind of citizen participation seen in the Department of Education.

Specific to procurement, the government, through the Government Procurement Reform Act or GPRA (R.A. 9184), allows CSOs to sit as observers in all stages of government procurement. (Sec. 13 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations) The GPRA is a landmark legislation passed in 2003 that has as foundation the principles of transparency and accountability in public procurement.

DepEd further operationalized this provision of the GPRA by issuing Department Order (D.O.) 57, s. 2009, and expanding the kind of CSOs able to sit as observers to even those who are not

registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission or the Cooperative Development Authority. This was a product of several years of CSO engagement in DepEd which started with Textbook Count, and meant to cover big-ticket procurement items of the Department other than textbooks.

Very recently, the Government Procurement Policy Board also came up with a resolution that further expands the participation of CSOs in procurement, through the APCPI, a look into procurement systems based on international benchmarks.

2) DEFINITION OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Before going into the succeeding discussion, there is a need to define who the CSOs are. From the experience of G-Watch, this distinction is crucial because members of some civil society organizations taking part in G-Watch initiatives with DepEd are personnel of the agency –scout coordinators of Boy Scouts of the Philippines and Girl Scouts of the Philippines are teachers; and members of PS-Link (Public Services Labor Independent Confederation) are from government. Questions arise as to their identity –how can they be effective monitors of government services when they are part of the government themselves? Will they be objective? How do they distinguish their identity as government personnel from their role as CSOs?

Prof. Ledivina Cariño gives a broad definition of CSOs as "groups and networks working in social sphere between the market and the state, where the state involves public action for public interest and market involves private action for private profit. Civil society is about private action for public good."

Given this broad definition, organizations like GSP, BSP and PS-LINK fall under CSOs since they aim for public good in their private actions, even using private means (and resources). In this sense, CSOs fill the void between the state (public) and the market (private), taking on a private identity but working for public good.

There are also non-government organizations (NGOs), which are independent entities that engage public issues to advance public interest. Then there are people's organizations (POs) –bona fide associations of citizens with demonstrated capacity to promote the public interest and with identifiable leadership, membership, and structure. (1987 Constitution)

According to the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO), the term "civil society organization" refers to all organizations that are non-governmental and are non-profit. The definition itself gives an idea of how broad the term encompasses, ranging from community level to national level. To give an idea of how broad it is, CODE-NGO identified three common types of CSOs operating in the country:

i) *People's Organization*- often organized based on sector, issue or geographical area and are formed by their members often for their own benefit or for serving their sector or locality as a whole (e.g. farmers and fisherfolk associations, organizations of workers, urban poor, transportation drivers, indigenous peoples, women, and youth)

ii) *Development NGOs* – intermediate organizations that often operate with full-time staff and which provide services not to their members but to people's organizations, communities, and/ or other disadvantaged individuals.

iii) *Cooperative* - an autonomous and duly registered association of persons with common bond of interest, who have voluntarily joined together to achieve their social, economic, and cultural needs and aspirations by making equitable contributions to the capital required, patronizing their products and services and accepting a fair share of the risks

and benefits of the undertaking in accordance with universally accepted cooperative principles (e.g. savings and credit, consumer, marketing, service, multi-purpose, etc.).

The government agencies that are authorized to undertake primary registration of these CSOs are Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), and Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB). These agencies also provide juridical personality to these CSOs. The Department of Agriculture (DA) and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) also initiate the formation and recognition of CSOs. However, there is no consolidated, comprehensive, and updated official database of CSOs registered with the government and those that are not registered. Though there were attempts of coming up with estimates from other organizations, CODE-NGO cannot consider it official as these organizations used various definitions that resulted in exclusion of other CSO types.

3) DEEPENING CSO ENGAGEMENT

The Department of Education (DepEd) has long been engaging civil society organizations (CSOs) for various transparency and accountability initiatives. Through its National Education for All (EFA) Committee, the agency partnered with CSOs in terms of tracking of progress and close monitoring of the department's performance in achieving the EFA and Millenium Development Goals (MDG) targets.

Arguably, DepEd is pioneering in terms of CSO-government engagement concerning transparency and accountability, procurement, and service delivery. The existing efforts of CSOs in the monitoring and evaluation of various programs of the Department include Textbook Count, Bayanihang Eskwela, Bantay Eskwela, Check My School, Protect Procurement Project, and Local Hubs.

It is worth noting how these initiatives and their accomplishments were made possible through a constructive environment within DepEd that presents opportunities for CSOs. There is a favorable institutional-legal framework for CSO participation in education governance further deepened by DepEd through its issuances supportive of CSO participation, its various partnerships with CSOs and even its own initiative to reach out to civil society. We go briefly go through these CSO initiatives below:

i)   Textbook Count

In 2001, an anomaly of unaccounted Php 1.3 billion-worth procurement of about 37 million textbooks surfaced in DepEd. This triggered interventions from other stakeholders including CSOs to monitor its textbook procurement and ensure that the right textbooks were delivered to schools at the right time. The initiative led to the launching of the project Textbook Count.

Textbook Count is a collaborative program of DepED and G-Watch that started in 2003. With partnership from CSOs such as Parents-Teachers Associations (PTAs), Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP), Girl Scouts of the Philippines (GSP), and NAMFREL, the program was able to safeguard the integrity of the bidding process, ensure good textbook quality, help high school and districts check the textbooks delivered to them, as well as distribute textbooks to elementary schools. It also contributed in lowering the unit prices of textbooks to Php 30 to Php 45 (previously ranged at Php 80 to Php 120) through the help of third party monitors. Procurement period was shortened from the usual two years to one year during its implementation.

DepEd, through the Instructional Materials Council Secretariat (IMCS), adopted Textbook Count as a regular program, including its expansion to cover onward distribution of elementary school textbooks through the Textbook Walk.

ii) Bayanihang Eskwela

Documented cases of poor implementation in school-building projects (SBPs) were the reason why Bayanihang Eskwela started. This project is a collaborative public-private sector program that aimed to ensure quality school buildings for public school children through strengthening of community-based monitoring of SBPs. The partnership involves the DepEd, G-Watch, Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Office of the Ombudsman (OMB), Girl Scouts of the Philippines and Boy Scouts of the Philippines (GSP/BSP), and Parents-Teachers-Community Associations (PTCAs/PTAs).

The project was able to make concerned citizens involve themselves in the monitoring of the implementation of SBPs because the tools and methods available for them are user-friendly—easy and non-technical. This was institutionalized through D.O. 21, s.2011. It was then when a nationwide rollout of BayEsk was conducted.

iii) Bantay Eskwela

In 2009, an anti-corruption effort focused on monitoring school equipment was initiated. The Bantay Eskwela was aimed at checking DepEd's use of procurement money and how it implements its approved project. Through DepEd's partnership with the Affiliated Network for Social Accountability in East Asia and the Pacific (ANSA-EAP) under the Ateneo School of Government (ASoG), the project was able to encourage community participation by inviting them to join in seminars, orientations, biddings, and other procurement activities of the department.

iv) Check My School

Aiming at improving the service delivery in public education, ANSA-EAP Foundation, Inc. and the Department of Education entered a into partnership to implement the Check My School (CMS) project. The project empowered citizens to engage in the monitoring of services of DepEd through collecting/ providing data, sending feedback, and facilitating resolution of school issues. It also encouraged them to involve government in dialogues and collaborative problem-solving activities.

v) Other initiatives

DepEd has also opened its doors to CSOs on various projects such as Protect Procurement and Local Hubs. Protect Procurement Project which was initiated back in 2008 was aimed to improve the procuring process of the department by finding ways for CSOs to become more involved in its monitoring. A few years since the first round of Textbook Count, G-Watch saw the need to direct its focus on other big-ticket procurement items of DepEd; to protect, sustain and expand the gains of civil society participation won through Textbook Count. This was when a systematic capacity-building of CSO Observers was put in place through the Protect Procurement Project. The project has then expanded in 2010 wherein citizen monitors observe all stages of procurement process at the regional/division level.

To be able to sustain and encourage monitors at the local level, DepEd once again engaged with G-Watch to develop local hubs back in 2011. The idea was to make available the tools for monitoring, provide capacity-building, and share methodologies used and developed in the previous monitoring projects in procuring textbooks, school construction, and school furniture to the local CSOs and trained staff assigned to the local hubs.

A comprehensive monitoring of education services involving not just the national government, but also the local government unit, was demonstrated to have worked through the Edukasyon sa Naga, Salmingan Ta! It was a result of the G-Watch localization program in 2011. It was unique

in that it was comprehensive, covering inputs to education such as classrooms, teachers, furniture, textbooks, and even the LGU welfare program; these inputs to education come from both the LGU and national government through DepEd.

These initiatives have contributed to **efficiency** in DepEd (reduction of prices, period of implementation, compliance to standards); operationalized a **system for participation** of CSOs and citizens in transparency and accountability in DepEd; influenced **policy-making**; contributed in improving **public trust;** have **partnered** with and mobilized around 50 CSOs (TBC), 950 community monitors (BayEsk, Naga City), 101 procurement observers (PRO) and 702 members of the local monitoring hubs.

However, there are difficult questions facing the CSOs and DepEd as both go through this process of deepening their experience. *Is state institutionalization the right direction to go? Can the practice of accountability go beyond leaders and personalities? Can willingness of volunteers be sustained? How do we avoid decentralization? How do we ensure the credibility of CSOs?*

The practical questions that were asked include: *How do we avoid duplication of efforts and maximize resources available? How do we avoid confusion in the field where the same set of CSOs are mobilized for monitoring of different services? How do we make use of the situation as an opportunity for convergence / synchronization?*

In trying to find answers to these questions, the challenges confronting CSOs and DepEd as they engage each other surfaced in many discussions.

4) CHALLENGES TO CSO PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION GOVERNANCE

The initiatives and projects previously mentioned have undeniably proved DepEd's openness to the mechanism of improving their service-delivery through CSO engagement. While these projects have indeed shown good results and produced success stories, issues related to sustainability began to arise both in the demand side (CSOs) and the supply side (DepEd).

i) Limited reach of CSOs

The sheer size of DepEd as the largest bureaucracy in the entire government is challenging enough for a limited number of CSOs, not all of which engage in education governance. There just couldn't be enough CSOs to cover about 46,000 public schools nationwide (38,000 elementary; 8,000 secondary). In terms of the total amount of procurement, the coverage of CSO performance monitoring could only be so much – 1.8B out of 2.2B for textbooks; 122M out of 56B for classrooms; and 1.5B under PRO.

ii) Decline in the number of participating CSOs

DepEd noticed a decline in the number of observers attending their procurement process. Based on the DepEd report submitted to the Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB) in 2010, 100% of the invited CSOs showed up as observers. It reached the same percentage in 2011 where observers were very active in attending all procurement activities. However, it experienced a decreasing participation of CSO observers in the bidding process in 2012 with a recorded 96% of attendance. The department continued with its usual strategy of sending invites to CSOs on their list but it only diminished further to about 58% in 2013. The next year, the department experienced a total decline in the participation of CSOs as observers in the procurement process.

Over the years, CSOs participating in DepEd reached a peak of about 50 for the Consortium of CSOs for Textbook Count. Only 16 reaffirmed their participation during the re-launch in 2011, down from 40 in 2003 and about 50 in 2007/08.

Coverage of Textbook Count per round:
- Textbook Count 1: 68% of 5,613 delivery points
- Textbook Count 2: 85% of 7,656 delivery points
- Textbook Count 3: 77% of 4,844 delivery points
- Textbook Count 4: 70% of 4,844 delivery points
- Textbook Count 5: (no data for CSO coverage)

For PRO, only 9 out of the 31 trained CSO Observers were active after the pilot round, with DepEd noting difficulty in inviting CSOs, or the latter having a hard time coordinating with DepEd. BayEsk encountered a similar challenge after the nationwide rollout and Division-level joint monitoring teams were set up. In the five Local Hubs piloted, two have reported difficulty in tapping CSOs; the other five had CSOs participating.

iii) Challenge in report generation

Generation of reports on the implementation of the monitoring initiatives from the field offices will only be facilitated if memos were secured from DepEd executives. However, despite the presence of such memos, report generation remained a challenge. Also, without a central coordinating mechanism, no independent report from CSOs on the ground can be generated, leaving no means to validate the reports from DepEd.

iv) Challenge in identifying and classifying CSOs to engage

DepEd may have been very open to CSO engagement but one challenge to this is knowing who to engage with. DepEd would also rather deal with a number of CSOs, not necessarily all CSOs. Engagement with so many CSOs may become cumbersome (and an impediment to good performance), and worrisome if they are not sure about the constructive engagement framework of the CSOs engaging the agency.

In its twelve years of engagement with the DepEd and with experiences in implementing various monitoring initiatives with other CSOs, G-Watch enumerated the challenges that they (CSOs) have faced:

v) Keeping the volunteers interested

Volunteers can be counted on to carry out monitoring activities especially in services with several irregularities or perceived irregularities. However, it appears that as irregularities diminish over time (a targeted result of monitoring), so does the volunteers' drive to monitor government processes. A realization is that as the government becomes more open to CSO participation, the more people do not see the need to monitor anymore.

vi) Lack of resources to support and sustain engagement

In the monitoring initiatives G-Watch spearheaded, sustainability was premised on the spirit of volunteerism. Though the spirit of volunteerism is still evident, there is not enough monetary support to sustain the coordination, aid in the preparation of reports and conduct capacity building activities for CSOs. Also, most CSOs rely heavily on the donor community to able to get funds. Once funding stops, CSOs' efforts become limited as well.

vii) Absence of coordinating body overseeing the CSO monitoring activities

Monitors perform their tasks when mobilized, capacitated and coordinated. Thus, there is a need for a coordinating body that will enable and ensure monitors to carry out the monitoring activities.

viii)   Increasing demand from government for CSO participation

In the recent years, five years to be exact, there is a marked change in government where it moved towards the general direction of openness. The challenge that it poses to civil society comes in the form of overwhelming demand for participation in many areas of governance. The increasing budget for many services (i.e. Php436 billion this year for DepEd, the biggest in history) also makes CSO participation in public finance – particularly in budget execution –most needed. How far CSOs respond to the demand remains to be seen.

Most of the problems encountered by DepEd were primarily caused by the challenges that CSOs encounter. CSOs who lost their drive in participating in procurement processes may have been the reason to the diminishing number of DepEd's monitors and observers. It can also be the lack of resources, the absence of a coordinating body, or the combination of all these. On the other hand, the issues encountered by CSOs were due to the lack of mechanisms that suit the nature of their work, their capacity, and their resources.

B) General Recommendations to Sustain CSO Participation in DepEd

How will CSO participation in education governance be sustained given the challenges discussed above? The recommendations that will be discussed in this section are a product of many years of experience engaging government, exploring different means, piloting various initiatives, winning some gains and learning lessons along the way, and encountering the challenges enumerated.

The proposed strategy is such that state-based mechanisms are strengthened in such a way that it can ensure transparency and accountability of service delivery and not dependent on citizen participation, but allows it whenever needed. This is recognizing that government still has the primary mandate to ensure accountability, and efforts of CSOs should be seen as corrective and supplementary. The strategy also has it that **the capacity of intermediary CSOs is built and sustained, not to parallel government processes but to have the capacity to support school based monitoring and exact accountability at levels where it is needed.**

We keep in mind that civil society is private in nature, using private means for public goals. This strategy is two-pronged: it enables supply and demand sides; supply side to enable demand, demand to be maintained independent, autonomous and flexible/ responsive.

Three modes to operationalize this strategy may be explored, depending on what works for DepEd at the national and local levels. The three modes are as follows:

1) Central CSO Coordinator to be contracted out by DepEd
2) A volunteer Regional CSO Coordinator to be facilitated or supported by DepEd
3) DepEd to directly coordinate with CSOs at all levels utilizing its own hierarchy

Any of these three modes may be used in setting up a school-based monitoring mechanism supported by a division-level intermediary mechanism (Local Hub) linked to the national (either with a central CSO or DepEd CO), with DepEd accountability processes being enabled for such strategy.

The Local Hubs shall perform four functions:

- Facilitator and coordinator of school-based monitoring of textbooks, school-building projects and furniture
- Repository of G-Watch knowledge products (monitoring designs and tools, etc.) that can readily be accessed by school-based monitors
- Trainer for school-based monitoring of education services
- Transmission belt of information and monitoring results as well as feedback requiring quick response

The Division-level coordinating mechanism (Local Hub) may be through any of four modalities depending *on the peculiar condition of the division as long as it is effective in performing the local hubs' functions:*

- Model 1: **Multi-stakeholder, with a coordinating body composed of DepEd division office and CSO representatives**

   This was the model utilized by the pilot round of Local Hubs by G-Watch. Its strength is that it brings the crucial stakeholders onboard. There is joint problem-solving and joint ownership of the actions and results, very much like the experience with Textbook Count at the national level. Its weakness lies in the absence of any stakeholder (or lack of support of any one stakeholder), which may not give legitimacy to the multi-stakeholder mechanism, and impeding its movement.

- Model 2**: Unit within DepEd/ personnel**

  DepEd may take a more proactive role in enabling school-based monitoring by designating a unit within the Division Office or assigning personnel dedicated to coordinating with CSOs for monitoring at the school level. This model works if there is no strong CSO working with DepEd at the Division level, and the DepEd is very willing to take an active role in drawing in CSOs for monitoring.

- Model 3: **CSO-based**

  Should the Division Office be inactive, or unwilling, and there is a strong CSO willing to engage education governance and lead other CSOs in the locality, then this model will come into play. It may be weak in terms of probably not having fast and direct access to information at the Division Office. There are, however, means to acquire the information needed to conduct school-based monitoring –through CSO and/or DepEd contacts at the national level. Note that most information (allocation list, for instance) are all submitted to and finalized at the Central Office.

- Model 4: **CSO-LGU-based (eg. Naga City)**

  This model is multi-stakeholder like Model 1, but it involves the participation of the local government unit. Representatives from the LGU (Planning Office, Local School Board and City Council in the case of Naga City) sat with CSO and DepEd DO representatives in a multi-stakeholder Core Group. This Core Group facilitated the comprehensive monitoring in schools.

Enabling school-based monitoring is the better design to guarantee sustained transparency and accountability in education service delivery for the following reasons: (1) there is a steady supply of monitors in schools who have a major stake; (2) having beneficiaries as monitors is empowering the communities to not only be recipients of services but also active partners in making the delivery of services transparent, accountable, responsive and efficient. And (3) decentralization allows a comprehensive look at education services.

This proposal contains elements that guide us in making the sustainability strategy work:

- A working policy that supports decentralized and school-based monitoring.
A working policy is needed at the national level to achieve a decentralized and school-based monitoring. This policy can be a Department Order clearly stating the support to a decentralized and school-based monitoring. It can identify the critical actors and their respective roles in achieving a decentralized monitoring of education service deliveries.

- Avenues, knowledge products and resources for capacity building.
Continuous capacity building is needed to produce a steady supply of monitors at the school level. Avenues, knowledge products and resources are the pre-requisites for capacity building activities.

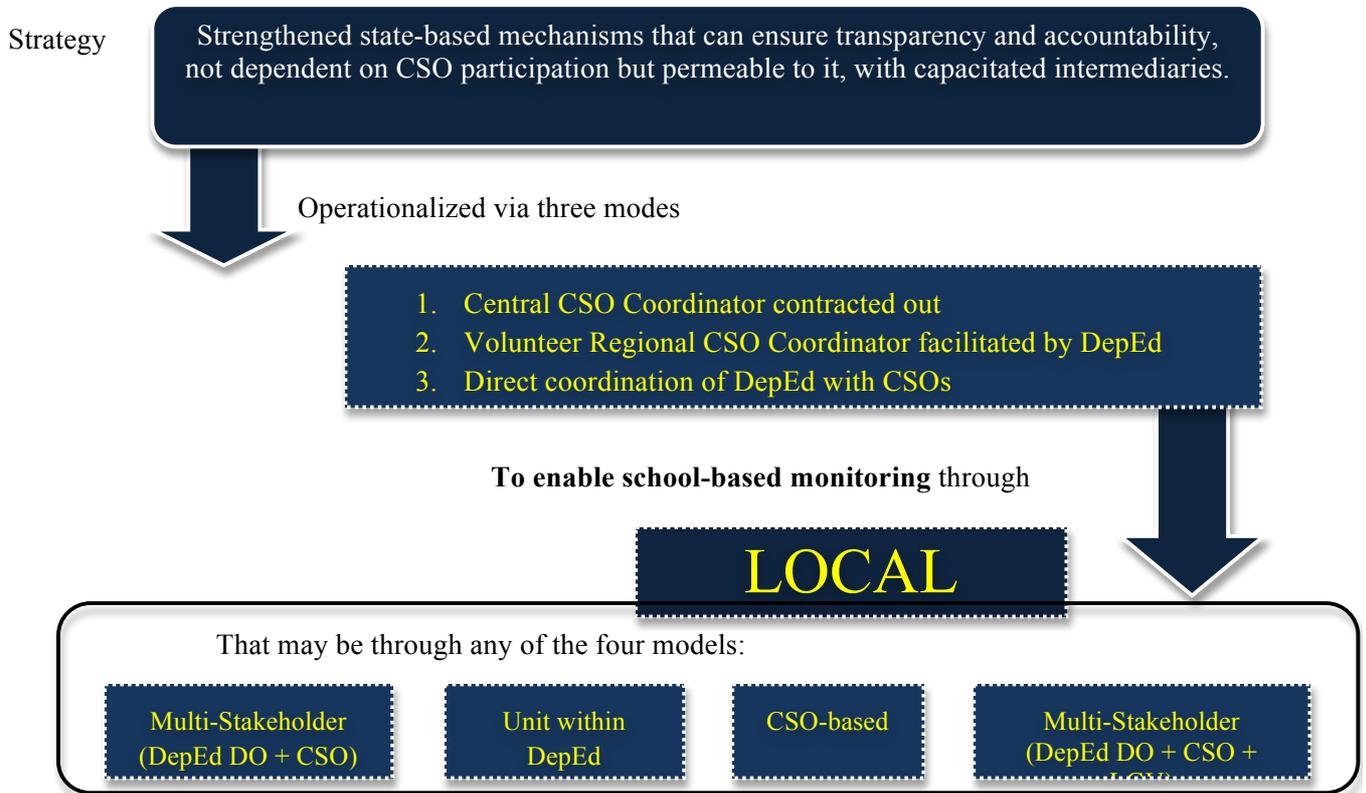- Transmission belt of information.
A coordinating body tasked to facilitate and supervise a school-based monitoring is needed to serve as a transmission belt of information. This mechanism is not only expected to download information and knowledge products to the schools, but they are also expected to generate reports from the schools and channel these reports to the central office and other national stakeholders.

- Consolidation of monitoring results.
Monitoring on the ground will be useless if the results are not consolidated to provide assessments and points for recommendations at the division and national levels.

- Response to monitoring results and feedback.

Policy makers have to respond to the monitoring results so that the system can be improved using the results of the monitoring

These recommendations for sustainability of CSO participation in DepEd may be visually summarized as follows:

Strategy

Strengthened state-based mechanisms that can ensure transparency and accountability, not dependent on CSO participation but permeable to it, with capacitated intermediaries.

Operationalized via three modes

1. Central CSO Coordinator contracted out
2. Volunteer Regional CSO Coordinator facilitated by DepEd
3. Direct coordination of DepEd with CSOs

To enable school-based monitoring through

LOCAL

That may be through any of the four models:

| Multi-Stakeholder (DepEd DO + CSO) | Unit within DepEd | CSO-based | Multi-Stakeholder (DepEd DO + CSO + LGU) |

From the figure above, the level by which the APCPI CSO Confirmation may be sustained is via the three modes. Being able to put any mode into practice is already going to benefit the sustainability of CSO engagements in procurement and contract implementation monitoring. As can be seen, one of these three modes can enable school-based monitoring via the local hubs.

The proposal is solid enough as it contains the elements of sustainability earlier mentioned, except for resources. The issue of resources will be tackled in the latter part of this paper.

C) Proposed CSO Mapping Methodology for Use in APCPI Confirmation

1) INTRODUCTION

Various types of CSOs emerged in the Philippines after the 1986 People Power. Such types include non-government organizations, people's organizations, and co-operatives, all aiming to advance their advocacies and concerns and to make the government responsive, transparent, and accountable in their actions.

The diversity of CSOs has captured the interest of different organizations to explore its nature, understand its environment, its dynamics, and capacities for social accountability work. Several mapping studies were also conducted and different tools have been developed to be able to dig more into CSOs' strengths, weaknesses, gaps, threats, and opportunities. These were all aimed to help CSOs improve their operations and strengthen engagements with the other stakeholders.

The Department of Education (DepEd) has long been engaging CSOs for various transparency and accountability initiatives. A sustained partnership is the set up the DepEd is envisioning in deepening the engagement with CSOs. To be able to achieve this, it is important to identify relevant CSOs interested in doing work on transparency and accountability in education.

Specifically for the CSO Confirmation of DepEd APCPI, an effective mapping of CSOs is the first step in continuing and broadening the participation of CSOs beyond the pilot round implemented in the first half of 2015.

2) REVIEW OF EXISTING MAPPING TECHNOLOGY

Before proceeding with the proposed CSO mapping to be undertaken by DepEd for APCPI CSO Confirmation and other participatory mechanisms, it is important to have a general idea first of the mapping process. Mapping is a method that can provide a more detailed description of a stakeholder. To be able to get the desired data, it would require different approaches that may vary according to the objective, scope, resources and time frame. The tables below are some of the mapping activities that selected organizations undertook, each with pros and cons to be able to understand if the process can help DepEd achieve a sustained engagement with CSOs for APCPI.

AN ASEAN COMMUNITY FOR ALL: EXPLORING THE SCOPE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT	By Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2011	
Objective	• To identify the strengths, challenges, gaps and development needs of the CSO sector in ASEAN member countries. • To address questions on the diversity of CSOs in each country, their level of organization and structure as well as the structural processes of consultation. • To provide framework to present the different CSO sectors for comparison and contrast
Methodology	• Selection of researchers, civil society leaders, and academics to write country chapters/papers (case study) • Conduct of workshop to identify the issues and challenges of mapping exercise • Consolidation and standardization of country chapters based on sub-headings and themes

	• Conduct of workshop to address operational challenges. • Editing and review of country chapters
Scope	Selected Southeast Asian Countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam)
Duration	N/A

The mapping in the study above utilized qualitative research methods such as writing country chapters/cases and conducting of workshops among stakeholders.

Pros: The methodology is doable and can be done in the future mapping exercises.
Cons: Target stakeholders and scope are so huge that it requires a lot of time and resources. It may also be hard to do this method Conducting workshops will also be too tedious for DepEd's APCPI.

SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY STOCKTAKING	By Affiliated Network for Social Accountability in East Asia and Pacific, 2012	
Objective	To develop a shared understanding among the stakeholders about what exactly social accountability perspectives and practices entail in the context of East Asia and Pacific.
Methodology	1. **Scanning** - A close examination of SAC agents and activities in the wider environment of governance 2. **Scoping**- Carves out and puts into spotlight all known SAC work within the environment, setting the boundaries or coverage of possible SAC initiatives or interventions 3. **Mapping**- Defines the stakeholders: their practices, approaches, and tools; the locus of their operations and their partners; and the length of time they have been doing such activities 4. **Profiling**- Takes a more detailed look using a descriptive assessment of the SAC agent by appraising its strengths and weaknesses; its strategy, structure, systems staffing, skills, leadership style, and shared values; and the challenges it faces. **Social Inquiry process:** *1. Research Conceptualization* *2. Tool Crafting* *3. Conduct of Research* *4. Report writing (drafting)* *5. Validation & vetting* *6. Report Writing* **Exploratory research approach** - *Review of literature, qualitative approaches like informal discussions with varied respondents, in-depth key informant interviews, FGDs, case studies, or pilot studies.*
Scope	Philippines, Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia
Duration	Four years for all countries

ANSA-EAP defined "Stocktaking" as a collective term given to the tools in getting to know and understand social accountability situation of a specific area or sector. In stocktaking, they used qualitative methods such as FGDs, in-depth interviews, and case studies to gather data. Tools were also used to help them trim the available data from general to specific.

Pros: The detailed process helps in screening the data well.

Cons: It also requires a lot of time and resources.

CIVIL SOCIETY INDEX: A PHILIPPINE ASSESSMENT REPORT | By Caucus of Development NGO Networks, 2011	
Objectives	• To create a knowledge base and momentum for civil society strengthening. • To increase the commitment of stakeholders in strengthening civil society
Methodology	1. **Assessment**: CSI uses an innovative mix of participatory research methods, data sources, and case studies to comprehensively assess the state of civil society using five dimensions: Civic Engagement, Level of Organisation, Practice of Values, Perception of Impact and the External Environment. 2. **Collective Reflection**: implementation involves structured dialogue among diverse civil society stakeholders that enables the identification of civil society's specific strengths and weaknesses. 3. **Joint Action**: the actors involved use a participatory and consultative process to develop and implement a concrete action agenda to strengthen civil society in a country. **Organizational Survey** - *carried out with 120 CSOs across the Philippines to measure the extent of their resources, impact, and their practice of corporate governance and ethical valuesS* **External Perceptions Survey** - *undertaken with 60 influential individuals in government, business, religious, academia, the media, and the donor community to assess their views on CSOs* **Population Survey** - *in coordination with SWS to measure the extent of participation of Filipinos in civil society groups* **Case Studies** - *qualitative analysis of the issues that CSOs are currently facing*
Scope	Country Level (Philippines)

CODE-NGO utilized both qualitative and quantitative approach in coming up with their Civil Society Index. Various types of surveys were conducted across the Philippines to be able to generate measurable data. In mapping CSOs' strengths and weaknesses, they used dialogues among diverse civil society stakeholders. They also tapped the service of an external research firm to conduct population survey. Case studies were also conducted.

Pros: The data generation process is very comprehensive.
Cons: Too tedious. It may take time before completion. Also requires a lot of resources.

While the presented mapping technologies of selected organizations above vary, all of them have generated substantive data and achieved their respective objectives. However, these processes require a lot of tedious planning and designing before proceeding to the implementation stage, which also requires a lot of time and resources. Adopting these may not be appropriate for DepEd.

The succeeding part is the G-Watch proposal for a CSO mapping that may be taken on by DepEd, with adjustments considering the limitations and learning from the experience of the pilot round of DepEd APCPI CSO Confirmation.

In summary, G-Watch and DepEd were able to mobilize 20 civil society organizations in the pilot regions (Bicol Region, Eastern Visayas and Central Visayas). The mapping was a combination of one done by the DepEd Regional Offices as instructed by the DepEd Central Office, and by G-Watch utilizing its network of CSOs in the areas concerned.

The initially proposed mapping methodology did not deliver as designed, primarily because the CSO community which local DepEd offices engaged with is too small owing to the fact that the agency has not really been used to engaging with CSOs outside this small community. There was difficulty on the part of the local DepEd offices to complete the CSO mapping templates provided, or to sift through a long list of CSOs for the most relevant ones that may be able to engage DepEd. G-Watch relied largely on the network of CSOs it has on the ground.

After the mapping came the selection of CSOs to be invited, which was done by G-Watch with the concurrence of DepED Central Office (CO).

Such concurrence was needed in response to negative reactions coming from DepEd officials on the kind of CSOs that may engage them. Generally, DepEd is cautious when it comes to how constructive CSOs can be. They also take an issue on the number of CSOs that may engage them, avoiding having to deal with numerous CSOs at a time.

This does not, however, signal their resistance to CSO participation in general. In fact, during the briefing-orientations, DepEd officials on the ground embrace the idea of having third party participation, reflective of the general attitude of officials at the Central Office.

4.   MAPPING METHODOLOGY FOR CSO PARTICIPATION IN APCPI

The lessons mentioned above informed G-Watch in further simplifying the mapping process that DepEd will have to undertake in facilitating the participation of CSOs for APCPI Confirmation. In a nutshell, this is how the proposed mapping methodology looks like:

MAPPING OF CSOs FOR APCPI CONFIRMATION	
Objective	To generate data on the presence of CSOs in the regions of the Philippines working or with potential to work on education governance.
Methodology	1. Initial Listing 2. Screening 3. Invitation and Profiling
Scope	National to Local (Regional and Division levels of DepEd), in all regions of the Philippines
Duration	Two months

The mapping of CSOs for APCPI Confirmation may be adjusted based on what mode will be deemed as most appropriate for DepEd, recalling the three modes presented in the previous section: (1) having a central CSO coordinator contracted out; (2) having a volunteer regional CSO coordinator facilitated/supported by DepED; (3) DepEd directly coordinating with the CSOs. The steps are detailed below.

The adjustments in methodology based on the mode to be adopted are as follows:

i)   CSO Mapping in Mode 1 (having a Central CSO coordinator contracted out)

a.   **Issuance of Memorandum:** CSO to coordinate with DepEd for the issuance of memorandum that will inform the DepEd field offices about the conduct of the annual APCPI and the involvement of CSOs. Included in the memorandum to DepEd field

offices (ROs and DOs) are the CSO mapping templates and instructions on how to fill out the templates, as well as the submission guidelines (flow of submission and deadlines). The proposed template is attached as ANNEX 1. The CSOs to be included in this mapping are the local CSOs in the jurisdiction of the DepEd field office (DO).

b. **Dissemination and Submission:** The Regional Office will cascade the information to its Division Offices. The Division Offices will accomplish the task and submit the completed CSO Mapping templates to the Regional Office, with the latter consolidating the lists and submitting them to the Central Office.

c. **Parallel Mapping:** The CSO Central Coordinator will likewise conduct a parallel mapping, utilizing its CSO networks at the regional and local levels and acquiring lists from the head offices of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), among others.

d. **Collection and Consolidation of Mapping by DepEd and CSO:** The Central CSO Coordinator collects the lists of CSOs mapped by the DepEd field offices submitted to the Central Office. A summary of the lists (integrating the results from both the parallel mapping conducted by the CSO and the mapping done by the DepEd field offices) will be prepared by the CSO, including a proposed short list per region.

e. **Joint Decision on Final List of CSOs for APCPI:** The Central CSO Coordinator will schedule a meeting with DepEd to discuss the shortlist and decide on the final list of CSOs to be invited (DepEd and CSO to jointly agree on the shortlist and final list).

f. **Profiling of Final List of CSOs:** Invitations will be sent by the Central CSO Coordinator to the CSOs for an orientation on APCPI. Enclosed in the communication is a profile form to be accomplished by the invited CSO (ANNEX 2). This will give more information on the background of the CSO.

ii) CSO Mapping in Mode 2 (having a volunteer regional CSO coordinator facilitated/supported by DepED)

a. **Designation of DepEd Focal Person for CSO Participation in APCPI:** DepEd CO will assign a focal person for the coordination with CSOs for their involvement in the annual APCPI.

b. **Recommendation of Regional CSO Coordinator for APCPI:** The DepEd focal person will convene a meeting with national CSOs to present the annual APCPI, and get recommendations for volunteer CSOs at the local level to lead the coordination of CSOs in the region. DepEd CO will collect the contact information of the recommended CSOs (Regional CSO Coordinator). The criteria for the identification of the Regional CSO Coordinator may be one of the discussion points of the meeting.

c. **Coordination with Regional CSO Coordinator:** DepEd will coordinate the recommended CSO for every region. The coordination may entail a face-to-face meeting of the Regional CSO Coordinator with DepEd CO and the DepEd RO concerned to establish the working relationship and lay down the roles and responsibilities of each party in the annual APCPI. The discussion may also include the designation of a focal person for CSO participation in the APCPI for the Regional Office. **Formal Assignment of CSO Regional Coordinator:** Upon the agreement of both the Regional Office and the identified Regional CSO Coordinator, the Central Office will then issue a communication formally assigning the lead CSO for the region to work with the RO for the participation of CSOs in the annual APCPI. This may be in the form of a memorandum listing the Regional CSO Coordinator per region.

d. **Actual CSO Mapping:** The assigned Regional CSO Coordinator, on its own, or in collaboration with the DepEd RO (depending on the strength of the CSO and the DepEd RO), will conduct the CSO Mapping. The CSO mapping will follow the template in ANNEX A. A shortlist will be prepared by the Regional CSO Coordinator (integrating the results of the mapping done by the DepEd RO, if they did a separate mapping).

e. **Joint Decision on the Final List of CSOs for APCPI:** The Regional CSO Coordinator will again meet with the Regional Office to present the shortlist and arrive at a joint decision on the final list of CSOs to be invited to the annual APCPI.

f. **Profiling of Final List of CSOs:** Invitations will be sent by the Regional CSO Coordinator to the CSOs for an orientation on APCPI. Enclosed in the communication is a profile form to be accomplished by the invited CSO (ANNEX B). This will give more information on the background of the CSO.

iii) CSO Mapping in Mode 3 (DepEd directly coordinating with the CSOs)

This mode is going to be a little challenging for DepEd, but may still work if the national CSOs will readily work with the Central Office in giving an initial list of CSOs that may be tapped for APCPI.

a. **Designation of DepEd Focal Person for CSO Participation in APCPI:** DepEd CO will assign a focal person for the coordination with CSOs for their involvement in the annual APCPI.

b. **Meeting with National CSOs for Initial Recommendation of CSOs:** The DepEd Central Office will convene a meeting of national CSOs to present the participation of CSOs in the annual APCPI and gather recommendations for prospective CSOs at the local level who may be tapped as CSO Confirmators. DepEd CO may ask for CSO directories from the national CSOs prior to the meeting to have an initial list. The DepEd CO may also get recommended criteria for the selection of CSOs to be tapped for the APCPI Confirmation.

c. **Communication with National Government Agencies:** The DepEd Focal Person will facilitate the acquisition of CSO directories from the DILG and NAPC, through a communication from the Office of the Secretary (or an Undersecretary). These are CSOs engaging the government for the Bottom-Up Budgeting program of the DILG, or CSO members of the sectoral assemblies and sectoral councils of the 14 basic sectors of NAPC.

d. **Issuance of Memorandum to ROs and DOs:** The Focal Person at Central Office will facilitate the issuance of a memorandum that will inform the DepEd field offices about the conduct of the annual APCPI and the involvement of CSOs. Included in the memorandum to DepEd field offices (ROs and DOs) are the CSO mapping templates and instructions on how to fill out the templates, as well as the submission guidelines (flow of submission and deadlines). The proposed template is attached as ANNEX A. The CSOs to be included in this mapping are the local CSOs in the jurisdiction of the DepEd field office (DO).

e. **Collection and Consolidation of Directories:** Using the template provided in ANNEX A, the DepEd Focal Person will integrate the different directories from the national CSOs and national government agencies and prepare a shortlist per region.

f. **Final Decision on the List of CSOs:** The DepEd Central Office, either through official communication (memo, letter), or a meeting, will consult the national CSOs for their feedback on the shortlist of CSOs to be tapped per region for the APCPI. DepEd will then make the final decision based on the feedback.

g. **Profiling of Final List of CSOs:** Invitations will be sent by the DepED CO to the CSOs for an orientation on APCPI. Enclosed in the communication is a profile form to be accomplished by the invited CSO (ANNEX B). This will give more information on the background of the CSO.

D) Roles and Responsibilities of DepEd in the Proposed Setup

This part lays down the roles and responsibilities of DepEd in the setup proposed by G-Watch in Part B (General Recommendations to Sustain CSO Participation in DepEd) which proposes that state-based mechanisms in DepEd are strengthened in such a way that it can ensure transparency and accountability of service delivery and not dependent on citizen participation, but allows it whenever needed –to be operationalized via three modes (Central CSO Coordinator; volunteer Regional CSO Coordinator facilitated by DepEd; direct coordination by DepEd) to enable school-based monitoring through the establishment of Local Hubs.

1) PROCESSES AND PROGRAMS TO BE COVERED BY CSOS

In laying down the roles and responsibilities of DepEd, it is necessary to identify which processes of the agency need to be covered by CSOs as they participate. The three main processes are: Procurement, Contract Implementation and APCPI.

i) Procurement

Art. V, Sec.13 of the IRR of R.A. 9184 specifies that at least two (2) representatives of a recognized private organization and Non-Government Organizations duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) or the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) are invited to all stages of the procurement process. The Department Order 57, s.2009 further expanded the kind of CSOs who can participate in the agency's procurement, to include even those not registered with SEC or CDA but part of the Consortium of CSOs for Textbook Count and those involved in other DepEd-CSO monitoring initiatives.

The main purpose of inviting third party entity as observers in all stages of procurement process is to enhance transparency. To be able to achieve this, the observers to be invited should be selected according to the following criteria set forth in the Revised IRR:
a. Knowledge, experience or expertise in procurement or in the subject matter of the contract to be bid;
b. Absence of actual or potential conflict of interest in the contract to be bid; and
c. Any other relevant criteria that may be determined by the BAC.

Under the same rule of the IRR Section 13.4, observers shall have the following responsibilities:
a. Prepare the report either jointly or separately indicating their observations made on the procurement activities conducted by the BAC for submission to the Head of the Procuring Entity, copy furnished the BAC Chairman. The report shall assess the extent of the BAC's compliance with the provisions of this IRR and areas of improvement in the BAC's proceedings;
b. To submit their report to the procuring entity and furnish a copy to the GPPB and Office of the Ombudsman/Resident Ombudsman. If no report is submitted by the observer, then it is understood that the bidding activity conducted by the BAC followed the correct procedure; and
c. To immediately inhibit and notify in writing the procuring entity concerned of any actual or potential interest in the contract to be bid.

Although observers are invited to attend in all the procurement stages, their absence will not nullify the BAC proceedings provided that they have been duly invited in writing as stated in the Revised IRR.

Most often, the invitation to CSOs are for the following stages: Pre-Procurement Conference; Pre-Bid Conference; Submission and Opening of Bids; Post-Qualification; Awarding of Contract.

ii) Contract Implementation

The Department of Education has long been engaging CSOs in the monitoring of contract implementation. As early as 2003, DepEd has partnerships for monitoring of textbooks. This has gone on and expanded to school furniture and school buildings.

a. Textbooks
Through the Textbook Count program institutionalized in DepEd, the CSOs track the contract implementation side of the textbook delivery program –production, delivery and onward distribution. The Instructional Materials Council Secretariat directly coordinated with the Consortium of CSOs for Textbook Count, then led by G-Watch.

At the production stage, CSOs join the Textbok Quality Inspection Team (TQIT) alongside the IMCS and COA representatives. The CSOs present during this stage conduct random inspections of textbooks (printing, binding, trimming, packaging) and sign the TQIT Report. Upon their recommendation, any batch of textbooks may be recalled if found to be defective.

Deliveries to Division Offices, District Offices and high schools are monitored by both the designated DepEd personnel (Supply Officer, District Supervisor and Property Custodian) with a CSO representative present. The CSO representative is notified by DepEd of the delivery schedule and allocation list and is required to sign the Inspection and Acceptance Report (IAR) form. DepEd CO double checks on deliveries with no CSO signature on the IAR.

For elementary schools, textbooks are delivered only up to the District Office, and onward distribution of these textbooks is through the school heads and their property custodians. Textbook Walk supplements this where CSOs mobilize resources and the community to bring elementary school textbooks to recipient schools.

b. School Furniture
The CSO monitoring of the contract implementation stage of school furniture covers the production and delivery at the local level. Bulk of the funds for school furniture is downloaded to the Division Offices, and a small portion to the Regional Offices, hence the bidding part (to be included in the procurement monitoring) is monitored at these levels as well.

c. School Buildings
Monitoring of school buildings by CSOs during contract implementation includes every major stage of the construction up to the post-construction stage. Monitoring teams from around the school community are to be mobilized for this. Bulk of the biddings for school building projects are now with the DPWH District Engineering Offices, at least for the past three years. Representatives from the DepEd Division Office and recipient schools attend the bidding stage as observers. CSOs and DepEd both play a monitoring role in the contract implementation stage of school building projects, helping the implementing agency ensure good performance of contractors.

iii) APCPI

Participation of CSOs in the APCPI started in 2015, and will be continued as an annual engagement between DepEd and CSOs through a mechanism that is discussed in this paper.

The GPPB Resolution No. 10-2012 puts APCPI as a standard procurement monitoring, assessment and evaluation tool that aims to determine (qualitatively & quantitatively) procurement strengths and weaknesses of agencies, and formulate a reasonable action plan to address weaknesses. APCPI included the following pillars: compliance with legislative & regulatory framework; agency institutional framework and management capacity; procurement operations and market practices; and integrity & transparency of the agency procurement system.

In APCPI, CSOs play the role of "Confirmators," validating the results of the self-assessment of Procuring Entities (PE) under DepEd, checking for the integrity of the data used, the correctness of the computation of agency scores and their corresponding APCPI ratings, and pointing out the strong and weak points of the PE's procurement system with the goal of helping improve it.

2) ROLES OF DEPED AND CSOS IN PROCUREMENT, CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION AND APCPI

The tables in the succeeding pages present the different roles that different stakeholders –from all levels –play, and their corresponding responsibilities in an environment where CSO participation in procurement monitoring, contract implementation monitoring and APCPI is sustained via the three modes discussed in Part B of this paper. While the title of this part indicates only DepEd roles and responsibilities, it is but necessary to include the CSOs to complete the picture.

In procurement monitoring, CSO coverage includes the Central Office, Regional Offices and Division Offices. The CO procures textbooks, a small portion of the furniture, and goods/services/works for its major programs (e.g. health and nutrition, IT equipment, library hubs). The Regional Offices procure mostly regular items under the MOOE and some works for its Capital Outlay. They also procure a portion of the school furniture. The Division Offices procures regular items for its MOOE, and the biggest percentage of school furniture. DOs affected by disasters are given special funds (e.g. Quick Response Fund, other funds from aid agencies), hence they conduct big-ticket procurements.

Contract implementation monitoring of textbooks, as discussed above, is from the national down to the level of District Offices and schools. Contract implementation of school furniture is mostly at the regional, division and school levels. School building contract implementation is at the school level.

CSO coverage of APCPI is at the Regional and Division levels only (CO is only counted as one APCPI Confirmation).