



*Final Report*

# **Last Mile Initiative-Philippines II**

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**Prepared for**

**Secretary Anthony Roxas Chua  
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Technology (CICT)  
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# Preface

This report is the result of technical assistance provided by the Economic Modernization through Efficient Reforms and Governance Enhancement (EMERGE) Activity, under contract with the CARANA Corporation, Nathan Associates Inc. and The Peoples Group (TRG) to the United States Agency for International Development, Manila, Philippines (USAID/Philippines) (Contract No. AFP-I-00-03-00020-00, Delivery Order 800). The EMERGE Activity is intended to contribute towards the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) and USAID/Philippines' Strategic Objective 2, "Investment Climate Less Constrained by Corruption and Poor Governance." The purpose of the activity is to provide technical assistance to support economic policy reforms that will cause sustainable economic growth and enhance the competitiveness of the Philippine economy by augmenting the efforts of Philippine pro-reform partners and stakeholders.

This report on the Last Mile Initiative-Philippines (LMIP) II was written by Atty. Jose Gerardo A. Alampay and Mr. Joel Umali to summarize the technical assistance provided to the Philippine Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT) at the request of former Secretary Ramon P. Sales, CICT Commissioner, from December 2006 to July 2007, to help develop and set-up sustainable and viable Community e-Centers (CeCs) in rural and unserved areas in the Philippines, as well as to expand the use of Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) and Internet technology in the regions. This was an extension of the one year LMIP I which was conducted from November 2005 to October 2006 and which was the subject of a previous report.

The views expressed and opinions contained in this publication are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the resource persons, USAID, the GRP, EMERGE or the latter's parent organizations.

## **Last Mile Initiative-Philippines-II (December 2006 to July 2007)**

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August 8, 2007

This report summarizes the activities pursued and milestones achieved by Last Mile Initiative-Philippines (LMIP) for the period covering December 2006 to June 2007, the period extending LMIP to enable it to build upon and expand on previous successes.

### **NARRATIVE BACKGROUND**

Since September 2005, LMIP has been providing assistance and support to the Commission on Information and Communications Technology's (CICT) Community e-Center (CeC) Program, a major initiative of the Philippine Government aimed at bridging the digital divide.

LMIP's task was simple enough at the start, i.e., to "support the set-up of at least ten (10) pilot community e-centers in rural and/or underserved areas." The main purpose was to identify potential best practice models or applications that could then be replicated and scaled throughout the country through the CeCs.

In its first year, LMIP exceeded all expectations as it successfully leveraged its resources, engaged local government, private sector and civil society support and provided various forms of assistance and trainings for thirty-one (31) CeCs throughout the Philippines,

Specifically, LMIP assisted in the set-up of thirteen (13) Community e-Centers throughout the archipelago, three more than the mandated target. Four (4) CeCs are located in northern Luzon, four (4) CeCs are situated in rural Cebu and another five (5) CeCs were established in Mindanao.

The LMIP was also able to train eighteen (18) public high schools as part of the Ischools CeC program bringing the total CeCs assisted to thirty one (31) CeCs.

Additionally, the Program assisted the CICT in the compilation of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) into CDs that were distributed to, and therefore benefited an estimated one hundred forty (140) existing CeCs, with additional sets provided to national government agencies.

Finally, LMIP developed five (5) training modules for CeCs which can be used to build the capacity of CeC staff to sustain the CeC's financial viability, service delivery and community acceptance. Present and future CeCs can now use

these modules to develop technical and entrepreneurial skills to prepare and implement business plans, identify and respond to the needs of the communities, investigate the market, promote services to the community and maintain CeC technology.

Most importantly, LMIP identified several best practice models that demonstrated the potential of CeCs to promote education, job creation and ecotourism.

This present extension was intended to continue the support for the CeC Program over an additional six-month period specifically to (a) support the establishment of five (5) additional CeCs; provide additional training on the use of the Web Board for iSchools; identify additional best practice models; and finally, at the request of the CICT, to research and prepare an evaluation report of selected existing CeCs to identify possible “killer” applications for e-governance.

Because of the political flux and uncertainty of the period given that national and local elections were looming in May 2007, LMIP found it a bit more complicated and difficult to pursue its objectives. Several planned activities had to be postponed or even shelved, particularly where local governments were involved as partners, because the point persons in these areas simply did not have the time to focus on the set up of CeCs. In other cases, the local executives in some communities were involved in tightly contested races, and in some cases, lost, bringing efforts back to square one.

Despite these challenges, for the six-month extension, LMIP again exceeded its mandate as it:

- Provided training workshops for 4 CeCs in the Province of Oriental Mindoro on the use of open source applications to create effective websites, which are now being used to provide constituents with online job information and matching services;
- Trained 20 volunteers and facilitators for 4 Gawad Kalinga youth computer centers (or “e-Tambayans”) with emphasis on utilizing the eSkwela module of the CICT for out-of-school youths (OSYs)
- Conducted additional weeklong intensive iSchool trainings for 36 teachers from 12 public high schools.
- To ensure a higher level of support for the iSchool Web Board from decision makers within the Department of Education (DepEd), LMIP also conducted a training workshop for the iSchools Web Board Program for all 13 ICT Regional Coordinators of the Department of Education. This was supplemented by a subsequent pilot web board training for DepEd officials and public high schools from Region 8, thereby demonstrating the viability of cascading the trainings down to the regional levels. A total of 30

participants from eight regional divisions and 12 public high schools attended the training on April 30 to May 3, 2007 at the Ormoc City National High School.

- LMIP partnered with the Philippine General Hospital-University of the Philippines, College of Medicine to develop and design 4 multi-media modules focused on common medical-related community concerns including the following:
  - Poisoning prevention
  - Bird/avian flu
  - Tuberculosis
  - Stroke

The first telemedicine module - “Iwas Lason” (Poisoning Prevention) – was successfully pilot tested on June 14, 2007 when doctors from Manila trained barangay health workers in the Basak Pardo CeC in Cebu using webcams and VoIP, all in real time.

- Finally, the LMIP team, in partnership with the United Nations Development Program, conducted extensive research and field surveys and interviews in 12 eLGU Community eCenters across the country with 4 CeCs in each major island grouping (Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao), which resulted into 2 substantial and substantive reference papers that can now be used by the CICT as it pushes forward with efforts to use the CeCs as conduits for e-governance.

These papers provide the CICT with a suggested methodology for identifying “killer” e-governance applications for CeCs, and also document initial lessons learned in the course of an evaluation of CeCs set up under the Philippine Government’s Community e-Center Program.

Because of these successes, CICT has expressed a desire and interest in continued LMIP support and involvement in its CeCs Program, particularly to help it conceptualize and develop the e-commerce strategy for its planned CeC portal; to pilot-test and develop further e-governance and telemedicine applications and modules in CeCs; and more broadly to help it identify and/or develop other useful content or applications that will help make the CeCs even more relevant and useful to their respective communities.

Below is a table outlining the deliverables and accomplishments of the EMERGE Team for this Extension of Assistance to the CICT’s Community e-Center Program.

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<p><b>Establishment of 5 additional CeCs focused on refining and replicating models for creating jobs and/or livelihood opportunities.</b></p>	<p>LMIP conducted training workshops for CeC managers, staff and ICT personnel of 4 LGUs in Oriental Mindoro on how to develop effective websites using open source applications.</p> <p>Included in these trainings were sessions that created online web based solutions specifically intended for providing online job information and matching services in these LGUs.</p> <p>LMIP also conducted an ocular visit to the local government of Lake Sebu in Koronodal, South Cotabato to assess the possibility of providing e-commerce-related applications for their CeC. While interest was high on the initiative, the same had to be temporarily postponed pending the results of the May 2007 elections.</p>
<p><b>Empowerment of 12 public schools through innovative education.</b></p>	<p>The LMIP continued to support the iSchools Program, one of the components of the CICT's CeC initiative in order to bridge the digital divide in education through maximization of digital opportunities. The iSchools Program seeks to provide digital educational content and computer equipment with access to online information and e-learning applications.</p> <p>For this period, LMIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conducted additional web board e-learning literacy training for 36 public high school teachers from 12 Public High Schools across the nation last February-March 2007, bringing the total to 90 public high school teachers from 30 public high schools trained;</li> <li>▪ Conducted a training workshop for the iSchools Web Board Program for all 13 ICT Regional Coordinators of the Department of Education in March 2007.</li> <li>▪ Conducted web board training for Region 8 DepEd officials and public high schools. A total of 30 participants from eight regional</li> </ul>

	<p>divisions and 12 public high schools attended the training on April 30 to May 3, 2007 at the Ormoc City National High School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Trained 20 volunteers and facilitators for 4 Gawad Kalinga youth computer centers (or “e-Tambayans”) with emphasis on utilizing the eSkwela module of the CICT for out-of-school youths (OSYs);</li> <li>▪ All Web Boards can be accessed at <a href="http://www.ischoolwebboard.orgfree.com">www.ischoolwebboard.orgfree.com</a> and at <a href="http://www.teacherwebboard.blogspot.com">www.teacherwebboard.blogspot.com</a>. Gawad Kalinga Web Board can be accessed at <a href="http://www.etambayan.netfast.org">www.etambayan.netfast.org</a>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Identifying other models of innovation and sustainability. LMIP will continue its main mission of providing technical assistance to rural and/or unserved communities to enable them to obtain sustainable access to ICT, as well as to develop and identify appropriate programs and applications, as well as by facilitating access to private and public sector partners, programs, resources and technologies.</b></p>	<p>LMIP partnered with the Philippine General Hospital- University of the Philippines, College of Medicine in developing telemedicine solutions and content which could be deployed in CeCs. Telemedicine is a cheap and innovative way of providing awareness on health issues at the same time improve skills of local health workers through online consultation with experts. CeCs are in a strategic position to provide medical care and create greater public health awareness even when the health provider and client are separated by distance. Through CeCs, doctors in Manila can use VoIP, webcam and other easily accessible ICTs to provide training and online consultations to far flung communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The collaboration resulted n the development and design of 4 multi-media modules focused on common medical-related community concerns including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Poisoning prevention</li> <li>○ Bird/avian flu</li> <li>○ Tuberculosis</li> <li>○ Stroke</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ The LMIP partnered with the Basak-Pardo LGU to conduct a pilot testing of the first telemedicine module entitled “Iwas Lason” (Poisoning Prevention) on June 14, 2007 in the Basak Pardo CeC in Cebu. A total of 50</li> </ul>

	<p>participants representing Barangay health workers, barangay staff and officials, city health doctors and nurses participated in the pilot-testing.</p>
<p><b>Identification of appropriate e-government applications for CeCs. At the request of the CICT, LMIP will conduct an indepth study of existing CeCs (not necessarily LMIP-assisted CeCs) throughout the country to evaluate existing and possible applications for the online delivery of government-related services.</b></p>	<p>At the request of the CICT, the LMIP team, in partnership with the United Nations Development Program, conducted extensive research and field surveys and interviews in 12 eLGU Community eCenters across the country with 4 CeCs in each major island grouping (Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao). The result of these activities were two papers that were submitted to the CICT (published separately):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>High Impact, Pro-Poor e-Governance Applications: Identifying “Killer Applications” and Best Practice Models of E-Governance through Community e-Centers in the Philippines.</b></li> </ul> <p>This paper proposed a methodology or guide for evaluating killer applications, and identified possible killer applications and best practice models.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Setting up Community e-Centers for e-Governance in the Philippines: A Preliminary Assessment of the Community e-Center Program</b></li> </ul> <p>This paper documented initial lessons learned in the course of an evaluation of CeCs set up under the Philippine Government’s Community e-Center Program.</p>