



# Legal Network for Truthful Elections

**Reform Strategies and Practical Approaches  
on How to Pursue Electoral Reforms**

# WHO WE ARE

Established in 2007, the Legal Network for Truthful Elections (LENTE) is a non-partisan, nationwide network of lawyers, law students, paralegals, and grassroots volunteers engaged in election monitoring and lobbying for electoral policy reforms.

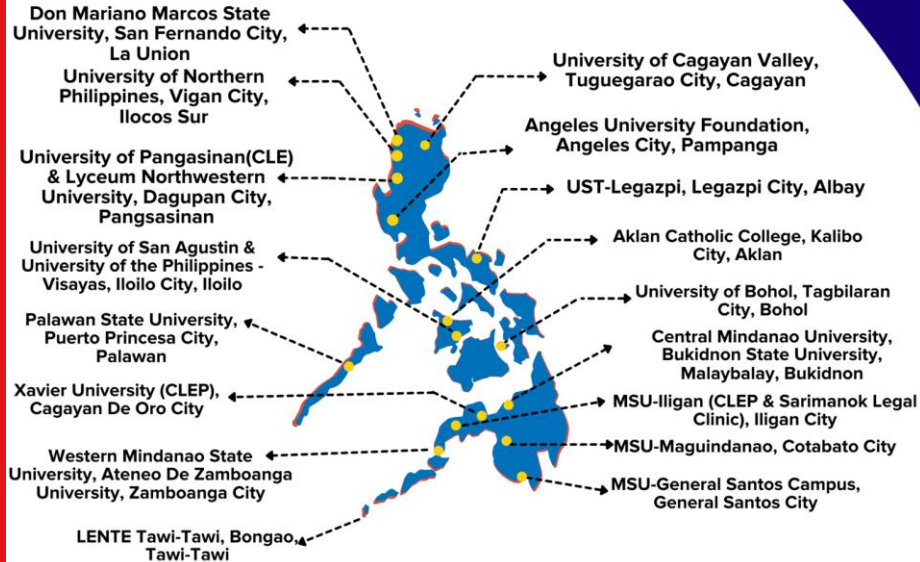


# WHAT WE DO

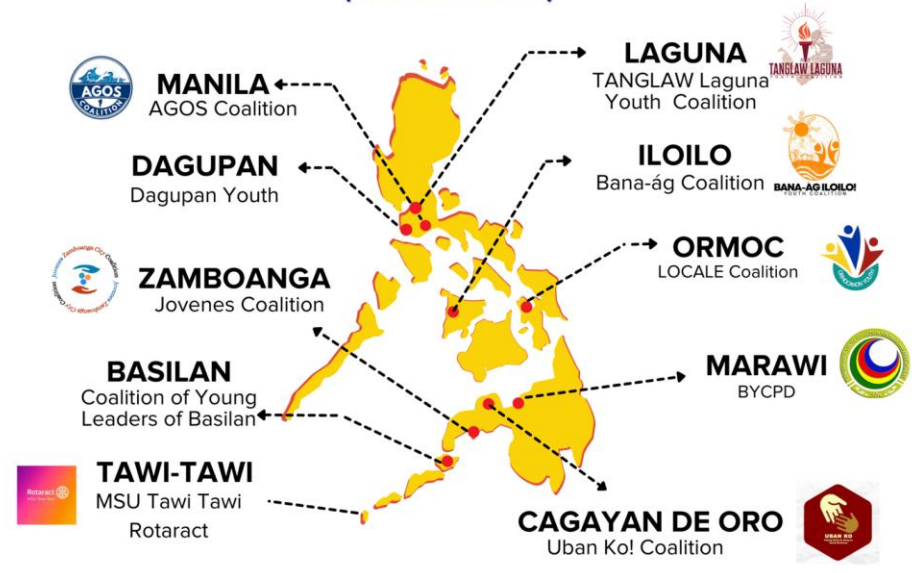
- **conducting training and capacity development programs, and political education** for its law school chapters, youth coalitions, vulnerable sector groups, and grassroots communities;
- **monitoring the entire electoral cycle**, from pre-election processes, election day, and post-elections
- **partnering with Church-based organizations and other like-minded NGOs** to ensure safe, accountable, transparent, and inclusive elections which inspires national public confidence (#SATINAngELEksyon); and
- **purposive and systematic monitoring of the entire electoral process** as the basis for the legal electoral reforms it advocates

# OUR NETWORK

## Our Chapters (24 CHAPTERS)



## Our Youth Coalitions (10 COALITIONS)



# OUR GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON SUFFRAGE AND ELECTORAL REFORMS**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL REFORMS AND PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION**

# Background



## The Philippines

- Presidential form of government
- **3 branches of government:** Executive, Legislative and Judicial
- **Constitutional Commissions:** Commission on Elections (COMELEC)
- **Has 1 autonomous region:** BARMM (parliamentary system of government)

# Electoral Reform for us **BEFORE**



## LENTE'S STATEMENT ON THE FIRST PUBLIC CONSULTATION OF BTA BILL NO.29 - BANGSAMORO ELECTORAL CODE

Regarding the provisions related to the BARMM Political Party Subsidy Fund, Bill No. 29 simply provides that "six months after the first parliamentary elections, the parliament shall, by law, establish a BARMM Political Party Subsidy Fund, which shall be used to augment the operating funds of Accredited Political Parties." Thus, LENTE proposes to include more details regarding the same such as those pertaining to party development, campaign expenditures, and their schedules of release. LENTE also recommends the inclusion of safeguards such as accounting requirements to ensure the proper use of the political subsidy fund.

Furthermore, in view of BARMM's Parliamentary System form of government, LENTE highlights the following recommendations for the BTA's consideration: i) a clear step-by-step procedure on how seats for representatives should be allocated based on proportional representation of the number of votes received with emphasis on low threshold, no seat cap, gender quota, and zipper list, ii) four different options on the manner of selection of sectoral representatives, iii) consideration of anti-political dynasty provisions in the list of nominees for parties competing in parliamentary elections, iv) four-level requirement for the establishment of political parties in the region, v) introduction of varying requirements that would secure the equal representation of women and other sectors, and v) a requirement for political parties to have a "Membership Book" to operationalize the anti-turncoatism provision found under the Bangsamoro Organic Law.

**Attend Parliamentary/Congressional Hearings**

**Issue statements regarding electoral issues**



**HEARINGS**

Legal Network for Truthful Elections

@lente\_ph  
lentephilippines  
lente.philippines@gmail.com  
lente.org.ph



**FGDS. SGDS. NEVER-ENDING.**

Legal Network for Truthful Elections

@lente\_ph  
lentephilippines  
lente.philippines@gmail.com

**LENTE'S STATEMENT ON THE FIRST PUBLIC CONSULTATION OF BTA BILL NO.29 - BANGSAMORO ELECTORAL CODE**

Regarding the provisions related to the BARMM Political Party Subsidy Fund, Bill No. 29 simply provides that "six months after the first parliamentary elections, the parliament shall, by law, establish a BARMM Political Party Subsidy Fund, which shall be used to augment the operating funds of Accredited Political Parties." Thus, LENTE proposes to include more details regarding the same such as those pertaining to party development, campaign expenditures, and their schedules of release. LENTE also recommends the inclusion of safeguards such as accounting requirements to ensure the proper use of the political subsidy fund.

Furthermore, in view of BARMM's Parliamentary System form of government, LENTE highlights the following recommendations for the BTA's consideration: i) a clear step-by-step procedure on how seats for representatives should be allocated based on proportional representation of the number of votes received with emphasis on low threshold, no seat cap, gender quota, and zipper list, ii) four different options on the manner of selection of sectoral representatives, iii) consideration of anti-political dynasty provisions in the list of nominees for parties competing in parliamentary elections, iv) four-level requirement for the establishment of political parties in the region, v) introduction of varying requirements that would secure the equal representation of women and other sectors, and vi) a requirement for political parties to have a "Membership Book" to operationalize the anti-turkeyism provision found under the Bangsamoro Organic Law.

Legal Network for Truthful Elections

**STATEMENTS.**



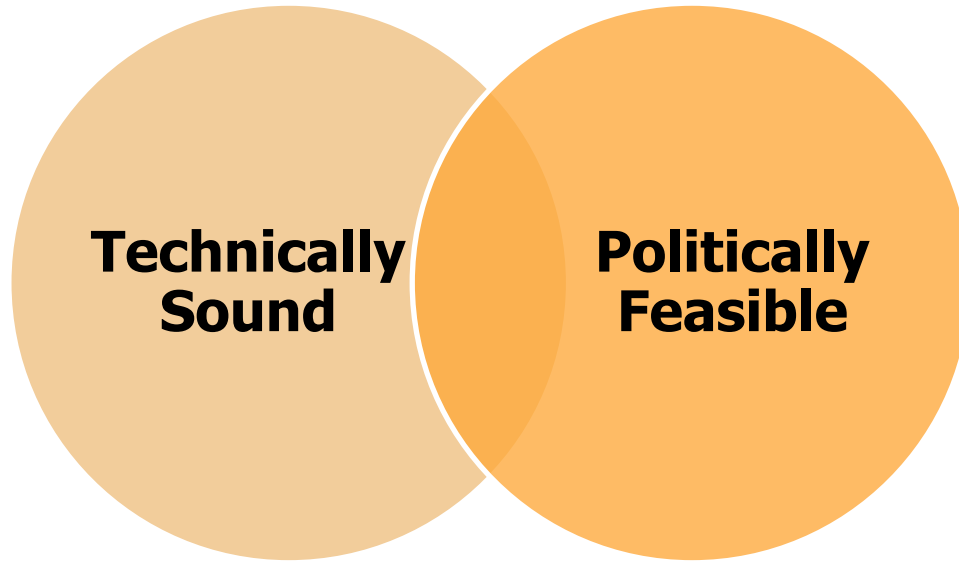
**MEETINGS. ANYWHERE.**



**Electoral Reform for us NOW**

# **Our FORMULA**

## **UNIVERSE OF REFORMS**



# How is a **REFORM TECHNICALLY SOUND**?



**Transformative**



**Institutionalization**



**Scale**



# How is a **REFORM POLITICALLY FEASIBLE?**



**WHEN THE  
STARS  
ALIGN**

April 8, 2016






ON THIS DAY RA 10756

**ELECTION SERVICE  
REFORM ACT**

WAS SIGNED INTO LAW!

Dagdag benepisyo  
para sa mga volunteer teacher  
tuwing halalan!

STATUS: WITH IRR

CONNECT WITH US     [BAM AQUINO](#) 





**MAKE SMALL BETS**

**HARNESS THE POWER  
OF COALITIONS &  
NETWORKS**

# BARMM ELECTORAL CODE (BEC)

**Lobbied** for the passage of the Bangsamoro Electoral Code last March 8, 2023 (2019 to 2023)

As a result, **LENTE provided policy recommendations to the BTA which were reflected in the BAA No. 35.**

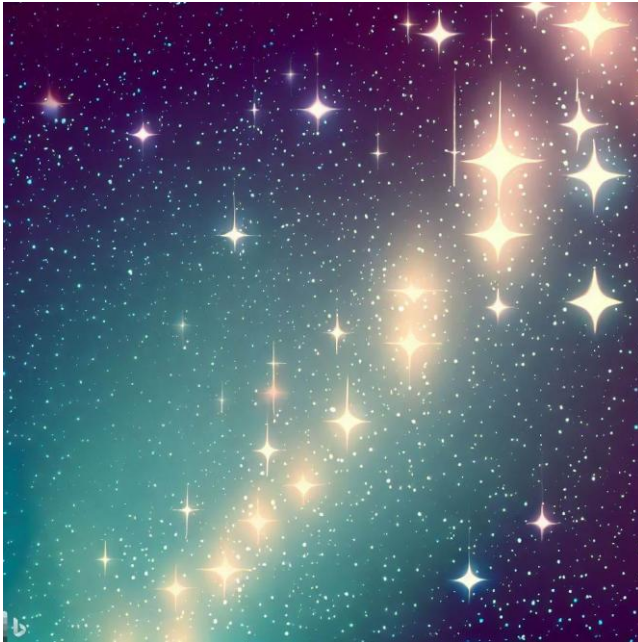
These include:

1. Mandating the Bangsamoro Electoral Office to purchase BEO Space and Time to enable equitable exposure and opportunities for all parties and candidates;
2. *"None of the Above"* option in the ballot;
3. More inclusive general election provisions to address high rates of illiteracy in BARMM through the following measures: inclusion of party logo in the ballot and mandating parties to conduct voter education;
4. Commitment to establish a BARMM Political Party Subsidy Fund;
5. Anti-political dynasty and anti-turncoatism provisions; and
6. Gender quota to increase political participation of women



REFORM AGENDA:  
The Passage of the Bangsamoro Electoral Code

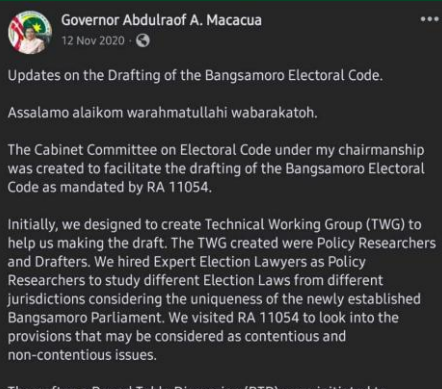
Was the BEC **REFORM POLITICALLY FEASIBLE?**



**STARS DID NOT  
ALIGN WELL**

ONLY THE “GOTD”  
HAS THE COPY of the  
BEC

PANDEMI  
C



NO PUBLIC  
CONSULTATION  
S

POSTPONEMEN  
T OF ELECTIONS

We appreciate the initiative of some non-government organizations in proposing their own draft and conducting series of activities such as public consultations. However, it somehow creates confusion on the part of the Members of the Parliament and pre-empts our policy and decision making capacity.

BIG EGO

Dear Minister [Macacua](#):

Greetings of Peace!

In support of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority's goal of enacting priority legislations and in particular, the Bangsamoro Electoral Code, the Legal Network for Truthful Elections (LENTE) wishes to offer its assurances that the organization is not seeking to cause any confusion or disruption to the internal drafting process. We apologize for any confusion that our previous activities may have caused to some members of the BTA. More than anything, LENTE only wishes to create a consultative space to allow key stakeholders to provide insight into what a potential electoral process could look like for the Bangsamoro Region. We hoped that this in turn would allow our own organization to have a better understanding of how LENTE can offer its electoral expertise in service to the Bangsamoro people.

We continue to extend our strong support and would gladly offer any technical or legal support which may be useful to your office or the BTA for the enactment of the Bangsamoro Electoral Code.

SMALL  
EGO

  
BANGSAMORO TRANSITION AUTHORITY  
BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO

  
CALL FOR  
**POSITION PAPERS**

  
**BTA BILL NO. 29**  
(BANGSAMORO ELECTORAL CODE OF 2022)

send email to  
[parliamentary.rules@bta.gov.ph](mailto:parliamentary.rules@bta.gov.ph)  
[parliamentarycommittees@bta.gov.ph](mailto:parliamentarycommittees@bta.gov.ph)

DEADLINE OF SUBMISSION:  
**OPEN DATE**

 @btaparliament  
parliament.bangsamoro.gov.ph



**PWD GROUP CALLS FOR INCLUSION IN BANGSAMORO ELECTORAL CODE**

A civil society organization for persons with disabilities (PWD) called for the inclusion of provisions friendly to them on the last day of public consultation on the Bangsamoro Electoral Code held today in this province.

  
@btaparliament  
parliament.bangsamoro.gov.ph



**MOVE!**  
A Coalition on Electoral Reforms

**HARNESS THE POWER OF  
COALITIONS &  
NETWORKS**



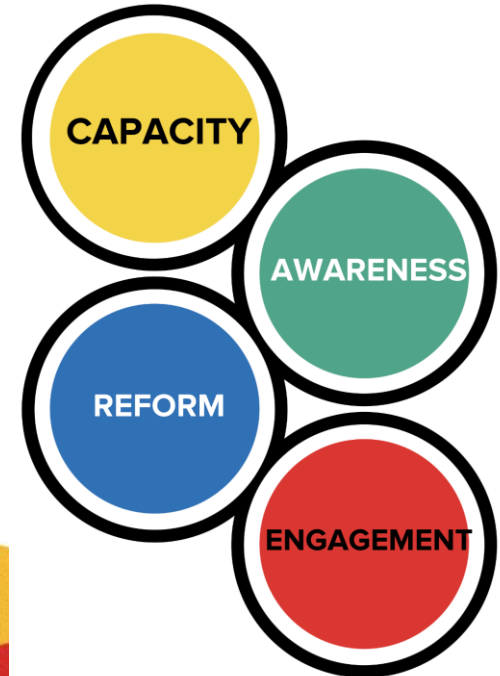
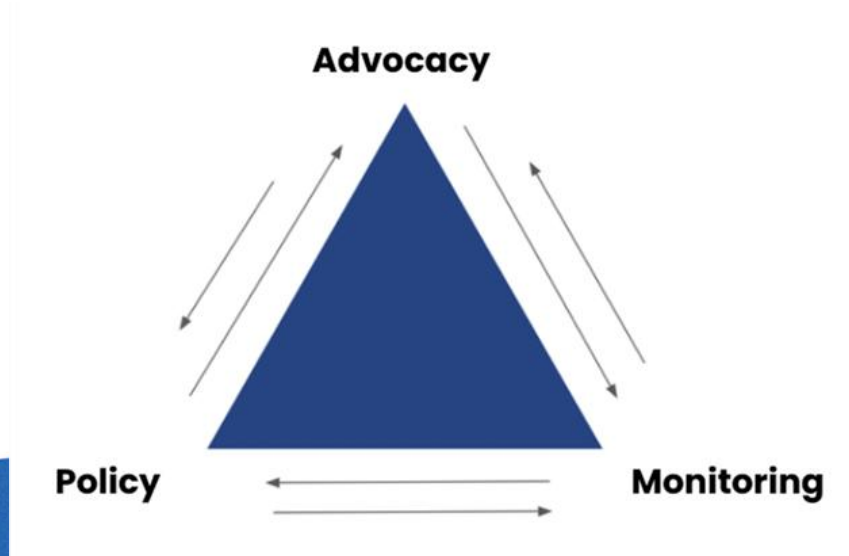
  
Legal Network for Truthful Elections  
@lente\_ph  
lente.philippines@gmail.com  
lente.org.ph

# About LENTE's Abuse of State Resources in Elections Monitoring

In the **2022 National and Local Elections**, LENTE started to look closely on the **use of state resources** through **40 long-term observers in 17 vote-rich and income generating cities**.

The **OBJECTIVES ARE TWOFOLD**: Increase public awareness and knowledge and Develop a robust legal framework through a **THREE-PRONGED STRATEGY**:

In the 2023 Barangay & SK Elections, it continued its ASR in elections monitoring using the **CARE framework**:



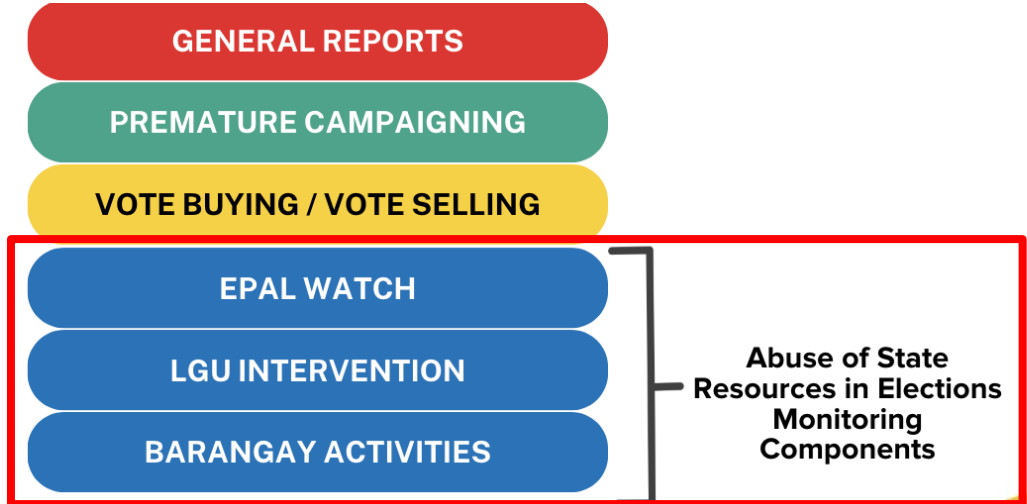
# LENTE's Monitoring Methodology For the 2023 BSKE

## Reporting Mechanisms

- Accountability Lab Portal
- LENTE Email, Social Media Pages, and Hotlines
- Kobo Tool Box (election day)
- Pro forma affidavit

## Types of Reports Received

(August 28 - November 29, except Election Day)



# ASR in Elections as an **ELECTION OFFENSE** & Intersection with **Vote-Buying & Vote Selling**

## As an Election Offense

- 1) **Prohibition to release, disburse or expend any public funds**
  - a) September 15 to October 30: National, provincial, regional and LGUs
  - b) October 20 to October 30: Barangay
- 2) **Construction/maintenance of barangay-funded roads and bridges** (October 20–October 29)
- 3) **Use of public funds, money deposited in trust, equipment, facilities owned or controlled by the government for an election campaign** (August 29 to November 29)
- 4) **Vote Buying and Vote Selling** (October 19 to October 30)

## Intersection with Vote-Buying & Vote-Selling

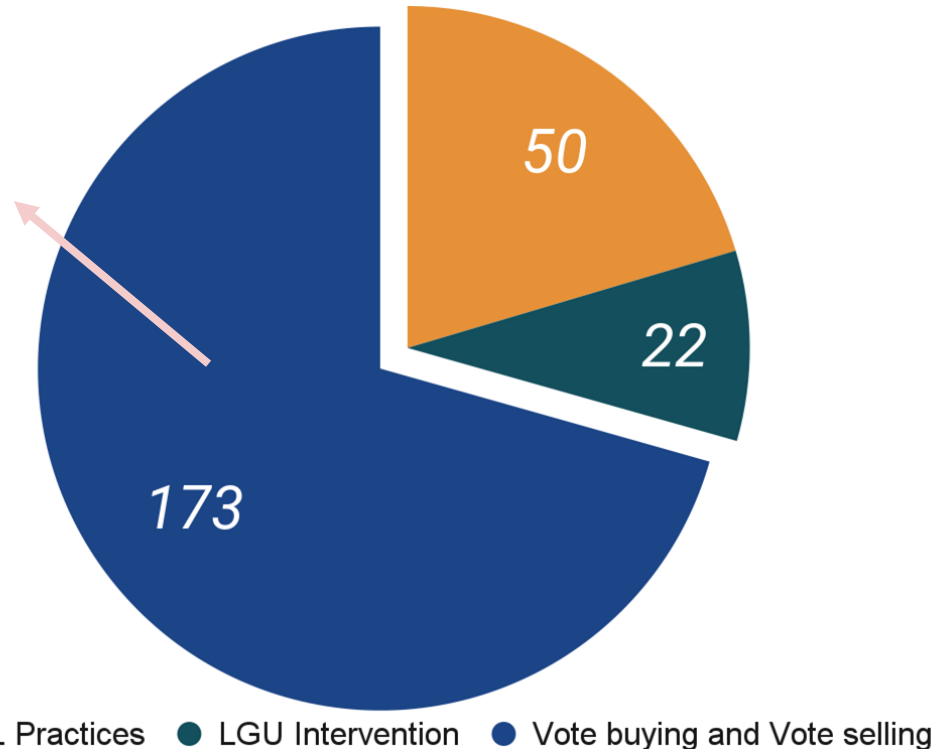
### Iba pang mga **PAGBABAWAL**

Pagbibigay, pamamahagi at pagtanggap ng anumang tulong o "ayuda"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sa panahon ng kampanya,</li><li>• sa araw bago ang halalan at</li><li>• sa Araw ng Halalan</li></ul>	Mga ayuda o tulong na karaniwang ibinibigay sa mga kuwalipikadong indibidwal tulad ng ngunit hindi limitado sa mga pangunahing pangangailangan gaya ng pagkain, transportasyon, medikal, edukasyon, libing at iba pang katulad na tulong.
--	--	---

## ASR Reports received by LENTE in the 2023 BSKE

**127 reports** fall under the COMELEC's presumed acts of vote buying and vote selling:

1. *Offering or promising something of value for a person's vote;*
2. *The gathering of two or more registered voters in a particular place with the purpose of buying votes; and*
3. *Giving, distributing, and receiving any assistance other than what is normally given to qualified individuals.*



# Presumed Acts of Vote Buying and Vote Selling – **Barangay Activities**



October 11, 2023: Nakapaloob dito sa mga litrato ang ginagawa nilang pa feeding program pagbibigay pagkain sa mga taong kanilang pinapatawag sila ay nangangampanya kahit ito ay ipinagbabawal. Ang tumatakbong pagkachairman ay si baddy sultan ibrahim at ang kanyang sk chairman na si pring jomie dito sa aming brgy 649 zone 68 – **Manila**



Bio Bagong Bayan Spc is with Charlie Flores Tanyag and 16 others.

Oct 10 · 🌐

OKTUBRE 10, 2023 - Pamamahagi ng School Supplies sa mga batang nag aaral mula Daycare, Kinder at Grade 1-2 kasama ang mga Guro at Punong Guro ng Bagong Bayan Elementary School at Daycare Center na proyekto ng ating Sangguniang Kabataan Chairperson [Liberty Pamela Capuchino](#) kasama ang ating Punong Barangay Robert Enriquez Dizon, Kagawad Carmelo Sabal Jr., Brgy Admin Ronald Manaloto, Hepe Raul Vitales at ang masisipag na PBSO ng Barangay.

[#BarangayInformationOffice](#) [#BioBagongBayan](#)

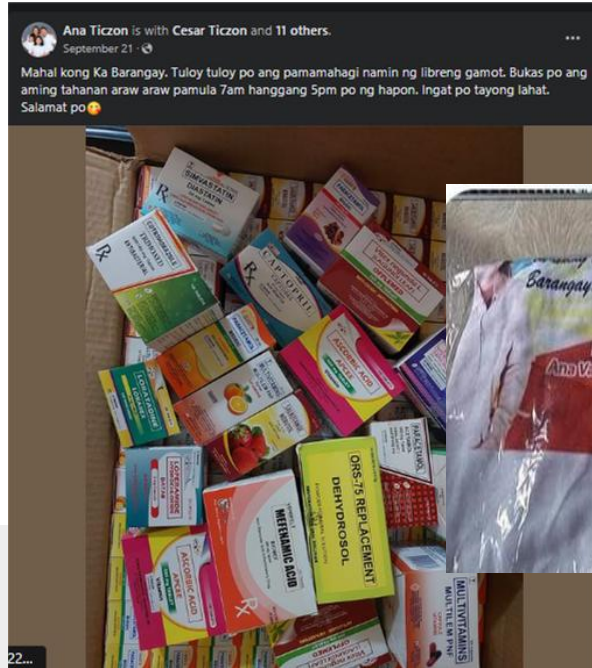


*School supplies were distributed to daycare kinder pupils at the local public elementary school, which was supposedly a project of the local barangay captain. This event was also publicized through the official social media page of the local public school – **Quezon City***

# Presumed Acts of Vote Buying and Vote Selling – *Barangay Activities*



When we were on our way to Brgy. Igtuba in Miagao, Iloilo, we saw five tricycles carrying carton boxes labeled “DSWD”, and we saw that they were unloading some in the barangay office. When I asked their captain what it was for, according to her, it was for a food-for-work program of DSWD, and the barangay is the one administering the goods to the recipients. While she was arranging the boxes inside the office she told us that there were actually 3 people who finished their work already and about to claim their goods the day after. – **Miagao, Iloilo**



In our barangay, an aspirant is distributing medicine to the community members and promising free medication/maintenance for children, seniors, and persons with disabilities. Some are also giving away mugs with their faces on them – **San Pablo, Laguna**

# Assessment on Committee on Kontra Bigay's Three-Pronged Strategy

The Committee on Kontra-Bigay's strategy is a paradigm shift in the COMELEC's approach to election violations, marking a substantial departure from previous practices.

## Deterrence

## Enforcement

## Investigation Prosecution

- The **development and inclusion of presumed acts of vote-buying and vote-selling helped elevate the awareness** of voters and candidates, encouraging them to engage with the accountability process by filing complaints.
- LENTE **observed an increase in election-related reports it received.**
- The localized committees of the Kontra Bigay and the Kontra Bigay complaint center are **tangible examples of how access to information empowers citizens to report and disseminate crucial information** related to election violations.
- These localized bodies played a role in bringing the accountability processes closer and more accessible to the community.

***Reluctance of informants to disclose their identity***

***Reluctance of informants to continue with the complaint process***

# ABUSE OF STATE RESOURCES

**Section 3. Abuse of state resources (ASR)**--, Abuse of state resources (ASR) pertains to the misuse of government resources – whether material, human, coercive, regulatory, budgetary, media-related, or legislative – for electoral advantage. Abuse of state resources is committed as follows:

- Intervention of public officers and employees
- Undue influence
- Use of public funds
- Policemen and provincial guards acting as bodyguards or security guards
- Prohibition against release, disbursement or expenditure of public funds.



# PRESUMED ABUSE OF STATE RESOURCES

**Section 5. Presumed abuse of state resources—** Committed by the incumbent elected public official and/or government employee, who exercises control or administration, whether directly or indirectly, over the pertinent government resource, whether **material, human, coercive, regulatory, budgetary, or media-related, or relevant government facility, asset, activity, or program:**



# CKB-ASR

## COMMITTEE ON KONTRA BIGAY AND ABUSE OF STATE RESOURCES

**Section 6.** The Commission hereby creates the **Committee on Kontra Bigay and Abuse of State Resources (CKB-ASR)** to ensure the efficient implementation and enforcement, through the Whole-of-Nation approach of all policies and guidelines of the Commission to curb vote-buying and vote-selling, and abuse of state resources.




# CKB-ASR

## MEMBERS COMMITTEE ON KONTRA BIGAY AND ABUSE OF STATE RESOURCES

- a. Commissioner-in-Charge, as Chairperson;
- b. Executive Director as Vice-Chairperson;
- c. Deputy Executive Director for Operations (DEDO), Law Department, Education and Information Department (EID), Finance Services Department (FSD), Election and Barangay Affairs Department (EBAD) as Members; and
- d. Department of Justice (DOJ);
- e. Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG);
- f. Department of Education (DepEd);
- g. Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT);
- h. Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD);**
- i. Cybercrime Investigation and Coordinating Center (CICC);
- j. Philippine Information Agency (PIA);
- k. Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP);
- l. Philippine National Police (PNP);
- m. National Bureau of Investigation (NBI);
- n. Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP);
- o. Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC);
- p. Public Attorney's Office (PAO);
- q. Office of the Ombudsman;**
- r. Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP);
- s. Philippine Association of Law Schools (PALS);
- t. Accredited Citizens' Arms of the Commission; and Other government agencies and election stakeholders as may be deputized by the Commission.

### a. Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD);

- (EPAL-Activities) Presence of Politicians in the government aid distributions..
- Abrupt revocation of Social Welfare benefits



CORDILLERA ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

“  
*Do not use the (government) program to attract votes and to campaign.*”

The program is non-partisan po 'yan, walang kulay, walang political party. Kung may mga reklamo, iparating lang ho sa mga ahensiya, o kami po sa DSWD at ipapasa namin sa mga kaukulang ahensiya na talagang nag-i-implement nito.

**DIR. ARNEL GARCIA**  
DSWD-Cordillera

*During the launching of Anti-Epal campaign in Cordillera on Wednesday, March 23, 2022.*

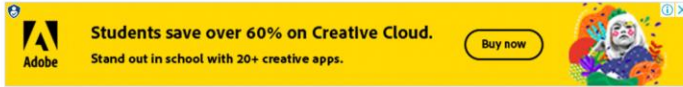
Philippine Information Agency-Cordillera

fb.com/pla.car.gov/ @PIA\_Cordillera www.pla.gov.ph

PHILIPPINE ELECTIONS

# Comelec to closely monitor gov't agencies exempted from spending ban

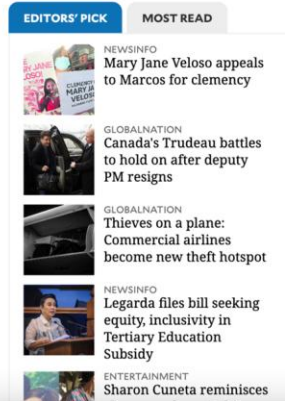
By: [Dianne Raine U. Sampang](#) - @inquirerdotnet INQUIRER.net / 11:25 PM December 17, 2024



Students save over 60% on Creative Cloud. Stand out in school with 20+ creative apps. Buy now



Comelec Chair George Erwin Garcia —INQUIRER.net/Noy Morcoso



**EDITORS' PICK** MOST READ

- NEWSINFO: Mary Jane Veloso appeals to Marcos for clemency
- GLOBALNATION: Canada's Trudeau battles to hold on after deputy PM resigns
- GLOBALNATION: Thieves on a plane: Commercial airlines become new theft hotspot
- NEWSINFO: Legarda files bill seeking equity, inclusivity in Tertiary Education Subsidy
- ENTERTAINMENT: Sharon Cuneta reminisces

Garcia also encouraged concerned citizens to file reports on possible violations of the spending ban, emphasizing that they should not be scared in doing so.

“We have a Kontra Bigay committee and we want to look into the abuse of state resources because the government funds should not be used for own interest,” Garcia noted.

# What are **PRACTICAL APPROACHES?**

Begin with the REFORM in mind

Assemble your team

Re-align your work methodology

Be patient

Never stop sharpening the tool



## **Bonus...**

In policy work,

You win some, you LOSE MORE.

But with policy work, the work done (short of the ACTUAL REFORM) is still GOOD WORK.

You get solid technical work and build/re-build networks & connections.



# Get to know us more!



LENTE Philippines



@lente\_ph



@lente\_ph



@lentephilippines



lente Ph



[www.lente.org.ph](http://www.lente.org.ph)



[lente.philippines@gmail.com](mailto:lente.philippines@gmail.com)