

## **DOST'S "Smarter Philippines" project to strengthen industries thru ICT**

Written by Allan Mauro V. Marfal, S & T Media Service, DOST-STII  
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The Information and Communications Technology Office of Department of Science and Technology (DOST-ICTO) recently introduced its upcoming flagship program that is expected to speed up the country's economy towards substantial growth via ICT.

Called "Smarter Philippines", it is a program that will use ICT as enabling tool to provide more efficient and reliable services in some priority industries in the country. It has several components such as Smarter Governance, Smarter People, Smarter High-Tech Industry, Smarter Computing, Smarter SME's, Smarter Agriculture World Development, Smarter Environmental Healthcare, Energy and Transport, Smarter Disaster and Mitigation Public Safety and Smarter Cities.

Alejandro P. Melchor III, deputy executive director for ICT Industry Development of ICTO, recognized the capability of ICT in boosting the country's economy by touching numerous industries.

Melchor expounded that, though some sectors like agri-business are not directly related to ICT, there is still a system in ICT that could give huge boost to this sector.

"DOST with the ICT office intends to transform every aspect of society through technology innovation. Actually, Smarter Philippines is a new program that will fuel tremendous growth to the ICT industry and create tremendous demand for engineering, content development, and domestic ICT industry," Melchor said.

Melchor also shared that though the program is still to be launched, some of its components are now in operation. It includes some initiatives in governance, disaster risk reduction, and bringing Information Technology-Business Process Outsourcing (IT-BPO) investments in cities in the countryside.

One component is iGovPhils, a landmark program that aims to enhance the e-capabilities of the government in addressing the president's call for transparency by putting relevant mechanisms to implement interactive, interconnected, and efficient government collaboration.

Another is Program NOAH, DOST's banner project that will set up a more responsive disaster preparedness system to reduce, if not eliminate, human casualties from rain-triggered natural hazards.

Still another component is Smarter Cities, also known as Next Wave Cities Program, which creates career opportunities in the countryside by promoting different areas in the provinces as suitable BPO destinations.

### **ICT industry mapping project**

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ICTO also launched its newest project, in collaboration with the Statistical Research and Training Center (SRTC), called the held a press briefing of its new ICT Industry Mapping Project.

Melchor emphasized the importance of formulating industry mapping to be able to understand the dynamics within the sector as well as its linkages outside the sector towards to a wider economy.

Under the Domestic ICT Industry of ICTO, this project seeks to obtain information integral to the development of strategic ICT industry programs to help increase the potential of the ICT industry in pushing the country's socio-economic development.

Particularly, the project will come up with a description and examination of the state and performance of the ICT industry as a whole and by segments. It will also measure employment and income contribution, and identify the sector or segment needs that have not yet been addressed by government policies and programs.