

The Implementation of the Ease of Doing Business Act in Selected Municipalities in the Province of Sorsogon

Maria Rachel P. Gonzales¹ and Dr. Catherine A. De Castro²

¹Leader, Local Government Unit of Irosin, Sorsogon, Philippines

²Member, Sorsogon State University-Graduate School, Sorsogon City, Philippines

Abstract— Ease of Doing Business plays a crucial role in a country's economic growth by influencing the attraction of foreign direct investments. When systems, processes, rules, and regulations are business-friendly, setting up of businesses is made easier. Ease of doing business can benefit businesses and local citizens through access to economic opportunities, lower transaction costs and less corruption. This study aimed to determine the implementation of the Ease of Doing Business (EODB) Act or the Republic Act No. 10032 in selected municipalities in the Province of Sorsogon for Fiscal Year 2023. Explanatory sequential mixed method of research was utilized in this study. Documentary analysis, survey questionnaire and structured interview were used to gather the needed data from the 34 key implementers. Specifically, this study sought to determine the profile of selected municipalities in the province of Sorsogon in terms of the number of business establishments, revenue, human resources, and technology; evaluate the extent of implementation of the EODB Act along Citizens Charter, single or unified business application forms, business one stop shop, automated business permitting and licensing system and Zero Contact Policy; and determine the problems encountered in its implementation. The data gathered were statistically analyzed and interpreted using frequency count, rank, percentage, and weighted mean. The findings led to crafting a policy brief to effectively implement the EODB act in the municipalities that participated in this study.

Keywords— Citizens Charter, Single or Unified Business Application Forms, Business One Stop Shop, Automated Business Permitting and Licensing System, Zero Contact Policy

I. INTRODUCTION

The Philippines is a popular choice for international businesses and investors. It is considered as one of the most competitive economies in the Asia Pacific region boasting increased urbanization. The country's economy is geared towards expanding its global leadership techniques and solutions led by a growing population. In the context of this study, one of the key factors to achieve an inclusive and sustainable economic growth is through a streamlined regulatory environment and effectual policies that are transparent and accessible to all (Ani, 2015). To strengthen the Sustainable Development Goal No. 8, governments around the globe are encouraged to build a dynamic, sustainable, innovative, and people-centered economies. Higher levels of economic productivity may be achieved through diversification, technological upgrading, and innovation, including a focus on high-value added and labor-intensive sectors. This shall go hand in hand through the promotion of development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSME), including through access to financial services.

Because of regulatory reforms, Philippines is among those counties which is keeping pace with the international economic trend. According to 2020 World Bank Doing Business Report, Philippines ranked 95th out of 190 economies with a score of 62.8 jumping 29 notches from the 124 rank and a score of 57.68 in 2019 (Philippine News Agency, 2021). Among ASEAN countries, the Philippines recorded the most significant improvement in both the rank (+29) and the EODB score (+5.12). The World Bank 2020 Report cited Philippines as one of the 42 economies which implemented regulatory reforms in 3 or more of the 10 areas. Aside from that, based from the report of Philippine Statistics Authority, the total approved foreign investments reached 13.05 trillion pesos in the third quarter of 2022.

However, behind this good news are some issues that need to be addressed. Despite the presence of a law which criminalizes acts of bribery, extortion, abuse of office and conflict of interest, still, legislative framework is not adequate to improve service delivery (GAN, 2017). Primary complaints of corruption come from the local government units (LGUs). According to 2019 Ombudsman Annual Report, there was a total of 9, 251 complaints for CY 2019 received by their office. Out of these, 1,382 were recorded for administrative

case and total case workload for criminal cases is 3,947. In the same report, LGUs ranked first with 90 cases filed with Sandiganbayan, House of Representatives with 41 cases and 16 cases for Tanjay Water District. The passage of the Ease of Doing Business Act and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018 has been a welcome development to improving the business climate in the Philippines. This law was created with the purpose of attracting more foreign investments and curb corruption in government transactions.

LGUs are mandated to implement the Ease of Doing Business Act which was enacted on May 28, 2018 and its full implementation took effect two years after its effectivity. The provisions in its implementation were adhered and followed by LGUs and strictly monitored by ARTA, DTI and DILG, DICT and CSC through the Oversight Committee of Anti-Red Tape Council. However, three years after its full implementation, only the municipalities of Bulan and Barcelona in the Province of Sorsogon are the known implementers of this law in the province of Sorsogon especially the adoption of electronic business permitting system (eBPLS). Based on the observation of the researcher, several factors hinder its implementation and these include the capacity and the capability of the LGU and the political will of the Local Chief Executive to name a few. To dig deeper on the reasons, this present study is hereby conducted to assess the implementation of the EODB Act in selected municipalities namely, Bulan, Gubat and Castilla, in the Province of Sorsogon using specific provisions or variables and provide recommendations for the improvement of its implementation.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study aimed to determine the implementation of the Ease of Doing Business (EODB) Act in selected municipalities in the province of Sorsogon for Fiscal Year 2023. Explanatory sequential mixed method of research was utilized in this study. Explanatory research was employed utilizing documentary analysis and survey methods. Sequential research was employed using structured interviews. Documentary analysis was used to determine the profile of the municipalities in terms of the number of business establishments, revenue, human resources, and technology. Data were gathered from the selected 34 key implementers who are members of the Committee on Anti-Red Tape (CART). The instrument used was a devised checklist made based on the provisions of the Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2019-001 Series of 2019. It also utilized a structured

interview guide. The data gathered were then analyzed and interpreted using appropriate statistical tools and treatment such as frequency, ranking, percentage, weighted mean and a 3-point Likert scale.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Profile of the Municipalities

This section presents the profile of the municipalities in terms of the number of establishments and revenue as well as human resources and technology.

Number of business establishments. Table 2A shows the number of registered business establishments including those offering products and services in the three (3) municipalities. Bulan has 1,172 registered business establishments, followed by Gubat with 711 and Castilla 484.

Table 2A. Number of Business Establishments

Municipality	Frequency	Rank
1. Bulan	1172	1
2. Gubat	711	2
3. Castilla	484	3

Source: BPLO

The most number of business establishments was registered in Bulan followed by Gubat and the least in Castilla. This is attributed to the fact that Bulan is the only first class and biggest municipality in the province catering to 63 barangays thus have the largest population among the three. Added from that, there are residents from neighboring towns of Masbate which do their purchase of goods and services in Bulan since they have a port. More business establishments result to a higher standard of living and this empowers the consumer to make more purchases and avail more services. This lets businesses bring in products that are in demand at much more profitable rates and enjoy the benefits of a growing economy. **Revenue.** As of June 2023 Bulan has collected 4.383 million revenues, the highest among the three (3) municipalities followed by Gubat with 2.830 million and Castilla with 1.019 million. This is shown in table below.

TABLE 2B. Revenue

Municipality	Revenue (in million pesos)	Rank
1. Bulan	4.383	1
2. Gubat	2.830	2
3. Castilla	1.019	3

Source: Office of the Municipal Treasurer

The highest revenue generation was achieved by Bulan, being a first-class municipality, followed by Gubat and the lowest in Castilla. This happened because Bulan has registered the greatest number of business establishments. Increase in revenue collection is attributed to the increase in the number of industry groups. If there are many businesses it will create more employment and promote economic growth in local communities. A growing economy means that a certain place can spend on its infrastructures such as roads, electricity, transportation, and communication. This means businesses will not have to struggle to get basic amenities like electricity, water, and better technology.

Human Resources. As shown in Table 2C, Bulan has employed the most number of employees among the

three municipalities. It has permanent employees with a total of 269, 621 for job order, 7 co-terminus, 6 casual, 12 elective and vacant is only 5. This is followed by Gubat with 153 permanent employees, 167 job order, 6 casual, 12 elective and vacant position is 13. Lastly, Castilla has 120 permanent employees, 365 job order, 4 co-terminus, 12 elective and vacant is 21.

The result implied that Bulan, a first-class municipality, has the highest number of permanent employees followed by Gubat and Castilla. In terms of job order, Bulan ranked 1st, next is Castilla and this was followed by Gubat. Meanwhile, with regards to vacant positions to be filled up, Castilla ranked 1st among the three municipalities followed by Gubat and Bulan.

Table 2C. Human Resources

Category	Bulan		Gubat		Castilla	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Permanent	269	29	153	44	120	23
Job Order	621	68	167	48	365	70
Co-terminus	7	1	0	0	4	1
Casual	6	1	6	2	0	0
Elected	12	1	12	3	12	2
Vacant	5	1	13	4	21	4
Total	920	100	351	100	522	100

Source: HRMO

It can be deduced that since Bulan registered the highest number of establishments have to employ more employees either permanent or job order to serve the populace. Meanwhile, the number of employees in Gubat is almost the same for permanent and job order. A different scenario in Castilla wherein the number of job order doubled the number of permanent. Basing from statistical analysis, it can be inferred that they have the highest number of unfilled permanent positions. As per information collected from LGU-Castilla, these job orders were deployed in the special projects of the Local Chief Executive pertaining to agriculture and fisheries and peace and order and basic services including disaster risk reduction, solid waste management, senior citizens affair, nutrition, health services and social welfare and development. Human resource can lead to increased productivity, satisfaction among employees and ultimately business growth (Newsome, 2023).

Technology. All municipalities used landline and cellular network and utilized fiber internet aside from cable TV as a form of technology. Aside from that, social media through the use of messenger and email is

now a trend nowadays. The results suggested that in terms of technology almost the same form of communications networks is used by the three municipalities for information dissemination and for speedy government transactions. Nowadays, citizens prefer to use digital technology like email or applications when accessing business permit transactions or paying business tax using e-wallet payments. Technology enables a faster, wider, and more efficient means of communication. It helps increase the efficiency of systems, products and services, track and streamline processes, maintain data flow, and manage contacts and records. In fact, this increased efficiency in operation helps reduce costs as well as enable the business entity to grow rapidly.

2. Extent of Implementation of Ease of Doing Business Act

Meanwhile, the extent of implementation of Ease of Doing Business Act along Citizens Charter is found in Table 3A. It showed the indicators with the corresponding description obtained.

a. Citizens Charter

The implementation of Citizens Charter in the three (3) municipalities was fully implemented with an overall mean of 2.89. The three provisions that got a score of 3.0 include Citizens Charter enumerates the comprehensive checklist of requirements for each type of application or request, the uniform checklist of requirements for each type of application or request and the procedure to obtain a particular service. It was observed in the three municipalities that it was common to all Citizens Charter posted in conspicuous place that it contained checklist of requirements as well as additional requirements for securing permits and services. It also enumerated the steps to be accomplished by the applicant or clients as well as from the service

providers, duration of activity, name of responsible persons and the corresponding fees.

The provision having the lowest weighted mean was Citizens Charter posted in LGU websites with a score of 2.62. According to interviews in Bulan, websites were not operational at the moment when the survey was conducted because there was no permanent Information Technologist (IT) to man the operation of their website. IT personnel were mostly on a job order basis thus, if they found new job they leave the LGU. Similarly, in Gubat, at the moment of interview website is not in a functional status. Except for Castilla which has an operational website and a permanent employee who oversee and maintain it.

Table 3A. Ease of Doing Business Act along Citizens Charter

Indicators	3	2	1	WM	Description
1. Citizens Charter is in the form of information billboards	25	8	0	2.75	FI
2. Citizens Charter is posted at main entrance of offices	28	4	1	2.81	FI
3. Citizen's charter is posted in LGU web	25	1	5	2.62	FI
4. Citizens Charter is posted in the form of published materials	29	3	0	2.89	FI
5. Citizens Charter enumerates the comprehensive checklist of requirements for each type of request	34	0	0	3.00	FI
6. Citizens Charter enumerates the uniform checklist of requirements for each type of request	33	0	0	3.00	FI
7. Citizens Charter enumerates the procedure to obtain a particular service	34	0	0	3.00	FI
8. Citizens Charter enumerates the person/s responsible for each step	33	1	0	2.97	FI
9. Citizens Charter enumerates the maximum time to conclude the process	33	1	0	2.97	FI
10. Citizens Charter enumerates the documents to be presented by the applicant	32	0	1	2.94	FI
11. Citizens Charter enumerates the amount of fees and were the payment shall be given	28	5	0	2.85	FI
12. Citizens Charter enumerates the procedure of filling complaints	26	3	1	2.82	FI
Overall Weighted Mean				2.89	FI

Legend: FI=Fully Implemented

Posting of the Citizens' Charter in conspicuous place complies to the transparency requirements of ARTA. Saguin (2013) revealed in his study that posting of Citizens Charter appears to have resulted in a better-informed citizenry because citizens asked fewer questions and lodged less complaints. Similar study of Shrestha (2018) found out that Citizens Charter seems to be very successful in creating procedural clarity among the service seekers and helping in improvement in service delivery. Citizens Charter enhance transparency and accountability and complement an effort of corruption fighting (Nigussa,2014).

b. Single or Unified Business Application Forms

The implementation of single or unified business application form in the three municipalities was partially implemented with an overall mean of 2.43. The provision that has a highest weighted mean of 2.97 is in the provision that a single or unified business application form is used in the processing of new applications for business permits and renewals. All three municipalities used a single business application form. Hardcopies is already not available in the municipality of Bulan because they are already implementing electronic BPLS that is why the copy is already available online

The provision that got the lowest score of 1.99 marked as partially implemented is the single or unified business application form is available online in the LGU website because most websites at the time of the study are not operational. Except for Castilla with a functional

website. According to Cflow Blogspot (2023), simplifying company procedures helps eliminate duplications and assures the best use of resources. Process and procedure simplification is the best strategy to raise operational effectiveness and boost profits.

Table 3B. Ease of Doing Business Act along Single or Unified Business Application Forms

Indicators	3	2	1	WM	Description
1. A single or unified business application form is used in the processing of new applications and business renewals	29	1	0	2.97	FI
2. The single or unified business application form is available online in the central business portal	20	4	6	2.47	PI
3. The single or unified business Application form is available in LGU website	12	5	9	1.99	PI
4. The single or unified business application form is in a “fillable format”	14	4	12	2.07	PI
5. Hard copies is available at all times in designated areas of the agency	23	1	4	2.67	FI
Overall Weighted Mean				2.43	PI

Legend: FI – Fully implemented

PI – Partially implemented

c. Establishment of Business One Stop Shop

The implementation of single or business application forms in the three (3) municipalities under study was fully implemented with an average weighted mean of 2.53. A one stop business facilitation service or BOSS is established within the municipalities “Negosyo Center” has the highest weighted mean of 2.93. All business one stop shop in the three municipalities is within the premises of the Negosyo Center. The one stop business facilitation service or BOSS located in the Negosyo

Center has the lowest weighted mean interpreted as partially implemented with a score of 2.01 because in the three municipalities all Negosyo Center is located in a separate office. In Bulan, it is located in front of the BPLO office, in Gubat it is in the entrance of the town hall and in Castilla it is beside the Treasury Office and BPLO Office. A respondent in Bulan mentioned that the office of the Negosyo Center was separated because there are cases that they are transacting businesses and the clients of BPLO are distracting them from their works.

Table 3C. Ease of Doing Business Act along Establishment of Business One Stop Shop

Indicators	3	2	1	WM	Description
1. A one-stop business facilitation service or BOSS is established within the Negosyo Center	29	0	1	2.93	FI
2. A one-stop business facilitation service or BOSS receives and process manually	27	1	1	2.90	FI
3. A one-stop business facilitation service or BOSS receives and process electronic submission of application	15	4	11	2.13	PI
4. A one stop business facilitation service or BOSS is located in the Negosyo Center	15	9	11	2.01	PI
5. A queuing system is available in the BOSS	21	3	6	2.48	PI
6. A collocation of the offices of Treasury, Business Permits and Licensing Office, Zoning and Bureau of Fire Protection is implemented	25	4	2	2.75	FI
Overall Weighted Mean				2.53	FI

Legend: FI=Fully Implemented

PI=Partially Implemented

d. Standard Turnaround Time for Government Transactions

The implementation of standard turnaround time for government transactions in the three (3) municipalities were fully implemented with an average weighted mean of 2.51. Application or request acts upon by the assigned officer or employee within the prescribed processing

time in Citizen Charter has a weighted mean of 2.97. All applications that are complete of requirements are acted upon immediately.

Meanwhile, the lowest weighted mean of 1.64 is in the provision that the signature of the applicants or requesting parties is in the form of electronic signatures or scanned signatures.

Table 3D. Ease of Doing Business Act along Standard Turnaround Time for Government Transactions

Indicators	3	2	1	WM	Description
1. Application acts upon by the assigned officer within the prescribed processing time as stated in the Citizens Charter	31	1	0	2.97	FI
2. The processing time for simple transactions is no longer than three (3) working days	29	3	0	2.90	FI
3. The processing time for complex transactions is no longer than seven (7) working days	25	4	3	2.69	FI
4. The processing time for highly technical transactions is no longer than twenty (20) working days	24	3	4	2.65	FI
5. The maximum time is extended only once for the same number of days	18	3	5	2.50	FI
6. The office notify the applicant in writing prior to the lapse of processing time	16	6	7	2.33	PI
7. The signature of the applicants is in electronic signatures	3	3	22	1.64	NI
8. The employee exhaust all means of communications available	19	6	3	2.16	PI
9. In case of highly technical transactions the office applies multi-stage system	8	5	9	2.19	PI
10. The application that requires the approval of the local Sanggunian is within 45 working days and extended for another 20 working days	18	3	1	2.75	FI
11. The application that requires the approval of the local Sanggunian is extended for another 20 working days	17	3	1	2.75	FI
12. The reason and the remedial measures for the denial of the application is cited by the Sanggunian	12	4	5	2.37	PI
13. The prescribed processing time is suspended in case of force majeure	12	5	4	2.41	PI
14. The responsible employee notifies the applicant in writing without any delay	15	3	4	2.58	FI
15. In case of system failure of computers the Head of the procuring entity (HOPE) certifies and post the same in a conspicuous place	12	1	8	2.29	PI
16. No application or request is returned to the applicant without appropriate action	25	1	0	2.96	FI
17. The employee who disapproved the application sends a formal notice within the prescribed processing time stating the reason	17	0	5	2.61	FI
18. Denial of request is fully explained in writing	15	3	4	2.58	FI
Overall Weighted Mean				2.51	FI

Legend: FI=Fully Implemented PI=Partially Implemented
NI=Not Implemented

Of the three municipalities, the only available electronic signature is that of the municipal mayor of Bulan which is used in the printed business permit.

e. Automated business and permitting and licensing system or eBPLS

The implementation of automated business application process (eBPLS) in the three (3) municipalities was partially implemented with an overall mean of 2.45.

Other local clearances such as sanitary permits, environmental and agricultural clearances are issued together with the business permits has the highest average of 2.85. As per interview of one of the respondents, local clearances such as sanitary permits, environmental and agricultural clearances, Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) certificates and Community Tax Certificates (CTC) are issued separately from the single or unified business application forms and it can be obtained manually from the respective offices.

On the other hand, the provision with the lowest weighted mean of 2.26 is that LGU with electronic

version of permits. Since the full implementation of Ease of Doing Business Act only the municipality of Bulan among the three municipalities under study is adopting the system since 2019.

The two municipalities, Gubat and Castilla, as per interview with Respondents 14 and 18 will be pursuing it next year because they are still on the process of amending their Local Revenue Code which is a requirement in applying with DICT. LGU Bulan is still reliant to the permits developed by DICT. They have not yet developed an electronic permit of their own version.

Table 3E. Ease of Doing Business Act along automated business permitting and licensing system or eBPLS

Indicators	3	2	1	WM	Description
1. The LGU is adopting eBPLS	17	6	7	2.30	PI
2. The LGU with electronic BOSS develop electronic version of permits	15	6	7	2.26	PI
3. Other local clearances such as sanitary permits and environmental permits are issued together with the business permits	24	2	1	2.85	FI
4. LGU has develop an electronic version of permits as hardcopy	16	5	6	2.37	PI
Overall Weighted Mean				2.45	PI

Legend: FI=Fully Implemented
PI=Partially Implemented

The Department of Information and Communications Technology or DICT (2018) has launched the eBPLS to allow taxpayers to file an application for new and renewal of business permits online. ACS Distance Education (2021) stated that being aware of technological advancements relevant to your business does not imply that you must adopt every new emerging technology.

LGU Castilla is not yet adopting electronic BPLS but currently they are using ETRACS or the Electronic Tax Revenue and Collection System. Penetrante, et. al., (2017) described ETRACS as a computer system developed by private service providers for local government units particularly on their tax revenue and collection system. Similarly, Municipal Treasury of Gubat which is of the same status uses a computerized system for assessment and collection of taxes.

Onate, et.al (2019) found out that majority of the respondents perceived that the proposed system which facilitate the application process of business permit and license into a streamlined electronic version using eBPLS as highly acceptable and was able to speed up the service delivery to one day for both the new and renewal of business applications. Government's web

presence has reduced perceptions of corruption around the world. Murillo (2013) recommends that international agencies support and promote the use of the internet to supplement other anti-corruption measures that rely on improvements in governance alone.

Alindajao, et.al (2023) determined the impacts of digitization of business permits and licenses in District 3 Quezon City in terms of service satisfaction on time efficiency, reliability, cost-effectiveness, and convenience in business permit and license application of the business owners as the respondents of the study. The researchers found that the respondents were very satisfied with digitizing business permits and licenses.

A study on the E-government initiatives of Local Governments in the Philippines by De Castro and De Castro (2022) revealed that the e-government initiatives in local governments were mostly done in partnership with National Government Agencies (NGAS). The study further revealed that along technology, some of the local governments in Sorsogon established websites, developed information systems, and adopted online systems introduced by other government agencies.

f. Zero Contact Policy

When it comes to Zero Contact Policy, all three (3) municipalities have not fully embraced its implementation and obtained an average weighted mean of 2.09 with a corresponding interpretation of partially implemented. This is the scenario because most LGUs are not yet adopting electronic BPLS. This only means that electronic adoption goes hand in hand with zero contact policy.

An interaction is observed when an inspection, training or meeting with the applicant is an integral part of the application process for a complex or highly technical transactions or when such interaction was done upon the written request of the applicant obtained an average of 2.74.

Moreover, zero contact policy is implemented in the LGU with a weighted mean of 1.55 which was the lowest. This is due to the fact that although Bulan is already adopting online transactions there were cases

that they are still in contact with their clients because they are still using the old system of payment in the Cashier’s Office. Cashless payment has not yet been operational and limited only to the application and renewal of permits with the primary purpose of monitoring the status of business.

Alternative payment methods, sometimes called local payment methods, allow for the distribution of more goods and services to a broader global audience, according to Mileva (2023). LGU Gubat and Castilla are still underway on their implementation of eBPLS which as they foresight to be implemented next year because of pending revision of their Local Revenue Code which is a requirement for eBPLS. When the interview was conducted both LGU’s are now conducting public hearings with Sangguniang Bayan regarding the revision process. On the positive side, LGU Gubat requirements for applications to Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) for cashless payment is already set.

Table 3F. Ease of Doing Business Act along Zero Contact Policy

Indicators	3	2	1	WM	Description
1. Zero contact policy is implemented in the LGU	5	6	18	1.55	PI
2. Zero contact policy is observed at all time in the LGU	5	5	18	1.58	PI
3. Contact is observed only during the preliminary assessment and evaluation of requirements	14	8	8	2.19	PI
4. No government employee has no contact in any manner unless strictly necessary	13	4	11	2.08	PI
5. The applicant prefers over the counter payment in the absence of online payment	25	2	3	2.71	FI
6. An interaction is observed when an inspection with an applicant is an integral part of the application	21	3	2	2.74	FI
7. Such inspection may be recorded with the consent of the applicant	16	6	4	2.47	FI
8. All transactions is coursed thru web-based software by DICT	9	6	14	1.78	PI
9. Electronic submission of application	5	5	19	1.57	PI
10. The government employee communicates with the applicant through email or other form of communications	16	3	10	2.20	PI
Overall Weighted Mean				2.09	PI

Legend: FI=Fully Implemented
PI=Partially Implemented

3. Problems Encountered in the Implementation of Ease of Doing Business Act

Three (3) themes were verbalized after the structured interview regarding the problems encountered in the

implementation of Ease of Doing Business Act in the chosen municipalities in the Province of Sorsogon. These themes include knowledge and attitude of clients, network and technology and problems concerning LGUs.

Table 4. Problems Encountered on Ease of Doing Business Act

Major Themes	Sub Themes
1. Knowledge and attitude of clients	Lacking documentary requirements Problem with land, building, machine Lack of awareness on LGU processes/guidelines Clients prefer old system
2. Network and Technology	Internet not yet centralized/fully established/upgraded/low connectivity No generator during brownout Website not operational Technical glitches/error
3. Problems concerning LGU	Lack of funds Local clearances manual operation Lack of Executive order/guidelines (Office not institutionalized/Separate/ distant offices/Lack of manpower) Merely political Lack of cooperation among government officials

Policy Recommendations

As with all other types of legislation, success depends chiefly on the political will to implement the law with persistence. A poor review and reengineering of operating procedures short changes the public. While RA 11032 seeks to ease doing business and to make delivery of government services efficient, it seems that only clerical transactions, such as issuance of permits and public documents, will benefit from the Act. All other deadlines in government services will have to contend with the proverbial Filipino time delay, and sadly, the public will have to manage their expectations and ease way from other alternatives. In order to realize the policy, these recommendations are hereby introduced:

- Strengthen internet connectivity through proper funding allocation for automated business permits licensing system and website operation.
- Strict Implementation of Executive Order to Strengthen Implementation of BOSS.
- Communicate, Reengineer, Empower.
- Full automation to achieve zero contact policy

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As to the profile of the municipalities, it can be deduced that 1st class municipalities have the capacity to implement Ease of Doing Business Act because they have the resources in terms of number of business establishments, revenue, human resources, and technology. As to the extent of implementation of the Ease of Doing Business Act, the implementation of Citizens Charter, establishment of Business One Stop Shop (BOSS) and standard turnaround time for

government transactions were fully implemented which implies that such provisions are fully adhered by the LGUs. Meanwhile, the provisions on the use of single or unified business application forms, electronic business permitting system and zero contact policy were partially implemented and these calls for necessary actions. The problems encountered in the implementation of Ease of Doing Business Act has led to crafting of a policy brief to effectively implement Ease of Doing Business Act.

This paper recommends encouraging Local Chief Executive and members of the Local Finance Committee to allocate funding to strengthen business permitting and licensing system through the use of automation to increase registration of business establishments to achieve more revenue. Empower human resources and deploy personnel to positions related to website development thus strengthening technology. The provisions on the extent of implementation of Ease of Doing Business Act along automated business permitting system and zero contact policy be given prioritization since it is the heart of Ease of Doing Business Act. Each municipality has to undergo evaluation of its transactions systems and procedures and reengineer the same to address issues generated.

REFERENCES

- [1] ACS Distance Education (2023) "Adapt to Technology" Retrieved from <https://www.acsedu.co.uk/Info/Trades/Other/Adapt-to-Technology.aspx> 19. Johnson, J. (2023) "15 Accounting Payment Terms and How to Work With Them" Retrieved from

- <https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/16588-15-accounting-payment-terms-strategies.html>
- [2] Ani, T. G. (2015) Effect of Ease of Doing Business to Economic Growth among Selected Countries in Asia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*. Vol. 3. No. 5, December 2015 pages 139-145
- [3] Alindajao, I.D., et. al (2023). Impacts of Digitization of Business Permits and Licenses on District 3 Quezon City. Retrieved from <https://www.ijmaberjournal.org/index.php/ijmaber/article/view/731>
- [4] Cflow Blogspot (2023) How to Streamline Business Processes Efficiently". Retrieved from <https://www.cflowapps.com/streamlining-business-processes/#:~:text=Streamlining%20business%20processes%20helps%20eliminate,operational%20efficiency%20and%20maximize%20profits>
- [5] De Castro, C.A. and De Castro, E.G. (2022). E-government Initiatives of Local Governments in the Philippines. *Journal of Community Development Research (Humanities and Social Sciences)*, 15 (3), 55-70. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.14456/jcdr-hs.2022.25>
- [6] Department of Information and Communications Technology (2018) "DICT launches e-BPLS Software to public" Retrieved from <https://www.creditinfo.gov.ph/dict-launches-e-bpls-software>
- [7] GAN Business Anti-corruption Portal (2017). The Philippines Corruption Report (Online url: <https://www.business-anti-corruption.com/country-profiles/the-philippines/>)
- [8] Mileva, G. (2023) "Everything You Need to Know About Alternative Payment Methods in 2023" Retrieved from <https://influencermarketinghub.com/alternative-payment-methods/>
- [9] Murillo, M. (2013). Does a government web presence reduce perceptions of corruption? Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02681102.2012.751574>
- [10] Newsome, R. et.al (2023) Why is Human Resource Important in Business. Retrieved from <https://www.peoplehr.com/en-gb/resources/blog/why-human-resources-is-important-in-business>
- [11] Nigussa, F. (2014). A Critical Analysis of the Conceptualization and Implementation of Citizen's Charter: case Studies from UK, India, South Africa, and Ethiopia. *Public Policy and Administration Research* www.iiste.org ISSN 2224-5731(Paper) ISSN 2225-0972(Online) Vol.4, No.1, 2014 50. Online URL: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Fekadu-Nigussa-Geleta/publication/259973646_A_Critical_Analysis_of_the_Conceptualization_and_Implementation_of_Citizens'_Charters_Case_Studies_from_UK_India_South_Africa_and_Ethiopia/links/57cd7b5d08ae83b37460d68a/
- [12] Onate, J.J., et al. (2019) Development of Electronic Business Permit and Licensing System(eBPLS). Retrieved from ieeexplore.ieee.org/abstract/document/8666319
- [13] Penetrante, Mary O., et. al (2017) Streamlining Workshops in Business Permits and Licensing System of the Cities of Puerto Princesa, Tagbilaran and Zamboanga. Retrieved from <https://repository.cpu.edu.ph/handle/20.500.12852/787>
- [14] Philippine News Agency (2021). Philippines improves in Ease of Doing Business world report. (online url: <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1139587>)
- [15] Philippine News Agency (2021). PH improves in Ease of Doing Business World Report. Retrieved from <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1139587>
- [16] Saguin, Kidjie (2015), Critical Challenges in Implementing the Citizen's Charter Initiative: Insights from Selected Local Government Units. Pages 1-28. Online URL: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2630536