

# ATTY. ROWENA "WENG" CANDICE M. RUIZ, LL.M., CESO I

*Executive Director V*

ED Rowena Candice Ruiz is the Executive Director V of the Government Procurement Policy Board – Technical Support Office (GPPB-TSO) since October 2018 and has since been at the helm of pushing for a more responsive, agile and sustainable public procurement through data-driven policy recommendations to the GPPB; implementation of a more proactive capacity development program; and use of technology and data analytics in innovating procurement monitoring.



As early as 2019, she pushed for the Philippines' application as an observer in the World Trade Organization – Committee on Government Procurement and in the same year, the Philippines got its approval. ED Ruiz was then designated as the Philippine Observer Representative to the World Trade Organization – Committee on Government Procurement.



FY 2018 AND BEYOND

## The Philippine Public Procurement Digitalization Roadmap



ED Ruiz likewise spearheaded the digital transformation in the GPPB-TSO with the use of available productivity applications and tools in the processing of transactions moving from a paper-based to a primarily digital and online service delivery system.

This enabled the seamless digital transition in the services provided by the GPPB-TSO during the pandemic. This digital shift was echoed in a number of policy reforms initiated by the GPPB-TSO beginning with the use of video-conferencing platforms in the conduct of the BAC meetings in 2018 and use digital signature in all procurement documents in 2019, both authorized long before the COVID-19 pandemic.



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Other procurement innovations introduced also include the GPPB – TSO Procurement Dashboard (year 2019), use of data analytics through the Interim Review of Procurement Performance (year 2020), development of Information, Communication, and Education materials (year 2020), electronic submission and receipt of bids (year 2020), electronic submission of procurement reports (year 2020), simplified Philippine Bidding Documents (year 2020), and the GPPB – TSO Online Philippine Bidding Documents Builder (year 2021), among others.



ED Ruiz also leveraged the power of social media and online platforms to effectively inform the almost 200,000 procurement stakeholders of the many innovations the GPPB and its TSO has been adopting and ensure business continuity as we shift to the new normal of doing business.



Thus, in April 2020, the GPPB-TSO had its first webinar, followed by 1254 more online trainings on government procurement to continuously capacitate procurement practitioners and equip them with timely information and use these as effective tools in their procurement undertaking. The GPPB-TSO Facebook page even has more than 400,000 viewers as of 30 June 2022. Continuing on her digital transformation advocacy, ED Ruiz sought GPPB approval in the revision of procurement reports, which shall provide the blueprint for the full automation of the monitoring tools submitted by Procuring Entities all over the country and provide real-time and accurate data to support the appropriate procurement policy interventions.



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Her passion and drive for technological innovation not only sparked inspiration from stakeholders but also gained international recognition when she was selected by the GovInsider in 2021 as one of the women across the world who have "tirelessly tested out new technology and approaches to make public services simpler and more accessible".

ED Ruiz has also been actively collaborating with development partners and other government agencies to ensure a whole of government approach in tackling the many challenges in public procurement. She requested the Commission on Audit for the issuance of rules on digital payment to support the GPPB-TSO's proposed rules on online subscription. She has also proposed a partnership with the Securities and Exchange Commission through a data sharing agreement which will help inform the ongoing study on beneficial ownership rules by the GPPB-TSO. ED Ruiz likewise reached out and successfully entered into various partnership agreements with the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme, United States Trade and Development Agency, United States Agency for



International Development, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Australian Government, United Kingdom Government, GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) for technical assistance and related support to the many public procurement reform initiatives since she was appointed Executive Director of the GPPB-TSO.



Prior to her appointment, Atty. Ruiz was the head of the Legal Service of the Department of Budget and Management starting as Atty IV until she was appointed Director IV in 2012.

Some of her major contributions in DBM include the study and drafting of the study and drafting of the Fiscal Responsibility Bill, Public Financial

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Accountability Act, and Budget Reform Bill; crafting of the proposed general provisions on efficient management of resources such as the use of PS Appropriations and good governance measures such as the Transparency Seal and Reversion of Special Funds in the National Treasury; and drafting of the President's Veto Message in the annual General Appropriations Act.



She had to take a one year pause from government service when she was selected as among the Chevening Scholars for 2016-2017 where she pursued her Masters of Law in Globalisation and Development at the University of London.



The Chevening Scholar also served as an Asian Development Bank project consultant, a highly sought-after lecturer in Government Budgeting and Procurement, and a recipient of the Career Executive Service Board Outstanding Resource Speaker and Thriving Leader award. She received her undergraduate degree in Political Science from the De La Salle University – Manila, while her law degree from the San Beda University.

**Find out more!**



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