There's Always Room For Improvement
Open Contracting in the Province of South Cotabato

In our country, some people mistrust the government.

We see politicians' faces every day, boasting of projects we didn't ask for...

while our most urgent pleas...

get ignored.

It is easy to think the government doesn't care

FIGHT POVERTY WITH YOUR CONGRESSMEN!

for those who need it the most.
But that doesn't have to be the case.

Hi...

my name's John Magbanua.

I've worked for the government of South Cotabato, a province in the Philippines, for 25 years.

Here we work hard and with integrity.

Now, I'm the supervising head of the Bids and Awards Committee at the Provincial Governor's Office.

to carry out the bidding process for all public procurement.
I also used to think that all government dealings were shady.

I mean, if you've ever been inside a government building...

You've probably seen these bulletins.

That's how the government used to announce projects open for bidding.

But this way, no one on the outside knew about these projects.

And some individuals in the government—and their connections in the private sector—benefited from this system.
Then the Government Procurement Reform Act (Republic Act 9184)... by requiring wide distribution and complete transparency of projects for public bidding.

But even with the reforms, has started a change to that,

We still weren’t getting enough bids.

So we started efforts to make procurement information available online,

**INVITATION TO BID**

but most people—potential suppliers included—still believed it was difficult to work with the government,

with representatives from the business sector, the academe, and civil society.

by consulting with the various stakeholders in the Integrity Circle,

we were able to deliver the projects according to specifications, and on schedule.
Even if it meant scrutinizing every document we received.

**JOHN.**

Because being open and transparent

**JOHN.**

is the foundation of trust in any healthy relationship.

We discussed with the community how to improve our systems and each improvement made them want to participate more.

We now get more bids than ever,

Legitimate bids from institutions that can deliver the projects according to specifications, and on schedule.

**JOHN!**

Okay okay, honey.
I take pride in seeing our projects completed.

They are foundations of progress.

These projects are of actual use to the community.

PUBLIC SCHOOL

EMERGENCY ROOM

They provide safety nets for unforeseen events.

I hope others see the value of what we do,

I have realized that when a government cares for its people,

so we can become an example for other government institutions.

people will care for the government.

And, hand in hand, we can build a better nation.