FINAL REPORT

USAID OPPORTUNITY 2.0 PROGRAM
Second-Chance Opportunities for Out-of-School Youth

'Implementation of a Nationwide Tracer Study of DepEd ALS Junior High School Completers/Learners'

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Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

The Nationwide Tracer Study on the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Junior High School (JHS) Completers for the School Year 2022-2023 seeks to examine the post-program trajectories of individuals who have completed the ALS JHS program. This research, made possible through funding from the USAID Opportunity 2.0 project, is crucial for understanding the educational and employment pathways ventured into by ALS graduates. Moreover, the study explores various factors that influence both the successes and challenges faced by these individuals as they transition to further education or employment. By investigating these dynamics, the study aims to assess the effectiveness of the ALS program, ultimately providing evidence-driven recommendations that can enhance policy frameworks and improve educational outcomes.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the ALS Tracer Study is to evaluate the outcomes of ALS JHS completers and delineate their post-program experiences. To achieve this, the study has identified several specific objectives:

1. To identify the prevalent post-program pathways chosen by ALS completers, encompassing further education opportunities, employment, and self-employment endeavors.
2. To analyze the influences of various factors, including geographic location, socio-economic status, and gender, on the decision-making processes of ALS graduates.
3. To highlight the specific challenges encountered by both completers and non-completers during their transitions to subsequent educational pursuits or the workforce.
4. To provide actionable insights rooted in data that inform potential enhancements to the ALS program and contribute to policy development aimed at optimizing its framework and outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed-methods strategy, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to ensure a holistic understanding of learners' post-program trajectories. A total of 900 ALS completers and 300 non-completers were sampled from a range of urban and rural contexts, ensuring the representation of varying socio-economic backgrounds.

The research employed a combination of hybrid surveys (utilizing both mobile and in-person methods), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and detailed case studies to gather comprehensive data.

Quantitative data were processed using descriptive statistics to discern trends and patterns, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis, extracting significant insights and narratives regarding the ALS outputs.

To provide context, the study focused on participants' trajectories nine months following their completion of the program and was conducted within a 12-month timeframe. Limitations acknowledged include logistical challenges and budgetary constraints, which may have influenced the ability to reach a wider participant base.

FINDINGS

The study yielded several crucial insights regarding the post-program outcomes of ALS JHS completers. Approximately 50% of ALS JHS completers advanced to enroll in Senior High School (SHS), illustrating a pronounced intent to further their education. Other pathways included Technical Skills Training, primarily through TESDA-accredited programs, self-employment ventures, and part-time studies complemented by employment commitments. Notably, urban graduates exhibited a higher propensity to pursue SHS compared to their rural counterparts, who leaned more toward self-employment opportunities.

Urban completers were significantly more inclined to enroll in higher education compared to their rural peers, highlighting educational disparities rooted in geographical contexts. Financial constraints emerged as a formidable barrier, particularly for non-completers, indicating limited familial support and access to essential resources. Rural participants reported obstacles related to familial obligations and geographical remoteness, which impacted their ability to complete the program.

Female completers exhibited a greater propensity to continue their education compared to males, underscoring an essential trend in educational aspirations among genders post-ALS. The study identified financial limitations as the most frequently cited factor for not completing the program, alongside personal commitments and inadequate support systems. Non-completers experienced amplified barriers regarding employment opportunities and often lacked structured pathways to facilitate smooth transitions following their ALS education.

CONCLUSION

This Nationwide Tracer Study offers invaluable insights into the experiences of ALS JHS completers, highlighting the significant impacts of socio-economic status, geographical factors, and gender dynamics on their post-program trajectories. By leveraging these findings and implementing the associated recommendations, there is a substantial opportunity to enhance the manageability and effectiveness of the ALS program. This can ultimately lead to improved educational outcomes for vulnerable populations. Through ongoing assessment and adaptation, ALS can serve as a transformative force, empowering individuals and broadening access to quality education, thereby facilitating economic opportunities and sustainable development.

By strengthening the link between outcomes and practices informed by research, the ALS initiative can maintain its relevance and efficacy in addressing the educational needs of diverse communities, thereby driving collective progress toward improved educational attainment and social mobility.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

A&E	Accreditation and Equivalent
ALS	Alternative Learning System
BAE	Bureau of Alternative Education
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Musim Mindanao
CHED	Commissioner on Higher Education
DepEd	Department of Education
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EDC	Education Development Center
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGI	Focus Group Interview
JHS	Junior High School
KII	Key Informant Interview
LIS	Learner Information System
LUCs	Local Government-owned Universities and Colleges
NGO	Non-Government Organization
Non-O2 Cities	Non-Opportunity 2.0 Cities
O2 Cities	Opportunity 2.0 Cities
PBSP	Philippine Business for Social Progress
PHP	Philippine Peso
PPA	Presentation Portfolio Assessment
RIMCU	Research Institute for Mindanao Culture
SDO	School Division Offices
SHS	Senior High School
SUCs	State Universities and Colleges
SY	School Year
Tech-Voc	Technical Vocational
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TOR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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I. Introduction

Introduction

In the Philippines, approximately 11 million children and youth aged 5 to 24 are not in school, an alarming statistic that shows considerable educational hurdles. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA, 2020), this figure accounts for over 25% of the population in this age range.

The 2020 Census of Population and Housing reveals a gender gap among out-of-school children and youth (OSCY): 51.3% are male and 48.7% are female (PSA, 2020). This disparity emphasizes the necessity for tailored actions to eliminate impediments that disproportionately affect certain populations.

According to age distribution data, more than two-thirds (68.5%) of OSY are between the ages of 20 and 24, with 15.6% aged 15 to 19. Financial restrictions, a lack of interest, early marriage, work obligations, and other personal situations are among the most common causes of non-enrollment. Specifically, 19.7% of youngsters indicated work duties as a cause for non-attendance, while 21.1% had completed their schooling or were involved in other activities (PSA, 2020).

To address these issues, the Alternative Learning System (ALS) provides a flexible, non-formal education approach that is suited to varied learning needs. This effort is particularly focused on OSY, offering numerous paths to education and skill development. To meet learners' individual situations, the ALS uses a variety of learning modes, including face-to-face education, radio-based teaching, and e-learning.

The Opportunity 2.0 Program, funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), is critical in closing educational gaps for Filipino adolescents aged 15 to 24 who are out of school or unemployed. Over five years, this effort seeks to help at least 180,000 young people in 15 cities by providing second-chance education, vocational training, and work-based learning opportunities. It works with key stakeholders, such as the Department of Education (DepEd), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), local governments, and commercial sector partners, to build a strong support network for OSY.

A rigorous process of problem identification and exit trajectory assessment was conducted to better address OSY's needs and enhance the ALS program's outcomes. This initiative examines the educational trajectories of Junior High School (JHS) completers and non-completers within the ALS program, identifying barriers and opportunities to improve transitions and long-term success. By leveraging research and analysis, it aims to refine the ALS framework and ensure it meets the diverse and evolving needs of learners across the Philippines.

Background of the Study

This tracer study is a combination of structured survey and qualitative techniques in data gathering among program among the ALS-JHS completers and non-completers in SY 2022-2023. Its purpose is to assess various aspects of the program's outcomes, including the transition to the workforce, career prospects, application of acquired skills, and the relevance of training in real-world contexts[1,2,3]

Tracer studies commonly examine a range of issues, such as study progress, employment opportunities, career development, and the relationship between acquired skills and professional success[4,5]. While widely used in higher education, their application is growing in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to assess the impact of skills training programs on employment and workforce development[6].

The **Nationwide Tracer Study on DepEd ALS Junior High School (ALS JHS) Completers/ Learners for SY 2022-2023** aims to gather data on the outcomes and experiences of ALS JHS graduates nine months after program completion. This study provides crucial insights into the effectiveness of the ALS program in equipping learners with knowledge and skills for further education, employment, and life improvement.

To ensure comprehensive representation, sampling sites were carefully selected to reflect geographic diversity across regions, provinces, and urban and rural areas. This strategy aims to capture the varied experiences and outcomes of ALS JHS completers from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, cultural contexts, and educational environments. Such an approach will provide a holistic perspective on the ALS JHS program's nationwide impact, aligning with the ALS Research Agenda and contributing to evidence-based policymaking and program enhancement.

By utilizing the framework of tracer studies, this initiative evaluates the ALS JHS program's capacity to meet its objectives and addresses gaps in understanding learner outcomes, thereby strengthening its role in transforming lives through alternative learning pathways.

Study Objectives

The **ALS Tracer Study** seeks to evaluate the post-program trajectories of ALS Junior High School (JHS) completers, focusing on the factors that influence their success or challenges in pursuing desired educational and career pathways. Additionally, the study examines the impact of the ALS program on participants' income levels and overall economic outcomes.

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[1]International Labour Organization, Tracer Studies. (2022). https://iloskillskspstorage.blob.core.windows.net/development/resources/5150/Tracer%20studies_InfoNote.pdf
[2] Tracer Studies Evaluating ETF. Impact of Training Programmes. (2017).
[3]International Labour Organization. Tracer Studies. (2024). https://www.itcilo.org/courses/tracer-studies

[4] International Labour Organization, Tracer Studies. (2022). https://iloskillskspstorage.blob.core.windows.net/development/resources/5150/Tracer%20studies_InfoNote.pdf
[5]International Labour Organization. Tracer Studies. (2024). https://www.itcilo.org/courses/tracer-studies
[6] International Labour Organization. Tracer Studies. (2024). https://www.itcilo.org/courses/tracer-studies

These objectives are aligned with the overarching goal of the **USAID Opportunity 2.0 Project** to improve educational and economic opportunities for vulnerable populations.

This initiative is particularly relevant to supporting and advancing the goals of the **Alternative Learning System (ALS) Research Agenda** of the Department of Education (DepEd) Bureau of Alternative Education (BAE). The ALS Research Agenda aims to enhance the quality and effectiveness of ALS programs, which are critical in providing educational access to out-of-school youth and adults who have not completed formal schooling.

The general objectives of this research are as follows:

1. **Support the Implementation of the ALS Research Agenda of DepEd BAE**
    - Conduct research studies that align with the priorities and goals of the ALS Research Agenda.
    - Address key research questions, collect relevant data, and generate evidence to inform policy-making and program decision-making for ALS programming.

2. **Advance the Role of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Utilizing Research Expertise**
    - Leverage the research capabilities of HEIs to foster evidence-based policy-making and decision-making in ALS programming.
    - Enhance the quality and rigor of research through collaboration with HEIs, ensuring adherence to high research standards.

3. **Establish a Vibrant Research Culture on ALS**
    - Contribute to building a research-driven culture for ALS by enabling various stakeholders to continuously expand the knowledge base on ALS.
    - Create platforms for collaboration and knowledge-sharing among researchers, educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders involved in ALS programming.

Scope and Limitations

Definition of Terms

To ensure clarity in this study, the following terms are defined:

1. **Completers**: ALS learners who were enrolled for a school year, completed their learning objectives, and passed the Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) exam or the Presentation Portfolio Assessment (PPA). For this research, “completers” specifically refer to **Certification Passers**.

2. **Certification Seeker**: An ALS learner who has completed their learning objectives and taken the A&E exam.

3. **Certification Passer**: An ALS learner who successfully passes the A&E exam or PPA or also refers to **Completers.**

Scope

More specifically, the study aims to generate evidence-based insights to inform policy-making and program improvements, aligning with the priorities of the ALS Research Agenda to support evidence-based decision-making. The following key research questions include:

1. **Post-Program Pathways of ALS JHS Learners.** Determine where ALS JHS completers (Certification Passers) proceed after exiting the program, focusing on their enrollment in further education, employment, or other pathways.
   - What are the common pathways pursued by ALS JHS completers and non-completers?
   - How do factors such as geographic location and socioeconomic background influence their post-program destinations?

2. **Decision-Making Factors.** Explore the primary motivations, barriers, and the influence of personal circumstances, educational opportunities, and career prospects on ALS JHS learners' choices regarding their post-program pathways.
   - What are the primary motivations and barriers influencing ALS JHS learners' decisions regarding their post-program pathways?
   - What role do personal circumstances, educational opportunities, and career prospects play in shaping learners' decisions?

3. **Enabling and Hindering Factors.** Examines the support systems and interventions that help ALS JHS learners transition into their desired pathways while identifying the challenges, societal attitudes, and structural barriers that may hinder them from achieving their goals.
   - What support systems and interventions facilitate ALS JHS learners' transitions into their desired pathways?
   - What challenges, societal attitudes, or structural barriers hinder learners' ability to achieve their goals?

4. **Evidence to Inform ALS Program Enhancements.** Focuses on generating data-driven insights to help DepEd BAE refine ALS programming by understanding learners' post-program pathways, motivations, barriers, and influencing factors, aligning with the ALS Research Agenda to support evidence-based decision-making.
   - Generate data-driven insights to guide DepEd BAE in refining ALS programming based on learners' post-program pathways and experiences.
   - Address research questions focusing on the motivations, barriers, and influencing factors shaping ALS JHS learners' decisions, aligned with the priorities of the ALS Research Agenda to support evidence-based decision-making.

Population and Sample: This study covers ALS JHS completers and non-completers from 16 regions, including BARMM, representing both USAID Opportunity 2.0 (O2) Cities and non-O2 Cities. The target population includes:

- **ALS Completers**: A total of 900 respondents were drawn from various locations, including highly urbanized cities (HUCs) and 4th-6th class municipalities.

- **Non-Completers**: A sample of 300 respondents was included to provide comparative insights into the reasons for discontinuing the program.

Data Collection Methods: Hybrid surveys (mobile and face-to-face), KIIs, FGDs, and case studies. The research design incorporates a mix of primary and secondary data collection methods, employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a holistic analysis of program outcomes.

Variables Studied:

- Independent variables: Completion of ALS JHS, age group, geographic location, socioeconomic background, and gender.
- Dependent variables: Educational attainment, reintegration into further education/training, employment status, and reasons for dropout.

Timeframe:

- The timeframe for the study was initially set at 18 months but was later adjusted to 12 months to align with the conclusion of the USAID Opportunity 2.0 project by November 2024.

Limitations

Several limitations were encountered during the study:

1. **Budget Constraints**: The project budget was designed for virtual or phone-based data collection using mobile technology, with no allocation for face-to-face interviews or focus group discussions (FGDs).

2. **Challenges in Reaching Respondents**: Difficulties in reaching ALS JHS completers and non-completers included:
    - Absence of valid phone numbers or social media accounts.
    - Non-responsiveness or disinterest among those contacted.
    - Parents' refusal to allow their children to participate in interviews.
    - Respondents' unavailability during weekdays due to work or school commitments.
    - Incomplete interviews or refusal to answer certain questions.

3. **Geographical Imbalance**: While some cities exceeded their respondent targets, others failed to meet the desired sample size. Notably, no respondents were interviewed in Cotabato City and Marawi City within BARMM due to logistical and accessibility issues.

Mitigation Measures

To address these limitations, the research team implemented the following strategies:

- Conducted face-to-face interviews to supplement virtual data collection, despite limited funding.

- Adopted **post-collection techniques**, including subgroup analysis, qualitative contextualization, and imputation methods, to ensure data representativeness and reliability.

- Leveraged collaboration with School Division Offices (SDOs) and ALS focal persons in all regions to optimize data collection efforts.

By combining these mitigation strategies with robust data analysis techniques, the study sought to maximize the quality and validity of its findings despite the challenges encountered.

II. Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a non-experimental posttest-only design to examine the outcomes of ALS Junior High School (JHS) completers and non-completers after their exit from the program. As a **tracer study**, the primary aim was to trace the pathways and transitions of ALS JHS completers and non-completers, identifying key factors that influenced their post-program decisions. The non-experimental nature of the design means there was no manipulation of variables; instead, the study focused on assessing the outcomes after the learners exited the program. The posttest-only design specifically refers to the fact that data were collected after the program's conclusion, capturing the learners' status at least nine months after their completion or exit.

The research approach included both **quantitative** and **qualitative** methods to provide a comprehensive view of the learners' post-program experiences. The quantitative approach involved the use of surveys to collect numerical data on educational outcomes, employment status, income levels, and satisfaction with the ALS program. In contrast, qualitative methods such as **key informant interviews (KIIs)**, **focus group discussions (FGDs)**, **focus group interviews (FGIs)** and **case studies** were employed to capture deeper insights into the learners' experiences, challenges, and aspirations. These qualitative techniques helped provide context to the quantitative data and highlighted the enabling and hindering factors that influenced learners' decisions after leaving the program.

The study's mixed-methods design allowed for the triangulation of data, ensuring robust findings that contributed to understanding the pathways taken by ALS JHS completers and learners, as well as the factors influencing their post-program choices. This approach also aimed to gather data from a variety of perspectives, including ALS JHS completers and non-completers, key ALS implementers more specifically ALS Teachers, ALS Regional and SDO focals, thus ensuring a well-rounded analysis of the program's impact.

Study/Research Questions

As outlined in the Scope, this study focuses on generating evidence-based insights to inform policy-making and program improvements for the Alternative Learning System (ALS), aligning with the priorities of the ALS Research Agenda.

The research questions underpin the development of data collection tools and methodologies, targeting four key areas: the post-program pathways of ALS Junior High School (JHS) learners, the factors influencing their decision-making, the enabling and hindering factors affecting their transitions, and the evidence required to refine ALS programming.

These questions aim to explore critical dimensions of learners' experiences and provide actionable insights to support evidence-based decision-making and enhance the ALS program.

The research questions for this **tracer study** were defined in the project's Terms of Reference (TOR) and have guided the development of the research tools. This study aims to explore the trajectories of ALS Junior High School (JHS) learners after exiting the program, focusing on their pathways, decision-making processes, and the factors enabling or hindering their post-program transitions.

Key research questions:

1. Where do ALS Junior High School (JHS) learners proceed after undergoing the program?

    1.a. Where do ALS JHS Completers proceed after exiting the ALS Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) JHS Program?
    - What are the common pathways or destinations chosen by ALS JHS Completers?
    - Are there variations in the post-program destinations based on geographic location or socioeconomic factors?
    - What are the factors that influence ALS JHS Completers' decisions regarding their post-program pathways?
    - Do ALS JHS Completers primarily pursue further education, enter the workforce, or opt for other alternatives?

    1.b. Where do ALS JHS Learners proceed even if they do not complete the program?
    - What are the different paths taken by ALS JHS Learners who do not complete the program?
    - Are there any patterns or trends in the destinations of ALS JHS Learners who do not complete the program?
    - What factors contribute to ALS JHS Learners' decisions to discontinue the program and choose alternative pathways?

- How do geographic location and socioeconomic factors influence the post-program destinations of ALS JHS Learners who do not complete the program?

2. What are enabling and hindering factors in the decision-making of ALS JHS learners immediately after undergoing the program?
   2.a. What are the factors that impact the decision-making of ALS JHS learners in pursuing a post-program exit?
   - What are the primary motivations and aspirations of ALS JHS learners in choosing their post-program exit paths?
   - What role do personal circumstances, such as family support or financial considerations, play in the decision-making process?
   - How do educational opportunities, including availability and accessibility, influence ALS JHS learners' decisions?
   - What influence do career prospects and employment opportunities have on the decision-making of ALS JHS learners?

   2.b. What are the enabling and hindering factors impacting ALS JHS learners' ability to pursue their preferred post-program exit?
   - What resources, support systems, or interventions facilitate ALS JHS learners in pursuing their desired post-program pathways?
   - What challenges or barriers do ALS JHS learners face in accessing and engaging with their preferred post-program exit options?
   - How do societal attitudes, biases, or stigmas affect ALS JHS learners' ability to pursue their preferred post-program exit?
   - Are there any systemic or structural factors that hinder ALS JHS learners from accessing and pursuing their desired post-program pathways?

Sample Size and Sampling Groups

The total ALS JHS population for SY 2022–2023 was **481,903**, based on the Learner Information System (LIS) as of January 10, 2023. The following is a breakdown of the sample size:

- Statistically Required Sample Size (using Cochran's formula): 384 respondents.
- Final Sample Size for the Study: 1,200 respondents from 900 ALS completers and 300 non-completers to ensure comprehensive representation and robust data collection across diverse subgroups.

Sampling Groups

	Key Variables	Purpose
1. ALS JHS Completers	Post-program educational attainment, employment status, and reintegration into further education/training	To capture the educational and professional trajectories of completers after leaving the ALS program.
1.1. Age Groups	Age within ALS program (e.g., young adults, older adults)	To assess how age affects outcomes, such as employability or further education.
1.2. Geographical Location	Urban, Rural	To examine disparities in educational access and outcomes across different locations.
1.3. Socioeconomic Background	Socioeconomic status (e.g., income level, family background)	To explore the influence of socio-economic factors on re-engagement in education and the workforce.
1.4. Sex	Male, female	To investigate sex-based differences in educational and employment outcomes.
2. Stakeholders	Level of engagement with ALS program (e.g., educators, parents, employers, HEIs, agencies)	To gather insights from key stakeholders about program effectiveness and areas for improvement.

Methods of Data Collection and Data Analysis

Data Collection

The data collection process for this study was designed to capture a comprehensive picture of ALS JHS completers' post-program outcomes by utilizing both primary and secondary data sources through a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The process was systematic, coordinated, and executed across multiple regions, ensuring inclusivity and robust data collection.

To begin with, the research team worked closely with the Department of Education's Bureau of Alternative Education (BAE) and School Division Offices (SDOs) to access vital data on ALS completers. This collaboration helped ensure a smooth and efficient fieldwork process. Enumerators were then hired and thoroughly trained in survey administration, focusing on both face-to-face and mobile-based survey tools, such as Kobo Toolbox. The training emphasized consistency and accuracy in data collection, equipping the enumerators to handle the hybrid approach effectively.

Fieldwork was conducted in 15 regions across the country, including the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), ensuring nationwide representation of ALS JHS completers and non-completers from diverse backgrounds. This widespread data

collection allowed the study to capture a wide range of responses from different geographical areas, age groups, and socio-economic conditions, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the post-program outcomes.

In terms of primary data collection, a hybrid survey method was employed. This method combined mobile technology and face-to-face administration, allowing participants to respond using smartphones or engage in direct interactions with enumerators. This approach ensured flexibility in data collection, accommodating different preferences and contexts.

Qualitative methods, such as Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focused Group Interviews (FGIs), were conducted with ALS implementers, teachers, and stakeholders to provide in-depth insights into the program's impact. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with ALS JHS completers and non-completers allowed the research team to explore shared experiences and perceptions of the program, providing a richer understanding of the challenges and successes associated with the program.

Additionally, Personal Case Studies and Storytelling methods were incorporated into the research to highlight the lived experiences of select ALS completers and non-completers, adding depth and personal narratives to the findings. For secondary data, a thorough desk review of relevant literature, policies, and program data from DepEd and SDOs provided further context and support for the primary data, ensuring a robust and comprehensive understanding of the ALS JHS completers' post-program pathways.

A summary of the data collection methods employed in this study is presented in the table below:

Data Collection Method	Description	Mode of Collection
Hybrid Survey (Quantitative)	Combination of mobile technology (e.g., Kobo Toolbox) and face-to-face survey administration.	Mobile/ Face-to-Face
Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) (Qualitative)	Interviews with ALS implementers, teachers, and other key stakeholders to explore the program's impact.	In-person/ Virtual
Focused Group Interviews (FGIs) (Qualitative)	Discussions with ALS teachers and implementers for insights into program strengths and weaknesses.	In-person/Virtual
Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) (Qualitative)	Group discussions with ALS JHS completers and non-completers to explore shared experiences and perceptions.	In-person/Virtual
Personal Case Studies and Storytelling (Qualitative)	Capturing the lived experiences of select ALS completers and non-completers.	In-person
Secondary Data Collection	Desk review of literature, policies, and program data from DepEd and SDOs for contextual understanding.	Desk Review

Data Analysis

The study utilized a mixed-methods approach to analyze the data comprehensively, ensuring both breadth and depth in understanding the post-program outcomes of ALS JHS completers.

Quantitative data from surveys were processed using descriptive and correlational statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics summarized key respondent characteristics such as educational attainment, employment status, and income levels. Inferential statistics identified relationships between variables, such as age, gender, geographic location, and socioeconomic status, with program outcomes.

Qualitative data, gathered through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and case studies, underwent thematic, coding, and narrative analyses. Thematic analysis identified recurring patterns, while coding grouped data into themes to reveal facilitating and hindering factors in learners' transitions. Narrative analysis provided in-depth accounts of individual challenges and successes.

Additionally, data triangulation validated findings by cross-referencing quantitative and qualitative insights, ensuring a nuanced and reliable understanding of the learners' trajectories.

Summary of Data Analysis Methods

Data Type	Analysis Method	Purpose
Quantitative Data	Descriptive Statistics	Summarized educational attainment, employment status, and income levels.
	Correlational Statistics	Identified correlations between demographic factors and program outcomes.
Qualitative Data	Thematic Analysis	Analyzed recurring themes from interviews and discussions.
	Coding	Categorized data into themes to highlight factors influencing outcomes.
	Narrative Analysis	Provided detailed accounts of individual experiences and challenges.
Combined Methods	Data Triangulation	Validated findings by cross-referencing quantitative and qualitative data.

III. Results and Findings

Overall Target and Accomplishments

The Nationwide Tracer Study for the ALS-JHS SY 2022-2023 of the Department of Education – Bureau of Alternative Education has concluded the data collection process and made significant progress in interviewing respondents as captured in Table 1 below with the study set targets for both completers (n=900) and non-completers (n=300).

Overall, the actual completers and non-completers of ALS JHS, 2022-2023 interviewed totaling 1,273 respondents (1,093 completers and 180 non-completers).

Table 1. Overall Target vs. Accomplishment

ALS JHS, 2022-23	Stratum		Total
	Rural	Urban	
Male			
Completers	97	361	458
Non-Completers	23	75	98
Total	120	436	556
Female			
Completers	152	483	635
Non-Completers	29	53	82
Total	181	536	717
Overall			
Completers	249	844	1,093
Non-Completers	52	128	180
Total	301	972	1,273

Here is a breakdown of the overall percentages:

a) Overall Target vs. Actual
- **Overall Target**: 1200 respondents (completers and non-completers combined)
- **Actual Accomplishment**: 1,273 respondents
- **Percentage Accomplished**: **106.08%** of the overall target has been achieved.

b) Overall Target for Completers vs. Actual
- **Target for Completers**: 900
- **Actual Completers**: 1,093
- **Percentage Accomplished**: **121.44%** of the target for completers has been reached.

c) Overall Target for Non-Completers vs. Actual
- **Target for Non-Completers**: 300
- **Actual Non-Completers**: 180
- **Percentage Accomplished**: **60%** of the target for non-completers has been met.

Despite the progress, there remains a gap especially for non-completers. Further, breakdown of these respondents by cities across 17 regions with the corresponding number of respondents interviewed is captured in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Overall, breakdown of respondents interviewed disaggregated by O2 and Non-O2 Cities

Opportunity 2.0 Cities			Non - Opportunity 2.0 Cities		
No.	**City**	**(n)**	**No.**	**City**	**(n)**
1	Angeles City	4	**1**	Baguio City	22
2	Cagayan de Oro City	29	**2**	Balanga City	50
3	Cebu City	134	**3**	Bislig City	26
4	Davao City	64	**4**	Butuan City	76
5	General Santos City	85	**5**	Calapan City	49
6	Iloilo City	62	**6**	Cavite City	25
7	Legaspi City	18	**7**	Dagupan City	56
8	Marikina City	35	**8**	Iriga City	24
9	Puerto Princesa	75	**9**	Isabela City	22
10	Tacloban City	57	**10**	Lucena City	31
11	Tagbilaran	38	**11**	Maasin City	66
12	Valenzuela City	15	**12**	Oroquieta City	22
13	Zamboanga City	20	**13**	Passi City	46
			14	Samal City	29
			15	Santiago City	23
			16	Tacurong City	20
			17	Tuguegarao City	26
			18	Vigan City	24
	Total	**636**	**Total**		**637**

1. Demographics

1.1. Sex at Birth: ALS JHS Completers and Non-Completers, SY 2022-2023

Table 3. Distribution Sex at Birth for Completers & Non-completers

LS status/ Sex at birth	Stratum		Total
	Rural	Urban	
Completers			
Male	39.0	42.8	41.9
Female	61.0	57.2	58.1
Total	100.0 (n=249)	100.0 (n=844)	100.0 (n=1,093)
Non-Completers			
Male	44.2	58.6	54.4
Female	55.8	41.4	45.6
Total	100.0 (n=52)	100.0 (n=128)	100.0 (n=180)
Overall			
Male	39.9	44.9	43.7
Female	60.1	55.1	56.3
Overall	100.0 (n=301)	100.0 (n=972)	100.0 (n=1,273)

The demographics of ALS Junior High School (JHS) completers and non-completers based on sex at birth reveal notable trends. Among the completers, females comprised a majority, with 58.1% overall, slightly higher in rural areas (61.0%) compared to urban areas (57.2%). Males accounted for 41.9% of completers, with a higher proportion in urban areas (42.8%) than in rural areas (39.0%).

In contrast, among the non-completers, males formed the majority at 54.4%, with a notably higher percentage in urban areas (58.6%) compared to rural areas (44.2%). Females made up 45.6% of the non-completers, with a larger share in rural areas (55.8%) compared to urban areas (41.4%).

Overall, across both completers and non-completers, females constituted 56.3%, with a higher proportion in rural areas (60.1%) compared to urban areas (55.1%). Males represented 43.7%, with a slightly larger share in urban areas (44.9%) than in rural areas (39.9%).

These figures are based on a total of 1,273 respondents, with 1,093 categorized as completers and 180 as non-completers.

1.2. Age Distribution: ALS JHS Completers and Non-Completers, SY 2022-2023

Based on the data collected on the key demographic trends in the age distribution of ALS (Alternative Learning System), the average age of completers is slightly lower for urban areas (average age of 25.95 years) than for rural participants (average age of 26.63 years). Nonetheless, the average age of completers is 26.11 years. This finding suggests that although participants in rural regions tend to be older, more people completed the ALS-JHS program in the urban areas as a result of more access to ALS services and programs.

The average age of non-completers is lower than that of completers. The average age of non-completers in rural areas is 24.92 years, whereas the average age of those in urban areas is considerably lower at 22.24 years. There are 180 non-completers overall, 52 of whom are from rural and 128 of them are from urban areas. These numbers show that there is a greater concentration of younger non-completers in urban areas.

Table 4. Age Distribution, ALS JHS Completers/Non-Completers

ALS status/ stratum	Average age (in years)	n
Passers		
• **Rural**	26.63	249
• **Urban**	25.95	844
Total	26.11	1093
Non Passers		
• **Rural**	24.92	52
• **Urban**	22.24	128
Total	23.02	180
Overall		
• **Rural**	26.34	301
• **Urban**	25.46	972
Total	25.67	1273

When considering the entire cohort, the average age in rural areas is 26.34 years, which is marginally higher than the average in urban areas, which is 25.46 years. The majority of the 1,273 participants—972—come from urban areas, while 301 are from rural areas. According to the data, individuals in rural areas tend to be older, which is probably due to their delayed access to education compared to their urban counterparts.

1.3. Marital Status: ALS JHS Completers and Non - Completers, SY 2022-2023

Table 5. Marital Status: Completers and Non-Completers, 2022-2023

ALS status/ Marital status	Stratum		Total
	Rural	Urban	
Completers/Passers			
Single	66.1	74.9	72.8
Married/Cohabiting	33.0	23.6	25.8
Widow/widower/separated	0.9	1.5	1.4
Total	100.0 (n=230)	100.0 (n=730)	100.0 (n=960)
Non-Completers/Non Passers			
Single	56.9	88.1	78.7
Married/Cohabiting	43.1	11.0	20.7
Widow/widower/separated	-	0.8	0.6
Total	100.0 (n=51)	100.0 (n=118)	100.0 (n=169)
Overall			
Single	64.4	76.8	73.7
Married/Cohabiting	34.9	21.8	25.1
Widow/widower/separated	0.7	1.4	1.2
Overall	100.0 (n=281)	100.0 (n=848)	100.0 (n=1,129)

The marital status of ALS Junior High School (JHS) completers and non-completers highlights key differences. Among the completers, a majority were single (72.8%), with a slightly higher proportion in urban areas (74.9%) than in rural areas (66.1%). Those who were married or cohabiting constituted 25.8%, more prevalent in rural areas (33.0%) compared to urban areas (23.6%). A small fraction (1.4%) were widowed, widowers, or separated, with slightly more representation in urban areas (1.5%) than rural areas (0.9%).

Non-completers showed a higher overall percentage of singles at 78.7%, with a stark difference between urban (88.1%) and rural areas (56.9%). Those married or cohabiting represented 20.7%, with a significantly higher proportion in rural areas (43.1%) than urban areas (11.0%). A minimal percentage (0.6%) of non-completers were widowed, widowers, or separated, seen only in urban areas.

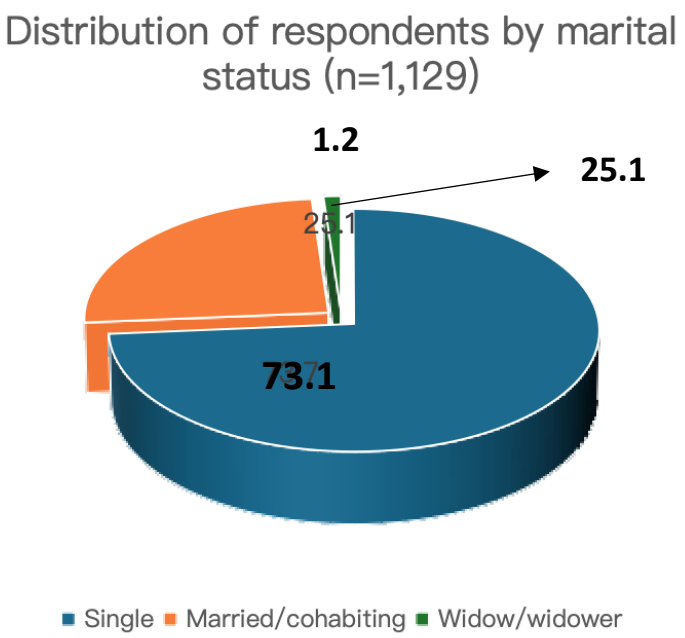

Figure 1. Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

Overall, across both completers and non-completers, 73.7% were single, with a larger proportion in urban areas (76.8%) compared to rural areas (64.4%). Married or cohabiting individuals made up 25.1%, more common in rural areas (34.9%) than urban areas (21.8%). Widowed, widowers, or separated respondents were rare, with negligible differences between rural and urban areas.

These figures are based on a total of 1,129 respondents, comprising 960 completers and 169 non-completers.

1.4. ALS JHS Completers and Non-Completers with Children, SY 2022-2023

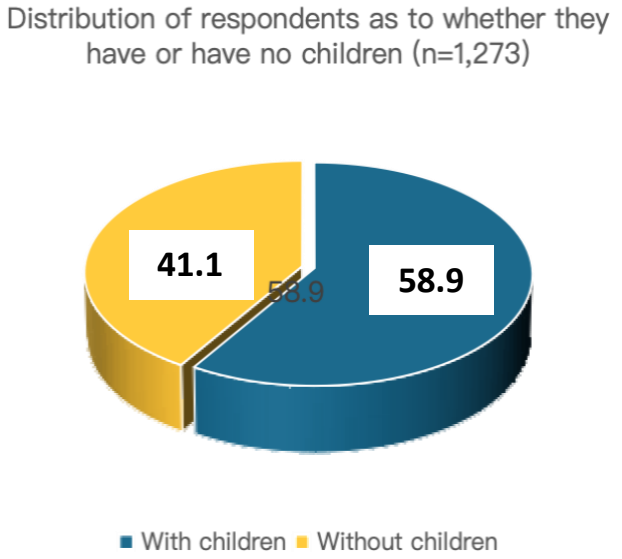

Figure 2. Distribution of Respondents with and without children

The data show the distribution of ALS JHS completers and non-completers with children.

Overall, 41.1% of respondents have children, with a higher proportion in rural areas (55.1%) compared to urban areas (36.7%).

In total, 58.9% of respondents are without children, indicating that a significant portion of ALS participants, particularly in rural areas, are balancing educational pursuits with parenting responsibilities.

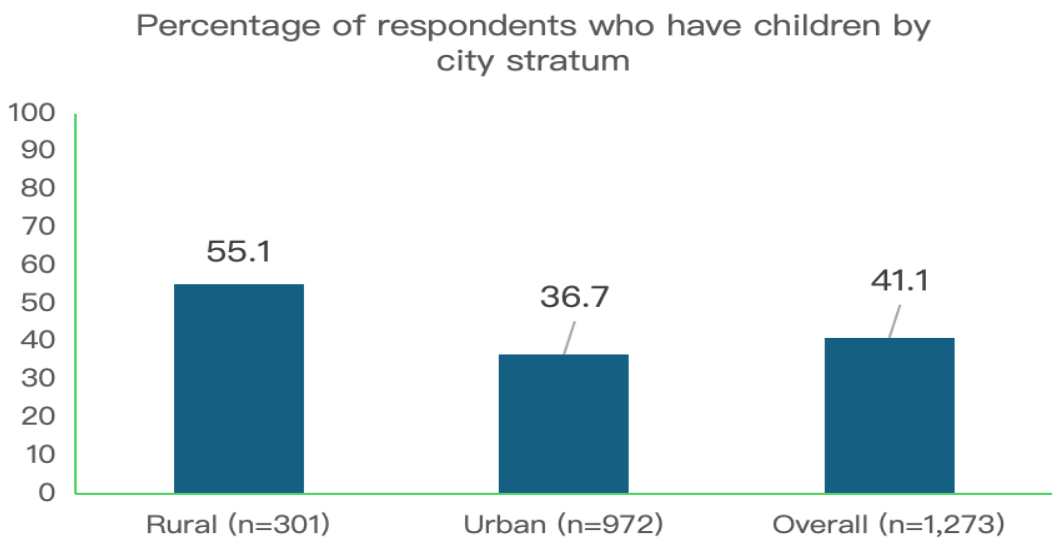

Figure 3. Percentage of respondents who have children by city stratum

Furthermore, there are more ALS completers among those who have children, but this could be due to the fact that individuals with children are older (average age = 30.1 years) than those without children (average age = 22.6 years).

1.5. Distribution of Respondents by Rural – Urban Stratum

The data reveals insights into the completion rates of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) among a sample of respondents (n=1,273), categorized by urban and rural settings.

The data showed more completers in urban areas (86.8%) than in rural areas (82.7%) which reflects strong participation.

Only 13.2% of the respondents did not complete ALS, pointing to challenges faced by a minority.

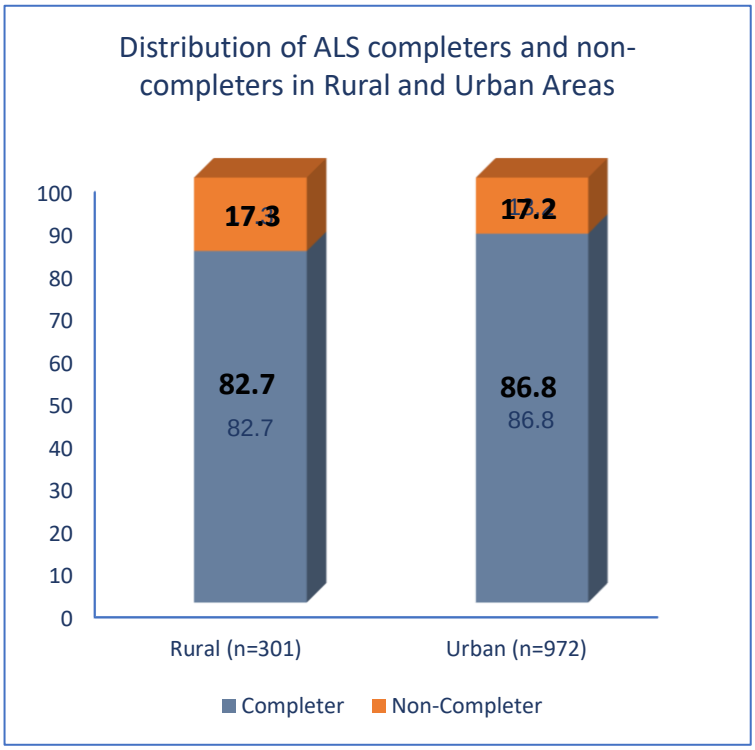

Figure 4. Distribution of ALS completers and non-completers in Rural and Urban Areas

2. ALS JHS 2022-2023: Completers and Non-Completers

The chart (Figure 5) shows the distribution of respondents who have completed or passed the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Junior High School (JHS) program. A vast majority, 85.9%, are ALS completers or completers, while 14.1% are non-completers. This indicates a high success rate among respondents participating in the ALS JHS program.

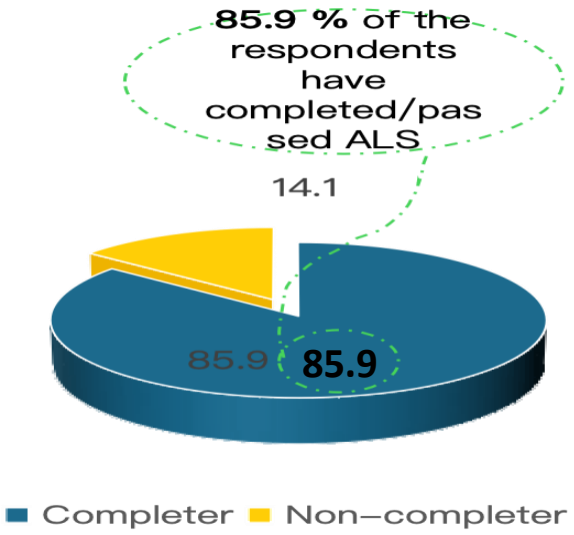

Figure 5. ALS JHS Completers and Non-Completers

Table 6. Disaggregation of respondents by sex, stratum, and ALS status

Stratum/ALS Status	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
Rural			
Completers	80.8	84.0	82.7
Non-completers	19.2	16.0	17.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
n	120	181	301
Urban			
Completers	82.8	90.1	86.8
Non-completers	17.2	9.9	13.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
n	436	536	972
All areas			
Completers	82.4	88.6	85.9
Non-completers	17.6	11.4	14.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
n	556	717	1273

Disaggregation of Male and Female Respondents. Table 6 presents the distribution of respondents based on their sex at birth, ALS completion status, and residential location (rural vs. urban). The data indicate variations in completion and non-completion rates across gender and geographic strata.

In rural areas, the ALS completion rate was 80.8% for males and 84.0% for females. The percentage of non-completers was 19.2% among males and 16.0% among females, indicating that males had a slightly higher likelihood of not completing the program.

In urban areas, both males and females exhibited higher completion rates compared to their rural counterparts. The male completion rate was 82.7%, while the female completion rate was 90.1%, leading to an overall urban completion rate of 86.8%. Non-completion rates were 17.2% among males and 9.9% among females, showing a more significant gender disparity than in rural areas.

The findings reveal a consistent trend where females exhibit higher ALS completion rates than males across rural and urban settings. The urban completion rate was higher than the rural rate for both genders, suggesting that urban respondents may have had better access to educational resources and support systems or fewer barriers to completing the program. Additionally, males had higher non-completion rates in both settings, but the gender gap was more pronounced in urban areas, where the male non-completion rate was nearly double that of females (17.2% vs. 9.9%).

2.1. ALS JHS, 2022-2023: Sex at Birth for both Completers and Non-Completers

Table 7. Summary of Completers and Non-Completers by Sex at Birth

Stratum/ Sex at birth	ALS JHS Status:		Total
	Completer	Non-completers	
Rural			
Male	39.0	44.2	39.9
Female	61.0	55.8	60.1
Total	100.0	100.0%	100.0
n	249	52	301
Urban			
Male	42.8	58.6	44.9
Female	57.2	41.4	55.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
n	844	128	972
All respondents			
Male	41.9	54.4	43.7
Female	58.1	45.6	56.3
Overall	100.0	100.0	100.0
n	1093	180	1273

Table 7 presents the sex-at-birth distribution of the respondents categorized by their ALS completion status. Among the completers, 58.1% were female, while 41.9% were male, indicating a higher proportion of female participation in completing the ALS program. In contrast, among the non-completers, 54.4% were male, and 45.6% were female, suggesting that males were more likely to discontinue or not complete the program. When considering all respondents, 56.3% were female, and 43.7% were male, further reinforcing that female had a higher engagement and completion rate.

These findings suggest that females were more likely to complete the ALS program, whereas males exhibited a higher non-completion rate. Various factors, such as differences in educational motivation, social expectations, economic responsibilities, or access to learning resources, may influence this trend. Males may face more significant external pressures, such as employment obligations or societal norms prioritizing workforce participation over educational attainment. Conversely, females may demonstrate stronger perseverance or have more supportive learning environments facilitating program completion.

2.2. ALS JHS, 2022-2023: Mean Age for both Completers and Non-completers

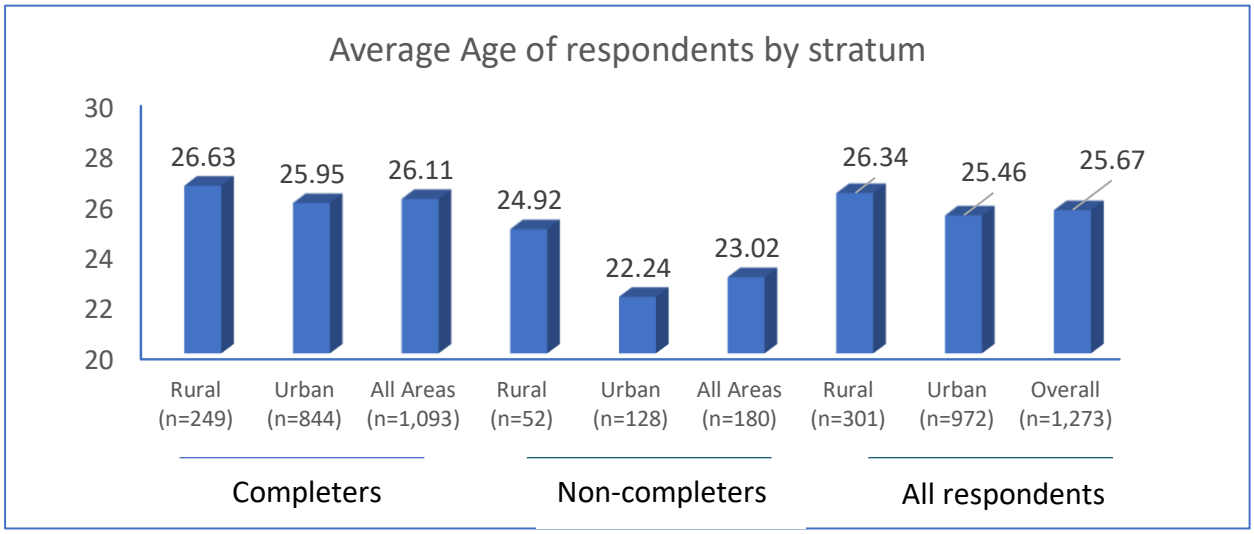

Figure 6. Mean Age for Completers and Non-Completers by city category and stratum

Figure 6, as above, shows the profile of ALS JHS respondents, with an average age of 25.67.

Overall, the majority of respondents, 78.9%, fall into the younger age group (years old and younger), indicating that ALS primarily serves younger individuals across both city types.

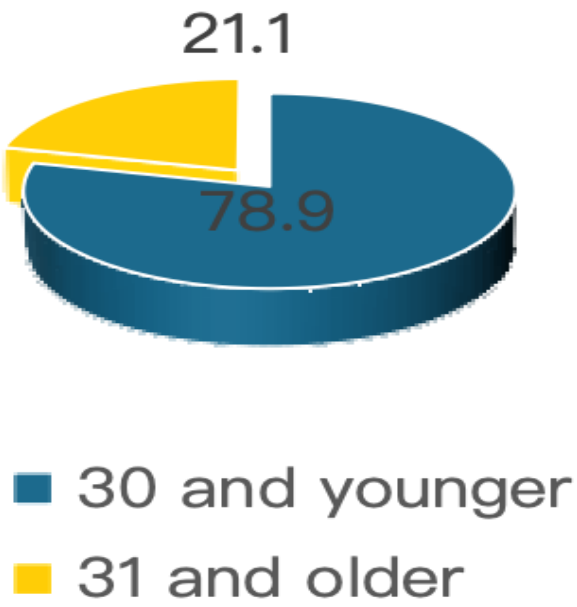

Figure 7. Percentage Distribution of Individuals Aged 30 and Younger vs. 30 and Older

3. Post Exit Trajectories

3.1. ALS JHS Completers, SY 2022-2023

3.1.1. Geographic Location

Table 8. ALS Completers by Geographic Location

Pathway after completing the ALS	Stratum		Total
	Rural (n=249)	Urban (n=844)	(n=1,093)
Part-Time – Tech-Voc/TESDA and Work	0.8	0.1	0.3
Part-Time – SHS and Work	4.4	5.2	5.0
Senior High School	42.6	52.3	50.0
Technical Skills Training (e.g., TESDA Accredited TVET cou rses),	4.0	5.8	5.4
Work - self-employment	25.3	18.7	20.2
No Answer	22.9	17.9	19.0
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Table 8 shows the data that highlights the pathways pursued by ALS JHS completers based on geographic location. Half of the respondents (50.0%) continued their studies in Senior High School (SHS). This trend is more pronounced in urban areas, where 52.3% of completers enrolled in SHS, compared to 42.6% in rural areas.

In rural areas, self-employment is a significant pathway, with 25.3% of respondents engaging in this compared to 18.7% in urban areas.

Other pathways, such as pursuing technical skills training and part-time combinations of work and study, are relatively low across both locations but slightly higher in urban areas.

The data suggest that geographic location shapes post-ALS pathways, with urban completers more likely to pursue further education while rural completers are more inclined toward self-employment.

The data collectors followed up on the No Answer responses; however, the respondents did not provide their answers to these questions. From the researchers' point of view, this could be because they did not fall under any of the mentioned categories. They may not be doing anything after completing their ALS-JHS, commonly termed as *"tambay"* in the local language.

3.1.2. Sex at Birth

Table 9. ALS JHS Completers by Sex at Birth

Pathway after completing the ALS	Sex at birth		Total (n=1,093)
	Male (n=458)	Female (n=635)	
Part-Time – Tech-Voc/TESDA and Work	0.4	0.2	0.3
Part-Time – SHS and Work	5.5	4.7	5.0
Senior High School	46.5	52.6	50.0
Technical Skills Training (e.g., TESDA Accredited TVET courses),	6.6	4.6	5.4
Work - self-employment	24.5	17.2	20.3
No Answer	16.6	20.8	19.0
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Table 9 as above shows the data that provides information into the post-ALS pathways of respondents in reference to their sex at birth.

Overall, half of the respondents (50.0%) continued to Senior High School (SHS), with females more likely to pursue this pathway (52.6%) compared to males (46.5%).

Self-employment is more common among males, with 24.5% engaging in this pathway compared to 17.2% of females. Similarly, males are slightly more inclined toward technical skills training (6.6%) compared to females (4.6%).
Part-time combinations of work and study, as well as responses with no specified pathway, are relatively low across both sexes, though females have a higher proportion of "No Answer" responses (20.8%) compared to males (16.6%).

These trends suggest that females are more likely to continue formal education, while males are more inclined toward self-employment and technical skills training after completing ALS JHS.

Biserial correlation between proceeding to Senior High School after completing ALS and city stratum and sex at birth

Variables	Biserial Correlation	p value	Interpretation
Stratum	.081**	0.007	Significant
Sex (at birth)	-.060*	0.047	Significant

The analysis highlights significant relationships between geographic stratum, sex at birth, and proceeding to Senior High School after completing ALS. A statistically significant positive

biserial correlation (r = 0.081, p = 0.007) indicates that residing in an urban area increases the likelihood of pursuing further studies in Senior High School.

Additionally, a significant negative biserial correlation (r = -0.060, p = 0.047) shows that females are more likely than males to continue to Senior High School after completing ALS. The negative sign reflects the coding of males as 1 and females as 0 in the analysis. These findings emphasize the influence of both geographic location and sex on educational pathways post-ALS completion.

Biserial correlation between engaging in self-employment after completing ALS and city stratum and sex at birth:

Variables	Biserial Correlation	p value	Interpretation
Stratum	-.069*	0.023	Significant
Sex (at birth)	.090**	0.003	Significant

The analysis reveals significant relationships between geographic stratum, sex at birth, and engaging in self-employment after completing ALS. A statistically significant negative biserial correlation (r = -0.069, p = 0.023) indicates that respondents in rural areas are more likely to engage in self-employment, with rural areas coded as 0 and urban areas as 1.

Similarly, a significant positive biserial correlation (r = 0.090, p = 0.003) shows that males are more likely than females to pursue self-employment after completing ALS. These findings suggest that rural residence and being male are associated with a higher likelihood of engaging in self-employment, highlighting the influence of geographic and gender-related factors on post-ALS employment pathways.

3.2. Facilitating Factors (Multiple Responses)

Table 10. Summary of Facilitating Factors in Multiple Responses

Facilitating factors	Completer			Non-Completer			Overall		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
Guidance and Counselling Support (teachers and significant others)	18.1	30.8	27.9	17.3	22.7	21.1	17.9	29.7	26.9
Financial Support	27.3	30.7	29.9	26.9	25.0	25.6	27.2	29.9	29.3
Family Support	70.7	69.5	69.8	71.2	56.3	60.6	70.8	67.8	68.5
Networking Opportunities	9.6	10.3	10.2	7.7	7.8	7.8	9.3	10.0	9.8
Close proximity to home friends/ peers supports	9.2	16.5	14.8	11.5	13.3	12.8	9.6	16.0	14.5
Others	9.6	6.3	7.0	5.8	7.0	6.7	9.0	6.4	7.0

Facilitating factors	Completer			Non-Completer			Overall		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
n of cases	249	844	1093.0	52	128	180	301	972	1273

Table 10 as above shows the qualitative responses that reveal insights into the facilitating factors that support ALS JHS completers and non-completers, with notable differences across rural and urban settings:

1. Guidance and Counselling Support: Overall, 26.9% of respondents identified this as a key factor, with higher acknowledgment among urban respondents (29.7%) compared to rural ones (17.9%). Completers in urban areas reported this more frequently (30.8%) than their rural counterparts (18.1%).
2. Financial Support: Financial assistance was identified by 29.3% of respondents as a critical support factor. Both rural (27.2%) and urban (29.9%) respondents highlighted this equally across completers and non-completers.
3. Family Support: Family support was the most frequently cited factor overall (68.5%), with rural respondents slightly more likely to mention it (70.8%) than urban respondents (67.8%). Completers consistently emphasized family support, with little difference between rural (70.7%) and urban (69.5%) areas.
4. Networking Opportunities: Networking was the least-cited factor (9.8%), with urban respondents (10.0%) mentioning it slightly more than rural respondents (9.3%). Non-completers were less likely to report this as facilitating compared to completers.
5. Close Proximity to Home, Friends, or Peer Support: This was highlighted by 14.5% of respondents, with urban respondents (16.0%) mentioning it more often than rural ones (9.6%). Completers in urban areas (16.5%) were more likely to identify this factor compared to those in rural areas (9.2%).
6. Others: Additional factors were mentioned by 7.0% of respondents, with little variation between urban (6.4%) and rural (9.0%) respondents.

Overall, family support emerged as the most significant facilitating factor, with urban areas placing greater emphasis on guidance and counselling, close proximity, and financial support compared to rural areas. This underscores the importance of both family and institutional support systems in promoting success in ALS JHS pathways.

Qualitative findings showed that family support emerged as a critical factor in most locations, including Baguio, Dagupan, Valenzuela, Gensan, and Vigan, where learners credited their families for emotional and logistical backing. In Tagbilaran, family members not only provided encouragement but also helped manage household responsibilities, enabling learners like Jillean, Rose, and JR to focus on further studies or short-term skills acquisition.

Career aspirations also played a significant role, with many participants across Baguio, Zamboanga, Gensan, and Vigan expressing the desire to obtain diplomas or certifications to secure better employment. This pragmatic approach was evident in Cagayan de Oro, where the availability of local job opportunities, such as construction and mining influenced learners like Jerry and Naser.

Self-determination and personal goals were equally influential, with learners from Passi, including Cassy, Filo, and Inday, prioritizing their dreams of improving their circumstances. Across cities, this sense of self-motivation fueled persistence in pursuing education or employment despite challenges.

The support and guidance of ALS teachers were universally highlighted as pivotal, particularly in Dagupan, Valenzuela, Zamboanga, and Gensan. Their encouragement not only motivated learners but also helped them develop a clearer vision for their future.
However, financial necessity often dictated post-program choices, as learners from Cagayan de Oro, Passi, and Tagbilaran frequently pursued employment to meet family needs or offset educational costs. For many, the decision to balance work and education became a necessity rather than a choice.

Finally, community and peer influence were notable in shaping decisions in Passi and Dagupan, where learners like Filo and Nene found encouragement through social networks and local support systems.

In **Cagayan de Oro**, practical considerations dominated decision-making, with participants like Rachelle and Renilyn valuing the vocational skills learned through ALS. However, limited job options in their locality constrained aspirations, as reflected by Jerry and Naser's focus on local industries like construction and mining.

In **Tagbilaran**, a strong aspiration for higher education set the city apart, with learners like Maricar, Rian, and Jenzen prioritizing college. Meanwhile, others like Jillean, Rose, and JR opted for short-term skills training through TESDA to secure immediate employability.

Passi presented a unique focus on balancing work and education, as seen in the experiences of Don and Inday. Church support, as in the case of Cassy, also played a significant role, reflecting the influence of faith-based communities in decision-making.
Learners from **Baguio, Gensan, and Vigan** emphasized a combination of motivations, ranging from improving living conditions to advancing education and career goals. The desire to achieve personal aspirations (e.g., *"maabot ang pangarap"*) was often intertwined with practical steps toward skill and knowledge enhancement.

In **Valenzuela**, motivations extended beyond individual goals, with some parents expressing a desire to gain knowledge to better support their children's education. Encouragement from romantic partners added a personal dimension to the decision-making process, highlighting the influence of intimate relationships.

Zamboanga stood out for its employment-focused motivations, as learners placed a strong emphasis on pursuing wage work or self-employment to support family needs.

3.3. Challenges/Hindering Factors (Multiple Responses)

Table 11. Summary of Challenges/Hindering Factors in Multiple Responses (Percentages)

Challenges/hindering factors	Completer			Non-Completer			Overall		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
Lack of Information	24.1	29.6	28.4	15.4	15.6	15.6	22.6	27.8	26.6
Financial Constraints	58.6	58.4	58.5	65.4	48.4	53.3	59.8	57.1	57.7
Family Obligation	57.0	51.1	52.4	67.3	57.8	60.6	58.8	52.0	53.6
Lack of available/education/training. program option	9.6	9.7	9.7	9.6	8.6	8.9	9.6	9.6	9.6
Lack of Documents	5.6	5.6	5.6	3.8	1.6	2.2	5.3	5.0	5.1
Lack of Family Support	16.9	15.5	15.8	21.2	17.2	18.3	17.6	15.7	16.2
Geographical Remoteness	8.8	8.4	8.5	3.8	4.7	4.4	8.0	7.9	7.9
Lack of needed Knowledge/Skills	14.5	15.9	15.6	5.8	9.4	8.3	13.0	15.0	14.5
Lack of Needed Work Experience	10.4	10.9	10.8	1.9	10.9	8.3	9.0	10.9	10.4
Lack of Access to Seed Capital/ Startup Funds to establish business/ self-enterprise	3.6	7.3	6.5	1.9	5.5	4.4	3.3	7.1	6.2
Lack of Support from Supervisor/ Mentor/Coach	2.8	2.6	2.7	1.9	0.0	0.6	2.7	2.3	2.4
Others	6.4	4.6	5.0	3.8	3.1	3.3	6.0	4.4	4.8
n of cases	249	844	1093	52	128	180	301	972	1273

Table 11 as above shows the data on challenges and hindering factors faced by respondents, disaggregated by rural and urban settings, reveals the following insights:

1. Lack of Information: A significant barrier for 26.6% of respondents, with urban participants (27.8%) citing it more frequently than rural participants (22.6%).
2. Financial Constraints: This was the most commonly reported challenge overall (57.7%), with minimal variation between urban (57.1%) and rural (59.8%) respondents. Non-completers in rural areas reported this challenge more frequently (65.4%) than their urban counterparts (48.4%).
3. Family Obligation: Family responsibilities were a notable hindrance for 53.6% of respondents, with rural respondents (58.8%) mentioning this more frequently than urban ones (52.0%). Non-completers reported higher challenges due to family obligations, especially in rural areas (67.3%).
4. Lack of Available Education/Training Program Options: This was a minor challenge overall, cited by 9.6% of respondents with no significant variation between rural and urban areas.

5. Lack of Documents: This challenge affected only 5.1% of respondents, with similar frequencies in both rural (5.3%) and urban (5.0%) settings.
6. Lack of Family Support: Cited by 16.2% overall, rural respondents (17.6%)
7. were slightly more likely to identify this barrier compared to urban respondents (15.7%).
8. Geographical Remoteness: While this was more frequently noted in rural areas (8.0%) compared to urban areas (7.9%), it remained a relatively minor barrier overall (7.9%).
9. Lack of Needed Knowledge/Skills: Reported by 14.5% of respondents, urban participants (15.0%) identified this challenge slightly more frequently than rural participants (13.0%).
10. Lack of Needed Work Experience: Affecting 10.4% of respondents overall, urban participants (10.9%) noted this barrier more frequently than rural ones (9.0%).
11. Lack of Access to Seed Capital/Start-up Funds: This issue was reported by 6.2% of respondents, with urban participants (7.1%) more likely to face this challenge than rural ones (3.3%).
12. Lack of Support from Supervisor/Mentor/Coach: A minor factor overall, cited by 2.4% of respondents with slightly higher prevalence in rural areas (2.7%) compared to urban ones (2.3%).
13. Other Challenges: Cited by 4.8% of respondents, urban areas (4.4%) reported slightly fewer instances than rural areas (6.0%).

Key Observations:

- Urban vs. Rural Disparities: While financial constraints and family obligations were significant challenges across all groups, rural respondents more frequently reported family obligations, geographical remoteness, and lack of family support as barriers.
- Non-Completers vs. Completers: Non-completers faced greater financial constraints and family obligations, particularly in rural areas, underscoring the importance of socio-economic and familial support in enabling ALS completion.

The qualitative results validated the quantitative data. Financial constraints are one of the most significant challenges for ALS users. Many students struggle with transportation and other educational expenditures, frequently relying on the help of professors and peers. For example, a student in Iloilo described how professors and classmates helped him with transportation fees, allowing him to attend class.

Another common obstacle is balancing study with work and family commitments. In Cagayan de Oro, students discussed how work responsibilities hampered their ability to keep up with their peers, illustrating the difficult realities of juggling numerous roles.

Low community awareness and engagement also limit the program's reach and effectiveness. Despite ALS implementers' efforts to promote awareness in Baguio, the program's impact was limited due to a lack of community engagement and support.

IV. Discussion

4.1. Post-Program Pathways of ALS JHS Completers

The donut chart provides data on the post-ALS pathways of completers, categorized into five main trajectories: Senior High School (SHS), Technical-Vocational (Tech-Voc) programs, part-time schooling, work, and other activities.

Post ALS pathway of completers (n=1,093)

Percentage distribution of completers

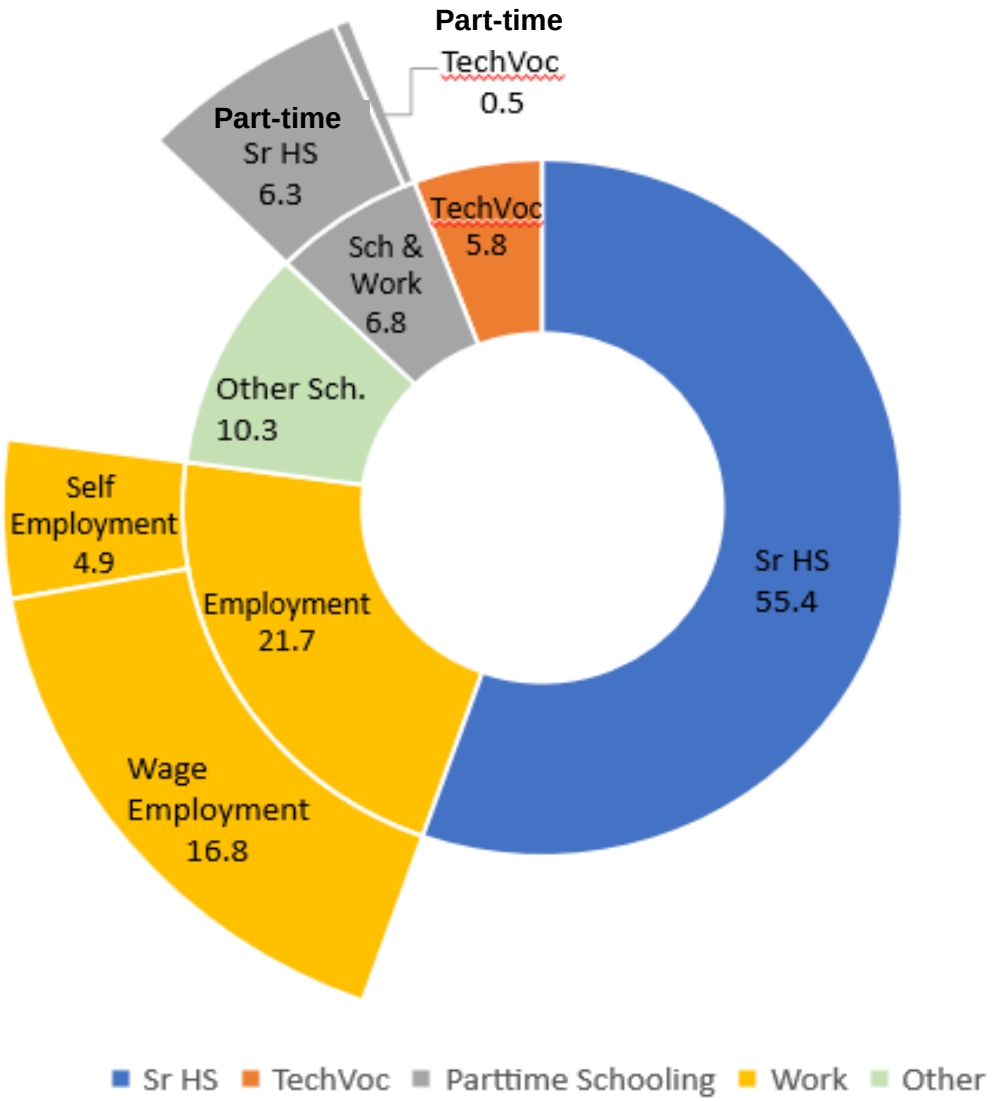

Figure 8. Percentage distribution of completers

Pathway	Frequency	Percent
Sr. HS Schooling	**605**	**55.4**
Tech-Voc Schooling	**63**	**5.8**
Part-time Schooling	**74**	**6.8**
Tech-Voc and Work	*5*	*0.5*
SHS and Work	*69*	*6.3*
Work	**238**	**21.7**
Self-Employment	*54*	*4.9*
Wage Employment	*184*	*16.8*
Other	**113**	**10.3**
Total	**1,093**	**100.0**

The **largest segment** of the chart represents the most common pathway for ALS completers. It indicates that many completers see ALS as a stepping stone to **pursuing formal education at the senior high school level.**

The **second-largest segment** corresponds to those who **transitioned directly to work** after completing ALS. This finding suggests that ALS also serves as a practical alternative for individuals aiming to enter the workforce, likely driven by economic needs.

A **significant portion** of completers opted **for Tech-Voc education**. This result reflects the value of ALS in equipping learners with foundational skills to pursue specialized training for employment in technical fields.

A **smaller segment** represents those engaged in **part-time schooling**. This may include individuals balancing studies with work or other responsibilities.

The **smallest portion** of the chart corresponds to **"others,"** indicating post-ALS pathways not covered by the main categories. These may include informal employment, entrepreneurship, or other personal pursuits.

4.1.1. Pursues Further Education

Table 12 presents the pathways taken by individuals after completing the ALS-JHS program. The majority of ALS completers (55.35% of the total respondents) pursued Senior High School (SHS), highlighting its position as the most common pathway. This indicates that ALS participants highly value further education to improve their qualifications and future opportunities.

Table 12. Post-ALS Junior High School Pathways

Pathway	Total (n=1093)	% of Distribution
Part-Time – Tech-Voc/TESDA and Work	5	0.450%
Part-Time - SHS and Work	69	6.31%
Senior High School	605	55.35%
Technical Skills Training (TESDA/TVET)	63	5.76%
Wage Employment	184	16.83%
Self-Employment	54	4.94%
Other Further Education	113	10.34%
Total	1093	100%

The second most common trajectory is entering wage employment (16.83%), reflecting that many completers directly join the labor force, possibly due to financial needs or immediate employment opportunities.

Others ventured into Technical Skills Training through TESDA or TVET (63 participants, 5.76%), self-employment (54 participants, 4.9%), and other further education (113 participants, 10.3%).

4.1.2. Transitioned to Employment

Distribution of ALS completers in full-time/part-time job (n=312)

Percentage distribution of ALS completers in full-time/part-time employment (n=312)

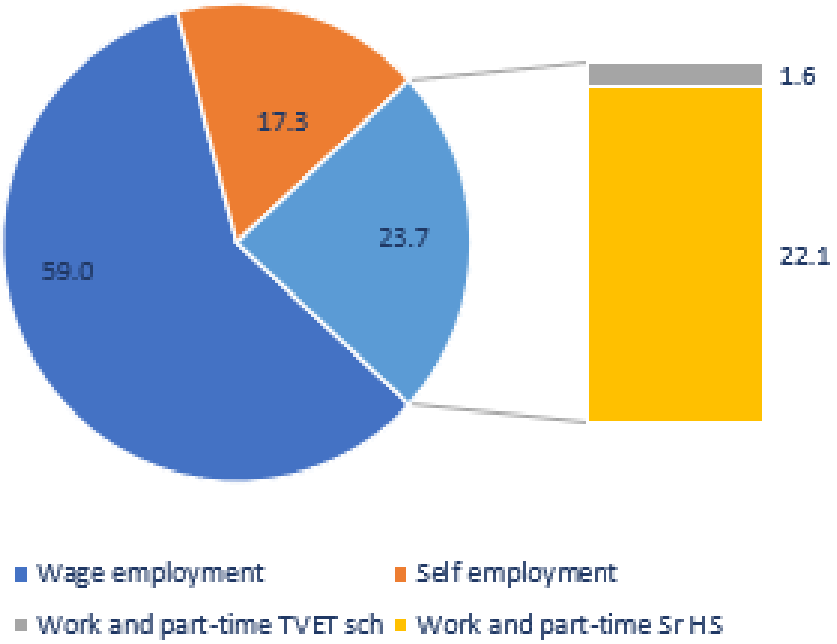

Figure 9. Percentage distribution of ALS completers in full-time/part-time employment

Occupation	All areas
Working and Part-Time Schooling – Tech-Voc/TESDA	**1.6**
Work and Part-Time Schooling – SHS	**22.1**
Work – Self-employment	**17.3**
Work – Wage employment	**59.0**
Total	**100.00**
n	**312**

Among the 312 ALS completers engaged in full-time or part-time jobs, more than half are employed in wage employment, indicating a preference for stable income opportunities. Slightly over a quarter of the time, they combine **work with part-time schooling** (senior high school), reflecting their commitment to continuing education alongside earning. Meanwhile, less than a quarter are engaged in self-employment, highlighting entrepreneurial efforts among some respondents. These results emphasize ALS completers' diverse pathways to balance work and education.

Classification of Industry-based occupation of ALS completers in full-time/part-time job

Percentage distribution of respondents' type of occupation

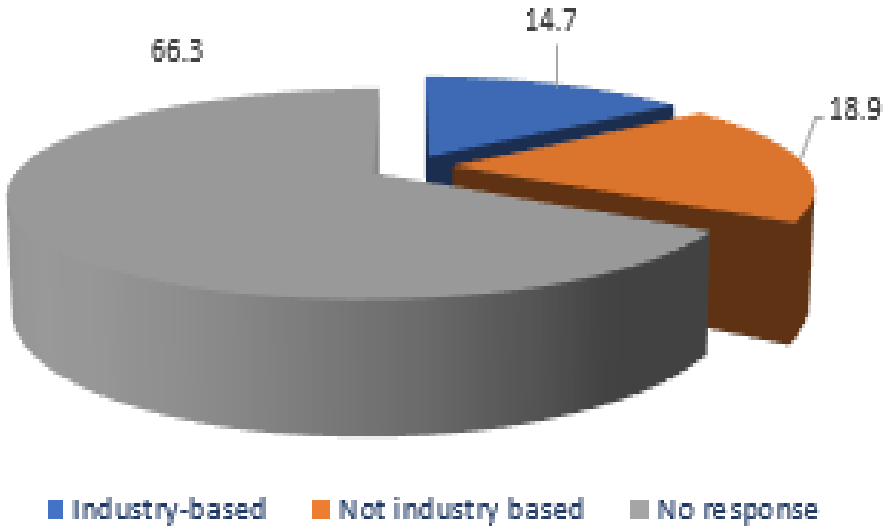

Figure 10. Percentage distribution of respondents' type of occupation

Classification of industry – based occupation	
Armed forces occupation	1.7
Elementary occupation (laborer, unskilled workers)	20.3
Plant and machine operator and assembler	10.2
Skilled agriculture, forestry, and fishery worker	16.9
Services and sales worker	50.8
Total	100.0
n	59

Nature and work status of ALS completers who are working

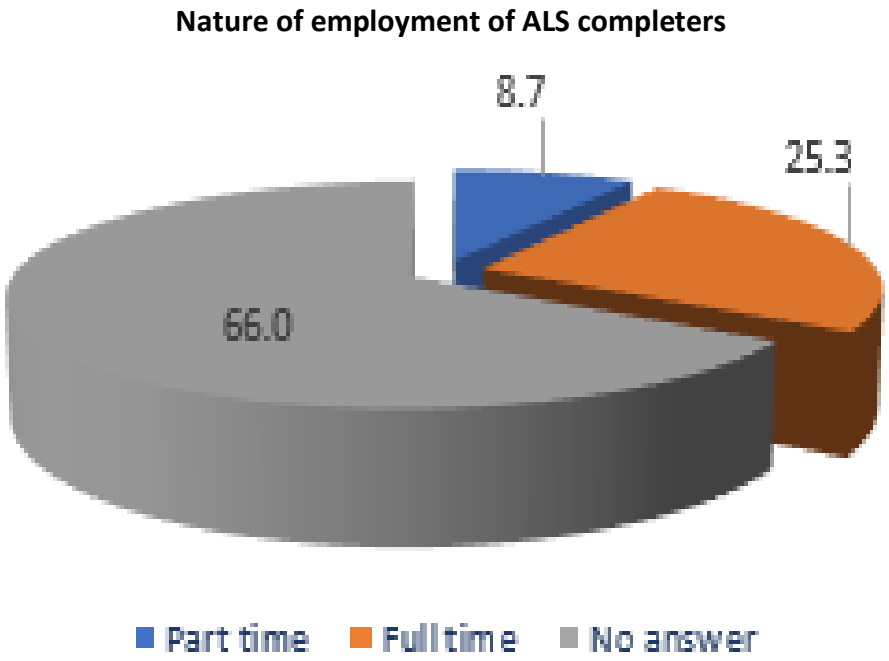

Figure 11. Percentage distribution of employment

Present employment status	All areas (n=312)
Permanent	22.8
Contractual	24.0
Casual/Seasonal/Daily Wages basis	32.7
Probationary	0.6
No Answer	19.9
Total	100.00

Overall, slightly less than one-third (32.7%) of ALS completers who are currently working are engaged in casual, seasonal, or daily wage employment. Approximately one-fourth are working on a contractual basis, and 22.8% have permanent employment.

Composition of completers who found employment

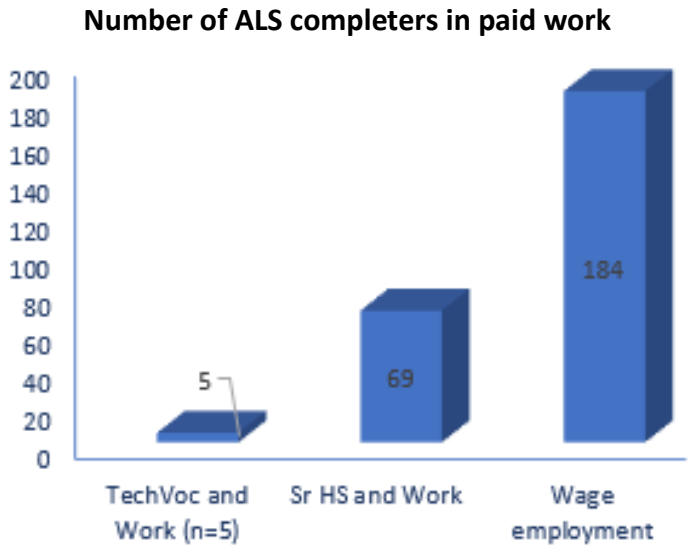

Figure 12. Graph distribution of ALS completers in paid work

Start of employment	All areas (n=258)
Before studying my ALS JHS	**30.6**
While studying my ALS JHS	**21.7**
Right after I stopped my ALS JHS (1st six months after completion)	**32.6**
Sometime after I stopped my ALS JHS (more than six months onward)	**9.7**
No Answer	**5.4**
Total	**100.0**

A similar proportion (28.7%) are engaged in casual, seasonal, or daily wage work. Additionally, 22.4% work contractual, and very few (0.7%) are on probationary status.

Regarding the composition of completers who found employment, in all study sites, nearly one-third (30.6%) began their employment before completing their ALS JHS. A fifth (21.7%) were employed immediately after finishing their ALS JHS, typically within the first six months. Less than ten percent found employment more than six months after completing their ALS JHS

4.1.2.1. Employment Status of ALS JHS Completers

The table 13 below provides insights into the employment status of ALS completers across sites, and the total sample. This analysis highlights variations in employment outcomes and trends between these two categories of cities.

Table 13. Employment Status of ALS Completers

Employment Status	Total (n=312)
Work and Schooling	74
Wage Employed	184
Self-Employed	54
Total	312

The work and schooling category (74 participants, 23.7%) represents individuals balancing part-time work while pursuing further education. This finding may reflect greater access to education opportunities and flexible work arrangements in urban settings.
Wage employment (184 participants, 59.0%) is the most common employment status among ALS completers followed by self-employment (17.3%)

The total number of employed ALS completers is 312, indicating a significant portion of ALS graduates actively participating in the workforce, either part-time or full-time.

4.1.2.2. Employment and Monthly Income of ALS Completers

This data provides a breakdown of the employment and income levels of ALS completers. It highlights their engagement in work and schooling, wage employment, and self-employment, along with their reported income brackets (see Table 14 below).

Table 14. Employment and Monthly Income of ALS Completers

Employment/Income Level	Total
a. Work and Schooling	
• **No Answer**	74
• **Total**	74
b. Wage Employed	
• **No Answer**	184
• **Total**	184
c. Self-Employed	
• **Below 10,000**	42
• **10,001 to 15,000**	8
• **15,001 - 25,000**	1
• **25,001 - 30,000**	3
• **Total**	54

Employment/Income Level	Total
d. All Engaged in Employment	
• **Below 10,000**	42
• **10,001 to 15,000**	8
• **15,001 - 25,000**	1
• **25,001 - 30,000**	3
• **No Answer**	258
Total	312

A total of 74 individuals reported combining work and schooling across cities. No income data was provided for this category, indicating that these individuals likely prioritize education alongside limited work responsibilities.

No specific income data was reported among the 184 wage-employed individuals. This may reflect a lack of transparency or standardization in wage reporting. Nonetheless, wage employment remains the dominant category for ALS completers.

Most self-employed individuals (42 out of 54) reported earnings below PHP 10,000 per month, indicating limited profitability in entrepreneurial ventures.
A smaller number (8 individuals) earn PHP 10,001 to PHP 15,000, and only a few earn above PHP 15,001, with just 3 individuals earning PHP 25,001 to PHP 30,000. This pattern suggests that self-employment is largely a subsistence activity for many ALS completers, with opportunities for higher earnings being rare.

Overall Employment and Income. Across all employment categories, 258 participants did not provide income data, representing 82.7% of the total employed. This highlights a significant gap in financial reporting, which could be addressed in future studies to better understand the economic outcomes of ALS completers.

4.1.2.3. Employment and Monthly Income Distribution of ALS JHS Completers (in percentages)

The data highlights the proportional distribution of employment types and monthly income among ALS completers in all areas. It reflects their economic engagement and provides insights into employment categories and income levels.

All individuals in the work and schooling category (100%) did not provide specific income data. This indicates that participants in this category likely prioritize education over financial reporting or have no stable income to report.

Similarly, all wage-employed individuals (100%) did not disclose their income. This could point to confidentiality concerns or challenges in capturing accurate income data for wage employment.

A majority of self-employed ALS completers earn below PHP 10,000 monthly, with 76.0% in all areas. A small percentage earn PHP 10,001 to PHP 15,000 (29.8%). This shows that while

some individuals achieve moderate income through self-employment, the majority remain in the lowest income bracket.

4.1.3. Pursued Technical-Vocational Education and Training

Occupational status of r's who pursued other training activities after completing ALS (n=113)

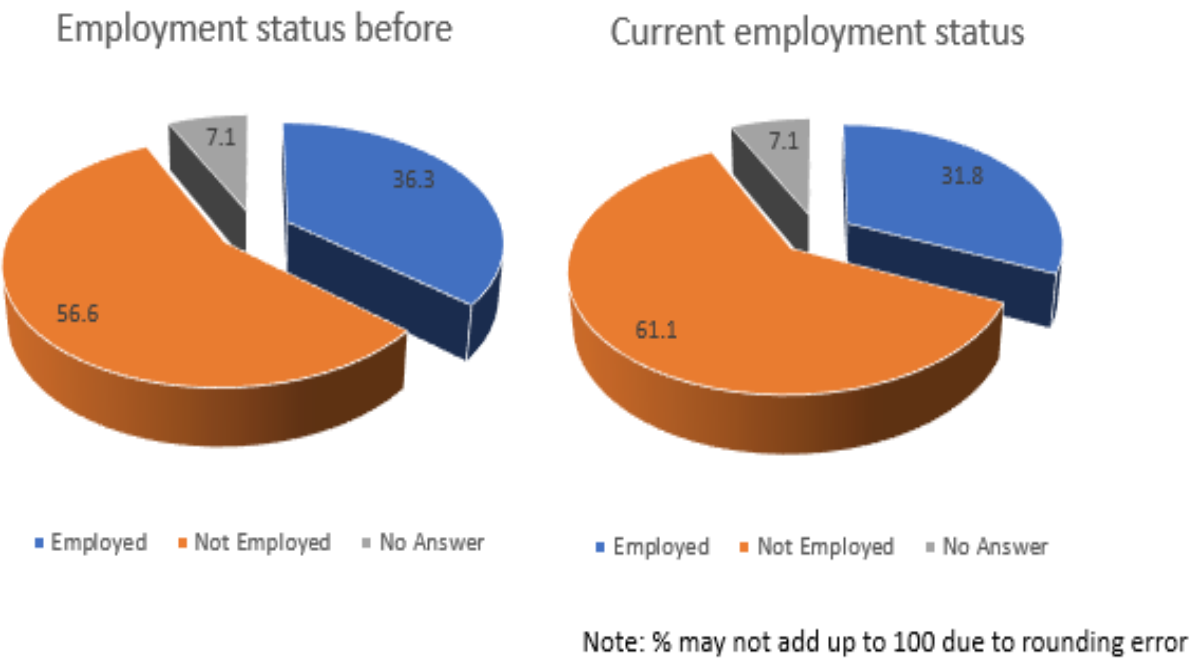

Figure 13. Occupational status of respondents

Regarding occupational status among those who pursued additional training activities after completing ALS, 113 individuals were employed before completing JHS, and the same number are currently employed.

This bar chart illustrates the percentage of currently employed ALS-JHS completers who reported that their ALS training benefited their current employment.

Overall, 54.3% of employed ALS completers across all areas indicated that their employment benefitted from ALS training. This suggests that more than half of the respondents found value in the training they received.

4.2. Decision-Making Factors

4.2.1. How Personal Decisions Affect Post-program Choice?

The data provides an overview of whether respondents' personal decisions affected their post-program choice.

Across all areas, 44.8% of respondents reported that their personal decision influenced their post-program choices, while 41.1% stated they did not. This result indicates that personal

decision-making plays a significant role in shaping post-program choices for many respondents.

Table 15. Respondents' Personal Decision Affecting Post-Program Choice

Response	Percentage
No	41.1
Yes	44.8
No Answer	14.1
Total	**100.0**

The answers to the question of how respondents' personal choices influenced their post-program decisions reveal a variety of internal and external factors. Some said, "Because I made the decision / Personal Decision" was the most often mentioned reason (16.3% overall). This finding implies that respondents have more discretion when making decisions. The second most frequent response, "Walang epekto because I want to go to school," demonstrated a dedication to education in spite of circumstances (17.4%).

Table 16. Reasons Why/Why not Personal Decision Affected Post-Program Choice

Response	Percentage
None / No Comment	4.9
Walang epekto because I want to go to school	17.4
Further education for personal **growth/teacher**	16.3
Because I made the decision / Personal Decision	16.3
Because of my dream to work abroad	9.1
To help **people/friends** / people in the barangay	3.8
To find work / gain knowledge for work	0.5
Financially Challenged / Walang pera	0.3
Balance part-time work and studies	0.2
Study hard / Work hard for my education	0.2
To help my family / Support them when I have a job	0.2
I got pregnant / gave birth / cared for children	0.2
Develop skills / Culinary skills / Other skills	0.2
Because of scholarship	0.1
I need to learn my own language but sacrificed	0.1
Living alone / No support	0.1
Not Applicable	1.6
No Answer	28.5
Total	**100.0**

Emphasizing goals for both professional and personal development, the statement "I felt that further education was essential for my personal growth and I want to become a teacher someday" (16.3%) was similarly common and largely consistent across all city types.

With 9.1% of replies indicating a strong desire among respondents, "Because of my dream to work abroad."

Responses such as "To help people/friends/people in the barangay" (3.8%) and "To help my family / support them when I have a job" (0.2%) show a sense of social and familial responsibility influencing actions.

Obstacles and Limitations Practical barriers to pursuing higher education were highlighted by a tiny percentage of respondents who mentioned limitations such as "Financially Challenged / Walang pera" (0.3%) and "Living alone / No support" (0.1%).

Reasons that are distinct and uncommon. Although they are less common, other answers like "Develop skills / Culinary skills / Other skills" (0.2%) and "Because of a scholarship" (0.1%) demonstrate the variety of motivations.

The data depict the diversity of motivations and challenges influencing post-program choices. Personal decision-making, aspirations for growth, and commitment to education are central themes, but financial and social constraints remain significant barriers.

4.2.2. Personal Decision Affect Post-Program Choice.

This study examines the extent to which personal decisions influence post-program choices. The findings highlight notable trends and implications, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to support participants in their decision-making processes.

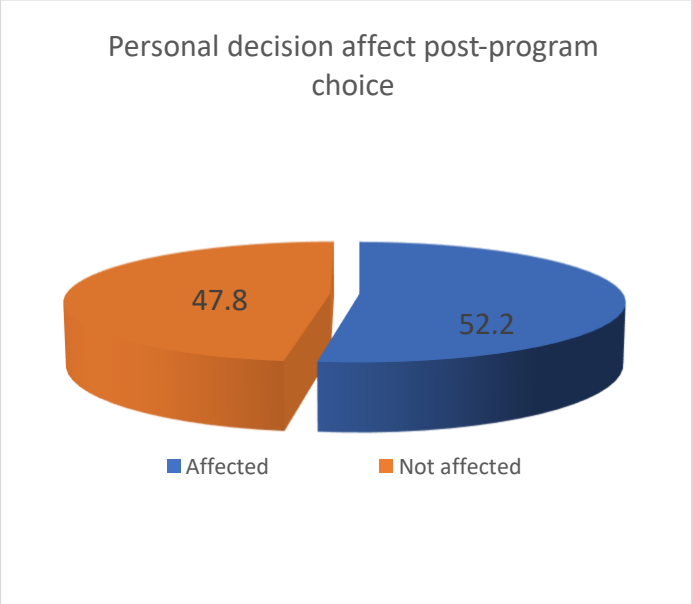

Figure 14. **Personal decisions affect post-program choice**

Among all respondents **(n=1,093)**, 52.2% indicated that personal decisions affected their post-program choices, while 47.8% stated otherwise. This relatively even split suggests that personal decisions play a significant role for a slight majority of participants, shaping their choices after completing the program.

Implications for Program Support. Programs may need to examine external factors, such as structural barriers or institutional support, that could neutralize the impact of personal decisions.

4.2.3. How Does Location Matter in Post-Program Choice?

This graph explores the extent to which location impacts post-program choices in all areas. The responses are divided into three categories: **Affected**, **Not Affected**, and **No Response**.

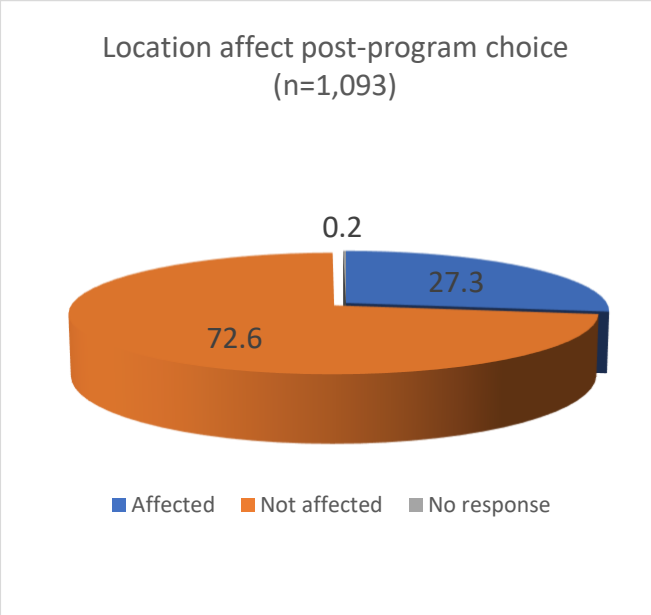

Figure 15. Location affects post-program choice

In all Areas Combined (n=1,093), 27.3% reported being influenced by the location in their post-program choices, and 72.6% indicated no influence from the location. The overall data aligns closely with the trends observed in in all cities, with the majority dismissing location as a factor.

More than a fourth (27%) of participants reported that location influenced their post-program choices. A majority, 73%, indicated that location did not affect their choices.

Across all areas, a significant majority of respondents (73% in all cities do not perceive location as a factor in their post-program decisions.

4.2.4. Financial Situation Affecting Post-Program Choice

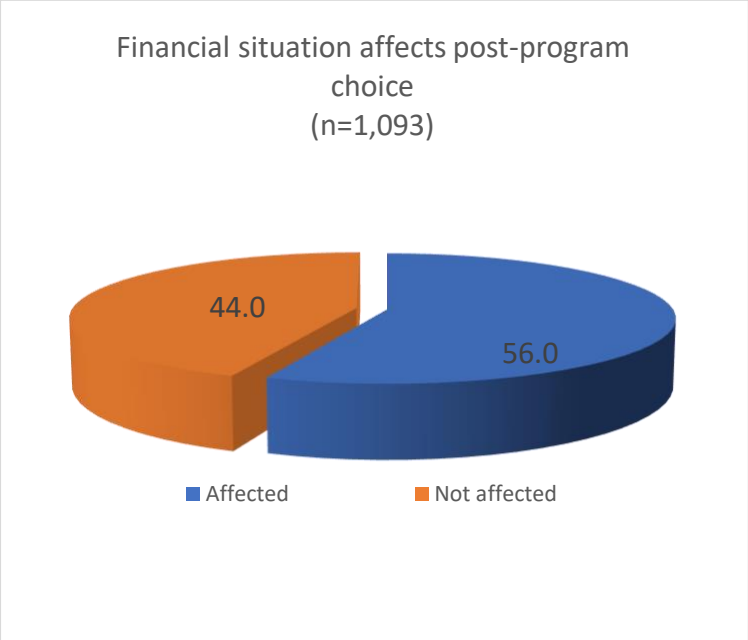

Figure 16. Financial situations affect post-program choice

This graph shows the proportion of individuals who reported being either "Affected" or "Not Affected" by their financial situation when making post-program choices.

A majority (56%) of respondents from all areas stated that their financial situation **affected** their post-program choice. However, 44% indicated that their financial situation did **not affect** their choice. This highlights the financial situation as a critical factor in shaping decisions for a significant proportion of the population.

4.3. Facilitating Factors

4.3.1. Factors that Helped Respondents Pursue Desired Post-Program Pathways

Table 17. Outlines the factors that helped respondents pursue their desired post-program pathways

Factors	Percentage (n=1,273)
Family Support	68.5
Financial Support	29.3
Guidance and Counselling Services	26.9
Close Proximity to Home/Friends/Peers	14.5
Networking Opportunities	9.8
Others	7.0

Family Support is the most significant factor, with 68.5% of the respondents. This suggests that family backing is a universal enabler.

Networking Opportunities There were 9.8% overall had **Close Proximity to Home or Peer Support** 14.5% overall) play less prominent but noteworthy roles. This factor is consistent across all areas (approximately 27%), indicating its moderate but consistent impact in supporting respondents.

4.3.2. Facilitating Factors for ALS Completers Pursuing Fulltime/Part-Time Senior High School (SHS)

Table 18. Facilitating Factors for ALS Completers Pursuing Fulltime/Part-Time Senior High Schools (SHS)

Pathway	Frequency	Percent of cases
Financial support of parents/family/relatives	331	49.1
Access to scholarship	228	33.8
Easy access to the education/training institution	226	33.5
Working student. Self-supporting	25	3.7
Personal decision to finish school	15	2.2
Work for my dream e.g. abroad, to become a soldier	6	0.9
Motivation to support family	6	0.9
ALS training/ALS in the jail	5	0.7
Motivated by friends/teachers	3	0.4
No answer	77	11.4

The respondents who completed the ALS-JHS identified several facilitating factors that influenced their decision to pursue full-time or part-time Senior High School. Among these factors, financial support from parents or relatives emerged as the most significant, cited by almost half of the respondents (49.1%). This underscores the critical role of family and relatives in providing the financial stability needed for learners to continue their education.

Approximately a third of the respondents (33.8%) highlighted access to scholarships as a key enabler, demonstrating the importance of financial aid programs in reducing the economic barriers to further education. Similarly, another third (33.5%) mentioned easy access to education and training opportunities, reflecting the positive impact of accessible schools and learning centers on enrollment decisions.

Other factors, though mentioned by less than a tenth of the respondents, are equally noteworthy. These include being working students/self-supporting, making a personal decision to finish schooling, striving to achieve their dreams, feeling motivated to support their family, drawing inspiration from ALS training or experiences such as ALS in the jail, and being encouraged by friends and teachers. While less common, these factors highlight the diverse motivations and challenges that learners face, showcasing the multifaceted impact of ALS on their educational journeys.

Overall, these insights emphasize the importance of financial support, scholarships, and accessible education in encouraging ALS completers to transition to Senior High School, while also recognizing the role of personal determination and external motivation in shaping their pathways.

4.3.3. Facilitating Factors for ALS Completers Pursuing Fulltime/Part-Time Technical Vocational (Tech-Voc) Courses

Table 19. Facilitating Factors for ALS Completers Pursuing Fulltime/Part-Time Technical Vocational (Tech-Voc) Courses

Pathway	Frequency	Percent of cases
access to scholarship	37	54.4
financial support of parents/family/relatives	31	45.6
Convenient/easy access to the education/training institution	27	39.7
It's convenient	1	1.5
May Trabaho po ako *(I have work)*	1	1.5
Micro Finance	1	1.5
Self decision	1	1.5
No answer	5	7.4

The facilitating factors that influenced ALS completers to pursue full-time or part-time Technical Vocational (Tech-Voc) education highlight key enablers for their educational decisions. Access to scholarships emerged as the most significant factor, cited by more than half of the respondents (54.4%). This underscores the critical role of financial aid programs in supporting learners to continue their education in technical and vocational fields.

Financial support from parents, family, or relatives followed closely, mentioned by 45.6% of the respondents. This finding emphasizes the importance of familial backing in ensuring that learners have the resources needed to engage in Tech-Voc education.

Additionally, convenient or easy access to education and training institutions was identified by 39.7% of respondents, suggesting that proximity and accessibility of training centers play a substantial role in their decision-making process.

The remaining factors, while less frequently mentioned, are nonetheless important. These include the convenience of the program, the fact that some learners were already working, microfinance support, and self-decision. Though these factors accounted for smaller percentages, they reflect the varied circumstances and motivations of ALS completers pursuing Tech-Voc education.

Overall, these findings demonstrate the significant influence of financial and institutional support, as well as personal and contextual factors, in enabling ALS completers to transition to Tech-Voc pathways. They also highlight the need to strengthen scholarship programs, ensure family involvement, and enhance the accessibility of training institutions to support the diverse needs of learners.

4.3.4. Facilitating Factors for ALS Completers Pursuing Other Schooling/Training

Table 20. Facilitating Factors for ALS Completers Pursuing Other Schooling/Training

Pathway	Frequency	Percent of cases
access to scholarship	1	0.9
financial support of parents/family/relatives	1	0.9
easy access to the education/training institution	6	5.3
No answer	105	92.9

The facilitating factors for ALS completers pursuing alternative schooling or training pathways reveal a combination of financial and logistical enablers. Access to scholarships stands out as a critical support mechanism, providing much-needed financial relief and incentivizing learners to continue their education.

In addition, financial support from parents, family, or relatives emerged as another significant factor, highlighting the essential role of family resources and encouragement in sustaining educational pursuits.

Lastly, easy access to education or training institutions was identified as a key enabler, emphasizing the importance of proximity and the availability of training centers in influencing learners' decisions to pursue further education or training.

These findings stressed the interplay of financial aid, familial support, and institutional accessibility in shaping the educational journeys of ALS completers. Strengthening these factors could further enhance participation and success rates in alternative schooling and training programs.

4.4. Hindering Factors

4.4.1. Challenges Faced by Respondents in Pursuing Preferred Pathways

Table 21. Challenges Faced by Respondents in Pursuing Preferred Post-Program Pathway

Challenges	Percentage (n=1,273)
Financial Constraints	57.7%
Family Obligation	53.6%
Lack of Information	26.6%
Lack of Family Support	16.2%
Lack of Needed Knowledge/Skills	14.5%
Lack of Needed Work Experience	10.4%
Lack of Available Education/Training Program Options	9.6%
Geographical Remoteness	7.9%
Lack of Access to Seed Capital/Start-up Funds	6.2%
Lack of Documents	5.1%
Lack of Support from Supervisor/Mentor/Coach	2.4%

The most common challenges are financial constraints and family obligations. The former is the most significant challenge across all cities, with 57.7% in the overall. This suggests a widespread need for financial assistance to help individuals achieve their desired pathways. The latter is the second most common challenge, reported by 53.6% in the overall. The respondents carry the burden of family obligations.

The lack of Information is notable, with above a fourth (26.6%) overall. This indicates the need for improved dissemination of program-related information.

Lack of Family Support is reported by 16.2% overall. Despite being less common than family obligation, it is a significant barrier for some.

Less common challenges are factors such as Lack of Needed Knowledge/Skills (14.5%), Geographic Remoteness (7.9%), and Lack of Work Experience (10.4%).

4.4.2. Hindering Factors for ALS Completers Pursuing Senior High School (SHS)

Table 22. Challenges Faced by Respondents in Pursuing Senior High School

Constraints for ALS completers pursuing Sr. High School (multiple response n=674)

Challenges	Percentage
None	5.9
Finances	23.9
Time management	14.1
Academic requirements	15.0
Family problems	2.8
Pregnancy/birth/child-minding/married life	3.7
Adjustment issues	4.0
Distance	3.6
Others	1.8
No response	35.0
n	674

The findings highlight key constraints ALS completers face in pursuing Senior High School. Financial challenges emerged as the most significant barrier, reported by 23.9% of respondents, underscoring the critical need for financial support mechanisms such as scholarships and subsidies.

This is followed by academic requirements (15%), which may reflect gaps in preparedness or the additional demands of transitioning to Senior High School.

Time management (14.1%) was also identified as a notable constraint, likely reflecting the difficulty of balancing studies with personal, family, or work responsibilities.

4.4.3. Hindering Factors for ALS Completers Pursuing Other Training

The research findings on the difficulties faced by respondents who pursued other training activities provide critical insights into the obstacles encountered by the respondents in all

cities. These findings highlight a complex interplay of environmental, personal, and systemic elements that affect participants differently depending on their location.

Table 23. Challenges Faced by the Respondents in Pursuing Other Training

Challenges encountered by those who pursued other training activities	Percentage (n=113)
None	17.7
Child minding/pregnancy	18.6
Lack of experience	11.5
Documentary requirements	15.0
Adjustment to new work	5.3
Lack of finances	3.5
Too young to legally work	1.8
Others	7.1
No answer	19.5
Total	100.0%

Addressing these barriers through targeted interventions, such as financial aid, academic bridging support programs, and flexible learning schedules, could improve access and retention/completion rates among ALS completers in Senior High School.

As shown in Table 18c, it is clear that family obligation severely impede participation in training programs, as 18.6% of respondents in all regions cited pregnancy or child care as a barrier. This finding emphasizes the need for programs like daycare centers, family-friendly laws, and flexible training dates to help people—especially women—balance their training and caregiving responsibilities.

Documentary Requirements. 15.0% of all participants experienced difficulties with the documentary requirements. As indicated by this administrative obstacle, better advice and support mechanisms are needed to help participants complete the required paperwork. These systems could include workshops, clear communication, or on-site administrative assistance.

Lack of Experience. Above a tenth (11.5%) of respondents cited lack of experience as a challenge. This finding emphasizes the value of preparatory or bridging programs that can give participants the fundamental skills needed to improve their preparedness for more specialized training.

Financial Constraints. Even though only 3.5% of respondents said that money was a barrier, it's crucial to understand that these problems are not negligible. Providing specific financial

aid, such as stipends or transportation allowances, can help ensure that financial limitations do not hinder individuals from accessing training opportunities.

4.4.4. Societal Attitudes or Biases on Respondents' Ability to Pursue Preferred Post-Program

Table 19 examines the impact of societal attitudes or biases on respondents' ability to pursue their preferred post-program pathways. The data reflects how societal perceptions influence opportunities and challenges.

Table 24. Impact of Societal Attitudes or Biases on Respondents' Ability to Pursue Preferred Post-Program Pathway

Impact	Percentage (n=1,273)
Positively	56.2%
Negatively	17.1%
No Impact	19.4%
No Answer	7.2%
Total	**100.0%**

Over half of the respondents (56.2%) reported that societal attitudes or biases had a **positive impact**. This result indicates that, for the majority, societal attitudes likely encouraged or supported their pursuits, perhaps due to cultural norms or community encouragement.

Less than a fifth (17.1%) of respondents overall reported a **negative impact**. A significant portion (19.4%) stated that societal attitudes had **no impact** on their pursuits. This could imply that some respondents are less influenced by societal attitudes, relying more on internal or other external factors.

4.4.5. Societal Attitudes on Biases Impact Respondents' Ability to Pursue Their Preferred Post-Program Pathways

The table highlights this impact. The analysis provides insight into the role societal factors play in shaping individual opportunities and constraints.

Table 25. Impact of Societal Attitudes or Biases on Respondents' Ability to Pursue Preferred Post-Program Pathway

Impact	Percentage (n=1,273)
Positively	56.2%
Negatively	17.1%
No Impact	19.4%
No Answer	7.2%
Total	**100.0%**

The majority of respondents (56.2%) across all areas reported a **positive impact**. This finding suggests that societal attitudes are generally supportive or encouraging, which could be leveraged in designing programs to enhance motivation and social backing.

A smaller portion (17.1%) experienced a **negative impact**. Around a fifth (19.4%) of respondents stated that societal attitudes had **no impact**. This suggests that a notable group is unaffected by societal perceptions, possibly due to self-reliance or alternative support systems.

4.5. Evidence to Inform ALS Program Enhancements

4.5.1. Strategies to Overcome Challenges

The overall data offer insights into how respondents overcame obstacles while pursuing their degrees. "Study Hard / Self-discipline / Work hard for studies" was the most often given response in every category (21.1%).

Table 26. Respondents' Methods to Overcome Challenges

Response	Percentage (n=1,273)
None / No Comment	2.4
Study Hard / Self-discipline / Work hard	21.1
Working / Working Extra / Working Student	6.8
Time Management	4.4
Help from Parents / Family Support	3.0
Think Positive / Believe in Yourself	1.3
Support from Friends	1.0
For My Dreams / Para sa Pangarap Ko	1.0
Prayers / Faith	0.9
Help by Teachers / Tutorials	0.8
Take a Break / Rest	0.5
Decided to Stop Schooling	0.3
Utilized Government Programs	0.2
Financially Challenged / No Money	0.2
Not Applicable	1.6
No Answer	54.3
Total	100.0

Based on the table above, a small percentage of respondents (0.2%) used government programs to get beyond obstacles, suggesting that the available resources may not have been fully exploited. A sizable majority (54.3%) did not respond to this question; . This finding could

be a sign of hesitation or trouble expressing coping strategies. In all areas, the portion of respondents who prayed and relied on faith (0.9%) was comparatively low, indicating that these techniques were not their main coping mechanisms. Only 0.3% of respondents choose to drop out of school, which may be a reflection of their personal or financial struggles.

This table and conversation highlight the significance of hard work and self-control as the prevailing strategy, the fluctuating dependence on outside support networks, and the chance to improve the use of government initiatives and other aid channels.

4.5.2. Reasons that Prevented Individuals Engaged in Other Training Activities to Pursue Senior High School (SHS) or Technical Vocational (Tech-Voc) Education.

The table highlights the reasons that prevented individuals who engaged in other training activities from pursuing Senior High School (SHS) or Technical Vocational (Tech-Voc) education.

Table 27.. Reasons that hampered those who took other training activities from pursuing Senior High School or Tech-Voc education

Reason	Percentage (n=113)
None	20.4
Pregnancy/child minding chores	23.0
Have just completed Jr. HS	9.7
Sickness/death of main provider	1.8
Health reasons	0.9
No plan yet	1.8
Financial constraints	7.1
Others	8.8
No answer	26.5
Total	**100.0**

1. "None." A fifth (20.4%) of respondents overall disclosed that they did not face any challenges that prevented them from pursuing SHS or Tech-Voc education.

2. Pregnancy/Child Minding Chores. A significant 26.6% of respondents in all cities cited pregnancy or childminding as a reason, with 23.0% overall. This is the most common reason across all areas, highlighting the critical role that caregiving responsibilities play in limiting educational opportunities, particularly for women.

3. Just Completed Junior High School. 9.7% of the respondents reported this reason. This finding may indicate that some participants view completing Junior High School as a

natural pause point before considering further education, suggesting a potential gap in transition support between Junior High School and SHS/Tech-Voc programs.

4. Sickness or Death of Main Provider. This reason was cited by 1.8%. While not a major issue, the loss of a main provider can have a profound impact on a family's ability to support educational pursuits, indicating a need for social safety nets or financial aid programs.

5. Health Reasons. Health-related challenges were mentioned only by 0.9% overall. Health concerns, though minimal, are a barrier that may require targeted interventions, such as health screenings and wellness programs.

6. No Plan Yet. Very few (2.0%) of respondents reported having no plans yet to pursue further education, with an overall rate of 1.8%. This finding suggests a need for career guidance and motivation-building initiatives to encourage educational aspirations.

7. Financial Constraints. Financial barriers were cited by 7.1% in the overall. Despite being a relatively small percentage, financial constraints remain a notable barrier for some participants, underscoring the importance of scholarships, grants, or free education programs.

General Observations and Insights

1. **Pregnancy and Childcare as the Leading Barrier**:
   - Caregiving responsibilities disproportionately affect individuals, particularly, highlighting the need for programs that support young parents or those with childcare responsibilities.

2. **Financial and Health Constraints**:
   - Although not the most cited reasons, financial and health challenges remain persistent barriers that can disproportionately impact low-income families and vulnerable groups.

3. **Transition Gaps**:
   - The data suggests a gap in the transition from Junior High School to SHS/Tech-Voc education, emphasizing the importance of interventions to bridge this stage and sustain educational momentum. This involves strengthening ALS post-program support mechanisms to facilitate ALS JHS graduate access to TESDA scholarships and bridging mechanisms to enhance academic readiness for senior high and college level education. This includes ALS Field Implementers' enhancing coordination with local agencies/stakeholders such as TESDA, DTI, DOLE, Local Government Colleges and State Universities/Colleges, to ensure sustained support and opportunities for ALS learners. The USAID Opportunity 2.0 project's Youth Development Alliance (YDA), provides a model of effective inter-agency collaboration in support of ALS post-program transition. YDAs are also consistent with the provisions of the ALS Law (RA 11510) mandating development of alliances to enhance ALS post-program support systems and learner transitions.

4. **Unspecified and Unreported Challenges**:
    - The high rates of "others" and "no answer" categories underscore the importance of further investigation to uncover and address hidden or localized barriers.

The findings reveal a complex interplay of personal, financial, and systemic barriers that prevent individuals from pursuing SHS or Tech-Voc education. By addressing caregiving responsibilities, financial and health constraints, and transition gaps, stakeholders can create more inclusive and supportive educational pathways. Furthermore, localized and tailored approaches are crucial to ensuring equitable access to education across cities.

The data provides insights into how individuals who faced challenges in pursuing Senior High School (SHS) or Technical Vocational (Tech-Voc) education managed these challenges. It compares responses from all areas.

4.5.3. Reasons How Challenges in Pursuing Senior High School (SHS) or Technical-Vocational (Tech-Voc) Education were Addressed

Table 28. How the Challenges in Pursuing SHS/Tech-Voc Education Were Addressed

Category	Percentage (n=60)
Challenge not addressed	50.0
Planning to enroll in the upcoming school year	15.0
Planning to enroll in some future time	1.7
No concrete plan yet	5.0
No intention to return to schooling	3.3
No response	25.0
Total	100.0

NOTE: The n of the table above is equal to the number who mentioned any challenge in pursuing SHS or Tech-Voc education

A substantial **48.6%** of respondents in all cities indicated that their challenges in pursuing further education were not addressed. Overall, half of the respondents (**50.0%**) reported unresolved challenges. This result highlights the significant proportion of individuals unable to overcome barriers to education, indicating the need for targeted interventions.

- **Planning to Enroll in the Upcoming School Year. A very small percentage (15%) plan to enroll in the upcoming School Year**.
- **Planning to Enroll in Some Future Time.** A small **percentage (1.7%)** fall into this category. The lack of immediate plans to return to schooling among this group may reflect uncertainty or unresolved barriers.
- **No Concrete Plan Yet. Very few (5.0%)** of respondents reported having no concrete plan to address their challenges. The overall percentage is **5.0%**. This small but notable

group remains indecisive, requiring guidance or counseling to help chart their educational path.

- **No Intention to Return to Schooling. Very few (5.7%)** of the respondents reported having no intention of returning to schooling. Overall, this category represents **3.3%** of respondents. The lack of intention to resume education may reflect dissatisfaction, discouragement, or competing priorities among certain individuals.

General Observations and Insights

1. **Unresolved Challenges:** Half of the respondents still face unresolved challenges, emphasizing the need for improved support mechanisms such as financial aid, career counseling, and flexible schooling options.
2. **Encouraging Future Plans:** Even small percentages of respondents planning to enroll in the future indicate the importance of sustaining encouragement and support.

Policy Implications

- **Addressing Barriers:** Initiatives must focus on addressing systemic barriers to education, such as financial constraints and accessibility.
- **Localized Support:** IN all cities need targeted interventions to address gaps in planning and engagement.
- **Engagement Strategies:** The high rate of non-responses indicates a need to improve communication and engagement strategies to better understand and address individual challenges.

4.5.4. Reasons that hampered those who took other training activities from pursuing technical courses

The table presents the reasons that prevented respondents who engaged in other training activities from pursuing technical courses across different areas.

Table 29. Reasons that Hampered Those Who Took Other Training Activities from Pursuing Technical Courses

Reasons that Hampered Those Who Took Other Training Activities from Pursuing Technical Courses	Percentage (n=113)
None	37.2
Pregnancy/child-minding chores	4.4
Planning to enroll	2.7
Family concern	1.8
No plan	2.7
Others	2.7

Reasons that Hampered Those Who Took Other Training Activities from Pursuing Technical Courses	Percentage (n=113)
Others - incorrect answer	4.4
No response	44.2
Total	**100.0**

- The highest percentage of individuals (37.2% overall) reported **no specific reason**, indicating either indifference or the absence of constraints on pursuing technical courses.
- **Pregnancy/child minding chores**. 4.4% of the respondents affirmed this reason.
- **Planning to enroll.** Less than 5% the participants indicate a positive inclination to pursue technical courses (4.7%), and there is no data from non-O2 cities.
- **Other family concerns**. Both areas reported relatively low percentages (1.8% in the overall), which indicates that family concerns are a minor barrier in pursuing technical education.
- **No plan**. 2.7% of cities residents have no plan to pursue technical courses, indicating a slight disinterest or lack of awareness.

4.5.5. How Challenges in Pursuing Skills Training among those who took Other Training Activities were Addressed

The data shows how challenges faced in pursuing skills training were addressed among participants in different areas. Overall, slightly above three-fourths (76.9%) of the respondents mentioned that **challenges remained not addressed**. The only respondent in the non-O2 cities claimed that it is unaddressed. Those who were **planning to enroll in Tech-Voc courses** comprised 8.3% of respondents. The same percentage distribution on inquiring from others on how to access the courses, and those who have other reasons.

Table 30. How Challenges in Pursuing Skills Training Were Addressed

How Challenges Were Addressed	Percentage (n=12)
Challenge not addressed	76.9
Planning to enroll in Tech-Voc courses	7.7
Inquire from others on how to access courses	7.7
Others	7.7
No response	76.9
Total	100.0

NOTE: The n of the above table is equal to the number who mentioned any challenge in pursuing skills training

4.5.6. Reasons that Hampered those who took Other Training Activities from Pursuing Employment

The data outlines the reasons that hampered participants who took other training activities from pursuing employment. The analysis focuses on patterns observed across the areas and the responses.

Table 31. Reasons That Hampered Pursuing Employment

Reason	Percentage (n=113)
None	**38.1**
Pregnancy/Child-minding chores	**15.9**
Other family matters/issues	**2.7**
Lacks requirements/documents	**3.5**
Still looking for work	**3.5**
Finances	**0.9**
Lacks experience	**0.9**
Others	**1.8**
No response	**32.7**
Total	**100.0**

A large proportion (38.1% overall) stated they had no issues preventing them from pursuing employment A notable factor, with 15.9% of respondents overall citing the reason on pregnancy/child-minding chores. Family-related issues hampered a small percentage (2.7% overall. 3.5% of respondents overall indicated they were still job-seeking.

Financial Constraints were cited by overall percentage (0.9%), reflecting this was a minimal concern. **Lack of Experience** is cited by 0.9% overall, reflecting a minor issue. Other unspecified reasons were noted by 1.8% overall. A significant percentage (32.7% overall) provided no response.

4.5.7. How the challenges in pursuing skills training among those who took other training activities were addressed

The data highlights how challenges in pursuing skills training were addressed among individuals who took other training activities and faced barriers. The analysis reveals the following:

Table 32. How Challenges in Pursuing Skills Training Were Addressed

How Challenges Were Addressed	Percentage (n=33)
Challenge not addressed	**30.3**
Look for job opportunity	**12.1**
Others	**57.6**
No response	**30.3**
Total	**100.0**

NOTE: The n of the above table is equal to the number who mentioned any challenge in pursuing employment

Less than a third (30.3% across all areas) reported that the challenges they faced in pursuing skills training remained unaddressed. This percentage is slightly higher in O2 Cities (39.1%) compared to Non-O2 Cities (10.0%). Above a tenth (12.1% overall) addressed challenges by seeking job opportunities. More than half (57.6%) of respondents in all areas addressed their challenges using unspecified methods categorized as "others." Utilization of Skills in the Perspectives of the Respondents

Table 33.. Utilization of Skills in the Perspectives of the Respondents

Skills	All Areas Mean	All Areas Qualitative Description
Communication Skills	3.47	Highly utilized
Self-Development Skills	3.35	Highly utilized
Teamwork Skills	3.34	Highly utilized
Interpersonal Relationship Skills	3.23	Moderately utilized
Decision-Making Skills	3.23	Moderately utilized
Time Management Skills	3.22	Moderately utilized
Problem-Solving Skills	3.17	Moderately utilized
Community Responsibility Skills	3.11	Moderately utilized
Critical Thinking Skills	3.07	Moderately utilized
Collaboration Skills	3.02	Moderately utilized
Leadership Skills	3.01	Moderately utilized
Mathematical Skills	2.94	Moderately utilized
Extra-curricular activities Skills	2.85	Moderately utilized
Technical Skills	2.79	Moderately utilized
Entrepreneurial Skills	2.75	Moderately utilized

Skills	Mean	All Areas Qualitative Description
Scientific Management Skills	2.62	Moderately utilized
IT Skills	2.60	Moderately utilized

Scoring:
1.00 – 1.74 = Not utilized
1.75 – 2.49 = Less utilized
2.50 - 3.24 = Moderately utilized
3.25 – 4.00 = Highly utilized

The data presents the mean ratings and qualitative descriptions of various skills assessed among respondents.

Across all areas, the communication and self-development skills are consistently rated "Very Good".

Table 34. Communication and Self-development Skills

Skills	n	Mean	All areas Qualitative Description
Communication Skills	1,273	3.41	Very Good
Self-Development Skills	1,273	3.33	Very Good
Teamwork Skills	1,273	3.24	Good
Decision Making Skills	1,273	3.17	Good
Time Management Skills	1,273	3.14	Good
Interpersonal Relationship Skills	1,273	3.12	Good
Community Responsibility Skills	1,273	3.11	Good
Problem Solving Skills	1,273	3.07	Good
Leadership Skills	1,273	3.04	Good
Critical Thinking Skills	1,273	2.99	Good
Collaboration Skills	1,273	2.98	Good
Extra-curricular activities Skills	1,273	2.89	Good
Mathematical Skills	1,273	2.84	Good
Technical Skills	1,273	2.83	Good
Entrepreneurial Skills	1,273	2.81	Good
Scientific Management Skills	1,273	2.66	Good
IT Skills	1,273	2.62	Good

Self-Development is also rated "Very Good" in all areas, with relatively high and consistent mean scores (3.33).

Teamwork, Decision-Making, and Time Management Skills are moderately strong skills. These skills are rated "Good" across all areas, reflecting their moderate utilization and development.

Interpersonal Relationship Skills show slight variation. **Leadership Skills** consistently rated as "Good" across all areas with close scores (3.04). **Critical Thinking Skills** are slightly lower overall, indicating potential for improvement.

Technical Skills, Scientific Management Skills, and IT Skills are among the lowest-rated skills, particularly IT Skills (2.62). The qualitative description remains "Good," but the lower mean suggests a need for targeted enhancement in these areas.

Mathematical Skills and Entrepreneurial Skills: Both are rated "Good," but their scores are on the lower end of the spectrum, indicating room for improvement.

Overall trends show that the majority of skills are rated as "Good," indicating adequate competency, but there is potential for enhancement in technical, IT, and scientific management areas.

V. Recommendations

Policy-Level Recommendations:

1. **Strengthen and Institutionalize Family Support Mechanisms to Enhance Education Success for Learners, Particularly those in Transition to Senior High School, TVET, and Higher Education.**

   Finding/s: The research highlighted that **family support** was ranked highest, cited by **68.5%** of respondents overall. The data demonstrated that family support is the most critical enabler, with reliance on family being particularly pronounced. Conversely, a **lack of family support** was identified as a challenge by **16.2%** of respondents overall. This interplay indicates that, while family support serves as a cornerstone of learner success, its absence significantly impedes progress. Therefore, institutionalizing family support mechanisms can address this duality—maximizing its enabling potential while mitigating its hindering effects.

   This finding is consistent with the 2023 DepEd report, which noted that learners who receive strong family encouragement are more likely to succeed. Strengthening policies that institutionalize family support will increase the likelihood of educational success.

   Recommended Programs/Activities:

   1.1. Enhance Awareness Campaigns for Families. Conduct targeted campaigns to educate families about their role in educational transitions, focusing on both emotional and financial support systems, including scholarships and government grants.

   Context:

   - On 4Ps as CCT: While 4Ps beneficiaries are already receiving information on health and education requirements, many families, particularly in vulnerable or rural areas, may not be fully aware of the importance of their support during educational transitions.

     Hence, may conduct targeted awareness campaigns that focus specifically on families of SHS and TVET learners. These campaigns should educate families about their critical role in supporting learners' education during these transitions, how to navigate financial and emotional support systems, and how to access other government programs.

2. **Strengthen Financial Support Systems to facilitate the transition of ALS Learners to Senior High School (SHS), Technical-Vocational Education and Training, and Further Education.**

Finding/s: Financial constraints were identified as a significant challenge among ALS JHS learners, especially those from lower-income groups. Data from this research revealed that 57.7% of respondents cited financial constraints as the key barrier to continuing education, while 29.3% ranked financial support as the second most critical enabler.

Resource shortages and financial constraints in ALS were exacerbated by inequitable funding compared to formal education, limiting program sustainability and learners' ability to transition effectively to SHS, TVET, or further education.

The 2023 DepEd National ALS Report highlighted that marginalized learners, particularly in rural areas, face significant financial hurdles. Expanding financial assistance is crucial for improving transition, retention, and graduation rates. Further, Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) reported in 2022 that rural areas have fewer scholarship opportunities, exacerbating educational disparities. Expanding and diversifying scholarships, particularly for vocational and senior high school pathways, will address these gaps.

Recommended Programs/Activities:

2.1. Expand Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT) for Education Support: Expand financial incentives for families supporting learners in SHS, TVET, and higher education, particularly for those aged above 18 years, to close the current coverage gap in the 4Ps program.

Context:

- On 4Ps as CCT: 4Ps program provides financial support to families with children aged 0-18 years, its coverage for ALS JHS completers in Senior High School (SHS) and Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET) learners is limited. Therefore, there is a need to expand 4Ps to specifically include families with children enrolled in SHS and those transitioning into TVET, to address the financial barriers during these educational transitions.
- Given that 4Ps primarily covers younger learners (0-18 years), extend targeted support for families of SHS and TVET students who may be excluded from the current program, ensuring that financial assistance continues through their child's post-basic education transition.
- Ensure that conditionalities (e.g., school attendance and health checks) are aligned with the unique needs of ALS JHS completers enrolled in SHS and TVET, focusing on maintaining school engagement and supporting their pathway into higher education or vocational training.

- Address the limitations of 4Ps by highlighting additional non-4Ps resources, such as scholarships, government educational grants, and other available support mechanisms for families of older learners, ensuring they are fully informed of the opportunities for continued support.

Expanding CCT support will improve transition rates, enhance employability, and reduce financial barriers for ALS learners, ensuring sustained education and skills development.

*(**Source:** According to the 4Ps Operations Manual, the cash grant for each child enrolled in an education program, who is below 18 years old, is set at a minimum of Php700.00 per month, per child, for up to ten months per school year.)*

2.2. Expand and Diversify Scholarship Programs to Support Learners Pursuing Senior High School (SHS) and Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET): Expand government scholarships and establish new financial assistance programs, especially targeting marginalized groups like persons with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples.

Key possible actions may include:

- Partnerships with Private and Public Sectors: Collaborate with government agencies (e.g., CHED, TESDA) and private organizations to create scholarships tailored to ALS SHS and TVET learners.
- Monitoring and Tracking Scholarship Utilization: Implement monitoring systems to track the effectiveness of scholarships in improving transition, retention, and completion rates.
- Targeted Vocational Scholarships: Develop/provide access to scholarships tailored for learners pursuing Technical Vocational (Tech-Voc) education.

3. Expand ALS Career Counseling and Guidance Programs to Facilitate Transitions for Learners Pursuing Senior High School (SHS), TVET, Higher Education and Career Pathways.

Finding/s: 26.9% of respondents (overall) ranked Guidance and Counselling Services as third most critical enabler. While no direct hindering factor explicitly corresponds, the broader challenge of Lack of Information (26.6% overall) indicates the need for improved career guidance to address knowledge gaps. These findings highlight the importance of structured programs to bridge informational and counseling deficits.

Recommended Programs/Activities:

3.1. Strengthen ALS Career Counseling Programs: Establish/Strengthen nationwide career counseling initiative/program specifically tailored for ALS learners transitioning to SHS, TVET, Higher Education, and Career Pathways. This program should provide localized support especially in rural areas, ensuring equitable access to career guidance.

3.2. Training Local Leaders: Train ALS teachers and community leaders to serve as career counselors/advisors, offering personalized advice to students and their families.

3.3 Collaboration with Employers: Partner with industries to create realistic career pathways for ALS learners.

3.4 Enhance coordination between ALS implementers and local post-program stakeholders, such as TESDA, DTI, DOLE, DSWD, Local and State Universities/Colleges, to enhance ALS JHS completers awareness of, and access to, scholarships, TVET courses, bridging programs, job fairs, seed capital, depending on their preferred program exits (i.e., employment, TVET, SHS, college, entrepreneurship). Notably, the USAID-EDC Opportunity 2.0 project has successfully established a Youth Development Alliance (YDA) mechanism in its sites to facilitate this inter-agency collaboration. This model aligns with the provisions of The ALS Act of 2020 (RA 11510), which mandates the formation of such alliances to strengthen program implementation and learner transition pathways.

4. **Provide Comprehensive Support for Caregiving and Parenting Responsibilities of ALS Learners in Junior High School (JHS) and Senior High School (SHS) Levels.**

Finding/s: 53.6% of respondents overall identified Family Obligations as the second most significant barrier and cited care giving duties as a reason for not pursuing further education. This highlights the disproportionate caregiving burden on learners, particularly women, as reflected also in qualitative findings. Addressing caregiving responsibilities is crucial to reducing dropout rates and enabling continued participation in ALS programs.

This challenge was similarly reported in the 2023 DepEd National ALS Report, where caregiving, especially among women, was identified as a significant barrier. Addressing these challenges through supportive policies will help increase female participation and retention in ALS programs.

Recommended Programs/Activities:

4.1. Government-Sponsored Daycare: Establish daycare facilities near ALS community learning centers and SHS/TVET institutions, particularly in rural areas, to support young mothers and caregivers.

4.2. Flexible Educational Programs: Create educational opportunities that consider caregivers' time constraints, including part-time or online courses.

4.3. Incentive Programs for Parents: Provide financial incentives or allowances for parents pursuing education while balancing caregiving.

Sources:

- *Research Findings of this ALS JHS Tracer Study, SY 2022-2023 ALS JHS Completers/Non-Completers*
- *Department of Education National ALS Report, 2023*
- *Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) 2022 Report*

Program/Operation-Level Recommendations

1. **Enhance Community Engagement and Motivation Programs**

   Finding/s: Community support was a significant factor in respondents' success, with **68.5%** of learners across areas citing **family and community support as a facilitator** for pursuing desired post-program pathways. However, **16.2%** of respondents reported a **lack of family or community support as a hindrance**. These findings indicate that while strong community and family engagement is a key enabler, its absence creates a notable barrier to continued participation in ALS JHS, SHS and TVET programs.

   This finding is consistent with the DepEd's 2023 report, which noted the role of local support in encouraging educational participation. Operationalizing community-based motivation programs will significantly improve learner retention and success rates.

   Recommended Programs/Activities:

   1.1. Mentorship Programs: Develop mentorship initiatives where experienced learners or community leaders support and guide new learners.

   1.2. Community Recognition Programs: Establish community-based recognition systems that highlight educational achievements and create local role models.

2. **Facilitate Flexible Learning Options for ALS SHS and TVET to improve program accessibility for those who are employed, have family and other commitments, or live in geographically remote areas.**

   Finding/s: Time constraints, primarily due to work and caregiving duties, were a significant hindrance for 14.5% of respondents across areas. Additionally, 26.4% of respondents identified flexible learning opportunities, including online or modular setups, as a critical factor in supporting their continued participation in SHS and TVET programs.

   Flexible learning options directly address these time-related challenges, particularly for learners balancing employment or caregiving responsibilities, as emphasized in the DepEd 2023 report.

   Recommended Programs/Activities

   2.1. Hybrid Learning: Develop hybrid learning models of SHS and TVET that combine both online and in-person learning to provide flexibility.

   2.2. Evening and Weekend Classes: Introduce additional SHS and TVET class schedules during non-peak hours to accommodate working students and caregivers.

3. **Implement Localized Childcare Solutions for ALS Senior High School and Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET)**

Finding/s: Caregiving, particularly among women, was identified as a major barrier in the study, with 25% of female respondents citing childcare duties as the main reason they could not continue their education and training.

The DepEd's 2023 report further highlighted the absence of accessible childcare options as a challenge for parents enrolled in ALS programs. Implementing localized childcare solutions can significantly reduce this barrier and improve female participation.

Recommended Programs/Activities:

3.1. Partnerships with Barangay Daycare Centers: Collaborate with local daycare facilities to provide childcare support more specifically for ALS, SHS and TVET learners.

3.2. Mobile Daycare Units: Provide/Deploy mobile daycare units to reach underserved and remote areas where daycare services are limited to support ALS completers pursuing TVET and SHS programs.

4. **Strengthen Peer Support Systems for ALS SHS & TVET Learners**

Finding/s: The Lack of Family Support was a Hindrance for 16.2% of respondents, while Close Proximity to Home/Friends/Peers was identified as a Facilitating Factor by 14.5% of respondents.

This highlights the importance of building strong peer networks to provide encouragement, resource-sharing, and collaborative problem-solving among learners. The DepEd 2023 report further supports the role of peer support systems in improving learner retention.

Recommended Programs/Activities:

- Establish/Strengthen Peer Mentorship Programs such as Youth Networks, Learning Circles (self-directed set up by the learners themselves), Pathways Orientation for Youth (POY), where ALS JHS completers in SHS and TVET programs can share experiences and resources and seek support from peers.

5. **Strengthen Targeted Academic Bridging Programs for ALS SHS Learners and TVET Pathways**

Finding/s: The study revealed that 32% of respondents faced challenges related to Foundational Skills Gaps (e.g., in Mathematics, Science and English), which hindered their ability to transition smoothly to advanced education or training programs. These gaps are particularly evident among learners entering Year 11, those struggling with the academic transition to Year 12, and those preparing for higher education or vocational tracks.

Recommended Programs/Activities:

- Three-Fold Academic Bridging Programs:
  - Transition to Year 11: Provide foundational academic support to ensure learners entering Senior High School (SHS) are adequately prepared for the academic demands and pre-requisite knowledge of Year 11 and 12.
  - Year 11 to Year 12 Transition: Deliver targeted academic bridging interventions to support learners struggling to meet Year 12 requirements to reduce risk of drop out.
  - College Readiness Program: Equip learners completing Year 12 with advanced skills, such as critical thinking, writing, research and study skills and career planning, to ensure readiness for higher education.

- Pre-Training Remediation for TVET Learners:
  - Offer subject-specific remediation sessions, such as applied mathematics and literacy, tailored to meet TVET competency standards and enhance the preparedness of learners pursuing vocational pathways.

6. Provide Targeted Incentives to Support TVET and Entrepreneurship Pathways

Finding/s: The study revealed that 20% of respondents cited a lack of incentives as a significant barrier to continuing their education or pursuing entrepreneurship pathways.

This finding is consistent with the 2023 DepEd National ALS Report, which highlighted the role of financial and material incentives in improving retention, particularly among learners pursuing TVET and entrepreneurial tracks.

Recommended Programs/Activities:

6.1. Starter Kits for Graduates: Provide vocational toolkits or starter equipment tailored to specific TVET specializations (e.g., carpentry tools, sewing machines, culinary kits) to support ALS JHS completers transition into the workforce or entrepreneurial ventures.

6.2. Entrepreneurship Seed Fund Program:
Establish small seed capital grants or micro-loans for ALS graduates who wish to start their own businesses, along with training on business planning and financial management.

6.3. Performance-Based Incentives:
Introduce monetary rewards, such as stipends or allowances, for learners who achieve milestones in TVET or entrepreneurial programs, encouraging program completion and skills application.

6.4. Access to Market Linkages and Mentorship:
Facilitate partnerships with local industries and business organizations to provide hands-on mentorship and connect entrepreneurial learners to potential markets for their products or services.

Sources:

- *Research Findings of this ALS JHS Tracer Study, SY 2022-2023 ALS JHS Completers/Non-Completers*
- *Department of Education National ALS Report, 2023*
- *Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) 2022 Report*

Further Research Recommendations Based on ALS JHS Tracer Study Limitations

1. **Institutionalize an ALS Tracer Study and Address Accessibility Barriers to Enhance Transitions and Participation**

   Objective:
   Conduct a bi-annual ALS Tracer Study to track the transition patterns of ALS JHS completers, while addressing accessibility and infrastructure barriers to ALS SHS and TVET programs in remote and underserved areas.

   Rationale:
   A periodic ALS Tracer Study, combined with a focus on infrastructure barriers, will provide essential data on the educational and employment outcomes of ALS graduates and identify challenges limiting access to ALS SHS and TVET. This dual approach will enable the DepEd to:

   - Track ALS JHS completers' transitions to higher education, TVET, or employment.
   - Assess the effectiveness of current interventions and identify gaps in support systems.
   - Address barriers such as transportation, learning hubs, and digital infrastructure, proposing solutions like mobile education units and local hubs to enhance participation.

2. **Demand for and Effectiveness of ALS SHS Programs and for TVET Programs**

   Objective: Evaluate the demand and effectiveness of ALS SHS programs in preparing learners for higher education, employment, or vocational training.

   Rationale:
   This will determine if the existing ALS SHS infrastructure is sufficient or if expansion is necessary, particularly in rural areas.

   Focus Areas:
   - Assess the current capacity of ALS SHS programs and identify gaps in service delivery.
   - Examine the employment and further education outcomes of ALS SHS graduates compared to those from formal SHS.
   - Identify underserved areas with high demand for ALS SHS programs.

3. **Conduct a comprehensive programmatic evaluation of the ALS JHS program to assess its implementation, effectiveness, and alignment with learners' needs, focusing on curriculum delivery, resource allocation, and learner outcomes.**

   Rationale:
   The evaluation will provide insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the ALS JHS program, ensuring that it remains relevant and effective in achieving its goals of providing inclusive and quality education. By focusing on programmatic aspects, the study can identify areas for improvement, streamline processes, and enhance the overall learning experience for ALS learners.

   Focus Areas:
   - **Curriculum Relevance Assessment:** Evaluate the alignment of the ALS JHS curriculum with the academic, technical, and life skills needed for SHS, TVET, and employment readiness.
   - **Teacher Capacity Assessment:** Examine the training, support, and resources available to ALS implementers and assess their impact on teaching effectiveness.
   - **Resource Allocation Review:** Analyze the adequacy and distribution of learning materials, infrastructure, and financial support for ALS JHS learners across regions.
   - **Learner Feedback and Outcomes Analysis:** Collect data on learner satisfaction, retention rates, completion rates, and transition patterns to identify barriers and enablers of success.
   - **Stakeholder Engagement:** Involve learners, teachers, community members, and other stakeholders in the evaluation process to ensure a holistic understanding of the program's impact.

4. **Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) scholarships, financial aid, and other family support systems to assess their impact on ALS learners' enrollment, retention, and transition to Senior High School (SHS), Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and higher education pathways.**

   Objective: To evaluate the cost-effectiveness and impact of financial and family support systems, such as Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programs and scholarships, in addressing barriers to enrollment, retention, and transition of ALS JHS completers to Senior High School (SHS), Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and higher education, with a focus on identifying equitable and efficient resource allocation strategies.

   Rationale:
   Understanding the financial and social returns of financial support mechanisms, such as CCT scholarships, will inform policymakers about their effectiveness and sustainability. This analysis can highlight how these programs address financial constraints, which 57.7% of respondents identified as a major barrier to continuing education, and family obligations, reported by 53.6% of respondents. By evaluating costs and benefits, this study will identify the most efficient and impactful ways to allocate resources.

Focus Areas:

- **Evaluation of Existing CCT Programs:** Assess the effectiveness of CCT programs, like the 4Ps (Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program), in reducing dropout rates and enabling learners to transition to SHS and TVET.
- **Impact Assessment of Scholarships:** Analyze the direct impact of scholarship programs on learner participation and success, with a focus on underserved and rural areas.
- **Family Support Interventions:** Examine the influence of family-centered financial and non-financial support systems, such as daycare services or household allowances, on learners' ability to balance education with caregiving responsibilities.
- **Cost-Benefit Analysis:** Compare program costs (e.g., CCTs, scholarships, allowances) with measurable benefits, such as increased enrollment, completion rates, and improved socio-economic outcomes for beneficiaries.
- **Equity and Accessibility Review:** Assess whether financial support systems are effectively reaching the most marginalized learners, particularly those in rural areas.

5. Gender-Specific Challenges and Interventions

Objective:
Address the unique challenges faced by female ALS JHS completers, particularly those balancing education with caregiving responsibilities, to promote inclusivity and equitable access to learning opportunities.

Rationale:
Targeted research is necessary to identify and address gender-specific barriers to education, ensuring inclusivity and fostering equitable participation and completion rates among all learners, especially women and girls.

Focus Areas:

- **Analyze Barriers:** Examine how caregiving duties, societal norms, economic constraints, and limited family support impact female learners' enrollment, retention, and completion rates in ALS programs, with special attention to underserved areas.
- **Evaluate Interventions:** Assess the accessibility and effectiveness of current measures such as flexible learning schedules, hybrid learning options, mobile daycare services, and community-based support systems in reducing gender-specific barriers.
- **Develop Gender-Sensitive Policies:** Propose evidence-based and inclusive policies and programs, including targeted financial incentives, mentorship initiatives, and social awareness campaigns, to address challenges faced by female learners.
- **Promote Inclusivity:** Investigate strategies to engage and support male caregivers and parents in shared caregiving roles to alleviate the burden on women and promote gender equity in education access.

6. **Role of Career Counseling and Guidance**

   Objective: Measure the impact of career counseling on ALS learners' decisions and post-program success.

   Rationale:
   Effective career guidance can help learners make informed decisions and improve transition rates to higher education or employment.

   Focus Areas:
   - Evaluate the availability and quality of career counseling in ALS programs.
   - Assess how career guidance influences learners' choices between education, employment, and vocational training.
   - Identify best practices for integrating career counseling into ALS programs.

7. **Long-Term Outcomes of ALS Learners**

   Objective: Conduct longitudinal research to track the educational and career outcomes of ALS learners over time.

   Rationale:
   This will provide a comprehensive understanding of the long-term impact of ALS programs on learners' lives.

   Focus Areas:
   - Examine the progression of learners into higher education, employment, or entrepreneurship.
   - Assess how participation in ALS programs impacts learners' socioeconomic mobility.
   - Identify factors that correlate with long-term success and retention.

8. **Effectiveness of Community Engagement and Localized Support**

   Objective: Evaluate the role of community support in promoting ALS program participation and success.

   Rationale:
   Strengthening community involvement can enhance program outreach and learner retention.

   Focus Areas:
   - Investigate the impact of peer mentorship, local advocacy campaigns, and community-based recognition programs on learner motivation.
   - Explore the role of barangay-level partnerships in raising awareness about ALS opportunities.
   - Identify best practices for community engagement that can be scaled nationally.

POLICY STATEMENTS:

1. Strengthening and Institutionalizing Family Support Mechanisms to Enhance Educational Success for Learners

DepEd - Bureau of Alternative Education (BAE), shall institutionalize family support mechanisms to enhance educational outcomes and overall well-being, particularly for learners transitioning into Senior High School (SHS), Technical-Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and higher education. Research revealed that family support is the most critical enabler of success, cited by 68.5% of respondents overall, while 16.2% identified its absence as a key challenge.

This policy aligns with EDCOM II's recommendation to strengthen community and family involvement in education delivery and equity. By equipping families with tools to support learners academically, emotionally, and psychologically—including addressing mental health concerns—DepEd fulfills its Strategic Direction to ensure holistic learner development and improve access and quality of education for all.

2. Strengthening Financial Support Systems for ALS Learners Transitioning to SHS, TVET, and Further Education

DepEd - BAE, shall expand and strengthen financial support systems to address the significant barriers faced by ALS learners transitioning to higher education levels. Findings indicate that 57.7% of respondents identified financial constraints as a primary barrier, while 29.3% ranked financial support as the second most critical enabler. This policy seeks to expand scholarships, conditional cash transfers (CCT) linked to educational progression, and targeted financial aid for marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples.

This policy supports EDCOM II's call for resource equity across formal and non-formal education systems, particularly for underserved groups, and aligns with DepEd's goal of providing equitable opportunities to ensure inclusivity and access to quality education.

3. Expanding Career Counseling and Guidance Programs to Facilitate Learner Transitions

DepEd-BAE shall expand career counseling and guidance programs to address knowledge gaps and informational deficits highlighted by the study. Data revealed that 26.9% of respondents ranked guidance and counseling services as the third most critical enabler, while a lack of information was identified as a challenge by 26.6%. This policy includes training for teachers and community leaders to serve as career counselors, partnerships with industries to create realistic career pathways, and equitable access to guidance services, particularly for rural learners.

This policy aligns with EDCOM II's emphasis on linking education to employability and career pathways and DepEd's Strategic Direction to improve learner transition rates and ensure career readiness.

4. Providing Comprehensive Support for Caregiving and Parenting Responsibilities of ALS Learners in JHS and SHS

DepEd-BAE shall provide comprehensive support to ALS learners balancing caregiving responsibilities with their education. The study identified family obligations as the second most significant barrier (53.6%), particularly affecting female learners. This policy will establish government-sponsored daycare facilities near ALS learning centers, introduce flexible learning programs, and provide financial incentives for parents pursuing education.

This directly addresses EDCOM II's recommendation to support underserved learners through innovative programs that remove participation barriers and aligns with DepEd's Strategic Direction to promote inclusivity and equity in education access.

VI. References

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