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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



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

Grants Learning Summit

From Innovation to Integration: Building a Sustainable Future for Out-of-School Youth

OCTOBER 18-19, 2023 | EDSA SHANGRI-LA, MANDALUYONG

EVENT REPORT





Rebekah Eubanks
Deputy Mission Director
USAID/PH

“We must empower local actors in serving youth directly to the changing economic and social landscape. This is part of a broader USAID effort to make development locally-driven so that our results are more sustainable.”

Rebekah Eubanks
USAID/PH Deputy Mission Director

“We (DepEd) would like to extend our gratitude to USAID Opportunity 2.0 for the initiatives and all-out support especially to the Bureau of Alternative Education in achieving our goal in providing second chance education and opportunities to out-of-school youth.”

Dir. Lynn Padillo
Director III, DepEd BAE



“The National Technical Education and Skills Development Plan will not be realized without the support of our partners. Together with USAID and EDC, we are paving the way for every young soul to shine, offering hope and opportunity where it is needed the most.”

David Bungallon
Executive Director, National Institute for Technical Education and Skills Development, TESDA



“USAID has been with EDCOM since day one, helping us across all areas of education from basic education, literacy, numeracy, with out-of-school youth, with TESDA, and now with higher education institutions. EDCOM’s work with Opportunity 2.0 has really shown how genuine partnerships between institutions and communities can happen. We were able to do research to understand the needs of the youth, and ensure that learners don’t get left behind or fall through the cracks... Sama-sama nating itaas ang antas ng edukasyon para sa bawat batang Pilipino!”

Dr. Karol Mark Yee
Executive Director, EDCOM 2





INTRODUCTION

Since 2020, USAID has awarded 88 grants worth up to Php 118million (\$2.02 million) to 68 organizations and institutions in the Philippines. These grants enabled local actors, including higher education institutions as well as public and private training schools to implement programs for out-of-school youth that are otherwise difficult to implement because of a lack of funds and limited network. Using the Positive Youth Development framework, grantees were able to expand their network in their localities exploring and executing partnerships that allow for better youth programming and resource sharing.

This year, Opportunity 2.0 held its first **Grants Learning Summit** themed **From Innovation to Integration: Building a Sustainable Future for Out-of-School Youth** to document best practices among USAID grantees and identify wins and challenges. During the two-day event, participants shared insights in six breakout sessions tackling strategies in engaging OSY, successes and challenges in ensuring OSYs transition to employment, entrepreneurship, and education, innovations on OSY service delivery, partnerships and local collaborations, youth leadership and civic engagement, and technology-based solutions for OSY development.

The gathering looked back on the milestones and experiences achieved with the help of the following USAID grants:

- Training Development Grants
- Higher Education Institution Grants
- Youth Community Grants

Following USAID's Local Capacity Strengthening Policy, O2 grants promoted **resiliency**, **convergence**, and **partnership** in capacitating local institutions to identify OSYs' needs and engage them in training and development programs. The following is a list of best practices, challenges, and recommendations that resulted from the breakout sessions. These reflect the cities' current local systems as well as the grantees' efforts to improve services, foster collaborations, and leverage existing resources and policies to ensure stellar program delivery and capacity strengthening at each social level.

BEST PRACTICES

On maintaining OSY's interest and motivation

- Local service providers work on reaching and transitioning a target number of OSYs to the recommended exits. However, given the youth's circumstances, some eventually stop participating resulting in a lower number of program completers. To maintain youth's interest and motivation, LSPs employed various methods, including: **providing grocery packs** to motivate learners to attend sessions (YouthLead), **barkadahan or ate-kuya system** to provide a sense of belongingness (YouthLead). Some adopted a **flexible learning modality** during the pandemic to accommodate learners' schedules (SKILLS) and provided **snacks/meals** and **communication allowance** (TUA).



On partnerships and collaborations

- O2 grants build on existing programs and systems in the locality. This takes also into account the specific needs of OSYs in the communities. In Valenzuela, ValPoly **secured local government and YDA support** to conduct job fairs every two weeks. TESDA Valenzuela provided scholarship allocations every quarter and O2 trainees were referred to the college's 3-year diploma program.
- In delivering programs for the indigenous Sama-Bajau youth, IRDT sought the support of the **barangay local government, Sangguniang Kabataan, Indigenous Peoples' Mandatory Representations, DICT, and Joint Task Force Zamboanga**.
- GenSan and CDO leveled with the YDAs, local youth offices, and other government offices like ALS, PESO, and DSWD before developing and launching data management system tools – POSYGEN and Emonitor Mo.
- Forged memorandum of agreement with other organizations for leveling off and resource sharing (ILF-SMI)
- IFI collaborated with Child Fund, accommodating children who will transition to the school's youth programs.



Innovations in OSY programming

- Sessions originally designed for online implementation were modified and made to be implemented offline as not all OSYs have smartphones or any gadget (TUA).
- Valenzuela has an existing policy on providing free education, school supplies and travel allowances. ValPoly also **leveraged** Valenzuela's **top industry** (food manufacturing) to create opportunities for learners' wage employment. The **21st Century Skills curriculum** was **integrated into TVET programs** to increase OSY's success rates, and community-based program delivery was made possible.
- Collaborated with Youth Development Alliance and involved youth in civic engagement efforts (SKILLS)
- It was the first time GDS, an entrepreneurship-focused NGO worked with out-of-school youth through O2 grants. They provided **training in e-commerce, bookkeeping, and business management** and provided P5000 **seed capital** to 10 youth business groups which maintained youth's engagement and motivation to complete training. (GDS)
- NBSPI highlighted the importance of **building character among OSY** trainees to enhance employability; Immersion Coordinator gathers industry or company feedback on OSY trainees aligning with DOLE's policy on continuous monitoring of youth employed or absorbed.
- KGI **established a youth organization** to help with OSY-focused initiatives in Cotabato.
- In QC, TUA made use of its Health Sciences programs to conduct enrichment sessions for OSY, especially those interested in health services. Through St. Luke's College of Nursing, youth had the opportunity to undergo Basic Life Support as well as HIV-AIDs and Peer Support workshops. TUA also facilitated referral and assistance to youth to train with TESDA on Barangay Health Services NC II.
- Albay is a disaster-prone area. With TAYO, Inc., 120 youth were equipped with skills to respond in pre-disaster, during-disaster, and post-disaster situations. Specifically, youth had trainings in disaster risk response, fire prevention and mitigation, plotting an Emergency Preparedness Plan, and understanding various hazards. Youth were also trained in First Aid and Basic Life Support. Youth's leadership skills were honed during group simulations. Moving forward, TAYO explores the adoption of a city ordinance on Climate Hero Youth Responders to establish youth's role in local DRR.



- In Cotabato, KGI included **environmental conservation, climate change adaptation, peace and development interventions, gender and development, inclusive education and values transformation, and social services and enterprise** initiatives in its curriculum to promote its green and civic awareness advocacy among others.
- Trainings on **communication and character development, leadership, peer coaching**, and the like empowered youth to take charge of their future. With guidance from LSPs, many youth have been reported to have transitioned to further education with **scholarships from YDA members or started a business with seed money and livelihood kits** also from LSPs and/or YDA members.



Intentional inclusivity

- **Indigenous OSYs and OSYs with disabilities were found and included in youth programming (KGI).**
- With a lack of data on OSY, key actors and stakeholders will have no reference on which programs to develop. GenSan's POSYGEN and CDO's EMonitor Mo were developed by interacting with stakeholders who are also the apps' end-users and getting their buy-in to **use the data to bridge OSYs to development programs.**
- Issues on connectivity often hinder youth's participation in online programs. **Home visitations** were done to ensure learning continuity despite internet connectivity issues (ValPoly) and further understand youth's plight (TUA). Home visits were also done even in **conflict-affected areas** to get OSYs back on track with the ALS program (KGI, ALS).





CHALLENGES

- TESDA's late scholarship release also means late program implementation for grantees.
- Youth's financial barriers affecting their performance during training
- Isabela's geographical location is a factor hindering OSYs' access to opportunities
- Preconceived notions about OSY attitudes towards work/employment among the private sector
- Cotabato does not have regular programs focused on OSY and no consolidated data on OSY, therefore they also lack further education, employment and livelihood opportunities. Most employers still prefer college grads.
- Political agenda often affect OSY's opportunities to access career development.
- Limited OSY engagement in BARMM
- Political rivalries at the community level cause tension and affect program implementation.
- Private sector's uncertainty about OSYs' attitude towards training and/or employment
- Geographical location affecting youth's access to support, development programs
- LGUs are not mindful of updating data (i.e. contact details) on OSY. This results into LSPs' failure to reach them to impart available opportunities.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Secure families' support to OSYs' journey; orient parents about the youth's journey within the program
- In researching and analyzing OSY employment sustainability, include feedback from employers – their insights about youth's work ethics.
- Find a champion in the community and local government.
- It is important that the programs implemented respond specifically to the needs of the community.
- Designing technology for OSY development requires connecting and leveling with stakeholders.
- Involve SK Federation when planning for OSY-focused programs. Designate focal persons who will oversee the implementation of programs. Seek LGU support and include partnership agreements to ensure community development practice.
- Environmental education must be included in more curriculums
- More employers are looking for skilled workers. More work is needed to change youth's and the public's mindset towards TVET.
- Prioritize the marginalized (i.e. OSY, PWDs, IPs, LGBT).
- Expand operations to other barangays to reach target number of OSY trainees/grantees.



MOVING FORWARD

With O2 grants, local service providers seamlessly integrated technical skills as well as other relevant training with the O2 programs. This action effectively enhanced existing internal systems, driving targeted, intentional, and inclusive innovations. Collaborations at the community level have been proven to be more sustainable, and yield better and lasting results among OSY.

As repeatedly emphasized during the summit, **innovation** is about **intentionality** – to include those who and what are otherwise overlooked. At the individual level, OSYs are now equipped with life and technical skills and are empowered to serve as leaders in their communities, connecting OSY-focused programs to those who did not have access. At the organizational level, LSPs have learned ways to tailor-fit programs according to their learners' needs and requirements. They have also expanded their networks in the process, actively coordinating efforts to create opportunities for OSY and achieving a level of impact that would be impossible to reach when dared alone. These concerted efforts, especially when nurtured, and promoted by a community of youth champions, will drive value for OSYs, communities, and local industries. LSPs continuing established practices and institutionalized youth support mechanisms ensure the provision of more second-chance opportunities to OSYs even after Opportunity 2.0 concludes operations in the Philippines.



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ANNEXES

Annex A: Event Briefer and Program

Annex B: Event Photos



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Why this Summit

Out-of-school youth have the potential to be catalysts for change. They only need the right support, skills, and opportunities to build a prosperous and sustainable future.

Through the Opportunity 2.0 grants program, USAID has partnered with 67 organizations who represent a wide range of sectors including training providers, higher education institutions, NGOs and youth-serving organizations. Through USAID grants, they were able to implement innovative, cross-sectoral, responsive, evidence-based, and context-specific initiatives for better education, employment and livelihood outcomes for Filipino out-of-school youth.

USAID Opportunity 2.0's first-ever Grants Learning Summit is themed, "From Innovation to Integration: Building a Sustainable Future for Out-of-School Youth." 200 delegates from 15 partner cities will gather to put a spotlight on the value of USAID grants in boosting the capacity of local actors to develop new and diverse OSY-responsive innovations.

What this Summit aims to achieve

- 1** Highlight best practices and unique innovations towards scalability and sustainability through policy or program reform.
- 2** Serve as a knowledge-sharing platform for USAID partner organizations in managing OSY development projects, common challenges, and replicable accomplishments.
- 3** Facilitate dialogue centered on ideating doable mechanisms which sustain, refine, or scale these innovations beyond grant funding, sites, and contexts.



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From Innovation to Integration: Building a Sustainable Future for Out-of-School Youth

OPENING PROGRAM

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Time	Activities	Speakers
9:00 a.m.	Invocation and National Anthems	
9:10 a.m.	Welcome Remarks	Rebekah R. Eubanks Deputy Mission Director USAID Philippines
9:20 a.m.	Context-setting Presentation	Jill Jarvi Opportunity 2.0 Program Chief of Party Education Development Center
9:30 a.m.	Messages of Support	Dir. Lynn Padillo Director III Bureau of Alternative Education, Department of Education Dir. David Bungallon Executive Director National Institute for Technical Education and Skills Development, TESDA
9:50 a.m.	Keynote Message	Dr. Karol Mark Yee Executive Director EDCOM 2 - Second Congressional Commission on Education
10:00 a.m.	Awarding and Photo Opportunities 1. Awarding of Certificates of Appreciation to speakers 2. Awarding of the DepEd ALS Research Grant 3. Launch of USAID Opportunity 2.0 Grantees Compendium	
10:20 a.m.	End of opening ceremony	
10:30 a.m.	Morning Break	
11:00 a.m.	Youth Session: The OSY Experience	
12:00 p.m.	Lunch and Networking	



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Time	Activities	Speakers
Breakout Sessions		
1:30 p.m.	1. Effective Strategies on Engaging the Out-of-School Youth (Recruitment and Retention)	1. International Labor Force - Skills Mastery Institute 2. Youthlead Philippines, Inc 3. Good Neighbors International Philippines
	2. Easing Pathways to Employment, Entrepreneurship, and Education for Out-of-School Youth	1. New Brighton School of the Philippines, Inc. 2. Valenzuela City Polytechnic College 3. Gabay at Daan ng Sambayanan Inc.
	3. Innovations on Blue-Green Economy & Gender and Social Inclusion Services for Out-of-School Youth	1. Kutawato Greenland Initiatives, Inc 2. Ateneo de Zamboanga University 3. School of Knowledge for Industrial Labor, Leadership and Service (SKILLS) Inc.
	4. Partnerships and Local Collaborations for OSY Development	1. Quezon City University 2. Aylesford Aba Philippines Ferndale Colleges - Zamboanga Peninsula Incorporated 3. Mana Millenium Technical School
	5. Youth Leadership and Civic Engagement for Out-of-School Youth	1. Trinity University of Asia 2. Team Albay Youth Organizations (TAYO) Inc. 3. Ramon Aboitiz Foundation Inc.
	6. Technology-based Solutions for OSY development	1. Technological Institute of the Philippines - QC 2. University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines 3. STI College - General Santos Inc.
3:00 p.m.	End of breakout sessions	



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Time	Activities
3:00 p.m.	Afternoon Break
3:30 p.m.	Reminders and Announcements / End of Day 1
6:00-9:00 p.m.	Special Session: Solidarity Night Dinner and Special Awards



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CLOSING PROGRAM

OCTOBER 19, 2023 | EDSA SHANGRI-LA, MANDALUYONG

Time	Activities	Speakers
9:00 a.m.	Day 1 Recap and Synthesis	John Carlo Fernando Lead Higher Education Coordinator Education Development Center
9:30 a.m.	Plenary Workshop: Insights. Best Practices, Knowledge Sharing based on Local Capacity Strengthening Framework (with working break)	
11:30 a.m.	Overall Summit Synthesis	Philip Purnell Senior International Technical Advisor Education Development Center
11:45 a.m.	Closing Remarks	Michelle Chen Director Office of Education, USAID Philippines
12:00 p.m.	Lunch and Networking	
End of Grants Summit		



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OVERVIEW OF 2-DAY SUMMIT

OCTOBER 18-19, 2023 | EDSA SHANGRI-LA, MANDALUYONG

Day 1 | Wednesday, 18 October 2023

Time	Activities
8:00 a.m.	Arrival of Guests and Registration
9:00 a.m.	Opening Ceremonies and ALS Research Grant Awarding
10:00 a.m.	Launch and Turnover of the Compendium of O2 Grants
10:30 a.m.	Morning Break
11:00 a.m.	Youth Session: The OSY Experience
12:00 p.m.	Lunch and Networking
1:30 p.m.	Breakout Sessions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effective strategies on engaging the OSY (recruitment and retention) 2. The 3 Exits or Pathways for the OSY: Employment, Entrepreneurship, and Education: Successes and Challenges, Opportunities 3. Innovations on service delivery to the OSY <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Blue-Green Economy b. Gender and Social Inclusion 4. Partnerships and local collaborations 5. Youth Leadership and Civic Engagement 6. Technology-based solutions for OSY development
3:00 p.m.	Afternoon Break
3:30-4:00 p.m.	Reminders and Announcements / End of Day 1
6:00-9:00 p.m.	Special Session: Solidarity Night Dinner and Special Awards

Day 2 | Thursday, 19 October 2023

Time	Activities
9:00 a.m.	Day 1 Recap and Synthesis
9:30 a.m.	Plenary Workshop: Insights. Best Practices, Knowledge Sharing based on Local Capacity Strengthening Framework (with working break)
11:30 a.m.	Overall Summit Synthesis
11:45 a.m.	Closing Ceremonies
12:00 p.m.	Lunch and Networking
End of Grants Summit	



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Supporting Innovation and Resilient Growth in Southeast Asia

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Grants Learning Summit

From Innovation to Integration: Building a Sustainable Future for Our Schools







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Angelo University Foundation



Bicol University



Miriam College



Quezon City University



Good Neighbors Philippines, Inc.



St. Paul University - Quezon City



The Education Channel Consulting Corp.



Unilab Foundation, Inc.



Team Albay Youth Organization















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