

Former OSY in Iligan: USAID's Work-Based Learning Key to Employment Success

Mich Cabalquinto and Kyle Gaspar Rebusto could not believe their luck when they found out they had been hired as service crew members at a restaurant in Iligan City, Northern Mindanao.

However, luck only played a small part in their story. As completers of USAID's work and business readiness training, they credit their success to the skills they gained through Work Based Learning.

USAID introduced Work Based Learning content from the Education Development Center into the Alternative Learning System (ALS) curriculum in the Philippines. So, in addition to technical skills, youth are also equipped with soft skills that are highly sought after in the world of work. Now, through USAID support, alternative education graduates in the Philippines have better chances of landing jobs.



Twenty-three-year-old Mich had to drop out of formal education to take care of her young child. She used to be a household help in Marawi to support her young family. When she first began Work Based Learning workshops, she found the training difficult but rewarding. "I can really say that it is challenging because you end up enhancing yourself in ways that were never shown to me in school," Mich said. The five-week program incorporates real workplace visits, interviews with employers, work immersion, and job shadowing.

Another one of the program's standout graduates, Kyle, 20, dropped out due to family problems. When he was a teenager, he lost the grandmother who raised him, and his mother who was working overseas had already remarried. As an alternative education graduate, he previously applied for work but had not been accepted. "I thought to myself, what am I missing that others have?" So, in addition to his alternative education diploma, he also trained in Work-Based Learning. He learned how to craft resumes, apply interview techniques, and display proper etiquette and behavior in the workplace.



Former OSY in Iligan: USAID's Work-Based Learning Key to Employment Success

"We are very particular with training," said HR Assistant for Recruitment Ella Mayen Obina of the Alrose Group of Companies. "Our OSY's performance usually marks high." Alrose runs restaurants in Iligan City. Private sector partners are integral to work-based learning. As mentors and work immersion hosts, they are able to shape the future workforce. While providing upskilling opportunities to marginalized groups, private sector partners gain access to a young, enthusiastic workforce that can boost business operations.



Both Mich and Kyle are grateful to USAID Opportunity 2.0 for the training they have received, as well as for the second chance that they were given to continue their dreams. Mich is looking forward to be promoted down the line. Kyle is aiming to balance work and studies as he hopes to pursue higher education in the future. #



I'm thankful for the USAID Opportunity 2.0 program because I got a chance to show what I'm capable of. Being an out-of-school is not a hindrance to reaching my dreams.

— Mich Cabalquinto, former out-of-school youth in Iligan City



Opportunity 2.0 is a five-year (2020-2025) program that aims to improve the learning and earning outcomes of out-of-school Filipino youth by working with key stakeholders in government, industry and academia to strengthen education, training, and employment systems at national and local levels. As of September 2022, over 1,200 out-of-school youth has completed tech-voc courses with USAID support.