ANNUAL
REPORT | 2023

OPPORTUNITY 2.0
SECOND CHANCE OPPORTUNITIES
FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH

Contents

Acronyms and Abbreviations

A&E	Assessment and Certification
AKINA	Asenso Kabatan-onang Iliganon Network Alliance
ALS	Alternative Learning System
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BAE	Bureau of Alternative Education
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BGE	Blue and Green Economy
BLE	Bureau of Labor and Employment
BYOB	Be Your Own Boss
CDO	Cagayan De Oro
CLC	Community Learning Center
COVID-19	Corona Virus 2019
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSWDO	City Social Welfare and Development Office
DBM	Department of Budget Management
DepEd	Department of Education
DILG	Department of Interior and Local Government
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EDC	Education Development Center
EDCOM2	Second Congressional Commission on Education
FELP	Functional Education and Literacy Program
FY	Fiscal Year
GIP	Government Internship Program
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HECoP	Higher Education Community of Practice
HERO	Higher-level Education or Training Readiness Orientation
IAI	Interactive Audio Instruction
ILC	Industry Linkage Coordination
IR	Intermediate Result
IRR	Implementing Rules and Regulations
JCI	Junior Chamber International
JHS	Junior High School
KABAHIN	Kabataang Heneral Independent Network
KAYA NA	Kagay-anon Youth Network Alliance
KYN	Kutawato Youth Network
LGU	Local Government Unit
LLMA	Local Labor Market Assessment
LOP	Life of Program
LRIR	Local Resource Inventory Report
LSP	Local Service Provider
LYDC	Local Youth Development Council
MDYA	Madayaw Dabaw Youth Association
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NC	National Certification
NCR	National Capital Region
NITESD	TESDA's National Institute for Technical Education and Skills Development
NTESDP	National Technical Education and Skills Development Plan
O2	USAID Opportunity 2.0 Program
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
OSY	Out-of-School Youth
PAMAMARISAN	TESDA Pasig, Mandaluyong, Marikina, San Juan
PESO	Public Employment Service Office
PIA	Philippine Information Agency
PMAP	People Management Association of the Philippines
PYAP	Pag-Asa Youth Association of the Philippines
PYD	Positive Youth Development
QC	Quezon City
RIMCU	Research Institute for Mindanao Culture
SEAMEO INNOTECH	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Center for Educational Innovation and Technology
SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission
SHS	Senior High School
SILC	Saving and Internal Lending Communities
SK	Sangguniang Kabataan (Youth Council)
SPES	Special Program for Employment of Students
SY	School Year
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
TOT	Training of Trainers
TTI	TESDA Training Institutions
TVET	Technical-Vocational Education and Training
TVI	Technical Vocational Institution
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United National Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UniTVET	National Organization of Private TVET Institutions and Associations in the Philippines
US	United States
USAID	Unites States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
USG	United States Government
VSO	Voluntary Services Overseas
WBL	Work Based Learning
WORQ	Workforce Outcomes Reporting Questionnaire
WRLSS	Work Readiness and Life Skills Survey
WRN	Work Ready Now!
YATOP	Youth Access to TESDA Online Program
YDA	Youth Development Alliance
YDO	Youth Development Office
YEP!	DTI's Youth Entrepreneurship Program

Executive Summary

The Education Development Center (EDC) is pleased to submit the Opportunity 2.0 (O2) Program's Annual Progress Report covering the period of October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023 (FY2022-2023) or Year 4 (Y4). The following report highlights the project achievements, the quality improvements of interventions and tools, partnership successes leading to sustainability, and shares the outcomes and lessons learned.

FY23 was an exciting year with significant progress made supporting the systems that support out-of-school youth in the Philippines. There were several high-level events which showcased the achievements our partners and O2 team including: an ALS Mid-Program Learning Summit, the launch of the five-year NTESDP, first National Youth Development Alliance (YDA) Summit, the National Youth Summit, National Private Sector Summit and the Higher Education Learning Summit.

O2 lead innovative programs addressing crucial global themes including hosting 'Beginning Balance' Workshop bring fintech leaders, government representatives and youth together to identify solutions to out-of-school youth accessing service to start businesses and continue their education. O2 youth, staff and partners participated in the Regional Asia Summit on Youth Employment in the Blue and Green Economies which explored strategies and opportunities to address climate change.

O2 continues to support local challenges and needs, this year O2 provided immediate support the youth and communities impacted by the eruption of the Mayon Volcano in the Albay Province providing over Php9.7 million ($175,000) in education materials and hygiene kits.

The impacts of the O2 interventions this year resulted in partner agencies and youth being selected to present on the O2 activities and benefits at regional conferences including:

- Edtech 2023: Inclusive Future of Education with AI (September 2023) held in Seoul, Korea. O2 Deputy Chief of Party Dr. Maria Theresa Mokamad was one of the speakers and presented on the topic, "Out of School Youth as Partners for Lifelong Learning and Development: The Role of Inclusive Technologies, Learning Platforms, and Enabling Environment for OSY."
- UNESCO Inclusive Lifelong Learning Conference (July 2023) held in Bali, Indonesia. Former Assistant Secretary G.H. Ambat shared how the Department of Education is ensuring to high-quality lifelong learning opportunities to marginalized youth through O2's support in strengthening alternative education in the Philippines.
- SEAMEO INNOTECH Regional Youth Summit: Transforming Education in Southeast Asia (June 2023) in Manila, Philippines. Three O2 youth presented their work and achievements on Youth Leadership and Entrepreneurship.
- UNESCO Equitable Education Conference 2022: Together Towards Equity (October 2022) held in Bangkok, Thailand. O2 Private Sector Advisor Angelique Roux presented about O2 and how the program is strengthening local institutions to provide second chances for the OSY.
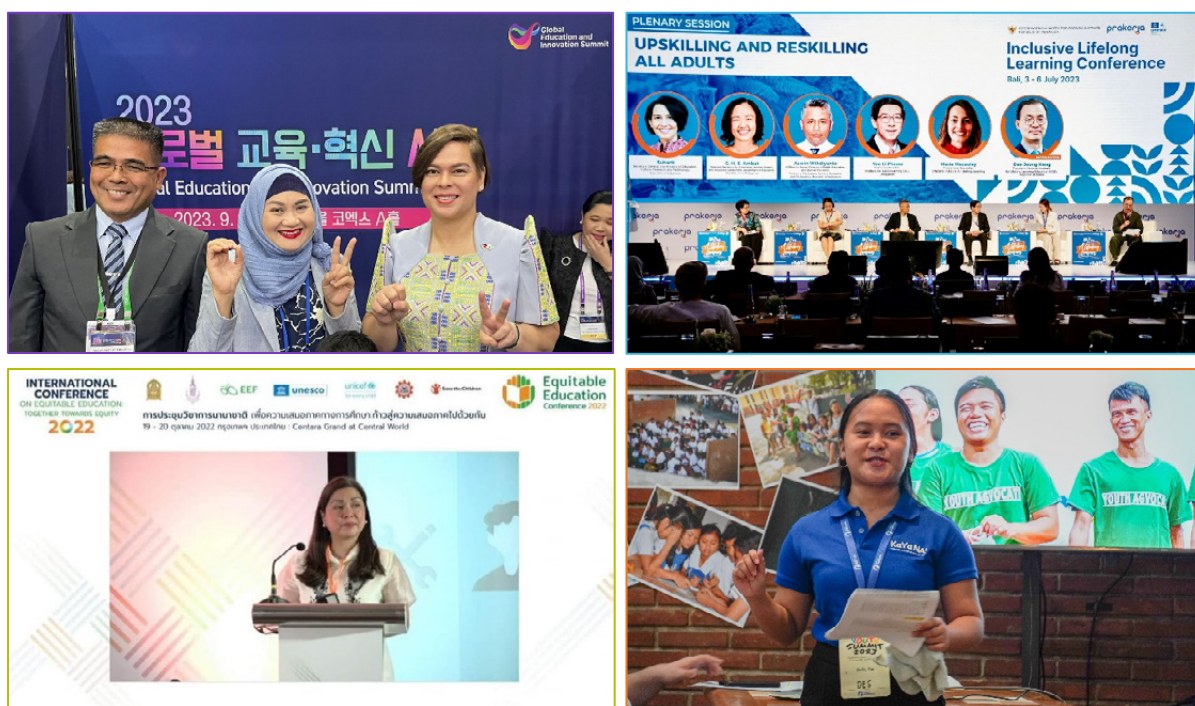
This is only possible due to the strong partnerships developed over the past few years. Our partner agencies: DepEd BAE, TESDA, DTI, DOLE, PESO and LGUs work hand and hand with O2 staff to set the agenda and determine priorities that address their local needs. This year, O2 has deepened partnerships among and between these agencies. O2 engaged with at national and regional level DOLE and PESO in new ways to increase the support for OSY to transition to employment which should result in more youth friendly services.

All of this hard work has resulted in O2 making significant progress on the project indicators, engaging more youth and supporting them as they process to further education, employment and entrepreneurship.

About Opportunity 2.0 (O2)

O2 is a P1.9-billion ($37.5 million) program designed to support existing programs and mechanisms for Filipino out-of-school youth (OSY) that seek to improve their education, employment, and livelihood outcomes by 2025. The five-year program is implemented by U.S.-based EDC in collaboration with the Department of Education (DepEd) and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), in partnership with Accenture, Philippine Business for Education (PBEd), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) Philippines, and SEAMEO INNOTECH.

Program activities support DepEd and TESDA, as well as local governments, to provide quality education, skills and opportunities to more than 180,000 OSY. O2 will work with more than 2,000 teachers and 2,200 employers to build valuable partnerships between the education system, industry, community leaders, higher education institutions. and government agencies who provide services to OSY.

Key activities include:
1. Support second-chance education programs teach innovative learning content that is relevant and responsive to youth aspirations for education and jobs through enhanced soft skills training, advancement to additional training programs and higher education, Work Based Learning (WBL) opportunities, and entrepreneurship trainings.
2. Policy and capacity building support for growth of the BAE Alternative Learning System (ALS) as a bureau under DepEd.
3. Support for the ALS to enhance teachers' access to and use of flexible delivery modalities to meet the needs of the diverse OSY population.
4. Support in linking higher education institutions (HEIs), local government units (LGUs), and relevant agencies through Youth Development Alliances (YDAs) to better address the needs of OSY.
5. Foster a network of HEIs that actively support initiatives to address the needs of OSY in their communities through a national-level Higher Education Community of Practice (HECoP).
6. Supporting national and local systems to provide foundational skills that are responsive to employers' needs in work readiness and entrepreneurship.
7. Engaging the private sector by bringing youth to the workplace through activities such as WBL and work immersion; connecting industry and training and by listening to industry needs.
8. Expanding the network of YDAs.
9. Building productive alliances with industry and the higher education sector, including the conduct of OSY-responsive research, training, and community extension activities.

OPPORTUNITY 2.0 PROGRAM SITES

▶ NCR HUB

Angeles City
Valenzuela City
Quezon City
Pasig City
Legazpi City

▶ CEBU HUB

Cebu City
Tagbilaran City
Iloilo City
Zamboanga City
Isabela City

▶ DAVAO HUB

Cagayan de Oro City
Iligan City
Davao City
General Santos City
Cotabato City

Performance Indicator Tracking Table[1]

#	FAF # / Custom	Indicator Name	Indicator Type	Frequency of Reporting	Year 4 October 2022 - September 2023		LOP Target	LOP Progress (cumulative)
					Y4 Target	Y4 Actuals		
Goal/Outcome Indicators								
1	Supp-15 ES. 1-59	Education system strengthened through USG-assisted policy reform	Outcome	Annual	Yes	Yes - Ongoing	Yes	Ongoing – ALS Law IRR written and approved; ALS policies & Operations Manual drafted
2	ES. 1-46	Percent of individuals who transition to further education or training following participation in USG-assisted programs	Outcome	Annual	25%	18.8%	25%	18%
3	EG. 6-11	Average percent change in earnings following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs	Outcome	Annual	30%	437%	30%	437%
4	EG. 6-12	Percent of individuals with new employment following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs	Outcome	Annual	25%	35.9%	25%	35.9%
IR1: Strengthened capacity of national and local systems to develop, deliver, and monitor second-chance education programs for out-of-school youth								
5	Supp-16	Education data system strengthened through USG assistance	Outcome	Annual	Yes (I)	Yes - Ongoing	Yes	Ongoing – ALS M&E Framework drafted and approved. Piloting ongoing.
Sub-IR 1.1: Second-chance programs teach innovative learning content that is more relevant and responsive to youth aspirations for education and jobs								
6	ES. 1-12	Number of education administrators and officials who complete professional development activities with USG assistance	Output	Annual	100	204	300	609
7	ES. 1-6	Number of educators who complete professional development activities with USG assistance	Output	Annual	550	1,671	2,350	5,343

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[1] Y4 actuals for Indicators 3-5 (Indicators derived from Workforce Outcomes Reporting Questionnaire or WORQ) are based on preliminary results. Additional analysis for these indicators will be reported in Y5 Q1 report.

#	FAF # / Custom	Indicator Name	Indicator Type	Frequency of Reporting	Year 4 October 2022 - September 2023		LOP Target	LOP Progress (cumulative)
					Y4 Target	Y4 Actuals		
Sub IR 1.2: National and local educational systems deliver new content with quality, at scale, and in a manner that is engaging to youth								
8	CUSTOM	Number of youth participating in USG-funded training program	Output	Annual	50,000	36,840	180,000	67,468
9	ES. 2-1	Number of host country higher education institutions receiving capacity development support with USG assistance	Output	Annual	100	271	110	325
10	ES. 2-54	Number of USG-supported partnerships that address regional, national, and/or local development objectives through or with higher education institutions	Output	Annual	45	28	59	88
Sub-IR 1.3 ALS supported to test flexible delivery modalities to meet the needs of diverse out-of-school youth populations								
11	CUSTOM	Number of youth reached through flexible delivery modalities	Output	Annual	2,000	22,226	6,000	51,704
IR2: Strengthened capacity of national and local systems to deliver workforce readiness and technical vocational training for out-of-school youth								
12	EG. 6-13	Percent of individuals with improved soft skills following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs	Outcome	Annual	80%	47.8%	80%	47.8%
13	YOUTH-1	Number of youth trained in soft skills/life skills through USG-assisted programs	Output	Annual	40,000	31,514	144,000	58,556
Sub-IR 2.1 National and local systems provide foundational skills in Work Readiness and Entrepreneurship								
14	CUSTOM	Number of teaching and learning materials (TLMs) that are inclusively representative produced with USG assistance	Output	Annual	10	1	20	45
Sub-IR 2.2 National and local youth workforce development systems are responsive to employers and prepare youth to transition into better jobs								
15	EG. 6-14	Percent of individuals who complete USG-assisted workforce development programs	Output	Annual	80%	88%	80%	88%
16	CUSTOM	Number of employers engaged	Output	Annual	600	554	2,200	1,510

#	FAF # / Custom	Indicator Name	Indicator Type	Frequency of Reporting	Year 4 October 2022 - September 2023		LOP Target	LOP Progress (cumulative)
					Y4 Target	Y4 Actuals		
Sub-IR 2.3: National and local youth workforce development systems prepare and support youth to start their own businesses/self-employment opportunities								
17	GNDR-2	Proportion of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income, or employment)	Output	Annual	50%	48%	50%	48%
18	EG. 4.2-7	Number of individuals participating in USG-assisted group-based savings, micro-finance, or lending programs	Output	Annual	175	185	500	520
Sub-IR2 2.4 Capacity of local training and accompaniment service providers built								
19	CUSTOM	Number of work experiences facilitated by USG-funded development program	Output	Annual	700	981	2,000	1,309
IR3: Improved enabling environment for Positive Youth Development at both national and local levels								
20	CUSTOM	Number of youth-friendly laws and policies	Outcome	Annual	6	6	16	19
21	CBLD-10	Value ($) of non-donor resources mobilized for local development priorities	Outcome	Annual	$711,282	$773,961	$1,195,394	$773,961
Sub-IR 3.1 Stakeholders sensitized to the potential of vulnerable youth								
22	CUSTOM	Number of individuals who participate in orientation workshops promoting positive youth development	Output	Annual	700	643	1,150	881
Sub-IR 3.2: Services, support networks, and relationships are more responsive to youth needs								
23	CUSTOM	Number of Youth Development Alliances (YDAs) established	Output	Annual	N/A	1	8	15
24	CBLD-9	Percent of USG-assisted organizations with improved performance	Outcome	Annual	80%	100%	100%	100%
25	CUSTOM	Number of youth engaged in leadership activities	Output	Annual	270	436	650	1,430
Sub-IR 3.3: Sustainable pathways for youth engagement created								
26	CUSTOM	Number of youth participating in volunteer activities	Output	Annual	26,625	36,304	61,250	40,511

Summary of Y4 Results

36,480	**1,674**	**554**	**36,304**
New youth reached	Educators trained	Private sector orgs engaged	OSY volunteers mobilized

FY2023 marks significant progress for O2's achievements, with at least 16 of 26 performance indicators meeting either its Y4 targets or have exceeded the life of project (LOP) target across the three intermediate results (IR) and cross-cutting work.

With its aim to strengthen the systems which bring quality education and training for the Filipino OSY, this year saw a significant growth in the number of youth reached with 36,480 new youth and 31,514 soft skills completers. These youth were participated in the DepEd ALS programs, TESDA courses, and trainings under Local Service Providers (LSPs). This is a notable achievement for the program, as these are considered the highest reported number of youth reach and soft skills completers in a single fiscal year since the program inception. O2 has now reached a total of 67,468, with 58,556 life skills completers.

Recognizing the critical role of strengthening the capacity for educators, O2 trained 1,674 educators and 205 administrators to support the roll out of youth programs such as Life Skills, 21st Century Skills, and Work-Based Learning (WBL), and Be Your Own Boss (BYOB).

Strengthened Youth Development Alliances (YDAs), now established and operationalized in all O2-supported sites act as cities' main local mechanism to bring stakeholders across different sectors and facilitate and provide relevant services for the youth. With O2's support, the program has trained 436 youth leaders, engaged 36,304 volunteers, and oriented 643 individuals in positive youth development (PYD) concept as an approach to build effective youth programs.
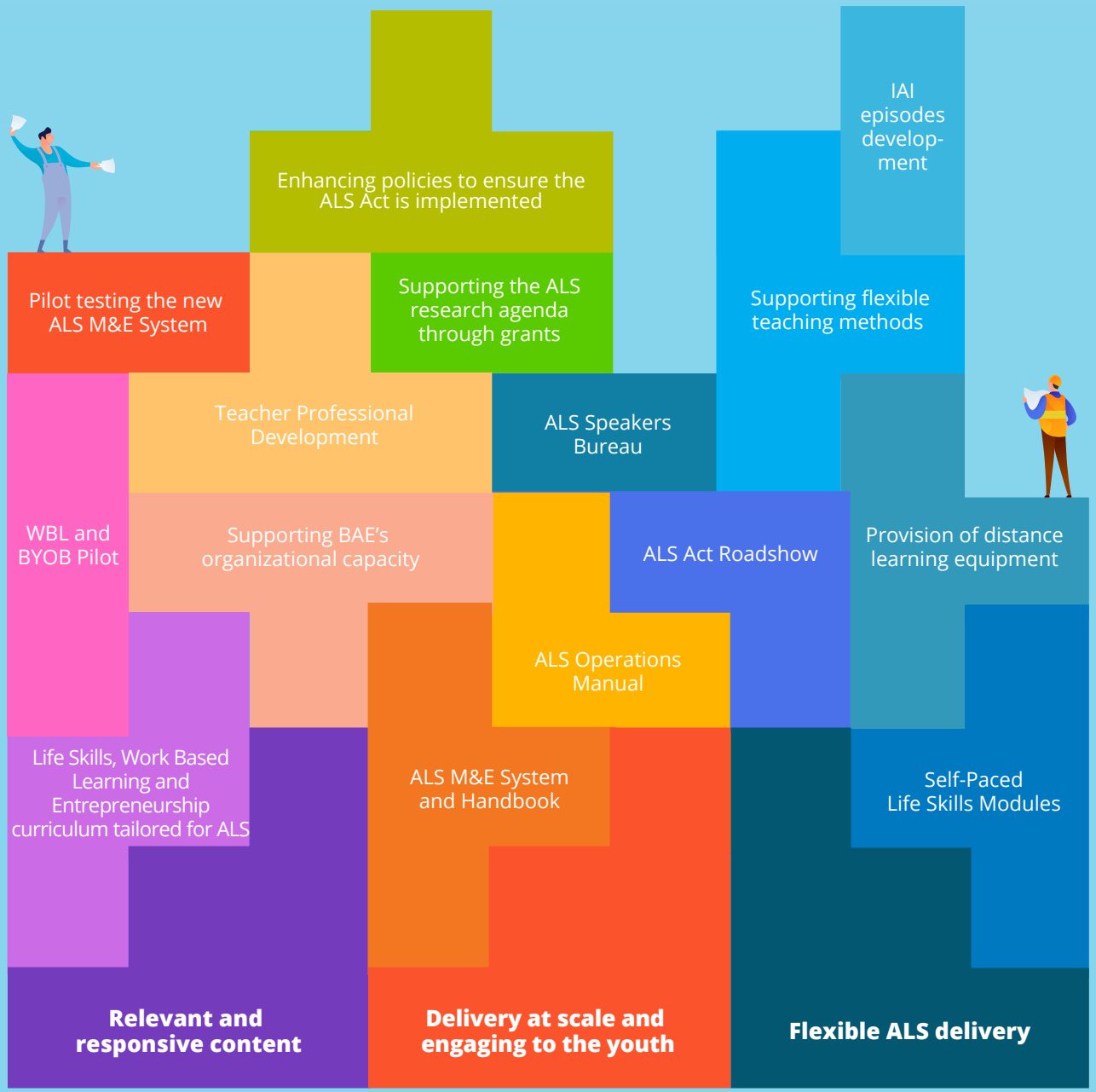
O2 continues to forge connections and strengthen existing partners that can provide learning and employment opportunities for the youth. This year, O2 partnered with 271 higher education institutions (including technical vocational institutions), and 554 private sector organizations towards contributing to local development objectives.

O2's performance reporting is established against the revised Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan submitted to USAID/Philippines in May 2023. Changes in Y4 targets in the MEL Plan are referenced in the MEL section. This section also provides notable updates in lagging indicators mentioned in prior reports.
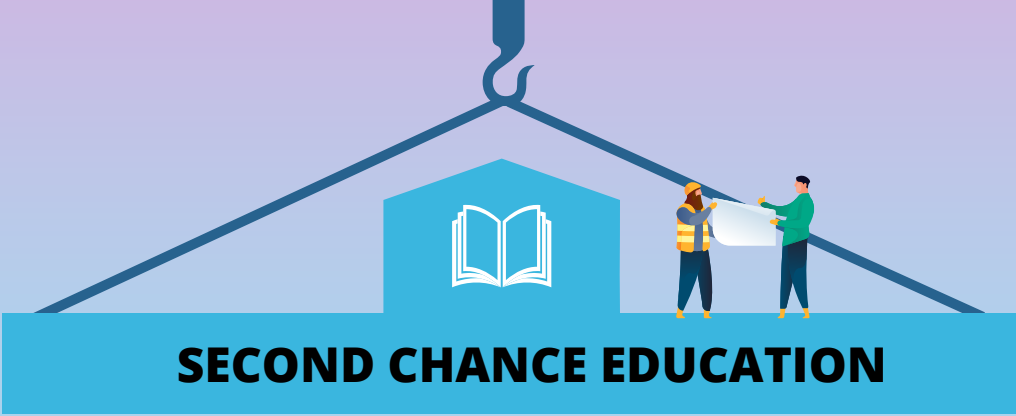
SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION

STRENGTHENING THE FOUNDATION FOR
LIFE LONG LEARNING

Enhancing policies to ensure the ALS Act is implemented

IAI episodes development

Pilot testing the new ALS M&E System

Supporting the ALS research agenda through grants

Supporting flexible teaching methods

Teacher Professional Development

ALS Speakers Bureau

WBL and BYOB Pilot

Supporting BAE's organizational capacity

ALS Act Roadshow

Provision of distance learning equipment

ALS Operations Manual

Life Skills, Work Based Learning and Entrepreneurship curriculum tailored for ALS

ALS M&E System and Handbook

Self-Paced Life Skills Modules

Relevant and responsive content

Delivery at scale and engaging to the youth

Flexible ALS delivery

Technical Progress

IR1 Strengthened capacity of national and local systems to deliver second-chance education programs for OSY

This year, O2 advanced capacity building initiatives to support DepEd in scaling up WBL-BYOB implementation. The DepEd Bureau of Alternative Education (BAE) continued to grow as the lead institution managing ALS in the Philippines through O2's support. O2's contributions include:

1. Assessing BAE's organizational capacity and action planning,
2. Enhancing policies to ensure the ALS Act is implemented,
3. Developing the manual of operations to guide all ALS implementors in delivering quality second-chance education services to all learners nationwide,
4. Pilot testing the ALS M&E system,
5. Launching a grant to support the ALS research agenda,
6. Conducting a teacher professional development program for ALS teachers, and
7. Producing flexible learning materials through Interactive Audio Instruction.

> **WBL and BYOB are relatable. Some of our learners already started their businesses and some are already working!**
>
> —ALS Teacher from Valenzuela City

Second-chance programs teach innovative learning content that is more relevant and responsive to youth aspirations for education and jobs

Supporting Learning Strand 4 (Life and Careers Skills), integration of Life Skills training and supporting quality assurance activities

To support DepEd's Learning Strand 4 (Life and Career Skills) of the ALS K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum, a pilot of WBL and BYOB through DepEd ALS Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) programs in 12 O2 sites for SY 2022-2023 was completed. O2 conducted five refresher trainings in Quezon City (QC), Valenzuela, Zamboanga, Isabela, and CDO throughout the year. A total of 95 teachers were refreshed on the content and delivery of the said modules.

In addition to supporting the DepEd ALS teachers with classroom-based WBL-BYOB which benefitted more than 16,000 ALS learners across O2 sites, O2 also ensured post-training support to teachers and students by developing the Work-Based Learning Industry Linkage Coordination (WBL-ILC) Resource Book for Teachers and building strong partnerships between DepEd and local Public Employment Service Offices (PESOs) of each site.

The adaptation of the WBL-ILC Resource Book from the formal education context to the alternative learning context was completed. DepEd ALS teachers will be trained on WBL-ILC to guide them on engaging the private sector for youth work experience opportunities as well as transitioning ALS completers to quality employment.

Likewise, O2 strengthened its PESO partnerships in Y4 across all 15 sites through sensitization sessions, introducing the potential of the upskilled OSY to the public and private sector. To date, 20 ALS youth have been supported by PESO, through the Special Program for Employment of Students (SPES) and the Government Internship Program (GIP).

In addition to strengthening the linkages between the DepEd ALS program and PESO, O2 also facilitated closer linkages with Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) programs which support ALS completers. O2 has been working with DTI to strengthen their Youth Entrepreneurship Program (YEP!) (see IR2 section) which is an excellent transition for ALS completers who are starting a business. Since DTI's rollout in Y4, 155 ALS youth have joined YEP! BYOB in eight regions covering 12 sites (Tagbilaran, Cebu, Pasig, Valenzuela, QC, Davao, General Santos, Angeles, Zamboanga, Isabela, Iloilo, and Legazpi).

I am doing all of this because I don't have parents to support my needs and studies. I am willing to do everything to improve my life and complete my studies.

—Christinny Magdoboy, 2, ALS learner now working at McDonald's in Davao City through SPES.

Finally, O2 completed a comprehensive three-day assessment workshop on March 28-31 with ALS implementers to review the pilot of WBL-BYOB in O2 sites. They assessed the content, utilization, and delivery of the training materials. The accomplishments, challenges, innovations, and strategies used in the pilot informed the planned limited scale up of WBL-BYOB as a component of ALS Junior High School (JHS) A&E programs in Y5. There were also discussions on the extent of flexibility regarding the training schedule, the important role of partnership with other agencies and private sector for post-program support, and capacity building of Education Program Supervisor for ALS on instructional coaching and mentoring. Subsequently, O2 worked with the DepEd BAE to craft a department memorandum to guide the limited scale-up process of WBL-BYOB implementation for an estimated 50 school divisions in SY 2023-2024.

National and local educational systems deliver new content with quality, at scale, and in a manner that is engaging to youth

Manual of Operations

One of the priority activities for O2 is supporting BAE to develop and operationalize the ALS Manual of Operations for Teachers. The manual was drafted, presented for validation and finalization by ASec. G.H. S. Ambat, Dir. Marilette Almayda, members of the BAE, and select Regional and Division ALS focal persons in July. The final copy of the handbook will be disseminated to members of BAE and the focal persons before its public dissemination in Y5. O2 also completed the draft 'ALS 2.0 Handbook for DepEd Officials and Partners,' which is set to be validated by DepEd BAE next quarter. These are significant steps in ensuring quality education for all in the Philippines.

> We have not reached our goal yet but we're getting there through O2's help. We will continue delivering our mandate as outlined by the law for the benefit of our ALS learners.
>
> —Former DepEd ASec for ALS G.H. Ambat during the ALS manual presentation in August 2023.

Support for Policy Development

Throughout Y4, O2 continued to provide technical advisory services to BAE in developing priority policies that address the requirements of Republic Act 11510 or the ALS Act. The following are the specific support provided:

- Reviewed and provided technical inputs to *DepEd Memorandum 22 s, 2023, Guidelines on the Conduct of Presentation Portfolio Assessment for ALS A&E Elementary and JHS Learners for SY 2022-2023*. As a

result of this policy issuance,157,599 ALS learners nationwide were able to successfully be certified as A&E passers.

- Reviewed and provided technical inputs to the *BAE Guidelines on the Implementation of the Alterative Learning System for Senior High School (ALS SHS)*. This landmark policy provides a legal basis and policy guidance for nationwide rollout of an ALS SHS program in SY 2023-2024. The policy has been approved by the DepEd Legal Office for issuance and currently with DepEd Publications Office waiting issue of a DepEd Order No. prior to release to the field. It is estimated ALS SHS enrolment for SY 2023-2024 will be over 35,000 learners.
- Reviewed and provided technical inputs to *DepEd Memorandum on the Adoption of the Contextualized Modified Essential Learning Competencies-based SHS Curriculum for ALS.* This policy details the approved curriculum for ALS SHS programs and has been approved for issuance. It is currently waiting for the related *DepEd Order on ALS SHS Implementation Guidelines* to be released.
- Reviewed and provided technical inputs to the *DepEd Policy on Recognition of Implementing ALS Providers*. This policy sets minimum national quality standards for ALS implementation by non-DepEd implementers as required by the ALS Act. It is now with the DepEd Legal Office awaiting final endorsement prior to issuance.
- Reviewed and provided technical inputs to the *DepEd Order on the Provision of Transportation and Teaching Aid Allowances to ALS Teachers.* This policy enhances the benefits of ALS teachers as required by the ALS Act. The policy was approved for issuance by the DepEd Legal Office and waiting endorsement by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) before release.
- Reviewed and provided technical inputs into the BAE policy, *Guidelines on the Engagement of Services of Community ALS Implementers (formerly Literacy Volunteers) in the Department of Education.* The policy is with the DepEd Legal Office awaiting final endorsement before issuance.
- Reviewed and provided technical inputs to the *BAE Policy on Micro-certification* as a member of the ALS Micro-certification Advisory Board supported by UNICEF. The policy will support micro-certification of selected life skills competencies of ALS learners. The policy is currently being finalized by BAE.
- Reviewed and gave technical inputs to Joint Memorandum *DM-CI-2022-231 Guidelines on Conduct of National Inventory of ALS Community Learning Centers (CLCs).* This included supporting the development of the inventory survey instrumentation and data analysis of results as input to the BAE ALS Learning Environment draft policy and DepEd national financial investment program for CLC refurbishment and construction.

- Reviewed and gave technical inputs to *DepEd, DILG, DBM Joint Memorandum Circular on Guidelines on the Authorization to Use the Special Education Fund (SEF) to Support ALS Programs of the DepEd Including the Engagement of Services of Community ALS Implementers in the Local Government Units.* The Joint Memorandum has been cleared by the DepEd Legal Office and will be sent to DILG and DBM for their review and concurrence.
- Reviewed and provided technical inputs to the draft *BAE ALS National Assessment Framework.* Field level consultations regarding the framework are ongoing.
- Reviewed and gave technical inputs to the *Program Conceptual Framework for the ALS Functional Education and Literacy Program (FELP),* a new ALS program offering required under the ALS Act to improve the relevance and accessibility of ALS. The FELP framework has been approved by Office of ALS Assistant Secretary. O2 will be supporting the development of a pilot FELP Course on Financial Literacy in Y5.
- Reviewed and gave technical inputs to a revised *Program Framework for the DepEd ALS Basic Literacy Program (BLP),* one of the flagship ALS programs under the ALS Act. The framework and implementing guidelines are currently being finalized by BAE.
- Reviewed and provided technical inputs to requested comments on Congressional House Bills 2112, 2603, and 4566 on *Social Entrepreneurship Education in Basic* Education, and House Bill 1208, *An Act to include in the Curricula of All Public and Private High Schools and Colleges a Course on Necessary Life Skills.*
- Reviewed and gave technical inputs to the *Revised DepEd Basic Education K to 10 Curriculum (2023 version).*
- Responded to on-call requests for technical assistance related to ALS system strengthening from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for ALS. This includes providing technical assistance during ALS policy discussions during the quarterly DepEd National Consultative Conference for ALS Focal Persons.

Further, a consultative meeting was conducted between DepEd BAE and Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM2) to discuss the policy priorities on the ALS, which EDCOM2 could take on and provide legislative support. EDCOM2 is a government agency lodged under the Philippine Senate and Congress, working to undertake a comprehensive national assessment and evaluation of the Philippine education sector by 2025. O2 is supporting as part of the broader partnership between USAID and EDCOM2.

The consultation identified collaborative topics which both BAE and EDCOM2 will work on through desk research, site visits, and policy workshops. These activities will gather inputs to inform draft laws aimed at improving access and quality of ALS in the country.

In Y5, O2 will need to adjust its policy advisory support work to respond to the changing context and policy capacity support needs of DepEd flowing from the resignation of ASec. Ambat as the longstanding DepEd Assistant Secretary for ALS. O2 will remain committed to be responsive and adaptive to the emerging technical assistance needs of DepEd regarding ALS policy and BAE organizational development, during the leadership transition period.

Improving ALS Learning Strand 4 Delivery

In addition to the support described above regarding Learning Strand 4 (Life and Career Skills) O2 assisted DepEd BAE in developing implementation guidelines in the form of a memorandum in preparation for the scale up in SY 2023-2024. O2 began designing a train-the-trainers course for an ALS Core of Trainers. This core will be trained in Q1 of Y5 and cascade the WBL-BYOB training to all the ALS teachers from schools divisions involved in the scale-up.

BAE organizational development capacity-building

With consortium partner Accenture, the O2 team worked closely with DepEd BAE in conducting a series of organizational development interventions enhancing BAE's capacity as a new organizational unit inside the DepEd tasked with leading the development, implementation, and oversight of DepEd ALS programs, by virtue of Republic Act 11510. This includes collaborating with BAE to jointly conduct an organizational capacity assessment (OCA) and craft an OCA Action Plan addressing identified areas for organizational development. Over the past year, O2 focused on the following key areas of organizational transformation of BAE:

- Strengthen the organizational culture of BAE and its value proposition as a new unit within DepEd.
- Conduct an organizational competency assessment covering critical functional competencies, competency assessment of BAE staff, and identify possible priority training interventions.
- Develop individual capacity building plans for all BAE personnel and executive coaching plans for BAE senior management team.
- Enhance BAE's operational processes and governance systems.
- Strengthen BAE's risk management systems and mitigation strategies.
- Define BAE's key success indicators in terms of its organizational management.
- Supporting the change management process as BAE matures as a new full-functioning organizational unit within DepEd.

In addition, O2's consortium partner SEAMEO INNOTECH engaged the services of a short-term consultant to assist DepEd BAE in analyzing more than 26,000 completed survey instruments. A national ALS CLC Inventory was conducted throughout the country from December 2022 to June 2023. The analysis is currently ongoing and will serve as input to a planned BAE policy on ALS learning environments, and to DepEd's preparations for a national investment program on CLC rehabilitation and construction.

Support for BAE Research Agenda (see also Higher Education and Grants sections)

In close coordination with DepEd BAE, O2 successfully launched a grant call for a Php 3-million research grant to support the ALS Research Agenda, which DepEd BAE had formerly developed with UNICEF. The research will focus on a tracer study of ALS students and completers of SY 2022-2023 and determine enabling and hindering factors relative to completing the ALS program.

O2 is in the process of completing the pre-award and negotiation process with Xavier University's Research Institute for Mindanao Culture (RIMCU), the HEI selected by the grants selection committee. The selection committee, composed of the technical members of BAE and O2, supervised the grantee selection from paper evaluations, deliberations, and negotiations. The grant to RIMCU is expected to be awarded by October 2023 during O2's Grants Learning Summit.

Teacher Professional Development

O2's ALS Teacher Professional Development Program, managed by SEAMEO INNOTECH, has concluded its third and final course with 461 ALS implementers participating. Course 3 was co-developed with the University of Southeastern Philippines and was unbundled into three sub-modules, with each module implemented as a micro course: Module 1 on Community Mapping and Curriculum Contextualization, Module 2 on ALS 2.0 Authentic Assessment and Portfolio, and Module 3 on ALS 2.0 Post-Program Support and Professional Development. The unbundling of the modules into micro courses provided the participants more time and more flexibility in going through the course, thus increasing their chances of completion.

The culminating activity of Course 3 was a two-day in-person integration session rolled out in three geographic clusters, where successful completers of the course requirements met as a community of practice to share innovative strategies and good instructional practices.

A series of complimentary capacity-building initiatives were also conducted to enhance the overall effectiveness of the Teacher Professional Development Program. In Y4, this included:

- Project-Based Learning for ALS Implementers (November 2022), completed by 83 participants
- Enhancement Session on Lesson Planning (December 2022), completed by 40 participants
- A Mid-Program Learning Summit, showcasing ALS practices and innovations (January 2023), attended by 77 ALS implementers

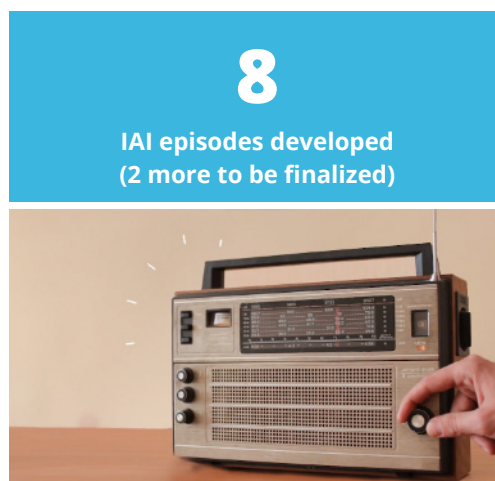*Support for BAE Monitoring and Evaluation*

O2, through consortium partner SEAMEO INNOTECH, worked with BAE to develop and pilot the ALS Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System. This year focused on conducting a series of division-wide orientations on the ALS M&E System. Four division-level orientations were attended by 109 participants including ALS division focal persons, representatives from DepEd's divisions on Curriculum and Implementation as well as School Governance and Operations, together with ALS Education Program Specialists, select ALS teachers and representatives from the local government. The orientations generated new insights and suggestions about the key performance indicators based on the different implementation contexts of the five pilot divisions. At the end of the orientation, all divisions were able to draft ALS M&E system pilot implementation plans which will be the basis for BAE's monitoring.

ALS supported to test flexible delivery modalities to meet the needs of diverse OSY populations

Interactive Audio Instruction (IAI) materials and capacity-building

O2 continues to support the use of IAI to re-enforce learning and is in the finalizing IAI episodes 9 and 10. The completed episodes are expected to be turned over in Y5 and DepEd committed to pursue development of episodes 11 to 51 as part of its ongoing learning materials development agenda.

To raise awareness of these on the IAI materials for Life Skill delivery, O2 developed a promotional video which has been turned over to DepEd for their use.

8

**IAI episodes developed
(2 more to be finalized)**

WORK READINESS AND TVET

BUILDING STRONG SYSTEMS TO JOBS AND BIZ

HERO modules for upskilling

Enhanced NTESDP 2023-2028

Futures Thinking Taskforce

Design Thinking for Entrep

Virtual First Job

SILC integration

WBL-BYOB nationwide rollout

Local labor assessments, workforce research

Saving & lending youth groups organized

DTI and PESO train on Life Skills

TOP expansion and turn-over

TESDA Futures Thinking Masterclasses

DTI trained on BYOB and DTE

Strengthening local service providers, TTIs, TVIs

TESDA Futures Thinking Program

TESDA Trained on WBL & BYOB

Grants program for service providers launched

Youth access to eTESDA

YDA and PESO enabled to support OSY

21st Century Skills modules developed

Work readiness and entrepreneurship skills

Systems support youth to jobs or business

System prepare youth for self-employment

Local service providers enabled to support OSY

IR2 Strengthened capacity of national and local systems to deliver workforce readiness and technical-vocational training for OSY

In Y4, O2 identified five priority areas to support TESDA as they strengthen their national and local systems for OSYs. This included:

- Integrating enhanced curriculum responsive to employer needs (NC III and IV and YATOP)
- Supporting TESDA to craft their 5th cycle NTESDP, five-year TESDA Professional Development and Capacity-Building Program or Plans for TTI Trainers, Planning Institutional Assessments for 21st Century Skills, Strengthening flexible delivery of skills program through institutionalization of Youth Access to TESDA Online Program (YATOP).
- Supporting the creation and operationalization of Futures Thinking Task Force.
- Supporting the delivery of higher-education orientation, work readiness, entrepreneurship programs and provision of support to help the youth transition to higher education, wage employment or self-employment through partnerships with different organizations and institutions that will help O2 in implementing such programs.
- Identifying partners and champions whose programs complement O2 Programs to further support the youth transition such as: SkillLab's profiling platform, Amazon Web Services, Virtual First Jobs 2.0's Coaching and Mentoring, and Racial and Environmental Justice Programs for the Blue and Green Economy.
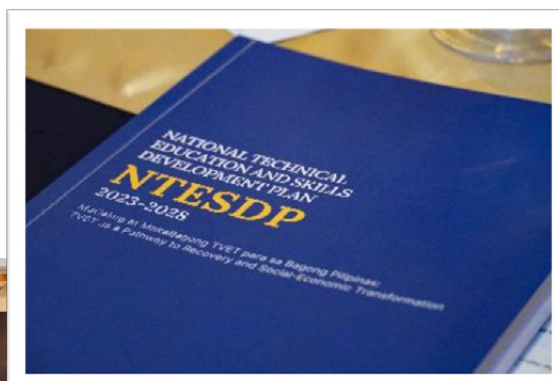
National and local systems provide foundational skills in Work Readiness and Entrepreneurship

Work readiness content integration into the curriculum

Following the co-development writing workshop held in April, this quarter, O2 continued supporting TESDA in finalizing the National Certificates (NCs) III and IV levels of the 21st Century Skills modules. On August 8, O2 met with TESDA Trainer-Writers and the TESDA's National Institute for Technical Education and Skills Development (NITESD) Curriculum and Training Aids Development Division (CTADD) to discuss on the next steps toward the finalization of the NCs III and IV modules.

> **Your role as TESDA trainers is the most essential ingredient in achieving the outcome for the globally competitive and inclusive TVET... that is why you are called the 'heart' of TESDA.**
>
> — David Bungallon, NITESD Executive Director after TESDA writers completed modules 21st Century Skills modules NC III and IV.

Currently, the modules are being reviewed by NITESD-CTADD to ensure that the modules cover all the expected learning outcomes as outlined in the curriculum. All comments will be resolved and addressed by the TESDA Trainer-Writers before turning them over to the O2 team for final proofreading, laying out, and packaging. Said modules are expected to be handed over to TESDA Master Trainers through NITESD and National TVET Training Academy in Q1 of Y5. These modules will equip TESDA learners with advanced 21st Century Skills competencies needed by employers seeking staff with NC III and NC IV certifications as well as benefit OSYs pursuing higher level technical-vocational education and training (TVET) programs.

Institutionalization of YATOP as local development initiative for youth transitioning to employment and entrepreneurship

129
OSYs have completed YATOP in Y4

As of September 2023, 32 out of 36 OSYs were able to get their NCII Certificates from the Phase five Cohort one batch in Youth Access to TESDA Online Programs (YATOP) as

129 youth have already completed the program and are ready for transition. Currently enrolled this quarter 105 OSY. As of this writing our YATOP youth have already done their work immersion and are now going majority to employment and further education as they pursue SHS and employment. O2 is also on the onset of the second cohort of Phase five wherein 104 were already inducted already as they received

their tablets and learning toolkits as they were guided by six learning facilitators in the sites of Pasig, Iloilo and Iligan. We are targeting again to have 150 more participants

In Y4, YATOP started in the three expansion sites of Pasig, Iloilo, and Iligan as OSYs were reached in Pasig through the City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO), Iloilo Pag-Asa Youth Association of the Philippines (PYAP) and local councils of Barangays Suarez, Buru-un, and Sta. Elena in generating the 150 YATOP enrollees.

> *YATOP ang naging hakbang ng buhay ko para makapagsimulang magtrabaho. Lahat ng natutunan ko during YATOP, nagamit ko lahat ngayon sa aking present job.*
>
> **(YATOP was the key for me to start working. Everything I learned during YATOP training, I now use here in my present job.)**
>
> —Jenny Zulueta, former OSY completed TOP with O2 and now works at an IT company in Metro Manila.

O2 also partnered with five private Technical Vocational Institutions (TVIs) and regional training centers for the hands on training and assessment of YATOP youth. O2 is reaching out to more TESDA Technology Institutes (TTIs) and TVIs as hands-on training partners, especially as hybrid learning and new training modalities are implemented through O2 as part of TESDA's post-pandemic adjustments.

In Y5, O2 will be turning over the tablets with accessories and the whole YATOP program to the National Institute for Technical Education and Skills Development (NITESD) through the eTESDA Unit. NITESD will then reach out through the TTIs and TVIs endorsed by O2 to be trained in adopting the program and providing access to more OSYs through the hybrid mode of TESDA training moving forward in the program.

Support to TESDA's Policy Direction and Strategic Plans

Formulation and Grand Launch of TESDA's 5th Cycle NTESDP (2023-2028)

In Q4, O2 supported TESDA in finalizing and launching its 5th Cycle National Technical Education Skills Development Plan (NTESDP) for 2023-2028. NTESDP is the document that guides the entire TVET sector in the Philippines—from the academe, industry, government, service providers, to learners—on priorities, delivery, assessments, and certification. In addition to curriculum enhancement and training trainers, O2 strengthened TESDA systems in Y5 through technical assistance, agenda-setting and formulation, and futures thinking that informed the NTESDP.

Through this, O2 was able to enhance the NTESDP into easing access to workforce readiness, technical-vocational training, and entrepreneurship support for vulnerable OSYs and other marginalized sectors.

Inclusivity and accessibility are one of the main pillars of the NTESDP. The new NTESDP prioritizes bringing TVET towards digital platforms and ensuring that programs such as 21st Century Skills and Lifelong Learning are available to an estimated six million Filipinos in the next five years.

TESDA's NTESDP for 2023-2028 was completed in August this year and was formally launched on August 25 through O2 support. With its vision of "A Globally recognized Philippine TVET as a Catalyst for Education and Lifelong Learning, Workforce and Socio-Economic Transformation," the NTESDP is steering the Philippine TVET sector to be more inclusive and aggressive in creating a globally competitive workforce and fostering economic growth through continuous skilling, reskilling, and upskilling in the context of transformative lifelong learning.

O2 has positioned itself to make the greatest sustainable impact by aligning its efforts with national frameworks and plans such as the NTESDP, which is also aligned with Ambisyon Natin 2040, the Philippine Development Plan, and the National Labor and Employment Plan. O2 will continue actively support the strategic objectives, plans, and implementation of the NTESDP to ensure that OSYs are equipped with the necessary skills and opportunities to thrive in the 21st Century.

In addition to supporting TESDA on their policy making work, O2 also supported EDCOM2 this quarter in reviewing pertinent laws related to the delivery of TVET and lifelong learning opportunities. EDCOM2's Standing Committee on TVET and Lifelong Learning visited O2 partner-TVET implementers in Cebu City and Davao City for consultation. This was also the first time EDCOM2 was able to have a dialogue with OSYs and receive feedback, inputs, and recommendations directly from them. Insights gathered from these site visits will be used by EDCOM2 to propose, revise, or strengthen laws governing TVET delivery and enhancing support to industry and private sector with the intent of providing quality skilling opportunities.

Through O2, EDCOM2 to was able to have direct dialogue with OSYs to inform education reform policy recommendations.

Futures Thinking Capacity Building for TESDA Leadership

Another way that O2 supported TESDA's policy direction and strategic plans was through a futures thinking capacity building program, which concluded in February 2023, for at least 30 members of the agency's leaders.

TESDA leaders and decision makers gained strategic foresight skills, finalized a strategic foresight framework for TESDA, and created capstone projects on four key areas: Skills Anticipation, Future of Assessment and Certification, Special Clients, and Trainers' Development. These were later adopted by TESDA, contributing to the agency's agility, responsiveness, and resilience as the country's lead institution managing the TVET sector.

TESDA is also following through on O2 consultant Center for Engaged Foresight's recommendations to start institutionalizing the strategic foresight framework within its organizational system. In line with this, 48 TESDA Regional and Provincial directors, staff, and training institute administrators trained on Transformational Leadership through Futures Thinking Framework on September 18-20. Another set of 50 TESDA officials will undergo the same training in October this year.

National and local youth workforce development systems are responsive to employers and prepare youth to transition into better jobs

Develop Work Readiness and Entrepreneurship Skills of the Youth

This quarter, a total of 35 lead instructors and trainers from 23 LSPs were trained on O2 content (facilitation skills, Pathways Orientation for Youth, PYD, 21st Century Skills, ALS Life Skills, Higher Education Readiness Orientation (HERO), WBL-BYOB, Peer Coaching, and SkillLab). Six new YATOP facilitators also joined the sessions.

1,229
TVET trainers trained as of Y4

Overall, O2 has trained 1,229 TVET trainers from both public and private training institutes on the content and delivery of 21st Century Skills NC I and II qualification levels. In Y5, O2 will continue to build the capacity of TTIs, TVIs, HEIs, and other LSPs to provide programs and services that meet the needs of OSYs to improve their competitive chance for meaning employment and self-employment opportunities. Reaping the benefits of strengthening the competencies of TVET trainers, the first data transmission from the Data Sharing Agreement between O2 and TESDA recorded around 48,000 TVET OSY learners nationwide, with 14,091 learners located in O2-supported program sites.

Virtual First Job (VFJ) reached 79 new O2 Youth in three expanded sites

EDC leveraged its partnership with Bank of America to expanded VFJ to reach 79 more youth in the cities of Pasig, Iloilo and Iligan. O2 provided OSYs with tablets and internet connectivity allowances so they can receive career and work readiness coaching directly from a professional volunteer over six sessions.

OSY participants of VFJ were completers of YATOP, ALS, or TVET courses and are currently transitioning to work, pursuing further education, or starting their own businesses. Mentors help youth succeed in their transition by offering meaningful insight, guidance, and practical advice for youth to apply in workplace settings. In Y4, O2 has supported a total of 107 OSYs through the VFJ.

107
OSYs supported through VFJ
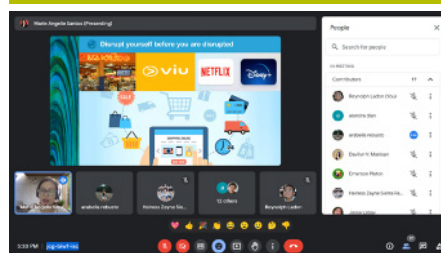
Improved Work Facilitation Services

O2 private sector partners provide work immersion opportunities to over 1000 upskilled OSYs

1,035
OSYs placed in work immersion in Q4

O2 continued engaging private sector to host OSY for work immersion activities and , employer the upskilled OSY. In the last quarter alone, 1,035 youth were placed in meaningful work immersion posts. As of Y4, O2 has a total of 1,309 youth that who participated in work immersion programs. Employers engaged also grew to 1,510 from last quarter's 1,346, indicating strong commitment from the private sector to continue providing meaningful and relevant experiences from immersion to employment for upskilled OSYs.

O2 also worked with People Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) to increase opportunities. In a meeting this quarter, we updated our partnership agreement to identify program sites where PMAP Chapters are active and thriving. Current National PMAP President, Elizabeth Nasol alongside Executive Director Rene Gener, and Research Head Sarah Niguas all underscored their commitment to move the partnership forward by supporting TESDA youth, through YATOP, for work immersion opportunities. PMAP is an organization of Human Resource Management professionals that have 1,800 member companies and executives in 24 local chapters across the Philippines. Business groups like PMAP are key actors in promoting sustainable pathways to work for upskilled OSYs.

First consultation workshop with DOLE, PESO leadership conducted, foundations for a formal partnership set

Another strategy to increase connections for youth to find employment, this year O2 conducted a courtesy visit to Undersecretary Carmela Torres of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) in charge of Employment and Human Resource Development, followed by a consultation workshop with DOLE Bureau

of Local Employment (BLE). Under the guidance of BLE Director Patrick Patriwirawan Jr. and his team, alongside representatives from PESO from select O2 sites as well as the private sector, O2 and partners discussed how existing youth employment programs can be leveraged by OSY.

Of all the programs offered by PESO, it was agreed that SPES and GIP were the best entry points for OSY to access PESO employment services. Jobstart, another youth employment program, is only activated in 14 of 1,500 PESOs across the country. Since Jobstart is the only PESO program for youth with a Life Skills component (37 modules), the need for an updated and streamlined Life Skills program surfaced as a critical need after the discussions. In addition, PESO Managers also identified the WBL-ILC Resource Book and the Youth Employment Survey to be helpful tools that would enhance their programs for OSYs.

An informal technical working group was formed by participants of the O2-DOLE-PESO consultation workshop to begin drafting a partnership agreement to formalize this collaborative initiative that would ease OSY access to work facilitation services. A meeting of DOLE Regional Directors is set next quarter following the recommendation from the workshop to enhance SPES and GIP. DOLE national and regional offices will also begin preparations with O2 on adding Life new tools into the department's youth programs and a training of trainers in Y5.

National and local youth workforce development systems prepare and support youth to start their own business or self-employment opportunities
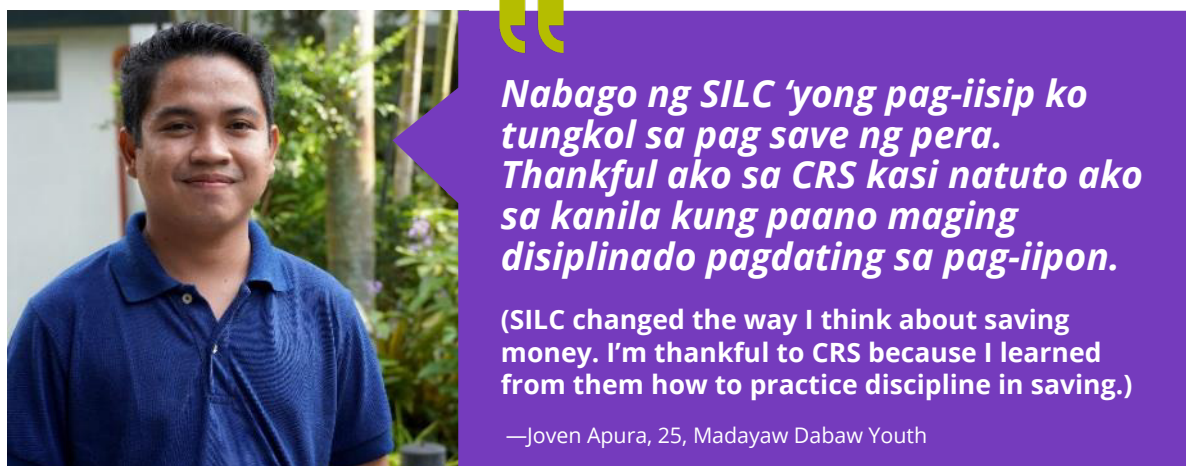
Expanded Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) activity

SILC is one of O2's strategies to increase access to financial for O2 youth. CRS has engaged 520 youth engaged in SILC program in the pilot sites of Davao, Cotabato, Cagayan de Oro (CDO), Cebu and Quezon cities. This concluded the pilot which the youth reported to be extremely valuable. As a next step, 35 youth network leaders from the cities of pilot cities participated in a week-long SILC bootcamp held in Malagos, Davao City. The camp aimed to scale up the SILC program through O2 youth networks, with youth leaders as local field agents and SILC experts in organizing more groups in their communities. In Y5, O2 will organize similar SILC bootcamps in NCR and Cebu hubs. Through this, more OSYs will have SILC as a viable local resource mobilization option to access finance for their small businesses or livelihood, and even for continuing

520
OSYs engaged in SILC

further education and training or aiding them on employment documentary requirements. CRS is producing an assessment report which will provide the data for scaling in Y5.

All O2-supported SILC groups have saved a total of Php 806,977 as of September. Of this, Php 442,103 has already been loaned by 143 -members to finance livelihood ventures, education, training as well as personal and family needs. After SILC pilot closing out in May 2023, most SILC groups have continued their savings mobilization activities and encouraged more OSYs in their communities to participate.

> *Nabago ng SILC 'yong pag-iisip ko tungkol sa pag save ng pera. Thankful ako sa CRS kasi natuto ako sa kanila kung paano maging disiplinado pagdating sa pag-iipon.*
>
> **(SILC changed the way I think about saving money. I'm thankful to CRS because I learned from them how to practice discipline in saving.)**
>
> —Joven Apura, 25, Madayaw Dabaw Youth

Post Training Support to SILC Groups

In September, O2 conducted a three-day capacity building session for members and officers of five SILC groups from the cities of Quezon, Cebu, Davao, Cagayan and Cotabato. These groups previously received business starter kits after winning CRS's SILC business pitching competition six months prior. Using the starter kits worth over Php 100,000 ($1,760), the groups started small enterprises on soap-making, rice trading, and food products.

Fifteen youth SILC group representatives received one-on-one coaching and mentorship on effective business management. They delved into the specifics of business registration and administration while gaining knowledge in product quality and adherence to standardized practices which will help them sustain and grow their businesses.

Partnering with Local Private Sector to Support Entrepreneurship Pathways for Youth

In Y4, O2 enabled DTI, as the lead government agency supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises development in the Philippines, to successfully implement YEP! BYOB across the country. Through O2's support, DTI has standardized its training modules, adopted new methods appropriate for youth trainees, and involved the private sector as coaches, mentors, and partners in the value chain of the community. More importantly, O2's support to DTI eased the access to entrepreneurship training for all OSYs across the country, including those outside program areas. At least 210 budding entrepreneurs have already benefitted from DTI's first nationwide rollout of YEP! BYOB this year.

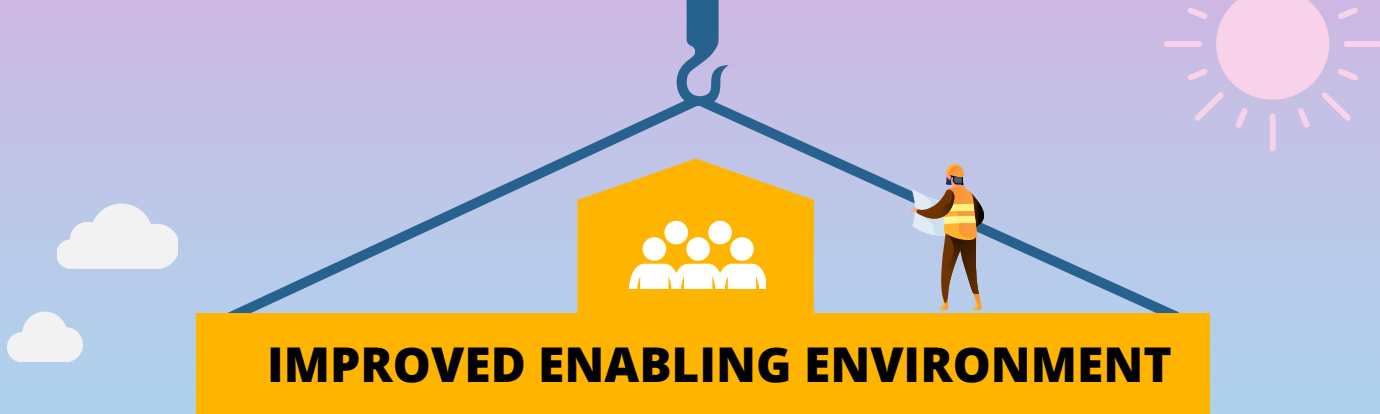| DTI standardized training modules with BYOB | DTI adopted new training methods for youth trainees | DTI involved the private sector as coaches, mentors, and partners in the value chain of the community |

This quarter, YEP! BYOB rolled out in four more regions (Regions 3, 5, 6, and 9) involving five program sites: Angeles City, Zamboanga City, Isabela City, Iloilo City, Legazpi City. DTI Region 10 and Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) are scheduled next quarter.

YEP! BYOB engages OSYs in a four-day Entrepreneurship Camp which teaches youth the fundamentals of starting a business (Mindset Change, Access to Market, Models of Businesses, Access to Finance, Business Model Canvas). It also equips OSYs with the knowledge and skills to adopt a problem-solving approach called Design Thinking, enabling them to come up with a small business solution the solve an existing community a problem and serves a specific clientele.

Capacity building of local training and accompaniment service providers to provide workforce readiness, technical-vocational, and self-employment training to OSY

Continued support to training providers

To expand the reach of the O2 interventions and impact more OSY, eighteen of twenty LSPs awarded with training development grants this year have started implementing the O2 curriculum for OSY this quarter. About 470 OSYs have participated in these programs to gain soft and technical skills for employment and business. O2 conducted monitoring visits that include classroom observation and interaction with the learners to assess the progress of the LSPs in their implementation. These visits allow O2 to coach and mentor grantees not only on managing their grants but also on effective delivery of the training as part of their capacity building.

IMPROVED ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

SUSTAINING STRONG CITY ALLIANCES FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

City ordinances passed and youth codes enhanced

YDA Summit

Report card system

Youth friendly policies and programs adopted

Youth networks established

Promoting the YDA mechanism for national institutionalization

LLMA, OCAT/LRIR, and other tools adopted by YDAs

Youth lead meaningful volunteer activities

Expanding YDA memberships and partnerships

Capacitating YDAs with knowledge and tools to serve OSYs better

Private sector engagement

Youth leadership training

Fostering local youth champions

YDAs established in cities

Developing youth leaders

IR3 Improved enabling environment for positive youth development at both national and local levels

This year, YDAs served as the anchor point to increase youth and YDA member's engagement and activities in support of OSY. O2 supported three new sites in establishing YDAs; these three sites joined the twelve previous sites in engaging agencies and partners to support youth pathways into further education and training, employment, and entrepreneurship. Local Labor Market Assessments (LLMA) workshops conducted in five O2 sites help to identify youth-friendly and in-demand pathways for youth employment and engagement and will become part of YDA annual action plans.

Over the course of this year, OSY and youth leaders deepened their engagement with their communities. Some were identified through barangay caravans and linked to services, some volunteered on behalf of their communities or to support the goals of their communities. Youth-developed and youth-led communications products are one of the outputs of the LLMA workshops and intended to engage youth in informing other youth about the opportunities in their cities. These youth-focused and youth-led activities empower OSY to engage with one another and with the institutions and agencies that support them.

Finally, this year saw the Mayon volcano eruption and emergency response from O2. O2 was able to provide psychosocial support and learning and hygiene kits to more than 100 teachers and 1,700 learners of DepEd's ALS in 34 affected barangays around Legazpi and Tabaco.

Stakeholders sensitized in three new sites to the potential of vulnerable youth

YDAs established in three new cities. In Y3, three new YDAs were established in the cities of Iligan, Pasig, and Iloilo. In Y4, they were institutionalized through agreements and executive orders.

Pasig City YDA was established through a Memorandum of Understanding signed by Mayor Vico Sotto last March 15. O2 supported the establishment of the Pasig City YDA through workshops and trainings on PYD, OSY Journey, and OSY Ecosystems. Through these workshops, Pasig City YDA was able to come up with an annual plan that they implemented this fiscal year. The activities implemented aligned with the YDA's member organization's mandates to increase access and utilization of education and training services, promote employment and livelihood opportunities, increase youth engagement activities, and improve he enabling environment in Pasig City. Through O2, the YDA supported the implementation of YATOP that reached almost 50 youth in Pasig, as well as various youth volunteering and capacity-strengthening activities for the youth. The YDA and its youth network, the Pasig City Youth Network Executive Council, also prioritized inclusivity in order to stay true to Pasig City's motto of "*Umaagos ang Pag-asa*" or "hope flows" through the provision of programs not only for the OSY in Pasig City but also for persons with disability and children and youth who are in conflict with the law. Pasig City YDA also increased their level of functionality from their recent OCA Workshop from a baseline score or 0.29, or Getting Started, to 2.09, or Functioning, by the end of the year.

The YDA and the LGU of Pasig City commits to a stronger delivery of programs and services to the OSY through a proposed ordinance entitled, "Barangay Zero OSY Program" and the full implementation of Pag-Asa Scholarship Program for Tertiary Education.

With the issuance of an Executive Order (EO 029) on establishing the **Iloilo City YDA**, the first year was spent in crafting the vision, mission, and goals and its manual of operations, creation of sub-committees, setting the regular meetings, finalizing membership or YDA composition, and strategically plans for the next two to five years. The recent OCA showed an improved score from a 0.09 Getting Started to a Functioning YDA with 2.14 score. This means that Iloilo City YDA already started implementing programs to the OSY in the city. The collaboration between agencies such as PESO, DTI, DepEd, TESDA, and LGU are evident in various programs and activities. Iloilo City YDA has prioritized reaching out to more OSY through the youth profile approach and the barangay caravan, combined with youth volunteering activities. O2 and Iloilo City

YDA also supported the delivery of training for youth. Two LSPs provided technical-vocational training and YATOP, which produced 48 youth program completers. DepEd teachers were also trained on the conduct of WBL and BYOB, which will be rolled out across all DepEd ALS learning centers this school year. Partnership Agreements were signed among HEIs, namely: University of San Agustin, University of Philippines-Visayas, Technological Institute of Iloilo City, and Iloilo City Community College on implementing HERO.

Iloilo City YDA also prioritized supporting the organization of OSY leaders as a network. The Iloilo O2 youth group was established in 2022 and was already recognized by the local Youth Development Office (YDO). The Iloilo O2 Youth Group is now working on their application to obtain accreditation from National Youth Commission–Youth Organization Registration Program (NYC-YORP). Youth leaders have led the conduct of Youth Volunteering activities in collaboration with CSWDO, PYAP, and YDO.

Next year, Iloilo City YDA shall focus on monitoring youth and ensuring their transition to employment, self-employment, and further education. They will continually strengthen the organization through regular meetings and constant review of plan of action. For sustainability, they will work on lobbying the issuance of an ordinance for Iloilo City YDA, while O2 youth network will work on their membership at the Local Youth Development Council (LYDC).

Through an Executive Order signed by Mayor Frederick Siao, the **Iligan City YDA** was established last year. In its first months of conception, the Iligan City YDA has finalized its three-year strategic plans containing its vision, mission, goals and core values. In April, the YDA members took their oath of office administered by Mayor Siao. They were also able to identify a set of committee leaders to provide oversight on the implementation of programs and activities towards the five strategic outcomes that the Iligan City YDA identified.

Iligan City YDA, through O2's support, has expanded its reach into all 44 barangays of the city. The barangay councils of the barangays were oriented on O2 programs and were enjoined to support the programs offered and delivered by Iligan City YDA to the OSY. Through this, six barangays have been engaged in youth volunteering activities and the youth from these barangays have been identified as priority recipients of 25 scholarships from TESDA Lanao del Norte. Moreover, HEI partners—St. Michael's College and Mindanao State University–Iligan Institute of Technology—have been engaged to support DepEd ALS and

Iligan City YDA to support youth transitions to higher education or training for 50 OSYs. Iligan City YDA and DTI Lanao del Norte also supported youth entrepreneurs through the provision of starter kits for rice businesses to 16 O2 youth completers, while DOLE and City PESO facilitated the participation of 22 O2 completers to SPES and GIP.

Iligan's youth network, the Asenso Kabatan-onang Iliganon Network Alliance (AKINA) has been well engaged in various capacity strengthening and youth volunteering activities this year. They have provided support to Iligan City YDA, Iligan City YDO, and O2 in the conduct of activities in Iligan such as PESO-led job fairs, Youth Leadership Program of YDO, and LLMA Pilot Workshops in liigan. AKINA have also received various awards from key partners this year: City YDO Economic Empowerment Award, Gold and Silver Excellence Leadership Awards to AKINA's President Kelly Robillos and Vice President Jeffsy Daumar, and Certificate of Recognition from Rotaract Club of Iligan.

Iligan City YDA has also demonstrated increased capacity through their OCA scores, showing an increase of 1.28 from their baseline score. Iligan City YDA is now at the 'Functioning' level of capacity as a YDA. Iligan City YDA plans to continue to strengthen their program delivery in the coming fiscal year through partnering with other organizations that could support OSY development in the city. Iligan City YDA is expecting that an amended Executive Order will be released by the end of the calendar year 2023 focusing on improved service delivery, and strengthening its data and profiling mechanisms

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Mapping OSY to Create Stronger Linkages to City Opportunities

The cities of Angeles, Valenzuela, Cebu, Tagbilaran, and Davao conducted barangay caravans that helped in mapping where the OSYs are in their city. **More than 15,000 youth were mapped from 112 barangays across eight sites.** In four sites, a YDA member took on the task of mapping the youth in the city, demonstrating stronger ownership and harmonization of alliance functions and among its members. These were:

- Angeles City 's Public Employment Office, in partnership with Youth Development Office
- Pasig City's Local Youth Development Office, Education Unit, DepEd ALS Pasig, Office of Social Welfare and Development, and Sangguniang Kabataan
- Valenzuela City's Social Welfare and Development Office
- Tagbilaran City's Department of Information and Communication Technology

O2 strengthened the YDAs' capacity in youth profiling through the introduction of tools like Youth Profiling Tool and data collection platform like Kobo toolbox. Out of the 15,000 OSYs identified through mapping, more than 100 were

already referred to opportunities for education, employment, and entrepreneurship such as enrollment to DepEd and ALS, access to PESO's SPES and GIP, and CSWDO's cash-for-work, education, and livelihood assistance programs.

Specifically, this quarter, **Angeles City YDA** engaged 94 OSYs who are working under SPES to help map 3,500 youth in the city.

Meanwhile in **Pasig**, through DILG Memorandum Circular 2022-033 or *Conduct of Profiling of the Katipunan ng mga Kabataan* and on the Establishment, Maintenance, Updating, and Submission of Youth Database, DILG, YDO, Education Unit, DepEd, and Pasig City Office of Social Welfare and Development, and Sangguniang Kabataan convened to create a unified profiling tool. Currently, seven of 30 barangays in Pasig have implemented youth profiling, where 10,453 youth, ages 15-30, were profiled.

Lastly, the **Valenzuela City YDA** have partnered with CSWDO and the local Pag-Asa Youth Association of the Philippines (PYAP), both of which have mandate to census OSY in the city, to map out the OSYs and refer them to employment and scholarship opportunities.

YDAs Serve as Catalyst and Intermediary for Youth Workforce Development
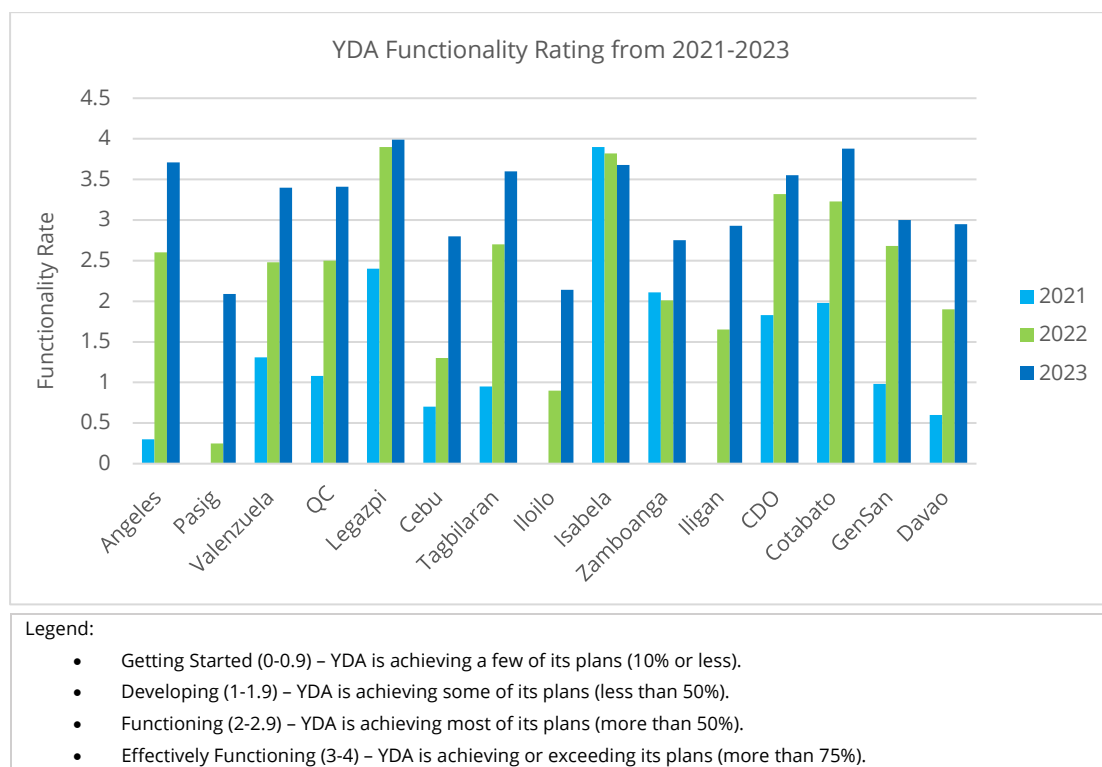
National YDA Summit on Positive Youth Development conducted

O2 continued to support the YDA in strengthening their capacities through training, workshops, and summits on PYD, OSY ecosystem, and systems strengthening. In Y4, capacity-strengthening sessions served as a refresher or input into the YDA's Annual OSY development plans. In February, more than 300 YDA members and champions and youth leaders from all 15 O2 sties showcased their emerging good practices, innovations, successes, and plans to sustain impactful youth programs, policies, and activities during the National YDA Summit in Davao City.

Annual Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool rolled out

All 15 YDAs completed their respective OCA workshops this quarter. Results showed that YDAs in all 15 sites, through O2 support, retained or improved their functionality as an alliance. Compared to last year, 11 of the 15 YDAs have increased their level of functionality this year, with four leveling up to 'Effectively Functioning' status and five to 'Functioning' stage, as seen below.

Legend:
- Getting Started (0-0.9) – YDA is achieving a few of its plans (10% or less).
- Developing (1-1.9) – YDA is achieving some of its plans (less than 50%).
- Functioning (2-2.9) – YDA is achieving most of its plans (more than 50%).
- Effectively Functioning (3-4) – YDA is achieving or exceeding its plans (more than 75%).

The YDA's increased functionality in Y4 can be attributed to O2's support on crafting local legislation to institutionalize and sustain alliances, the expanded and more active members, and fostering local champions for strong YDA leadership. This year's gains include:

1. Angeles – Increased by 1.11 due to YDA structure strategy that created a core group that functions as an executive board.
2. Pasig – This year's highest increase in score of 1.84 due to strong representation of various organization members of the YDA, and their ownership of the YDA's mission.
3. Valenzuela – Increased by 0.92 due to YDA members' close collaboration on ensuring approval for the drafted ordinance institutionalizing the alliance.
4. QC – Leadership of the Local Youth Development Office as YDA chair and secretariat directs strong intra-committee relationships leading to a 0.91 score increase.
5. Legazpi – Increased by 0.09 by the continued strong support of its YDA members and youth participation through strong presence and proactiveness of Youth Network Executive Council and Team Albay Youth Organization.
6. Cebu – Collaboratively working to transition Cebu City YDA to Cebu City Youth Development Commission (CCYDC), incorporating their Organizational Development Plan, as well as their Annual Youth Development Plan into CCYDC's plans. This local level operational harmonization led to a score increase of 1.5.

7. Tagbilaran – City's issuance of City Ordinance on the Establishment of the Tagbilaran City YDA and hiring of a YDA focal person under the city YDO improved the YDA's score by 0.9.
8. Iloilo – YDA score increased by 1.24 due to the strong and active leadership of city YDO, along with some members such as DepEd, TESDA, PESO, DTI, CSWDO, and PYAP.
9. Isabela – Showed a decrease in score by 0.14 but maintained its Effectively Functioning level. The YDA prioritized updating the Youth Code to include the YDA as well as improving the delivery of planned OSY programs and activities.
10. Zamboanga – Increased by 0.74 after the City Youth Code was approved to include a full section establishing the YDA, therefore assuring annual budget allocation.
11. Iligan – With the local YDO serving as YDA secretariat, resources worth at least Php 1 million between and among YDA members were mobilized to support youth transitions, leading to a score increase of 1.28.
12. CDO – Increased score by 0.23 through its improved mechanism for transitioning youth to further training and education through the TVET system, with a Php 7.1 million worth of scholarship funds and hauling a total of Php 11.2 million cost-share contributions for this fiscal year alone.
13. Cotabato – Increased functionality score by 0.65 by Improving implementation of majority of its programs and projects planned, including 100% achievement rate of ALS enrolment and provision of public employment services specifically for upskilled OSYs.
14. General Santos – Strong leadership and productive engagement among members such as the SK and Youth Affairs Development Office led to a score increase of 0.32.
15. Davao – Increased their functionality by 1.05 through their two-pronged approach to sustainability: institutionalization through Securities and Exchange Commission registration, and supporting the Davao City YDA Council chaired by Mayor Baste Duterte and by the Administrative Office as the Council's Secretariat.

Overall, in Y4, O2 observed an increase in ownership of the OCA process among YDAs as more members comfortable in facilitating these discussions with fellow YDA Members.

While the upcoming Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) and Barangay Elections pose a possible challenge for the YDAs, they are optimistic that this change will bring in new partners and OSY champions for PYD programming in their city. The YDAs have also started planning to mitigate the effects of the changes that might happen after the local elections.

YDA's Develop Skills Menus as a Result of Local Labor Market Assessments

The YDAs of General Santos, Iligan, Legazpi, and Tagbilaran conducted their LLMA this quarter.

This year, O2 implemented a workshop to guide YDAs in developing a "skills menu" that identifies current in-demand skills training programs and needed skills training programs for each site. OSY youth leaders contributed to the process by collecting their own data via youth focus group discussions, and then sharing this information on youth perceptions of sectors and skills with YDAs members. YDA members brought their agency's data and their own insights about current and upcoming demand to the workshop. Together, youth leaders and YDA member agencies determined which skills and pathways were youth-friendly and in-demand, resulting in the "skills menu."

At the conclusion of the workshops, youth leaders participated in a communications session where they drafted communications products to share LLMA findings with other youth in their communities. Youth sketched out and developed infographics, songs, and videos to highlight top opportunities. YDAs will validate these communications products, and with the support of O2, disseminate some of these to highlight youth voices and perceptions of opportunities.

As a next step, YDAs will incorporate the results of the "skills menus" in the YDA's annual development plans, where members of the YDA will identify actions to support OSY opportunities in high-demand and youth-friendly opportunities.

Earlier this year, YDAs in CDO and Cotabato conducted their own versions of the LLMA, initiated by their respective YDA secretariat. The results of these LLMA will likewise be used in the upcoming OSY development planning of the YDAs in CDO and Cotabato. The table below the top five sectors with the most opportunities for OSY in each of the 5 sites to generate LLMA data this year:

O2 Site	Top sectors with most opportunities for OSYs
CDO	1. Agribusiness 2. Manufacturing 3. Power 4. Construction 5. IT-BPM
Cotabato	1. Wholesale and Retail and Online Selling 2. Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism 3. Health and Wellness 4. Construction 5. Manufacturing
Legazpi	1. Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism 2. Construction 3. IT-BPM 4. Agribusiness 5. Wholesale, Retail and Online Selling
Iligan	1. Manufacturing 2. Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism 3. Construction 4. IT-BPM 5. Wholesale, Retail and Online Selling
Tagbilaran	1. Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism 2. IT-BPM 3. Wholesale, Retail and Online Selling 4. Transportation and Logistics 5. Construction

Services, support networks, and relationships are more responsive to youth needs

Increasing awareness and recognition of YDAs

In Y4, the 15 YDAs aimed to increase awareness of YDAs as a support mechanism for OSY with barangay leaders. Through O2 support, YDAs used a three-pronged approach in conducting barangay caravans: 1) OSYs and local leaders are gathered for an orientation about O2 programs; 2) recruitment and referral to ALS and TESDA are conducted; and 3) After these two activities, OSY are engaged in youth volunteering activities that help address common concerns of the barangay. Through this approach, YDAs reached 363 out of 743 barangays, almost 50 percent of the covered barangays. In larger cities like Iloilo and QC, YDAs prioritized barangays in the city's largest districts: La Paz and Jaro in Iloilo and Districts 2, 3, and 5 in QC to be more efficient with their resources.

YDAs become key players in continuing education and workforce development

YDAs strengthened their presence within the city government and the local communities. Through O2 support, the YDAs also strengthened their presence and partnerships externally by establishing relationships with various organizations that help youth transition to education or training, employment, or entrepreneurship. Some of these partners are highlighted in the table below:

YDA	Type or Sector	New members or partners gained in Y4
Tagbilaran	Private Sector	JCI Boholana Kisses JCI Sandugo Bohol Association of Hotels, Resorts, and Restaurants
Davao	Academe/HEI	Jose Maria College Foundation Joji Ilagan International Schools Ateneo de Davao Assumption College of Davao
Iligan		St. Michael's College St. Peter's College

YDA	Type or Sector	New members or partners gained in Y4
Cotabato	Academe/HEI	Cotabato State University
GenSan	Academe/HEI	Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges

YDA partnerships lead to the following achievements:

On Further Education or Training

- Pasig City – Through a partnership with TESDA PAMAMARISAN, 38 OSYs completed Bread and Pastry Production NC II, 92 completed various qualifications under the Training for Work Scholarship Program, and 72 OSYs with disabilities were trained on livelihood and skills training.
- Valenzuela City – In partnership with Pamantasan Lungsod ng Valenzuela's Community Extension Office, employed the *kayag-kayag* system[2] to refer youth to ALS.
- Angeles City – In partnership with City College of Angeles and DepEd ALS Angeles, SHS was offered last school year serving 45 ALS SHS Grade 11 students.
- QC – In partnership with TESDA District Office of QC, 47 OSYs were NCII-trained on Computer Systems Servicing, Shielded Metal Arc Welding, Barista, and Bread and Pastry Production. Grantee Trinity University of Asia also awarded one OSY a full scholarship for a baccalaureate degree in Secondary Education.
- General Santos City – TESDA allocated 300 scholarship slots for a three-year diploma program reserved for ALS completers in GenSan through the YDA.

YDAs also strengthened their support in implementing HERO through partnerships forged between HEIs and YDA members. Because of increased HEI engagement, efforts relating to continuing education support

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[2] Kayag-kayag system is a strategy employed by Valenzuela City YDA and Pamantasan Lungsod ng Valenzuela where an active youth leader who attends an event will bring 2 more youth to attend. This is from the Tagalog word kayag, which means to invite or to bring someone to an event with their arms interlocked.

is sustained by the YDA, such that OSYs receive HERO training and guided to go to further education and training. (See Higher Education section.)

On Employment

- Legazpi City – Two O2 youth from Legazpi were employed by the Rural Bank of Guinobatan, Ariel Lumen and Jan Marvin Malate both passed the exam and interview given by the bank. Both were trained by the bank and then were officially hired in September 2023.
- Tagbilaran City – 11 youth were assisted on accessing the SPES program of DOLE-PESO; and JCI and PESO conducted a Job Fair, where 5 OSYs were hired on the spot.
- Cebu City – In partnership with TESDA and Department of Manpower Development and Placement of Cebu City, a World Café of Opportunities event was conducted, that includes a job fair, processing of pre-employment requirements, and business registrations.
- Davao City – Through the support of PESO, seven youth completers were hired on the spot during a PESO-led job fair.
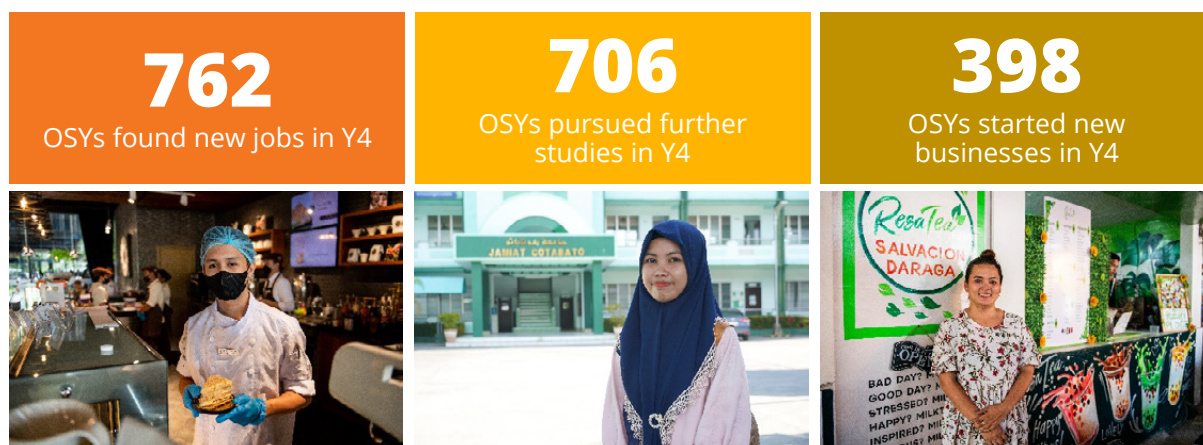

On Entrepreneurship

- Zamboanga City – Provision of start-up kits to O2 youth amounting to Php 5,000 per person.
- General Santos City – Through DTI South Cotabato's support, 14 OSYs received Php 8,000 each as a livelihood starter kit.
- CDO City – DOLE Region X granted two youth with livelihood assistance worth Php 35,000 each.
- Iligan City – Through DTI Lanao del Norte's support, 16 youth received rice business start kits worth Php 8,000 each.

In Y4, O2 to recorded 706 youth who took further education or training, 762 youth who received new employment and 398 youth who started or grew their businesses.

| **762** OSYs found new jobs in Y4 | **706** OSYs pursued further studies in Y4 | **398** OSYs started new businesses in Y4 |

As of September 2023, O2 organized 15 Youth Networks and have supported the network's accreditation and registration to various organizations and institutions to legitimize the network's existence. Below is a table outlining the Youth Networks formed under O2:

O2 site	Name of OSY organization established through O2 support	Year Established	Members as of Sep 2023	Accreditations and Registrations Received
1. Angeles	Angeles City Youth Network Executive Council	2022	14	NYC-YORP, YDO
2. Pasig	Pasig City Youth Network Executive Council	2022	55	YDO**
3. Valenzuela	Valenzuela City Youth Network Executive Council	2022	50	YDO
4. QC	QC Youth Network Executive Council	2022	30	YDO, NYC-YORP**
5. Legazpi	Legazpi City Youth Network Executive Council	2021	50	SEC, LYDC
6. Cebu	Cebu City O2 Youth Network	2021	20	NYC-YORP, LYDC
7. Tagbilaran	Pag-asa Youth Association of the Philippines – Tagbilaran City	2022*	200	YDO, CSWDO
8. Iloilo	Iloilo Opportunity 2.0 Youth Group	2022	20	YDO, YORP**
9. Isabela	Isabela CIty Youth Network	2022	25	YDO
10. Zamboanga	Jovenes Allianza de Zamboanga (JADZ)	2021	100	SEC, NYC-YORP, LYDC
11. Iligan	Asenso Kabatan-onang Iliganon Network Alliance (AKINA)	2022	15	LYDC
12. CDO	Kagay-anon Youth Network Alliance (KAYA NA)	2021	32	NYC-YORP, YDO
13. Cotabato	Kutawato Youth Network (KYN)	2021	50	YDO, DOLE, NYC-YORP
14. GenSan	Kabataang Heneral Independent Network (KABAHIN)	2021	40	DOLE**, NYC-YORP**
15. Davao	Madayaw Dabaw Youth Association (MDYA)	2022	32	DOLE, NYC-YORP

*Re-established, **Application Submitted
Legend: NYC-YORP – National Youth Commission – Youth Organization Registration Program; YDO –Youth Development Office; LYDC – Local Youth Development Council; SEC – Securities and Exchange Commission; DOLE – Department of Labor and Employment; CSWDO – City Social Welfare and Development Office

Sustainable pathways for youth engagement created

Youth empowered to actively participate in city level planning and project implementation activities

458 O2 youth leaders and youth networks have significantly strengthened their capacities both as individual youth leaders and as an organization because of their active participation in various trainings and workshops, and exposure to different activities and events.

- This quarter, O2 youth leaders from Tagbilaran City joined the city's 1st SK Federation Congress, organized by the YDO. Through this, OSY leaders had a chance to influence policies, annual plans, and propose budgets for the upcoming year.
- Similarly in Cotabato, O2 youth leaders of the Kutawato Youth Network (KYN) in partnership with YDO established a three-year development plan that includes a proposed civic engagement activities on disaster risk reduction, climate change response, and environmental protection. Mapakalamidad.ph and BARMM Ministry for Environment Protection have allotted funding worth Php 15,000 and Php 20,000, respectively, after witnessing KYN's successful upcycling-related volunteering activities.
- This quarter, O2 also supported Valenzuela youth leaders attended 'Spark the YOU(th): Creating Sustainable and Affordable Housing Solutions,' hosted by Habitat for Humanity. The activity aimed to empower youth in creating innovative solutions in providing adequate, inclusive, and affordable housing and resettlement programs in urban areas.
- Meanwhile in Pasig, O2 organized a youth volunteering activity and Youth Leadership Circle for OSY who are also persons with disabilities in the city. The activity did not only raise awareness on the context of people with disability, but also became a venue to recognize youth with disabilities as leaders capable of representing their fellow youth in Pasig City Youth Network Executive Council.
- Notably, this year, Legazpi City Youth Network Executive Council's contribution to O2's Mayon Volcano Eruption Emergency Response has been pivotal to the success of the said response, benefitting close to 1,500 youth and more than 200 teachers in Legazpi City and nearby areas.
- CDO's Kagay-anon Youth Network Alliance or KAYA NA Youth Leaders also continued its effectiveness and productivity mainly on their youth leader's selection and participation in various National and Regional Youth Development Programs organized by INNOTECH, Siklab Ph, PYD Network, iVolunteer Philippines.

O2 is very proud to announce that two youth leaders from Tagbilaran City and CDO City—Glaiza Bueno, PYAP Focal, and Desiree Rose Valmoria, KAYA NA President—will attend UNICEF's Southeast Asian Regional Dialogue on Young People's Skills, Employability, and Transition to Decent Work in October in Jakarta, Indonesia. The event is co-hosted by the International Labour Organization.

All of these great works were also recognized by partners and champions in our project sites.

- General Santos City – GenSan Sanguniang Panlungsod awarded a Certificate of Recognition to KABAHIN commending their commitment and efforts in mobilizing OSY in various youth community engagements
- Cotabato City – YDO awarded a Certificate of Recognition to KYN for implementing various volunteering activities
- CDO City – KAYA NA received the following awards from key partners:
  - YDO's certificate of recognition
  - Kids Who Farm's certificate of recognition
  - Bulua National High School's plaque of recognition on KAYA NA's work in establishing two Material Recover Facilities in the school
  - Individual recognition awarded by SEAMEO Innotech
  - Chosen as presenter and participants to Youth Development Programs and Fellowships hosted by iVolunteer, Siklab, and UNICEF-ILO
- Iligan City – AKINA received the following awards from key partners:
  - Iligan City YDO Economic Empowerment Award
  - Gold Excellent Leadership Award to President Kelly Robillos
  - Silver Excellent Leadership Award to Vice President Jeffsy Daumar
  - Certificate of recognition from Rotaract Club of Iligan
- Cebu City – National Youth Commission awarded Cebu O2 Youth Network a Certificate of Recognition as a community-based youth organization in Cebu
- Valenzuela City – YDO accredited and recognized the Valenzuela Youth Network Executive Council as one of the city's youth-serving organization

- Angeles City – National Youth Commission recognized Angeles City Youth Network Executive Council as a youth organization in Angeles City

Finally, in August 23-25, the inaugural National Youth Leaders' Summit was conducted in Pampanga. The three-day event was attended by more than 250 youth leaders and champions from the 15 O2 sites. With the theme, "OSYs as leaders of change towards PYD," the summit explored the different facets of youth leadership: the self, their fellow youth leaders, and their communities. The event was attended by champions from USAID and partner organizations from SEAMEO INNOTECH, CRS, Mapakalamidad.ph, WWF Philippines, and Siklab PH. OSYs-turned-City-Councilors Quin Cruz (Pasig) and Sedfrey Cabaluna (Iloilo) delivered the inspirational and keynote messages during the summit. Angeles City Vice Mayor Vicky Vega-Cabigting and USAID Office of Education Director Dr. Thomas LeBlanc also graced the opening ceremonies of the summit.

During the summit, YDA representatives from YDO, SK Federation, and other youth-serving organizations attended a separate session on Appreciative Inquiry that prompted the YDA members to envision a future for the youth leaders and youth networks in their sites and hubs and identify ways to further support their development and sustainability. The following insights were gathered during the sessions:

- **A recognized network of YDAs** specifically championing programs and policies for OSYs.
- **OSY organizations are institutionalized**, legally recognized, and funded by the government so that they can be well-represented in decision-making bodies including LYDCs.
- **Extensive youth development and engagement programs** are established as the norm and are regularly conducted to guarantee youth's transition to employment, education, and entrepreneurship.
- **Standardized database management systems** are utilized to formulate and advocate youth-centered data-driven policies and programs.
- **More OSYs are empowered** through upskilling, continued involvement in policy formulation, and transitioning to employment, education, and entrepreneurship.

Youth Networks and Leaders were also recognized for their hard work and achievements. Below are the recognitions awarded to select Youth Leaders and Youth Networks:

Most Outstanding Youth Leaders	Overall - Desiree Rose P. Valmoria (CDO) NCR Hub - Dyanne Rose Luna (Legazpi) Cebu Hub - Cristian Gumalo (Zamboanga) Davao Hub – Wenily P. Bendol (Cotabato) NCR Hub (2nd) - Jiane Mae Dizon (Angeles) Cebu Hub (2nd) - Glaiza Bueno (Tagbilaran) Davao Hub (2nd) - Erica K. Abelito (General Santos)
Best in Resource Mobilization	1st - Kagay-anon Youth Network Alliance (CDO) 2nd – Angeles City Youth Network Executive Council (Angeles) 3rd – QC Youth Network Executive Council
Most Innovative Youth Volunteering Activity	1st – KABAHIN's AdvocaSEA (General Santos) 2nd – KABAHIN's TEENguha Kabataan, Rides on Wheels, and Adolesecent Reproductive Health (General Santos) 3rd – KAYA NA's Youth Agvocates Project (CDO) 4th – JADZ's Project RIO (Zamboanga) 5th – Legazpi City Youth Network Executive Council's #BayaniKaOSY (Legazpi City)
NYLS 2023 Outstanding Youth Delegation	Overall – Kagay-anon Youth Network Alliance (CDO) NCR Hub – Legazpi City Youth Network Executive Council (Legazpi City) Cebu Hub – Cebu City O2 Youth Network (Cebu City) Davao Hub – Kutawato Youth Network (Cotabato City
NYLS 2023 Best Gallery of Wins Booth	Overall – Jovenes Allianza de Zamboanga (Zamboanga) NCR Hub – Legazpi City Youth Network Executive Council (Legazpi) Cebu Hub – Iloilo Opportunity 2.0 Youth Group (Iloilo) Davao Hub - Kagay-anon Youth Network Alliance (CDO)
NYLS 2023 Best Gallery of Wins Presenters	Overall – John Christian Porras and Stephanie Juaneza (Iloilo) NCR Hub – Ma. Theresa Francisco and Jerlan Elarde (Angeles) Cebu Hub – Janalyn Cariman and Gerry Baguio (Cebu) Davao Hub – John Rey Remadavia and Patrick Puebla (CDO)
Amazing Race Winners	1st – Angeles City Youth Network Executive Council (Angeles) 2nd – Asenso Kabatan-onang Iliganon Network Alliance (Iligan) 3rd – Jovenes Allianze de Zamboanga (Zamboanga)

YDA Youth Leaders Deliver Youth Services and Create Meaningful City-level OSY civic engagement

35 youth leaders from the five Davao hub youth networks—AKINA, KABAHIN, KAYA NA, KYN and MDYA—participated in a week-long SILC boot camp managed by CRS. The boot camp was intended to start scale-up the involvement of more OSYs to this model that facilitates improved access to finance that can support youth's access to further education or employment or livelihoods. Participants were able understand the practices and processes of SILC methods, developed skills in facilitating SILC with fellow youth and establish a work plan that will guide youth networks in forming new SILC groups in the next several months.

O2 also supported Youth Leaders' and Networks' advocacy campaign for ALS and TESDA enrollment and the availing of employment and livelihood opportunities for OSY in the area through workshops on video production and communications conducted in August and during the LLMA workshop series.

It is expected that in the coming fiscal year, youth leaders and youth networks will continue to receive capacity-strengthening training and workshops from LSPs through the Youth Community Grant, supported by O2. Youth leaders and networks are also expected to implement their proposed programs and activities for advocacy, information and education campaigns on the different opportunities for their fellow youth in their respective cities.

Youth Groups Create Opportunities for Meaningful Youth Engagement and Volunteerism

O2 youth leaders and youth networks continued to conduct meaningful volunteering activities in their respective communities and recruit youth to ALS and TESDA by delivering an O2 program orientation in various barangays in the site. For Y4, 36,304 O2 youth have volunteered in various community engagement activities. Out of this number, 6,608 youth have volunteered in O2 or youth network-led activities.

36,304
OSYs have volunteered in their community as of Y4

This quarter, O2 supported the following activities under the centers of participation outlined by the National Youth Commission's Philippine Youth Development Plan:

Health

- Close to 100 youth in Davao City participated mental health promotion through advocacy and environmental protection through tree growing activities in two indigenous communities.
- 17 Valenzuela youth participated in an activity, entitled, *Adik Sayo, Awit Sa'min:* a drug or substance abuse volunteer activity, where they shared awareness on anti-drug campaign of the city through focused group discussion and flyer distribution. The activity was led by Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Valenzuela, Red Cross, Samahan ng mga Kabataan sa Batimana, and PYAP Valenzuela.
- 50 youth from Legazpi City participated in a feeding program and out-reach activity by Team Philippine Noble Patrons, that aims to provide proper nutrition to youth and children through feeding and proper nutrition lecture.

Education

- 61 youth from Legazpi City participated in *Bayanihan para sa matatag na paaralan, Tara Na, Mag-Brigada Tayo*. The activity aims to help parents and teachers make the school ready for the opening of classes.

Economic Empowerment
- 53 youth from Pasig City participated in "Skills Camp," a life skills and self-discovery session and community service activity conducted in partnership with University of Asia and Pacific, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Pasig and Pasig City YDA.
- 50 youth from Cotabato City participated in *Kategelen endu Kapyanan para sa mga OSYs* (Skills and Opportunities for OSYs) that helped OSYs gain work readiness skills and at the same time share these skills with other youth in the city.

Social Inclusion and Equity
- 18 Valenzuela City youth supported Habitat for Humanity's Youth Build Program in Barangay Bignay through clearing the area for construction and attending a training on assembling solar-powered lamp that can be used by social housing recipients of Habitat for Humanity.
- 28 OSY who are also persons with disabilities participated in QC participated in *#KayaKo*: disability rights awareness and campaign session, conducted during the National Disability Week in partnership with QC YDA and Persons With Disabilities Office of QC.

Peace-building and Security
- 78 Legazpi City youth attended the *KaPEACEtahan* Peace Fair of Bicol University in celebration of National Peace Consciousness Month. The event was attended by Presidential Adviser on Peace Reconciliation and Unity, Secretary Carlito Glavez, Jr., and Mayor Adrian Salceda and BU President, Dr. Baby Boy Benjamin Nebres III. The youth assisted in preparing booths, setting up and restoring the venue, and distributing food during the event. Sec. Galvez said, "We should empower the youth to become active contributors to peacebuilding efforts. Furthermore, at the national level fostering a culture of peace essential for the stability and progress nation." He also pointed out that peace serves as a catalyst for cultivating a generation of global citizens who understand the complexities of conflict resolution, diplomacy, and the promotion of tolerance and harmony.

Active Citizenship
- 67 Legazpi City youth volunteered during the Mayon relief operations, repacking of relief goods of the DSWD V Regional Office for families affected by volcano eruption. Volunteers were able to pack a total of 2,200 food packs and boxes that were distributed in relocation sites and evacuation centers in Legazpi City and nearby areas.

Environment
- More than 200 youth leaders and youth champions participated in a tree planting activity in Sitio Sapangbato, Angeles City, Pampanga. This is conducted during the last day of the National Youth Leaders' Summit, focusing on youth leaders giving back to the communities *#LingkodLiderKabataan.*
- 397 youth from Pasig and QC participated in disaster risk management-related volunteer activity in partnership with USAID project Mapakalamidad.ph. Through the volunteer activity, the youth are equipped and encouraged to become active volunteer reporters during disasters.
- More than 50 Iloilo City youth participated in mangrove planting to support YDO and SK activities during the Linggo ng Kabataan Celebration.
- 63 Cotabato youth volunteered in *Canalimpyo*, in partnership with Cotabato City Environment Office. *Canalimpyo* aims to teach proper segregation of waste materials and conduct a clean-up drive in the barangay.

O2's Response to the Mayon Volcano Eruption

USAID through O2 handed over Php 9.7 million ($175,000) worth of relief to support DepEd's Mayon Volcano Emergency Response plan in the province of Albay. More than 100 teachers and 1,700 learners of DepEd's ALS in 34 affected barangays around the cities of Legazpi and Tabaco and the municipalities of Malilipot, Sto. Domingo, Camalig, Daraga and Guinobatan benefitted from this support.

USAID Philippines Regional Legal Officer Michelle McLeod joined DepEd ALS Assistant Secretary G.H. Ambat, DepEd 5 Regional Director Gilbert Sadsad, Mayor Gie Rosal of Legazpi and Mayor Cenon B. Volante of Malilipot to distribute learning materials and hygiene kits to affected ALS learners and teachers.

"Our out-of-school youth have already faced so many challenges in their journey to continue their education. Through our collaboration with our Philippine partners, we are restoring education in challenging circumstances and minimizing the effects of disruption in learning," McLeod said. "These learning kits and psychosocial support from USAID will give our ALS learners and teachers a fighting chance to recover from this disaster" DepEd Assistant Regional Director Sentillas said. "DepEd is committed to ensuring as little disruption to education so that vulnerable youth may continue to learn and upskill towards a better tomorrow no matter how difficult the circumstances."

In addition to the learning materials and hygiene kits, psychosocial intervention and support is also provided for the ALS learners and teachers.

Cross Cutting Activities

Higher Education Work

Philippine colleges and universities continue to strengthen their roles as central actors in supporting OSY at local and national-level. More than 90 HEIs continue to wear various hats to advance their contribution to OSY development complementing programs and services provided by government, industry, and other agencies.

HEIs performed three significant roles supporting OSY development:

As Policy Informants
Three HEIs participated in EDCOM2's visits in Cebu and Davao and informed them of their direct experiences in implementing TVET, and what they propose could be done to ensure that policies and laws ease the conduct of training and skilling for OSYs. *(In photo: Casuga Integrated Farm School and EDCOM2 TVET Standing Committee, Davao City)*

As Lifelong Learning Counselors
44 HEIs, involving 438 faculty members and college students volunteered to run HERO, O2's two-day second-chance education orientation, to a total of 1838 ALS JHS completers through their community extension programs and their National Service Training Programs *(In photo: Student volunteers of Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Valenzuela, orienting DepEd ALS Youth)*

As Researchers
Two HEIs continued their efforts to provide technical insights on OSY development and ALS. Another research grant which will support one HEI to conduct a nationwide tracer study of DepEd ALS Completers will also be awarded in the next quarter. *(In photo: Dr. Sheilalaine Romulo of Cebu Technological University, who heads the Education Committee of the Cebu City YDA turning over her research on OSY support to Cebu City LGU)*

Higher Education Grants that foster partnerships to advance opportunities for OSY

O2 engages HEIs to advance their work in lifelong learning broadening the impact of their innovations to impact OSYs, boosting their unique roles by enhancing partnership with government and industry, and expanding their technical capacities by learning from US-HEIs. O2 activities fosters the unique and critical role of Philippine colleges and universities in second-chance education and workforce development opportunities, thus contributing to a stronger enabling environment for marginalized youth.

Foster collaborations between Philippine HEIs across sites to share best practices and experiences in solving common challenges on youth development

To sustain the work done by HEIs in their respective localities and scale up their practices across contexts, O2 has been laying the ground work to establish a Higher Education Community of Practice (HECoP) for

Out-of-School Youth Development and Lifelong Learning. The HECoP brings together HEIs to advance thought leadership on OSY development, provide professional development opportunities, and conduct public policy advocacy on OSY and lifelong learning. Through the development of tools, evidence, resources, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities, the HECoP will support OSY transition to meaningful learning and earning opportunities. The HECoP will also be the avenue where Philippine HEIs could explore linkages with U.S. HEIs and researchers, and with the USAID Higher Education Learning Network.

In addition, O2 sealed 11 new partnership agreements with more HEIs across the country to promote further education to OSYs through the HERO continued as Through these partnership, HEIs use their own resources and collaborate with members of their respective YDAs in ensuring that in each year, completers of ALS JHS are oriented on further education opportunities such as pursuing SHS or TVET upskilling and multiskilling, and preparing for college-level education. By 2024, all HEI partners are expected to implement HERO to ALS JHS as well as ALS SHS as more enrollees are expected with more cities begin pilot implementation of ALS SHS. **Annex A** provides the complete list of O2's new HEI partners in Y4.

Although ALS students benefitted from HERO program, HEI faculty and students also benefitted through technical support, capacity building, and leadership opportunities. College students who volunteered as HERO Facilitators benefitted from the activity since they treat HERO as a training ground, especially among those taking up pre-service teacher education degrees. They were given opportunities to apply skills in community development, materials development, and class facilitation.

Finally, O2's higher education team is happy to be part of USAID Philippines' Higher Education Working Group. This Higher Education Working Group ensures that the impact made by partner HEIs of USAID Philippines across its projects are synergized, streamlined, and enhanced. Members of the Group will meet every quarter for updating, alignments, and strategy work.

1,510
Employers engaged as of Y4

Private Sector Engagement

O2's private sector engagement has three phases: (1) to raise awareness on the potentials of OSY, (2) engagement of Industry along the wage-employment and self-employment pathways for youth, and (3) to gain commitment as well as loyalty to the systematic support to OSY to give them second chance opportunities at a better life.

Core **awareness** raising activities with the private sector, were facilitated in partnership with PESO and the DTI across the Program sites. Last quarter, O2 conducted two more: "Gen Z: Impact on Legazpi Workforce" and "Young Isabeleños: Business and Work Ready." These activities have been continuous since the program started and have shifted the private sector's mindset on the Gen Z OSY from worthless and troublemakers to upskilled and ready to improve the workforce bringing in their digital native competencies as well as their natural grit. We are seeing more companies promoting OSY and seeing an increase in impact from these efforts.

Deepening the private sector's **engagement** also includes work immersion opportunities which lead to eventual employment. O2 directly links OSY with these opportunities along withour partnership with PESO. To date, 762 youth have been transitioned to quality employment through strong partnerships with business organizations such as the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, People Management Association of the Philippines, Junior Chamber International, Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and large companies across 15 O2 sites.

Likewise, the private sector is strongly **engaged** in supporting Gen Z OSY wishing to become young entrepreneurs. In partnership with DTI, companies participates in YEP! BYOB as coaches, mentors, judges in the pitch competition, seed funders, and finally partners of the youth in the community's value and supply chain. To date, 398 youth have been transitioned to self-employment.

To further support youth entrepreneurs, O2 launched an access to finance initiative by bringing together the largest Finance Technology (FinTech) Companies—GCash, Tala, goTyme, InvestEd, Home Credit—in the country to discuss financial inclusion alongside Deputy Governor Bernadette Romulo-Puyat of the Central Bank of the Philippines, DepEd ALS, TESDA, and the youth. This event, **Beginning Balance: Reorienting the Financial Landscape for Gen Z OSY,** in partnership with FinTech giants, will provide a more inclusive

access to financial services engaging youth to make transactions, save, invest, and build businesses, all through the convenience of digital platforms.

> **Robust digital financial literacy provides the youth equal opportunities. We need to empower our youth through digital financial inclusion.**
>
> —Deputy Governor Bernadette Puyat Romulo
>   Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

O2's private sector work culminated in a national private sector summit**, Forging the Future: Collaborating beyond impact with the new and upskilled workforce**, held in September. When the community of committed partners from the private sector, DTI, and PESO gather together in one space, their **loyalty** to support the GenZ OSY resounds. Close to 200 partners proudly shared how giving second chances to OSY benefited their companies, their businesses, their communities.

In the same event, Chairperson of the Committee of Youth and Sports Development in the Lower House, Congressman Faustino Michael Carlos T. Dy, in his keynote address, strongly recommended the legislation of the Program: "The interventions currently being applied by USAID must be given national coverage to provide protection to all the OSYs of the country and not just to the 15 cities identified by the program. Congress will play a pivotal role in institutionalizing the USAID Programs for all the Filipinos' OSYs." O2 has successfully presented the program to both the Committees on Youth Development in the Lower and Upper House gaining support to institutionalize the program through legislation.

> **The interventions currently being applied by USAID must be given national coverage to provide protection to all the OSYs of the country... Congress will play a pivotal role in institutionalizing the USAID Programs for all the Filipinos' OSYs.**
>
> —Congressman Mike Dy
>   Chair of the Committee on Youth and Sports

Grants Program

OSY learners at Ferndale College in Zamboanga City participating in group activity during the WRN training.

Ferndale has reached 112 OSY beneficiaries. To date, more than 50% have completed the training program and will proceed to transition to jobs, business or higher-level education.

O2 continues to expand our reach to support OSY development through new and follow-on grants. To date, O2 has awarded 88 grants to 68 organizations across 15 project sites. Two of these grants—one follow-on training grant and another for a tracer study for DepEd ALS—were awarded this quarter.

The School of Knowledge for Industrial Labor, Leadership, and Service (SKILLS) in Cebu City received its second O2 grant to train 133 OSY in life skills and in TVET courses on construction. Its first grant successfully enabled 89 Cebuano OSY to engage in employment, business or further education or training.

The Research Institute for Mindanao Culture located at Xavier University in CDO became the sole recipient of the O2-DepEd ALS Research Grant. The Institute will conduct a nationwide study on the exit pathways of JHS ALS completers of SY 2022-2023. Conduct of a tracer study is one of the priority research topics in the DepEd ALS Research Agenda 2022-2026. The results of the study will help DepEd BAE formulate policies for more effective ALS programming in the country.

As O2 closed nine grants this year, a new call for youth community grants applications was also launched in the last quarter of FY 2022-2023. Recipients of this grant are expected to create an enabling environment that will:

- Promote youth's roles in meaningful civic engagement,
- Provide access to learning and earning opportunities, and
- Capacitate both youth and organizations to deliver excellent and relevant programs as well as develop a community of practice to sustain programs for youth leaders and organizations alike.

Awarding this grant is expected in the second quarter of the next fiscal year.

Outreach and Communications

Social media engagement and website traffic

O2's Facebook followers grew by over 2,000 to 28,900 from last quarter's 26,400. The 188 posts made engaged up to 650,000 people. The most popular posts in Q4 were about the roll out of YEP! BYOB in GenSan and in Central Luzon. The call for applications to the Higher Education Grants and Youth Community Grants also were popular as the most shared posts this quarter.

Over the past three months, the O2 website had 1,700 visitors on average, of which 1,600 are new. Users are overwhelming coming from the Philippines (82 percent) followed by the U.S. (14 percent) and other countries compose the remaining four percent.

Media engagement

This quarter, O2 was covered by national and local media 22 times, with the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) accounting for six of these. O2's Mayon disaster response, the NTESDP launching, and the O2 private sector summit were the most popular media pick-ups in Q4. Major national news outlets like ABS-CBN, Philippine Daily Inquirer, and Manila Bulletin published O2 content. There was also an uptick of interview requests from radio-first broadcast media outlets in Q4, most likely due to O2's strengthening relationship with PIA. Radyo Pilipinas, Radyo 630, and Radyo Bandera specifically requested to interview O2's successful OSYs. The list of O2's media coverage this quarter is provided in **Annex B.**

New communications products

A branding package for the first ever O2 National Youth Leaders' summit was prepared this quarter. Special banners, deck designs, promotional materials, and collaterals were developed for O2's first event exclusively with its youth leaders. Aside from this, the following key program communication products have also been produced and published over the past three months.

- Report: The ALS Accomplishment Report 2005-2022
- Plan: The NTESDP 2023-2028
- Draft Modules: YEP! BYOB
- Report: National Youth Leaders' Summit
- Video: Growing Businesses with Upskilled Out-of-School Youth
- Video: Forging the Future O2 Private Sector Summit Highlights
- Video: Updated YDA Video

New stories

Three new success stories were developed this quarter and are provided in **Annex C.**

I have 'Be Your Own Boss' to thank for making me realize my strengths and giving me the confidence and tools to pursue this business track.

— Clark Catacutan, 21, former out-of-school youth, recalls a USAID-supported training he attended in 2021. He now has his own street food business in Angeles City.

Because of what USAID did for me, I want to empower others as well and give those of us that have struggled to find a space, that we are part of the community.

—Fairodz Sabar, 22, former OSY, returned to university to study law in Cotabato City in hopes of continuing to serve her community after growing as a youth leader through USAID support.

USAID was a huge help! They embraced us as out-of-school youth. We may have been left behind in formal schooling, but in society, we weren't. I don't feel alone anymore.

—Vann Bautista, 20, a former OSY from Quezon City found a safe space to grow as a young leader with his peers through USAID Opportunity 2.0.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Participation to USAID/Philippines' initiatives on Performance Management and Monitoring Activities

In November 2022, O2 participated and worked with Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting for Improved Development (CLAimDev), a USAID/Philippines' activity for a Third-Party Monitoring visit which covered the cities of Zamboanga and Isabela, to provide field-level information on the project's key activities, achievement. The activity highlighted good practices and recommendations to strengthen O2's programmatic and MEL activities to further improve programming.

O2 also participated in USAID/Philippines Implementing Partners' Performance Management Seminar in March 2023 designed for MEL specialists. The event focused on discussion of USAID performance data management and reporting for FY 2022 results. In addition, the event opened an opportunity to discuss how implementing partners and USAID/Philippines can strengthen collaboration to improve performance management and reporting

Support to strengthening capacity of Local Service Providers

Throughout April to June, O2 provided MEL trainings to the 20 LSP partner organizations awarded in the Training and Development Grants. The face-to-face trainings, conducted in NCR, Cebu and Davao Hubs, provided a deep dive on the discussion on the program's M&E requirements particularly on the following activities:

1. Administrating the Work Readiness and Life Skills Survey
2. Conducting the Workforce Outcomes Reporting Questionnaire interviews
3. Managing learner participation through the Youth Tracker
4. Managing and organizing MEL-related document requirements
5. Learning and feedbacking with O2 team with regards to T&D grants implementation

Project Indicators

IR1: Strengthened capacity of national and local systems to develop, deliver, and monitor second-chance education programs for out-of-school youth

Indicator 5 (Supp-16)

Y4 Target: Yes; Y4 Actual: Ongoing

O2 maintained its close working relationship with key partners DepEd and TESDA to provide technical assistance in crafting policy reforms, a key pillar in supporting the enabling environment for youth development. The piloting of the DepEd ALS M&E system was cascaded through a series of orientations with DepEd educators. Moving forward, it is envisioned that the M&E system will be used by BAE as an integrated tool to conduct monitoring activities, and generate results and learnings throughout the implementation of ALS program in the country.

Indicator 6 (ES 1-12) Number of education administrators and officials who complete professional development activities with USG assistance

Y4 Target: 100; Y4 Actual: 205

O2 provided professional development activities to 297 officials and administrators; these activities included training that focused on the delivery and instruction of 21st Century Skills, Life Skills, WBL, and BYOB programs as part of integration to their own institutional youth-facing programs. In addition, SEAMEO-INNOTECH also delivered the third course as part of the ALS Teacher Professional Development program aimed to support the ALS teachers' competency needs. Y4 actuals exceed the Y4 target.

Indicator 7 (ES 1-6) Number of educators who complete professional development activities with USG assistance

Y4 Target: 550; Y4 Actual: 1,674

With the same narrative as Indicator 6, O2 provided the same level of professional development activities to 1,674 educators from DepEd, TESDA, and DTI. The trainings focused on the delivery and instruction of 21st Century Skills, Life Skills, WBL, and BYOB programs as part of integration to their own institutional youth-facing programs. In addition, SEAMEO-INNOTECH also delivered the third course as part of the ALS Teacher Professional Development program aimed to support the ALS teachers' competency needs. Y4 actuals exceed the Y4 target.

Indicator 8 Number of youth participating in USG- assisted programs

Y4 Target: 50,000; Y4 Actual: 36,840

O2 reached an additional 36,840 learners (22,039 ALS youth, 14,801 TVET youth) from different activity streams in Y4. With this accomplishment, this now brings the program to a total of 67,468 youth reach throughout the LOP.

While the Y4 actuals resulted in a 73 percent accomplishment of the established annual target, the Y4 actuals have significantly contributed to the overall progress. One notable observation is that the Y4 actuals is the highest recorded youth reach in a single fiscal year since the program inception. The significant accomplishment for the year is attributed to the complete data collection of JHS learners of DepEd ALS program in the sites, and the initial data set provided by TESDA as part of EDC and TESDA's Data Sharing Agreement.

Indicator 9 (ES 2-1) Number of host country HEIs receiving capacity development support with USG assistance:

Y4 Target: 100; Y4 Actual: 271

O2 delivered capacity strengthening programs to 271 HEIs in the areas of PYD, Work Ready Now! curricula, and HERO. These initiatives are designed to improve the capacity of HEIs as a provider of quality programs and services for OSYs.

Indicator 10 (ES 2-54) Number of USG-supported partnerships that address regional, national, and/or local development objectives through or with HEIs:

Y4 Target: 45; Y4 Actual: 28

O2 directly partnered or became a bridge in fostering 28 partnerships with at least one HEI as key local actor. Through forging partnership agreements, committing in delivering foundational soft skills programs, and collaborating with other key local actors in the YDAs, HEIs are seen as an important stakeholder for supporting and enabling a development approach in facilitating youth programs.

This indicator did not reach its annual target of 45, but is expected to catch up with the progress next year, as there are pending partnership agreements that will be signed by O2 partners by Q1 and Q2 FY2024.

Indicator 11 Number of youth reached through flexible delivery modalities

Y4 Target: 2,000; Y4 Actual: 22,276

O2 reached 22,276 ALS and TESDA youth by flexible delivery modalities through the self-directed training materials. As the program enters a recovery period post-COVID-19, this achievement of a ten-fold return, which seen as an unanticipated uptake demonstrates the value of flexible learning, with this type of learning delivery to be invested upon by learning institutions.

IR2: Strengthened capacity of national and local systems to deliver workforce readiness and technical-vocational training for out-of-school youth

Indicator 13 (YOUTH-1) Number of youth trained in soft skills/life skills through USG-assisted programs:

Y4 Target: 40,000; Y4 Actual: 31,514

O2 recorded 31,514 learners (16,763 ALS youth, 14,751 TVET youth) from different activity streams in Y4. With this accomplishment, this now brings the program to a total of 58,556 soft skills completers through Life Skills and 21st Century Skills Modules throughout the LOP.

While the Y4 actuals translate to a 79 percent accomplishment of the established annual target, a similar observation is that the Y4 actuals for this indicator is the highest recorded number of soft skills completers in a single fiscal year since the program inception. The significant accomplishment for the year is attributed to the complete data collection of JHS Learners of DepEd ALS program in the sites, and the initial data set provided by TESDA as part of EDC and TESDA's Data Sharing Agreement.

Indicator 14 Number of teaching and learning materials (TLMs) that are inclusively representative produced with USG assistance.

Y4 Target: 10; Y4 Actual: 1

The DTI-YEP! BYOB modules produced as part of O2's systems strengthening effort for institutions to further upskill budding youth entrepreneurs.

The Y4 actuals is equivalent to 10 percent accomplishment rate vis-à-vis the target, which is seemingly low, but focusing on the big picture, the LOP actuals (45) have already surpassed the LOP target (20) prior to the start of the year.

Indicator 15 (E.G.6-14) Percent of individuals who complete USG-assisted workforce development programs

Y4 Target: 80%; Y4 Actual: 88%

Completion rate for O2 youth workforce development beneficiaries for the year has achieved a 88 percent, which is at par with the annual target of 80 percent. While retention rates are high and consistent throughout the year against the target, O2 continues to monitor retention rates in programming especially with DepEd and TESDA youth.

Indicator 16 Number of employers engaged

Y4 Target: 600; Y4 Actual: 554

O2 demonstrated a wider range of advocacy initiative with private sector organizations this year. Engaging an additional 554 private sector partners, O2 engaged in various levels of engagements such as exploratory meetings, sensitization events, hosting youth work immersions, active participation in YDA activities, providing coaching and mentoring sessions, and hiring program graduates. The LOP progress (1,510) of this indicator is on track to meet its expected LOP target (2,200).

Indicator 17 (GNDR-2) Proportion of female participants in USG- assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income, or employment)

Y4 Target: 50%; Y4 Actual: 48%

48 percent out of the 13,397 TVET youth undergoing programs to start their own businesses or self-employment opportunities are female participants, which is close to the target of 50 percent for equal gender programming.

Indicator 18 (EG.4.2-7) Number of individuals participating in USG-assisted group-based savings, micro-finance, or lending programs

Y4 Target: 175; Y4 Actual: 185

An additional 185 youth have participated in the Savings and Internal Lending Program led by consortia partner CRS, supported by O2. The group-based savings program piloted in O2 sites is designed to provide financial literacy and saving opportunities for the youth. With CRS contract ending this year, the LOP progress (520) met and exceeded its LOP target (500).

Indicator 19 Number of work experiences facilitated by USG-funded development program

Y4 Target: 700; Y4 Actual: 981

O2 has facilitated 981 unique work experiences given to youth beneficiaries undergoing workforce development training programs. This year's actuals surpassed the target by 140 percent. Considering the remaining active direct training to youth provided by O2, the LOP progress (1,309) of this indicator is on track to meet its expected LOP target (2,000).

IR3: Improved enabling environment for Positive Youth Development at both national and local levels

Indicator 20 Number of youth-friendly laws and policies

Y4 Target: 6; Y4 Actual: 4

Four (4) youth-friendly laws and policies were recorded for the year. These includes the technology transfer agreement between O2 grantee partner University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines and the CDO City LGU for the agreement and sharing of the O2-funded *eMonitor Mo App*, a software developed as a community-based profiling tool for CDO OSYs. Three other policies for the year were passed by the QC LGU which includes an allotment of scholarship slots for OSYs, an amended resolution of the *Pangkabuhayan QC Assistance Program* with the inclusion of livelihood and entrepreneurship program (i.e. BYOB) as potential beneficiaries of the program, and opening up the SPES, a youth employment-bridging program to include OSYs.

While this constitutes a rate of 66 percent accomplishment for the year, the overall LOP progress (19) already met and exceeded the LOP target (16).

Indicator 21: CBLD-10 Value ($) of non-donor resources mobilized for local development priorities

Y4 Target: 711,282 USD; Y4 Actual: 773,961

Investments and resources mobilized by development partners are critical in sustaining local development initiatives. For this year, O2 recorded 773,961 as part of cost-share contributions from various stakeholders and partners. The contributions were comprised of local TESDA scholarship slots allocation for OSYs, partnering with O2 in events and programs, provision of starter kits, and contributions facilitated by the YDAs for their own initiatives and programs.

Indicator 22 Number of individuals who participate in orientation workshops promoting positive youth development

Y4 Target: 700; Y4 Actual: 643

O2 has oriented 643 individuals from various sectors (higher education, local government units, local representatives of national government agencies, civil society and non-governmental organizations) in USAID's PYD approach. While this constitutes to a 92 percent accomplishment against the annual target, the LOP progress (881) of this indicator is on track to meet its LOP target (1,150).

Indicator 23 Number of Youth Development Alliances (YDAs)

Y4 Target: N/A; Y4 Actual: 1

The establishment of the Pasig City YDA in Q1 marked the establishment of all YDAs in O2 sites. This brings the total LOP Progress (15) above the LOP target (8).

Indicator 24 (CBLD-9) Percent of USG-assisted organizations with improved performance.

Y4 Target: 100 percent Y4 All YDAs situated in existing project sites (15) have either maintained or increased their respective level of functionality, bringing the progress of this indicator to 100 percent in terms of improved performance.

Indicator 25 Number of youth engaged in leadership activities

Y4 Target: 270 Y4 Actual: 436

O2 has trained 436 youth leaders across the sites in different leadership programs. Upskilling and capacitating the youth leaders enables them to lead among their peers in their respective communities and contribute in meaningful engagements. The LOP progress (1,430) met and exceeded its LOP target (650).

Indicator 26 Number of youth participating in volunteer activities

Y4 Target: 26,625 Y4 Actual: 36,304

O2 recorded 36,304 youth volunteers for the year. These are comprised of ALS youth who completed the Module 9: Civic Engagement as part of completing their Life Skills program, and OSYs engaged by O2 in conducting youth volunteering activities relevant to their communities as part of barangay-wide caravans. The LOP progress (40,511) of this indicator is on track to meet its LOP target (61,250).

Outcome Indicator (Supp-15)

Indicator 1 (ES.1-59/Supp-15) O2 continues to provide technical assistance in education policy reforms through collaborative efforts with institutional partners. With the support of O2's technical assistance, DepEd is moving various policy pieces in line with the Implementing Rules and Regulations of ALS Act. In addition, O2 is also providing technical assistance to EDCOM2, in identifying areas for policy reform in terms of Philippine government programming in the education sector. Two of the priority areas for EDCOM supported by O2 is ALS Access and Delivery under the Basic Education priority umbrella, and the TVET and Lifelong Learning. The specific write-ups are found and referenced in *Activity 4-1.2.2 Support for Policy Development.*

In addition, O2 also directly supported the development of the NTESDP for 2018-2023. The document serves as the official strategic plan and blueprint for the TVET sector's activities in the next five years.

The undertaking of these policy reforms through multiple approaches is seen to benefit the wider landscape of Philippine education sector, expanded beyond O2's supported program sites, and is seen to benefit educators, administrators, and millions of Filipino youth under these programs.

Workforce Development Outcomes (ES. 1-46, EG. 6-11, EG. 6-12)

At the end of Y4, the project has administered WORQ tool to the sample of youth who completed the workforce development program. The preliminary analysis of 245 youth who completed baseline and endline WORQ has been completed immediately upon the endline administration; an in-depth analysis will continue and the results will be reported in the Y5 Q1 report.

The preliminary results indicate that 35.9 percent of youth have obtained new employment, following the participation in the workforce development program. This is notable, considering that 40 percent of youth reported the employment at the baseline, and the new employment reflect the status only of those who were unemployed at the baseline. Additionally, the young people who had employment at both baseline and endline have reported an average of 437 percent increase in their earnings following the participation in the workforce development program. Finally, 18 percent of youth completing baseline and endline WORQ, 18 percent have reported transition to further education or training following the participation in the workforce development program.

Additionally, the project has administered baseline WORQ to the youth enrolled in the DepEd ALS programs in the sample CLCs across 12 program sites; the endline tool is expected to be administered in late Q1 Y5, or 4-6 months after the completion of the program. The preliminary analysis of the baseline data indicates that around 52 percent of young people enrolled in the ALS program reported being employed at the time when baseline WORQ data was collected. Among young men 58 percent reported being employment, while only 42 percent of young women reported employment. The employment also varied across the program sites, with youth reporting higher employment rate in some program sites (more than 70 percent of youth in Tagbilaran, Davao City, or Isabela reported employment), ad lower employment rates in others (less than 20 percent of young people in Zamboanga reported employment).

Work Readiness and Life Skills Survey Results (E.G. 6-13)

The activity deployed the Workforce Readiness and Life Skills Survey to capture youth's improvement in the soft skills after the participation in an O2 programmatic components. During Y4, the project administered WRLSS with the youth enrolled in the DepEd ALS program during the first month of their attendance after the enrollment, as well as after the completion of the Life Skills curricula. The tool was administered in a sample of CLCs in 12 program sites.

The preliminary analysis of the 749 youth who completed baseline and endline WRLSS, indicates that about 47.8 percent of youth have improved their life skills, work readiness or leadership skills. The results among young women and young men were comparable. However, there were variations in the improvement of skills across the program sites. The analysis of this data is ongoing and more detailed results will be reported in Y5 Q1.

Adjustments to the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan

O2's performance reporting is established against the revised MEL Plan submitted to USAID/Philippines in May 2023. This document reflects the changes documented in the revised MEL Plan of Opportunity 2.0. Below is the summary of changes in terms of performance indicator line up, and relevant changes in Year 4 and LOP targets:

Section	Proposed Changes
Performance Indicator Tracking Table (PITT), Individual Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS)	**New Indicators** Addition of **Indicator 21: CBLD-10** Value ($) of non-donor resources mobilized for local development priorities under IR3; LOP target: $1,195,314 **Indicators with Proposed Adjusted Targets** **Indicator 7: ES.1-6** Number of educators who complete professional development activities with USG assistance Original Year 4 target: N/A; Updated Year 4 target: 550 Original LOP target: 1,700; Updated LOP target: 2,350 **Indicator 9: ES.2-1** Number of host country higher education institutions receiving capacity development support with USG assistance Original Year 4 target: 5; Updated Year 4 target: 100

Section	Proposed Changes
	Original LOP target: 15; Updated LOP target: 110
	Indicator 10: ES.2-54 Number of USG-supported partnerships that address, regional, national, and/or local development objectives through or with higher education institutions Original Year 4 target: 0; Updated Year 4 target: 40 Original LOP target: 14; Updated LOP target: 59
	Indicator 22: Number of individuals who participate in orientation workshops promoting positive youth development Original Year 4 target: 0; Updated Year 4 target: 700 Original LOP target: 150; Updated LOP target: 1150
	Indicator 26: Number of youth engaged in leadership activities Original Year 4 target: 100; Updated Year 4 target: 270 Original LOP target: 430; Updated LOP target: 650
	Updated Target (from N/A): **Indicator 3: E.G. 6-11** Average percent change in earnings following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs **Year 4: N/A to 30%** **Year 5: N/A to 30%** **LOP: N/A to 30%**
	Dropped Indicators **Indicator 21: GNDR-3** Proportion of females who report increased self-efficacy at the conclusion of USG-supported training or programming

Learning Agenda

Innovations pioneered by the project continue to be implemented to demonstrate proof of concept as a foundation for potential scale-up and input to systems strengthening. Accomplishments in Y4 include:

- Support to DepEd for the development of operational guidelines facilitating limited scale-up of WBL and BYOB as a regular component of ALS JHS program in selected school divisions
- Technical guidance to DepEd BAE in preparation of a Policy Proposal Summary in support of an Academic-Focused Bridging Program, informed by the successful O2 bridging program for OSY piloted by Ferndale College in Zamboanga City under O2's Higher Education Grant
- Conduct of the O2 Higher Education Learning Summit, held May 30-31, involving sharing of innovations and insights of O2-initiated youth development initiatives conducted by HEIs and fostering of a sustainable Community of Practice among the higher education sector

In addition to pilot-testing innovative models for springboards for system strengthening, O2 continues to implement operations research designed to inform O2 planning and the systems strengthening requirements of DepEd, TESDA, and other education-related government agencies. For the quarter this includes:

- Awarding of a Php 3 million research grant to conduct a 16-month tracer study for ALS JHS learners and completers for SY 2022-2023. The study is one of the priority research studies of the DepEd

ALS Research Agenda 2022-2026, which will also be submitted to EDCOM2 for consideration of the Philippine Senate and Congress on policy-making initiatives related to ALS.

- Conduct of a Php 20 million grant call to enable Philippine HEIs to collaborate with local governments, industry, or US-based HEIs to conduct academic research, develop technological solutions or innovate processes and systems to support OSY development.
- Completion of the final draft of a research report prepared by Accenture on exploring OSY employment opportunities (both waged employment and OSY-led micro enterprise) in the blue and green economy).
- Completion of draft rapid assessment by Accenture exploring statistical trends in OSY enrolment and reasons why OSY enrolment in ALS and technical skills training courses has not increased as expected.

EDC also fielded Short-Term Technical Assistance to begin exploratory research on a system strengthening study to inform the planned O2 cost extension programmatic strategy and documentation of effective system-strengthening initiatives as a reference for future USAID program development.

O2 has also been selected as one of three host countries for the "Collaborative Case Study Learning: Better Youth Development Outcomes through Sustainable Systems Reform," supported by USAID's YouthPower2: Learning and Evaluation Project (YP2PLE). Team mobilization and secondary document sharing with the YPL2E team is ongoing. The Case Study is expected to be completed by mid-2024.

Partnerships

SEAMEO INNOTECH

In Y4, SEAMEO INNOTECH continued its capacity building of DepEd ALS teacher and supervisors through its series of online, blended and face-to face training courses. This included the conduct of Course 3 of its Teacher Professional Development (TPD) Course for ALS implementers in partnership with the University of Southern Philippines. These online courses were complemented with an on-line course on project-based learning, enhancement sessions on ALS lesson planning and a Mid-Program Learning Summit. The TPD was officially concluded through the conduct of integration activities. SEAMEO INNOTECH shall work on turning over the course to DepEd BAE.

As part of O2, SEAMEO INNOTECH will continue supporting and providing technical assistance in assessing the new ALS M&E System pilot implementation towards updating the M&E Handbook with a complementary training on its use in Y5 Q1. SEAMEO INNOTECH will likewise fulfill BAE's need for technical assistance in analyzing the National CLC inventory results and development of cost models for ALS programs. Data processing of the CLC inventory is ongoing.

The O2 and SEAMEO INNOTECH project management team recently met in Q4 to review the status of INNOTECH's O2 program implementation. Options for updating INNOTECH's current scope of work were explored to effectively utilize its remaining O2 grant funds in response to emerging ALS teacher capacity development priorities of the DepEd BAE. A revised set of deliverables that includes capacity building for a Regional Core of Trainers, development of ALS learning action cell session guides and development of selected knowledge products in Y5.

CRS Philippines

CRS facilitated access to savings for O2 participants through their SILC methodologies. CRS's work assist youth to gain planning and budgeting skills and build their own savings to meet their financial obligations and goals, including but not limited to investing in a start-up business or embarking on other livelihood goals. In Y4, CRS concluded their support for five SILC groups who concluded their eight-to-twelve-month savings cycle, the funds are returned to participants, with interest. CRS conducted a final boot camp in July, as outlined in section IR2.3. As a result of the impactful work in Y4, CRS's agreement was extended to until September in which they conducted training of O2 youth to lead future SILC groups through the O2 youth networks. In addition, CRS is developing a final report outlining the successes, challenges and adaptations employed to ensure the O2 youth successfully gain the valuable financial skills to be successful. O2 is working with CRS, USAID and other agency partners to determine how best to support the youth in Y5.

VSO Philippines

In Q4 , VSO has engaged 1,270 in civic volunteering activities in four of the five O2 sites covered: Davao (495), General Santos (503), Cebu (161), and Valenzuela (111). Overall, as of Y4, VSO has engaged a total of 2,761 OSYs, which is 69 percent of its target of 4,000.

VSO has rolled out its three-day Volunteering Programme Development and Management Course in four project sites names cities of Davao, Cebu, Valenzuela, and General Santos. It will be rolled out in Cebu in Y5. The course brings together local stakeholders to plan and sustain local OSY volunteerism in communities.

Accenture

Accenture continued as a strategic O2 consortium partner with work focused on three major deliverables:

- Organizational capacity development for DepEd BAE (described in Activity 4-1.2.4 BAE Capacity Building)
- Finalization of a research study on exploring the blue and green economy opportunities for OSY. A comprehensive draft final report has been prepared by Accenture for EDC review.
- Conduct of a rapid research study exploring statistical trends in OSY enrolment and reasons why OSY enrolment in ALS and technical skills training courses has not increased as expected. A draft final report has been prepared by Accenture for EDC review and the results used as an input to O2's Year 5 Annual Planning.

Philippine Business for Education (PBEd)

Private Sector Engagement

O2 consortium partner PBEd helped strengthen collaboration with the private sector in activities promoting the integration of OSY in the workforce. In Tagbilaran, more JCI chapters, along with PMAP, officially joined the city's YDA. A series of PBEd-managed O2 private sector sensitization events in Y5 successfully convened 187 partners from industries, government, and civil society and paved the way for engagement with new partners like the GJM Manpower Resource Inc. in CDO, the Bendemill Construction and HHH Builders Corporation from Zamboanga, and the Young Entrepreneurs of GenSan, South Cotabato Fil-Chinese Chamber of Commerce, and GenSan Coffee Association.

In Y5, 460 strong private sector partners were able to help 88 youths complete their work immersion in different industries. In Q4, partners like J. Amado Araneta Foundation and PPI Holdings in QC, and GenSan Producers Association, Toscano Grill and Restaurant, and Sidenotes Coffee & Co. in General Santos City successfully hosted youth for work immersion. Meanwhile, an Angeleño youth was immediately absorbed at Best Western after undergoing training.

Policymaking at the Forefront

PBEd conducted policy review sessions were held with 40 stakeholders in Tagbilaran and QC this quarter. Similar sessions were likewise conducted with stakeholders in Angeles and CDO in Y4. Private sector stakeholders confirm and validate YDA priorities on securing updated data on OSYs, strengthening industry linkages with workforce development programs, and expanding second chance opportunities for more OSYs to upskill and participate in local economic development.

Private Sector Communications

Private sector communications significantly contributed to enhancing O2's online presence. Q4 showed a 46 percent increase in engagement from the previous quarter, highlighting more youth success stories and "private sector spotlight" campaigns. In Y4, private sector-targeted content recorded reaching up to 1.5 million people on social media. In terms of media visibility, the private sector summit also served as an organic source of stories for major news outlets such as ABS-CBN, PTV4, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Manila Bulletin and BusinessWorld to laymanize the program to a wider audience. Total media pickups on the event alone was valued at Php 10.6 million.

Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM2)

As part of the broader partnership between USAID Philippines and EDCOM2, O2 is positioned to likewise support the overall agenda of enhancing the Philippine education sector in the areas of TVET, lifelong learning, alternative education, and pathways to equitable access. This quarter, O2 is fortunate to witness the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between USAID Philippines and EDCOM2 which will govern the overall support of USAID to the Commission. To support the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding, O2 signed a Data Sharing Agreement which formalizes the exchange of relevant data, insights, and technical inputs towards informing their national-level laws and policies on the said areas and strengthening system elements across the education sector. In addition to sharing data, O2 will support EDCOM2 by recruiting two personnel who will be fully seconded in the Commission, organize learning site visits in O2 sites, conduct policy workshops, and submit studies and policy recommendations on TVET, ALS and OSY pathways.

DTI

DTI continues to roll out YEP! BYOB nationwide. O2 likewise continues to provide guidance and technical assistance especially in covered sites to ensure quality delivery of BYOB. DTI received an enhanced version of the YEP! BYOB modules from O2 based on the results of the first national roll out. DTI is currently reviewing this, and a final turnover ceremony of the modules is planned in Y5, that may coincide with the slated BYOB trade expo.

DOLE-PESO

DOLE continues to show interest and commitment to working with O2 on improving services for upskilled OSYs. After the successful consultation workshop, DOLE-PESO has formed an informal technical working group to continue coordinating with O2 on drafting an agreement to formalize O2-PESO collaboration.

Admin and Operations

COP Transition

O2 has recruited and received USAID approval for a new Chief of Party, Jill Jarvi. Ms. Jarvi brings 25 years of experience in international development, including 19 years of experience as a senior manager on USAID-funded projects operating in complex environments of experience as a senior manager on USAID-funded projects operating in complex environments. Her prior experience includes over 9 years as Chief of Party including for youth education, workforce development, and civil society projects, as well as on projects focused on local systems strengthening/capacity building of local institutions and partners. Ms. Jarvi will join the O2 team in the Philippines in the start of the new Fiscal Year.

Short Term Technical Assistance

Name	Title	Technical Assistance Provided
Tania Tzelnic	Interim Project Director	Weekly calls with the Chief of Party and senior leadership Provided technical support for LLMAs, tool development for youth engagement strategies and tracking of blue-green jobs.
Abidemi Oderinde	International Project Coordinator	Weekly calls with the Chief of Party and home office to provide technical and operations guidance. Administrative, recruitment, procurement, financial, and communications support.
Claudia Nino de Guzman	Financial Analysist	Supported financial activities, reports, projections, and fund requests. Monitored program's financial burn rate.
Jasmina Josic	MEL Specialist	Weekly calls with technical support team. Provide guidance on the MEL plan revisions. Met with team in the Philippines
Jennifer Lebron	Senior Technical Advisor	Provided technical support for the higher education activities including the higher education summit and establishing the higher education community of practice which engages US universities.
Rachel Blum	Senior Technical Advisor	Provided technical support on systems strengthening, led a workshop with O2 technical leadership on systems approaches and conducted research on systems strengthening for OSY in the Philippines.
Alejandra Bonifaz	Senior Technical Advisor	Provided technical guidance on YDA sustainability and expansion.
Chris Murray	Senior Technical Advisor	Provided technical support regarding strategies for quality of step-down implementation of BYOB, WBL and accompaniment/post training support activities through DepEd ALS, TESDA and DTI.
Melanie Sany	Director, Youth and Workforce Development	Provided technical guidance to the team for strategies regarding the O2 targets, FY23 work planning and new initiatives include private sector engagement and green jobs.
Evan Lane	Security Advisor	Monitored the COVID-19 and security situations. Provided guidance and support for administrative and technical staff.

Look Ahead to the Next Quarter

October	
IR1	• Conduct quality assurance visit in partnership with DepEd BAE to select project sites and non-O2 sites to assess implementation of Life Skills Modules • Develop technical guidance note on using the existing DepEd Classroom Observation Tool and other M&E tools to monitor WBL-BYOB implementation • Conduct baseline and endline impact assessment for DepEd ALS JHS Learners • Provision of technical assistance and support on development of a FELP pilot program on Financial Literacy • Oversee the conduct and completion of ALS Tracer and Perception Studies
IR2	• Meeting and coordination with TESDA-ICTO on introducing amendments to Data Sharing Agreement • Provide inputs to EDCOM2 on priority topics aligned with TESDA's National Technical Education and Skills Development Plan 2023-2028, and informing policies relating to TVET • Monitoring for Quality assurance work readiness materials content and delivery in TTIs, TVIs, and LSPs • MOU signing on Work readiness collaboration with PAMAMARISAN Technical Vocational Schools Association and TESDA PAMAMARISAN • SkillLab program roll-out to target O2 youth learners • Organization/Mobilizing SILC groups in Davao Hub sites through Youth Networks • Monitoring visits of youth on work immersion: rolling task • Draft agreements with private sector in relation to wage employment, self-employment, and access to finance opportunities • Technical assistance to DTI on YEP! BYOB YR2 roll-out and tracking OSY transitioning to self-employment: initial planning meeting with DTI's Bureau of Small and Medium Enterprise Development, finalization of MOU, updating Manuals based on YR1 roll-out • Technical assistance to DOLE-PESO in standardizing life skills and industry linkage coordination work under SPES, GIP, Jobstart: internal planning • Finalize BGE awareness campaign content for Private Sector • Meetings and workshops LSPs to expand private sector and industry network to include WBL-ILC for better transitioning of learners.
IR3	• Support YDAs in leading the facilitation of annual OSY Development Planning • Conduct LLMA workshops and training with YDAs • Technical assistance for HEIs to institutionalize YDA-DepEd partnership on HERO implementation • Monthly Youth Leaders' Forum and quarterly youth network assembly

October	
	• Support the conduct of Youth Volunteering Activities in partnership with Youth Organizations • Support Youth Leaders and Youth Networks' Efforts to Advocate for TESDA and ALS Enrollment, and opportunities for wage- and self-employment
CC	• Launch the HECoP Steering Group, and conduct its first Strategic Planning Session • Award the ALS Research Grant Agenda to 1 HEI to conduct the nationwide tracer study for ALS Learners • Conduct O2 Grants Learning Summit • Sustain the provision of technical assistance to HEIs in HERO implementation, in partnership with YDAs and DepEd

November	
IR1	• TOT for 100 National Core of Trainers of BAE on Limited Scale-up of WBL-BYOB and Pilot of WBL-Industry Linkage Coordination • Training of 100 ALS Regional and Division Supervisors and ALS Division Education Program Specialists on ALS M&E of WBL-BYOB • Printing and distribution of WBL-BYOB Facilitator's Guides for at least 500 ALS Teachers • Conduct baseline and endline impact assessment for DepEd ALS JHS Learners • Workshop with HEIs on insights related to on bridging program for ALS SHS to College; and ALS JHS to TVET and SHS, through the HECoP
IR2	• Provide technical support to TESDA Master Trainers in at least one site in NCR Hub as they conduct multiplier TOTs on Work readiness • Online orientation for TESDA Master Trainers in NCR on 21st Century Skills for NC III and NC IV content and delivery • MOU signing and Turnover of YATOP with tablets and accessories to NITESD • Provide Inputs to EDCOM2 on priority topics aligned with TESDA's National Technical Education and Skills Development Plan 2023-2028, and informing policies relating to TVET • Monitoring for Quality assurance work readiness materials content and delivery in TTIs, TVIs, and LSPs • MOU signing on Work readiness collaboration with TVI Association in Davao Hub • Conduct activities to connect youth from TVIs to O2 programs and transition services • SkillLab program roll-out to target O2 youth leaners • BGE Orientation with TTIs/TVIs in at least one O2 sites in NCR Hub in collaboration with NITESD's Green Technology Center on BGE/Green Jobs Awareness • Planning with TESDA NITESD to Integrate SILC in at least one diploma program of select TTIs in O2 regions • Continuing technical guidance in mobilizing SILC groups in Davao Hub sites through Youth Networks • Monitoring visits of youth on work immersion: rolling task

November	
	• Finalize agreements with private sector in relation to wage employment, self-employment, and access to finance opportunities • Technical assistance to DTI on YEP! BYOB YR2 roll-out and tracking OSY transitioning to self-employment: MOU signing • Technical assistance to DOLE-PESO in standardizing life skills and industry linkage coordination work under SPES, GIP, Jobstart: 2nd consultation workshop with TWG • BGE awareness campaign kick-off for Private Sector • Meetings and workshops LSPs to expand private sector and industry network to include WBL-ILC for better transitioning of learners.
IR3	• Support YDAs as they facilitate their own annual OSY Development Planning • Conduct LLMA workshops and training with YDAs • Forge partnership agreements supporting OSY transitions • Support youth leaders' and network's initiative in creating advocacy materials • Monthly Youth Leaders' Forum and quarterly youth network assembly • Support the conduct of Youth Volunteering Activities in partnership with Youth Organizations • Support the crafting of Magna Carta for OSY
CC	• Award the Higher Education Grants that allow them to partner with government, industry, and US HEIs • Launch the ALS Perception Study, which HEIs are eligible to apply for • Continued support for EDCOM2, such as preparing for the Quarterly Commissioner's Meeting and presentation of strategic next steps

December	
IR1	• Monitor on-the-job coaching of DepEd BAE, Division ALS Focals, Education Specialists, A and O2 staff on limited scale-up implementation of Work Readiness Training, WBL-BYOB, and WBL-ILC by the ALS Teachers
IR2	• Provide technical support to TESDA Master Trainers in at least one site in Cebu/Davao Hub as they conduct multiplier TOTs on Work readiness • Online orientation for TESDA Master Trainers in Cebu/Davao Hub on 21st Century Skills for NC III and NC IV content and delivery • Provide inputs to EDCOM2 on priority topics aligned with TESDA's National Technical Education and Skills Development Plan 2023-2028, and informing policies relating to TVET • YATOP culmination and graduation events in Pasig, Iloilo and Iligan (Phase V Cohort 2) • Monitoring for Quality assurance work readiness materials content and delivery in TTIs, TVIs, and LSPs • MOU signing on Work readiness collaboration with TVI Association in Cebu Hub and UniTVET MOU in NCR • Conduct activities to connect youth from TVIs to O2 programs and transition services

December	
	• SkillLab program roll-out to target O2 youth leaners • BGE Orientation with TTIs and TVIs in Cebu/Davao Hubs in collaboration with NITESD's Green Technology Center on BGE/Green Jobs Awareness • Coordination work with CRS to conduct meetings with select TTIs on SILC Integration • Continuous support in mobilizing SILC groups and SILC integration to youth network and their plans • Monitoring visits of youth on work immersion: rolling task • Activate agreements with private sector in relation to wage employment, self-employment, and access to finance opportunities • Meetings and workshops LSPs to expand private sector and industry network to include WBL-ILC for better transitioning of learners.
IR3	• Support YDAs as they facilitate their own annual OSY Development Planning • National Write-shop on YDA Chronicles • Forge partnership agreements supporting OSY transitions • Monthly Youth Leaders' Forum and quarterly youth network assembly • Support the conduct of Youth Volunteering Activities in partnership with Youth Organizations
CC	• Conduct brownbag sessions with HECoP Learning Committees on OSY-related research, transition work, and community extension • Prepare for the visits of EDCOM2 to two O2 sites on areas relating to education pathways and lifelong learning

Annexes

Annex A: List of HERO-implementing HEIs

Site	Name of Institution
Angeles City	1. Angeles University Foundation 2. City College of Angeles
Legazpi City	3. Bicol University 4. Southern Luzon Technological College Foundation, Inc.
Pasig City	5. Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Pasig 6. Pasig Catholic College 7. University of Asia and the Pacific
Quezon City	8. Magna Anima Teacher's College 9. Quezon City University 10. Technological Institute of the Philippines – QC
Valenzuela City*	11. Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Valenzuela
Cebu City	12. Banilad Center for Professional Development 13. Cebu Technological University 14. School of Knowledge for Industrial Labor, Leadership, and Service Inc 15. University of San Jose Recoletos 16. University of Southern Philippines Foundation, Inc.
Iloilo City	17. Iloilo City Community College 18. PHINMA University of Iloilo 19. Technical Institute of Iloilo City 20. University of San Agustin 21. University of the Philippines Visayas 22. Western Visayas State University
Isabela City	23. Claret College of Isabela 24. ComTech Institute 25. Juan S. Alano Memorial School 26. Isabela Foundation Incorporated 27. Nagdilaab Foundation Incorporated 28. Global School of Isabela 29. Universal College Foundation of Southeast Asia and the Pacific, Inc
Tagbilaran City	30. Holy Name University 31. University of Bohol
CDO City	32. University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines
Cotabato City	33. Academie Tecnologia in Mindanao 34. Cotabato State University 35. Notre Dame University
General Santos City	36. General Santos College of Technology 37. Gerardo's School of Culinary Arts 38. Holy Trinity College of General Santos City 39. Nimer's Educational Institute and Technology 40. Notre Dame of Dadiangas University 41. Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges 42. STI College of Gensan
Iligan City	43. Saint Michael's College 44. Mindanao State University- Iligan Institute of Technology

*HERO has been included in the Memorandum of Agreement of the Valenzuela City YDA

Annex B: O2 in the Media (July-September 2023)

	Date	Media Outlet	Author	Title	Link
1	10-Jul-23	The Mindanao Times		USAID, DTI, fintech team up to include youth in GenSan MSMEs digitalization	https://pressreader.com/article/281621014797566
2	12-Jul-23	Philippine Information Agency	Harlem Jude Ferolino	USAID Opportunity 2.0 program, DTI hold forum for MSMEs	https://pia.gov.ph/news/2023/07/12/usaid-opportunity-20-program-dti-hold-forum-for-msmes
3	24-Jul-23	Business World		USAID, DTI, fintech providers engage youth in GenSan MSMEs digitalization	https://www.bworldonline.com/sparkup/2023/07/24/535351/usaid-dti-fintech-providers-engage-youth-in-gensan-msmes-digitalization/
4	26-Jul-23	Philippine Information Agency	Irene Joy Dayo	2nd leg of Kahigayonan Caravan offers opportunities to OSYs	https://pia.gov.ph/news/2023/07/26/2nd-leg-of-kahigayonan-caravan-offers-opportunities-to-osys?fbclid=IwAR0UvO7tSzVTtPl1kQBAV5CevVuueUFHvdj8ylSpYtfsID-37HQbb-tvYkE
5	29-Jul-23	Manila Standard		43 OSY Receive T.I.P. Training Through 'Kabataang NEGOSYANTE' Project	https://manilastandard.net/spotlight/314354825/43-osy-receive-t-i-p-training-through-kabataang-negosyante-project.htmlfac
6	31-Jul-23	The Manila Times		US donates nearly P10M to support learners, teachers of Albay	https://manilatimes.net/2023/07/31/expats-diplomats/us-donates-nearly-p10m-to-support-learners-teachers-of-albay/1903127
7	31-Jul-23	Philippine Information Agency		PANOORIN: ALS students, learners sa Legazpi, nakatanggap ng hygiene, learning kits mula sa USAID	https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2017096111974189
8	05-Aug-23	Business Mirror		US allocates some P10M to aid learners, teachers affected by Mayon's eruption	https://pressreader.com/article/281595245045859
9	05-Aug-23	DZGB News Online		Mayon-affected ALS students and teachers receive hygiene, learning kits from USAID	https://www.facebook.com/dzgbnewsonline/posts/pfbid0Tz5mGUpmiuRiZ75x6wFjFEnGGgPM9Hsnaw6QEQZbRwnxfwXUjEz5iz6p5FJ6kaSjl
10	23-Aug-23	Radyo Bandera 107.1 FM Olongapo City		National Youth Leaders' Summit 2023 Kasalukuyang Ginaganap sa Clark, Pampanga	https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1368301950708947
11	24-Aug-23	PIA Gitnang Luzon	Paul John Lopez	About 200 young leaders from 15 cities across the Philippines attend the opening ceremony of the National Youth Leaders' Summit in Clark Freeport Zone on Wednesday, August 23.	https://www.facebook.com/piacentralluzon/posts/pfbid028CB6aFYc3Ami4oL5TU5oughN9PnKQpP2w8CHGBMLPSTW6YDrNARRW7VecF5PQmU1l
12	25-Aug-23	Manila Bulletin	Dhel Nazario	TESDA unveils 5-year development plan for TVET sector	https://mb.com.ph/2023/8/25/tesda-unveils-5-year-development-plan-for-tvet-sector
13	27-Aug-23	Politiko		TESDA launches TVET dev't plan	https://politics.com.ph/2023/08/27/tesda-launches-tvet-devt-plan/
14	27-Aug-23	Abante		'MaGaling, MakaBagong TVET' inilunsad ng TESDA	https://www.abante.com.ph/2023/08/27/magaling-makabagong-tvet-inilunsad-ng-tesda/
15	29-Aug-23	PTV 4		PANOORIN: Noong August 25, inilunsad ng TESDA ang National Technical Education and Skills Development Plan (NTESDP) 2023-2028 na magiging gabay ng ahensya upang mas lalong palakasin	https://www.facebook.com/TESDAOfficial/videos/1239354310068637/

	Date	Media Outlet	Author	Title	Link
				ang tech-voc training sa bansa sa susunod na limang taon.	
16	30-Aug-23	Manila Standard	Melandrew Velasco	Collaboration for work force employability	https://manilastandard.net/opinion/columns/everyman/314365395/collaboration-for-work-force-employability.html
17	01-Sep-23	Philippine Information Agency	Jag Lyra Costamero	USAID O2: A Bringer of Hope for Marginalized Youth in the Philippines	https://pia.gov.ph/features/2023/09/01/usaid-o2-a-bringer-of-hope-for-marginalized-youth-in-the-philippines
18	06-Sep-23	ABS-CBN News	Andrea Taguines	USAID, advocacy group seek more private sector support for out-of-school youth	https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/09/06/23/more-private-sector-support-sought-for-out-of-school-youth
19	07-Sep-23	Philippine Daily Inquirer	Jane Bautista	Out-of-School Youth Grows Halal 'Siopao' Business into 24/7 resto	https://pressreader.com/article/281642489753381
20	08-Sep-23	Radyo Pilipinas		#OtroCinco | September 8, 2023	https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=6848974731833155
21	10-Sep-23	Radyo 630 DZPM		Radyo 630 - Official Livestream (September 10, 2023)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5If2kBY7mY
22	11-Sep-23	Radyo Pilipinas		#OtroCinco | September 11, 2023	https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=166645333135004

Annex C: Success Stories

USAID has been strengthening support systems for young entrepreneurs in the Philippines

Former out-of-school youth takes part in Angeles City street food scene

At dusk, Rizal Street in Angeles City comes to life as a bustling food lane offering the best local street food cuisine. Just an hour outside Metro Manila, here, young entrepreneurs with a passion for food set up their carts every day. Among them is Clark Catacutan, 21. He parks his motor bike, with a cart attached giving him just enough space for ingredients to prepare his very own version of nachos. 'Nachos de Motor' was only a dream. But today, Clark's vision of being part of a community of food entrepreneurs has come true.

"I was already an out-of-school youth when I first tried selling food but that had to end.

I used to think that I could not manage a business. All I thought about was working for other people."

Clark was unsuccessful in his first business endeavor. He was not gaining enough income to sustain operations.

An estimated four million Filipino youth are out-of-school, many come from lower income households forced to help support their families. The same was true for Clark. He had to start working at a very young age, helping out at his uncle's small businesses as well as his mom's small snack bar, all to augment their family's income.

I have 'Be Your Own Boss' to thank for making me realize my strengths and giving me the confidence and tools to pursue this business track.

— Clark, former out-of-school youth, recalls a USAID-supported training he attended in 2021.

Former out-of-school youth takes part in Angeles City street food scene

> ❝ **Aspiring entrepreneurs can get their businesses on track. I highly encourage students who want to fund their schooling or people who just want to earn money to try and start a business.**
>
> — Clark, 21, enjoys the results of a strong alliance of youth champions in Angeles City, established through USAID support.

"I didn't have enough knowledge on business planning so couldn't make sure that my business growth was sustainable," he looks back at a USAID-supported training he attended in 2021. "I have 'Be Your Own Boss' to thank for making me realize my strengths and giving me the confidence and tools to pursue this business track."

USAID has been supporting the Philippine government enhance its training programs for out-of-school youth. Over the past two years, Be Your Own Boss content has been added and institutionalized into services for out-of-school youth, including programs by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority. Clark gained essential skills on business start-ups when he was taking a vocational course two years prior, something that was not yet available before then. The additional training content USAID introduced gives Filipino learners a significantly higher chance of post-training success.

Through his training, Clark topped a business pitching contest and received a business starter kit from the Department of Trade and Industry, a strong member of the city's Youth Development Alliance. Aside from enhancing training curricula, USAID has also been supporting local actors to come together as a group of youth champions. Through this alliance, youth-serving agencies and organizations are able to put high priority for the marginalized out-of-school youth population and funnel resources together in collaborative youth development initiatives.

"Aspiring entrepreneurs can get their businesses on track. I highly encourage students who want to fund their schooling or people who just want to earn money to try and start a business." Clark's 'Nachos de Motor' business serves at least 300 people a week, most of them now repeat customers. Clark is currently working on launching a second pop-up branch. "I like Mexican food, but they can be expensive and not easily available. But with 'Nachos de Motor,' I made it so it's affordable and filling. I also make my own cheese sauce!"

Be Your Own Boss helps learners lead business start-ups with empathy and using community mapping tools. Participants are able to find more clarity about the solutions and products they can bring into their community to ensure clientele and growth.

"USAID really helped me get to know myself. I already had a bit of knowledge of running a business before training. But, I realized my strengths, received mentorship, and learned how to make a sustainable business plan. Thanks to you, I will reach further success in my business. That's for sure."

Opportunity 2.0 is a five-year (2020-2025) program that aims to improve the learning and earning outcomes of out-of-school youth by working with key stakeholders in government, industry, and academia to strengthen education, training, and employment systems in the Philippines.

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

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USAID support is enabling local schools fulfill the full potential of marginalized youth in the Philippines

From *sabar* to future Shari'ah Counselor: one out-of-school youth's story of hope

Out of the 6.9 million Muslims in the Philippines, there have only been 1,036 shari'ah counselors since licensure examinations were first held in 1983.

"Shari'ah law is where we learn the sources of Islamic law. Particularly, we learn the law of the Qur'an, the sunnah or tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him), al-ijma (consensus), and qiyas (analogy)," describes Fairodz Sabar, a 22-year-old young woman who took up Shari-ah Law in 2017 in Cotabato City, the center of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Contextualized legal services have been made available in areas in the Philippines where majority of the populations are Muslim. This way, they are able to avail legal services and access a justice systems that are aligned with their Islamic values, history, and culture.

Two years into the program, however, Fai had to drop out. In 2019, Fai was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. The trauma of losing her father from illness years prior had caught up with her. She lost confidence in herself and her ability to finish college.

After receiving some psychological counseling herself for a couple of years, Fai started entertaining the idea of re-training and going to work, particularly in the IT field. "I really wanted to learn computers and computing because that is, from what I saw, something in-demand today." She found a free training opportunity for especially out-of-school youth just like her, and so she elected to join USAID's Opportunity 2.0 program.

Academia De Tecnologia, a technical-vocational school in Mindanao, adopted new work and business readiness content into their curriculum as well as youth engagement and peer coaching activities that USAID introduced.

USAID has been supporting local vocational schools and institutions across the Philippines through a grants program so that services can be enhanced and extended to the disadvantaged out-of-school youth population, increasing youth's chances at post-training success.
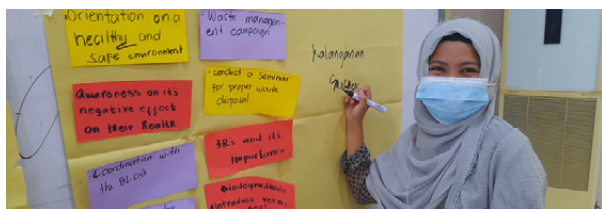
From sabar to future Shari'ah Counselor: one out-of-school youth's story of hope

> **Because of what USAID did for me, I want to empower others as well and give those of us that have struggled find a space, that we are part of the community.**
> **Not just as out-of-school youth but as youth that can be a change for the community.**
>
> — Fai, 20, former out-of-school youth, hopes to continue serving her community, a passion she found through USAID training and volunteer engagement.

So as Fai was learning technical vocational skills on computer servicing, she was also being involved in leadership and community volunteering activities. The holistic program helps young people fulfill their full potential.

"When I started joining USAID activities, I was really inspired. We volunteered to assist senior citizens in feeding programs and we really saw the happiness in their faces," exclaims Fai. "I ended up joining more volunteer activities. I learned how to get along with others, and I joined trainings and seminars where I met a lot of friends."

"The programs were great and they helped boost my confidence to go back to school."

With the right support, out-of-school youth like Fai realized how much they can achieve. When given the opportunity, Fai grew as a young leader, serving the voice of out-of-school youth during city planning activities along with other youth leaders.

Finally in 2021, rejuvenated, Fai re-enrolled at university. She finished her coursework in August 2023 and is now preparing for the 2024 examinations to become a full-fledged shari'ah counselor.

"Because of what USAID did for me, I want to empower others as well and give those of us that have struggled find a space, that we are part of the community. Not just as out-of-school youth but as youth that can be a change for the community." As a future shari'ah counselor, Fai hopes to continue providing services for her community, a passion she found through USAID training and volunteer engagement.

Since 2020, USAID has been able to uplift the lives of more than 2,500 out-of-school youth in Cotabato city by boosting the capacity of local actors to serve the marginalized youth.

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Second Chance Opportunities for Out-of-School Youth

USAID creates safe spaces for out-of-school youth to grow as community leaders

Out-of-school youth finds pathway back to leadership

"I was only eight months old inside my mom's belly when my dad walked out and never came back."

"That was 20 years ago," said Vann Bautista, a young man from Barangay Payatas in Quezon City, an area that formerly served as a dump site for the tons of garbage that Metro Manila produced. Most residents fall below the poverty line.

"Me and my older brother, who has Down's Syndrome, was basically raised by a single parent." Vann's mother, who migrated from the province to try and find better opportunities, found it difficult to land a permanent job in the city and was never able to finish schooling.

She kept the family afloat by working at the barangay local government unit, serving as the community focal person for gender and disability programs, as well as supporting administrative tasks.

"I used to feel frustrated waking up in the morning and not find my mom. She was often off in trainings and workshops because of work. But now it's my turn," Vann joked.

Vann always had a knack for public service. When he was in school, he was already part of the student council.

Hindi po mapantayan. Iba po talaga kapag tinawag ka ng serbisyo.

I've always been involved in leadership and community. It came naturally to me. I feel a genuine heart for service that I can't find anywhere else.

—Vann, 20, an out-of-school youth leader from Quezon City, Philippines

"I slowly lost my interest at school in 2022 because I was heavily involved in the electoral campaign... After the election results came out, I grew so frustrated. Disappointed and demotivated."

At grade 12, Vann dropped out. "I told myself, I should rest and skip a school year.

Out-of-school youth finds pathway back to leadership

"It wasn't an easy decision because my family was depending on me to continue schooling. But I had a mental breakdown. It came to a point that I didn't want to talk to anybody, not even my own mother."

Eventually, Vann busied himself into community work to try to recover. One of his fellow youth leaders encouraged him to join a leadership training that USAID was supporting for out-of-school youth in Quezon City.

"I didn't want to join at first because I didn't see myself as out-of-school youth," he didn't realize it then but Vann was harboring some shame from being out-of-school and feared the misconceptions that society commonly have against them. He reluctantly went anyway thinking he would just be helping others to join.

But when he was with other young people who, through difficult life circumstances, were unable to pursue education, he realized he wasn't alone. For the first time, he found a space where he felt safe to admit, he was out-of-school.

"It was then I realized, those times we couldn't find out-of-school youth as community volunteers, we thought it was out of a lack of trying. Turns out, they were ashamed to step up and identify as out-of-school too."

"Malaking tulong po ang USAID! Niyakap kami bilang OSY. Napag-iwanan man ako sa formal school level, sa lipunan hindi. Hindi ko naramdamang nag-iisa ako."

(USAID was a huge help! They embraced us as out-of-school youth. We may have been left behind in formal schooling, but in society, we weren't. I don't feel alone anymore.)

USAID has been establishing Youth Development Alliances (YDA) in its partner cities in the Philippines, including Quezon City. Through the YDA mechanism, youth-serving groups and government agencies can come together with the marginalized youth to craft more responsive policies and youth programs.

Members also train on USAID's positive youth development approach, equipping them with youth-centric lenses and allowing them to foster safe spaces for young people in governance and community decision-making.

Currently serving as an officer of the local out-of-school youth organization in Quezon City, Vann is inspired to continue public service.

"Kaya kong magsilbi kahit walang posisyon, pero iba ang impact pag elected ka." (I can serve even without a position in government, but the impact is greater if you're elected). Vann is now preparing to launch an electoral campaign of his own, aiming for a seat at his barangay's council to represent the youth.

To date, USAID has supported more than 1,400 out-of-school youth grow as leaders in 15 Philippine cities through the YDA mechanism.

Marginalized youth in the Philippines typically have no opportunities to participate in community decision-making that affect them. They are often excluded from the planning and the designing process of programs and policies meant to help them.

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