



The Philippines Out of School Youth Ecosystem

An Opportunity 2.0 Study

January 2022



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Executive Summary

The ongoing pandemic and the increasing occurrence and severity of natural disasters present significant challenges for the youth of the Philippines. Recent data, from the Philippine Statistics Authority, suggests that the number of out-of-school youth (OSY) has significantly increased to as many as 10 million*. Some of the common reasons for OSY numbers rising include (1) financial challenges led by the changing business environment amid the above-mentioned concerns, (2) family matters such as early pregnancy among female youth, and (3) lack of personal interest to study with a higher motivation to pursue a job. Aside from these commonly discussed reasons, this study also uncovered socio-emotional wellbeing as another common factor contributing to the numbers of OSY, exacerbated by the effects of the pandemic and other events.

Through this study, we sought to understand the perception and mindsets of the various stakeholders involved in the OSY ecosystem, and their roles, responsibilities and interactions with each other. These stakeholders include government bodies, educational institutions, private companies, independent agencies & NGOs, family & community and OSY themselves. We hoped to learn about the ongoing mechanisms to support OSY in their journey and identify any gaps or challenges that could be implemented to strengthen the ecosystem. It is important to consider that the findings portrayed in this report are largely based on qualitative insight through discussions and focus groups with the stakeholders that took part in this study. However, clear themes did emerge that can contribute to the understanding of the OSY ecosystem, including its strengths and limitations.

The research highlighted that there have been many initiatives to support OSY, however, some did not accomplish the intended goals. Some of the most common issues and barriers to an effectively functioning ecosystem were:

- **Lack of awareness of the opportunities available for OSY:** The government and other relevant agencies have created alternative learning programs for OSY for basic through tertiary education, but in some instances, information does not flow to all the OSY communities.

- **A multitude of different actors involved in supporting OSY:** However, these actors often work in silos and lack a single point of coordination for the implementation of OSY related programs and ownership of outcomes for OSY.
- **Less focus on employment outcomes for OSY:** While the alternative learning programs provide the skills and knowledge to the learners, there is not enough support provided to them upon completion to find employment. There is also a disconnect between educational institutions and employers (local labor officers, private employers, etc.) to enable learners to transition into the workplace.

In conversation with the OSY, we analyzed their journey of finding education and employment opportunities as well as their mindset, pain points and needs along that journey. Each OSY faced different challenges but had similar goals in relation to gaining financial independence for themselves and/or their families. Many of the youth expressed awareness of their situation and a perception of differentiation created between them and formal school graduates. In many cases, this can lead youth to believe that they must take whatever opportunity available, even when it doesn't align to their career hopes or aspirations. However, despite the challenges, many youth display a strong sense of determination and hopes to succeed, particularly through starting a business. Support from the community, barangay captains and local officers was cited as a key support measure necessary for the success and realization of these aspirations.

The report concludes with recommendations based on insights gathered through both interviews and OSY discussions. These recommendations have been characterized as *Quick Win* (higher impact, lower effort), *Transformational* (higher impact, higher effort) and *Momentum Builder* (lower impact, lower effort) and include:

* Source: Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS)

Executive Summary



Quick Wins

- Promote **collaboration between educational institutions and labor officers**, to address graduates finding suitable jobs
- Strengthen **partnership of government and NGOs** for a larger macro impact for OSY
- Better **assess skills and track competency levels** for alternative learners
- Shift **learning modules to an online interface** given the increasing use of digital means to access education
- Better define and promote the **role of government** (national and local) to support OSY

Transformational

- Introduce a **mechanism to better coordinate, support and implement OSY programs**
- Increase **frequency of data collection and dissemination**
- Create **more awareness** of opportunities among the OSY community by conducting regular seminars, orientations and mentoring sessions
- Provide **training, resources to private sector** to increase their involvement to assist OSY
- Focus on policy reform for **persons with disabilities (PWDs)**

Momentum Builder

- Involve **educational institutions in policy-making decisions** since their close interaction with OSYs
- Support OSY in their **socio-emotional wellbeing struggle** in any way possible
- Provide **parent education** through community welfare programs

The recommendations, including a comparative assessment of impact and level of effort, are further elaborated in pages 26 – 28 of the report.

This report builds on the research conducted in [The Impact of COVID-19 on Opportunities for Out-of-School Youth in the Philippines](#). We hope that the insights from both these reports will provide a better understanding of the dynamics and demographics of the OSY in the Philippines and establish a stronger and better-connected ecosystem for the welfare of both OSY and their community.

* Source: Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS)



Research Overview

**Goals and approach of the
research**

Research Overview

Research Objectives

This research was conducted to help the Opportunity 2.0 program (O2) better understand and articulate the Out-of-School Youth (OSY) ecosystem in the Philippines. Within the ecosystem, the stakeholder's perception of the roles and efficacy of those roles were analyzed to understand its impact on OSY's educational and economic opportunities (both informal and formal).

Three primary questions were investigated as part of this research:

- 1) The perception of roles and efficacy of different stakeholders in the ecosystem
- 2) The perception of relationships between these stakeholders and ways these stakeholders interact with each other
- 3) The perception of root causes that prevent, interfere, or inhibit key entities/groupings within the ecosystem from working effectively to address the needs of OSY, as well as elements that positively impact the ecosystem

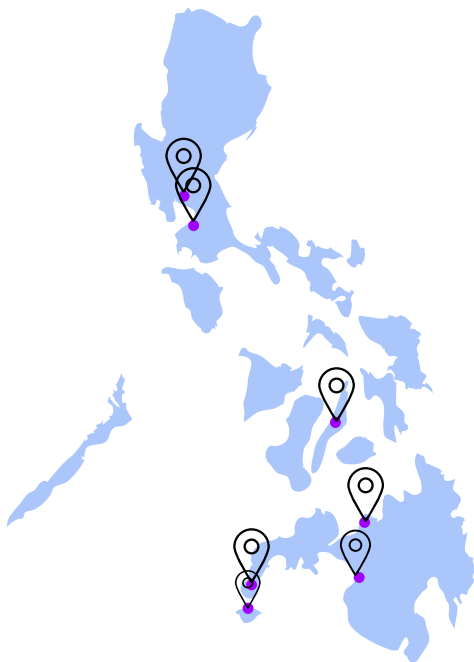
Acknowledging that OSY are at the center of the ecosystem, the perceptions of OSY, their behavior and characteristics were also investigated to understand their experience from their perspective, including pain points and potential opportunities.

Research Methodology

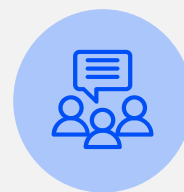
As an exploration of the perceptions of different stakeholders within the OSY ecosystem, qualitative research methods were utilized. These included:

- Desk Research – To identify key entities / groups who make up the stakeholders / actors of the ecosystem based on their roles and responsibilities and to understand the demographics and dynamics of OSY in the Philippines
- Focus Group Discussions – Interactive sessions with OSY groups and family to understand their journey including pain points and opportunities in navigating/accessing wage and self-employment; also conducted a workshop with Youth Development Councils (YDC) of the O2 sites since they are very closely involved with the OSY community and have a good understanding of the on-ground situation
- Stakeholder Interviews – Deep dive conversations with stakeholders across the OSY ecosystem to explore perceptions of roles and efficacy and interactions

The study captured insights of relevant stakeholders across all the three main islands of the Philippines focussing on Metro Manila (Luzon), Cebu Province (Visayas) and North Mindanao. The OSY and their families were widely based across Valenzuela City, Quezon City, Cebu City, Cagayan De Oro City, Cotabato city, Zamboanga City and Isabela City.

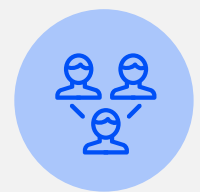


Geographic focus for this study



34
Interviews

10 x Government
6 x Education
12 x Independent Agencies
& NGOs
6 x Private Sector



9
Focus Group
Discussions

2 x Employed OSY
2 x Unemployed OSY
2 x OSY looking for
employment
2 x OSY Parents
1 x Youth Development
Coordinators

117 individuals consulted in this study

Note: The Opportunity 2.0 is a program by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), supports systems in the Philippines to provide second-chance education to 180,000 out-of-school youth across 12 cities that lead to their successful employment and livelihoods.

Stakeholder Groups

This research focused on the following identified group of stakeholders that are directly or indirectly involved with OSY and can have a large influencing power on the decisions made regarding OSY's education and employment. Stakeholders were selected and interviewed based on relevance to the OSY ecosystem and availability of stakeholders for interview at the time of this study.

Out of School Youth



For the purposes of this study, OSY comprise of youth in the age group of 15-24 years, who have not completed their education (secondary or graduate level) and could be employed, unemployed or self-employed as defined by the O2 program

Family & Community



Often the most important stakeholder for OSY in their decision-making process. Families and friends are an integral part of OSY's journey and often provide them with support.

Government Bodies



The main policy-making bodies in the OSY ecosystem, who create programs for ecosystem stakeholders at national, district and local levels.

Educational Institutions



The main providers of education and training programs including additional technical training, adult education, etc. They partner with other stakeholders in the ecosystem to facilitate these learnings that are directly provided to the OSY.

Corporate / Private Sector



They are main providers of employment, have the deepest understanding of employment trends and are in a unique position to engage with other stakeholders and OSY by making them financially independent and/or training them for better job prospects through internships and work-based learning programs.

Independent Agencies & NGOs



Generally, support OSY as purpose driven, not-for-profit organizations. Many of these organisations focus on the well-being of OSY and their families / communities by directly providing them skilling and training programs, helping them find employment or linking to other Local Government Unit (LGU) services by partnering with relevant agencies in the ecosystem to provide these services.

Interviewees

- Employed OSY
- Unemployed OSY
- OSY looking for employment

Interviewees

- OSY Parents
- OSY Friends
- OSY Siblings
- OSY Neighbors
- OSY Relatives

Interviewees

- Technical Education & Skills Development Authority (TESDA)
- Department of Education
- National Economic and Development Authority
- Department of Labor and Employment
- Department of Trade & Industry
- Local Government Units

Interviewees

- University of Pasig City
- Asia Pacific College
- Quezon City University
- University of the Philippines, Diliman
- National University – Nazareth School
- Paglaum Training International

Interviewees

- Cebu Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- Chowtime Cuisine
- Buildright Hardware
- Zen Bamboo Creations
- Greencars Mindanao Corporation
- Felta Multimedia, Inc.

Interviewees

- Philippines Business for Education
- Philippines Business for Social Progress
- Ayala Foundation
- Children Hope
- SEAMEO Innotech
- RBI Gabay
- TAYO Inc. Albay
- Societal Adolescent Youth Alliance
- Action Bridges Aspirations (ABA) Trainings Inc
- ZABIDA
- Isabela Foundation

Who Are Out-of-School Youth?

This section provides an overview of the classification of OSY for the purposes of this study. The size of the OSY population, reasons for not attending school, educational attainment levels and literacy levels are also presented below.

How are OSY defined?

The youth included in this study can be described (see panel to the right) by characteristics including age, gender, educational attainment, social situation and work status. They may be referred to as alternative learners, school dropouts or NEET (Not in Education, Employment and Training). For the purpose of this study, youth from the O2 sites are included, who are served by the Youth Development Alliances (YDAs), which are facilitated by the LGUs.

There are about 10 million OSY in the Philippines. These OSY mainly dropped out of school during secondary education for multiple reasons such as lack of personal interest, family matters, or financial concerns. It is also noted that most of the OSY have already acquired basic literacy levels (read, write and compute). Additional statistical information on OSY in the Philippines is provided in the figures below.

Out-of-School Youth Characteristics



Age
Between 15-24 years



Gender
Inclusive of all - Male, Female, LGBTQ



Educational Attainment

- High school dropout
- Not completed/enrolled for school or college in last 6 months
- Not completed ALS* program



Social Situation
Could include:

- Teenage mothers
- Person with Disabilities
- Indigenous People
- Youth in conflict with law



Work Situation

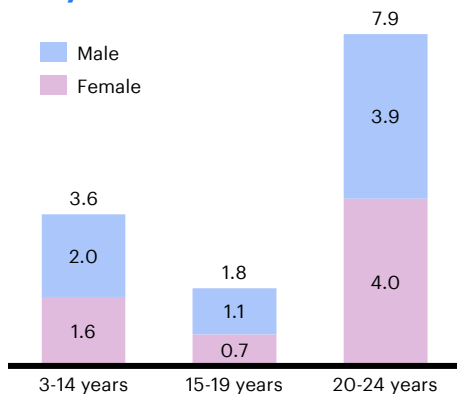
- Unemployed
- Employed
- Self-employed



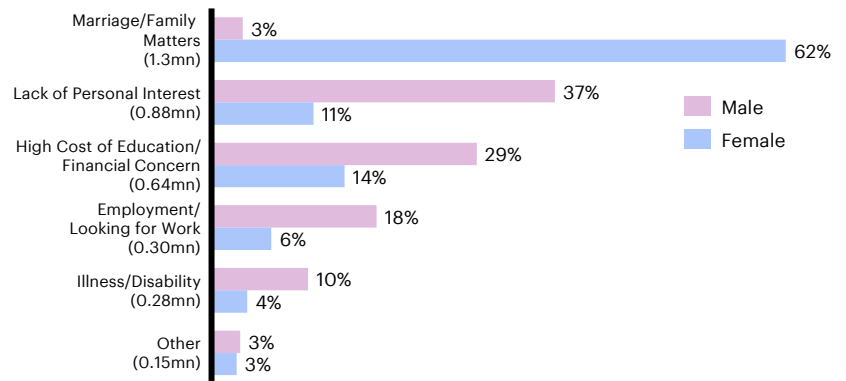
Residence
May not be resident of the site, but studying in the site

Source: USAID Opportunity 2.0 definition
*ALS - Alternative Learning System

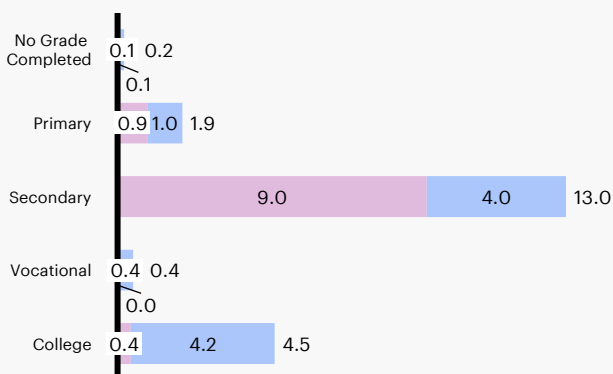
Population of OSY is about ~10mn in 15-24 yrs



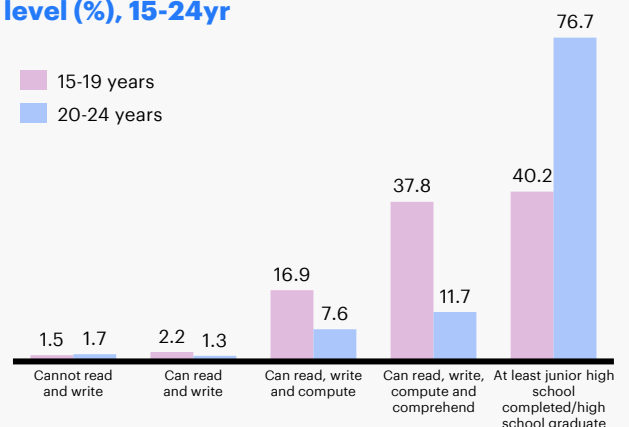
Reasons for OSY not attending school (%), 15-24yrs



Highest level of education completed by 15-24 yrs (mn)



Percent of youth population by literacy level (%), 15-24yr



Key Research Outputs

OSY mindsets and current state journeys capture the lived experience of OSY in order to better understand their needs, challenges and barriers from a human-centred perspective. The ecosystem model captures the dynamics of interactions and perceptions in the ecosystem, which have been further explored through key themes and insights.



OSY mindsets

Mindsets define different behavioral perspectives, such as OSYs' approaches to challenges, and their needs. Using mindsets gives us a better view of divergent profiles as we design services with them in mind.



Current state journey

OSY Journeys help identify and explain multiple facets of their experience – across key OSY intents and interactions.



Ecosystem model

A visual overview of the OSY ecosystem demonstrating perceived roles, relationships, efficacy and interactions.



Key themes and insights

The discussions with different stakeholder groups have helped identify what is working well, what needs to be improved and what is challenging in the current OSY ecosystem.





02

OSY Mindsets and Journeys

**Key insights and findings from
the focus group discussions**

OSY Mindsets

The following section describes the mindsets of the OSY and their families/communities, captured through three different perceptions of *employed youth*, *looking for employment youth* and *unemployed youth*.



Employed Youth

"I am enrolled in ALS learning, but I would like to get a college degree, as well. I have a job, but it is not what I would like to be doing as a career. I feel disappointed that I do not have many opportunities here."

"While trainings provided by TESDA and other agencies have been useful in skill development, the real source of learning comes from the trainings we receive directly from our employer."



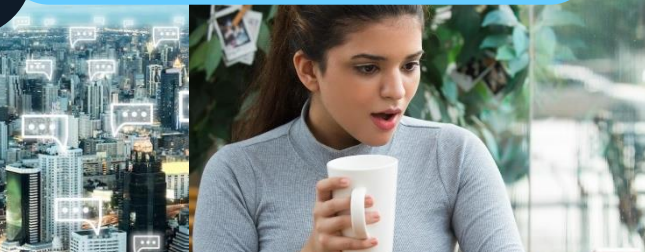
Looking for Employment Youth

"Our generation is very tech savvy and computer literate. We often use the computer to get trainings and apply for work."

Our barangay shares information about work opportunities. Many of the young people feel comfortable sharing information there.

We also use social media a lot and people are happy to share opportunities, but these are not long lasting, and we take what we can get to make some money."

"We do have to think about the future and where we want to go, and we know that we need the right certificates to get there, but sometimes we don't have the time and effort to do that when we are trying to live for the day. Most of us work in restaurants and supermarkets because these are the only jobs easily available."



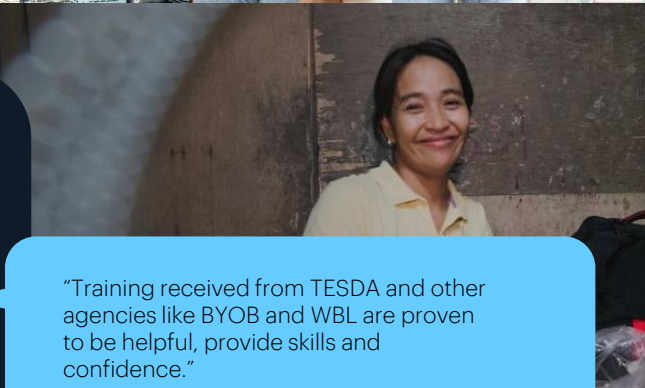
Unemployed Youth

"I didn't get a chance to finish school. It was expensive to travel and buy books. Our family doesn't make a lot of money. We live on what we grow. Each season we wait to see if we have surplus crops so that we can sell them to make money."

I usually hear about small jobs from my family and neighbors. I want to make money quickly and do not think about spending money to finish my education. I do what I can to help my family when I can, but mostly I do other things around the home to contribute.

I would like to make a business out of the crafts that we do in the community. Maybe one day the women in the village can sell their things in my online shop."





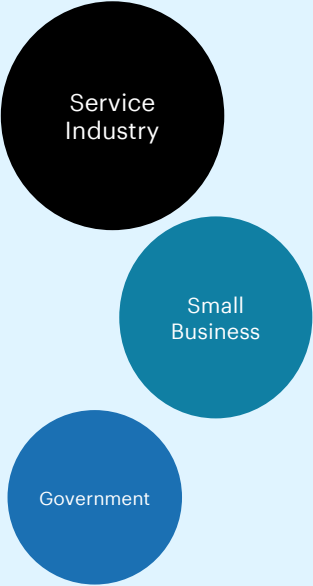
"Training received from TESDA and other agencies like BYOB and WBL are proven to be helpful, provide skills and confidence."



The OSY Journey

The journey map of the OSYs was analyzed to have a better understanding of their mindset, pain points and needs from the ecosystem. We attempted to capture some of the inefficiencies in the ecosystem (related to stakeholders or OSY programs) and what was crucial for OSYs to overcome their everyday challenges for a better future.



	Discovery	Consideration	Upskilling	Employment
<p>Goals shared by OSY:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take care of self and family 2. Get employment / start a business 3. Complete education and training to get employed 	<p>Emotions</p>  <p>Hopeful</p> <p>That I might be able to change my circumstances by studying and working hard</p>	 <p>Grateful</p> <p>That I can help my family /</p> <p>Sad</p> <p>That I don't love my job or don't have one</p>	 <p>Tired</p> <p>Because I work long hours for little money</p>	 <p>Hopeful</p> <p>That I will be able to get more opportunities in the future</p>
<p>OSY believe that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education will improve their prospects 2. Work experience will help build their CV for future opportunities 3. They will be able to start a business someday 	<p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find employment information via social media, • Talk to Barangay leaders about opportunities • Talk to family and friends about work opportunities • Participate in government programs (or community organizations) to learn about opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take whichever job available due to financial considerations • Poverty and immediate family needs are important to consider • There are certain types of work available more than others – low paying service jobs • Community and family perceptions influence OSY decisions • Aspirations are kept aside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainings available from government organizations • Eligibility for scholarships • On the job training and experience • Get the opportunity to develop their skills • TESDA related trainings • Receive training from ALS, TESDA and other agencies to improve chances of employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regardless of the training received, there are only few opportunities available • Must accept whatever job they get • Several university graduates are unemployed as well • Education does not prepare them to work in real life situations • Faith is important to have a positive attitude
<p>Sectors OSY feel represent best job prospects:</p>  <p>Size of the bubble denotes sectors that OSY feel are most likely to provide employment opportunities</p>	<p>Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about government programs need to reach the youth through the channels they currently use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty and family needs often prevent OSY from pursuing education and training opportunities • They often have no choice but to take low paying jobs for immediate relief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth have to work in difficult, low paying jobs, study and take care of family all at the same time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth need more support in all aspects of their lives to manage their current situation and be able to improve at the same time. • Infrastructure and access is a problem. • Resources are limited



03

The OSY Ecosystem

The interaction between various stakeholders linked to OSY

The OSY Ecosystem



This section describes the out-of-school youth (OSY) ecosystem in the Philippines including relationships, roles and perceptions, interactions and the flow of information, influence and power. The ecosystem can be described by the different stakeholders that have a role or influence on employment and education outcomes for OSY in the Philippines. The Philippines is a relatively large country with different regions facing different structural barriers. For the purpose of this study, seven regions were selected from the O2 sites that are representative and relevant to the ecosystem as a whole.

Additionally, the regions are quite unique in themselves, due to factors such as the density, geographic differentiation, religion or primary industries. For example, a region with a heavy focus on agriculture, generally means that job opportunities for OSY are largely concentrated in that sector. Furthermore, inter-regional and international migration can play a role on the dynamics of the development and opportunities available in different regions, such as when skilled youth move abroad, which has mixed effects on the ecosystem.

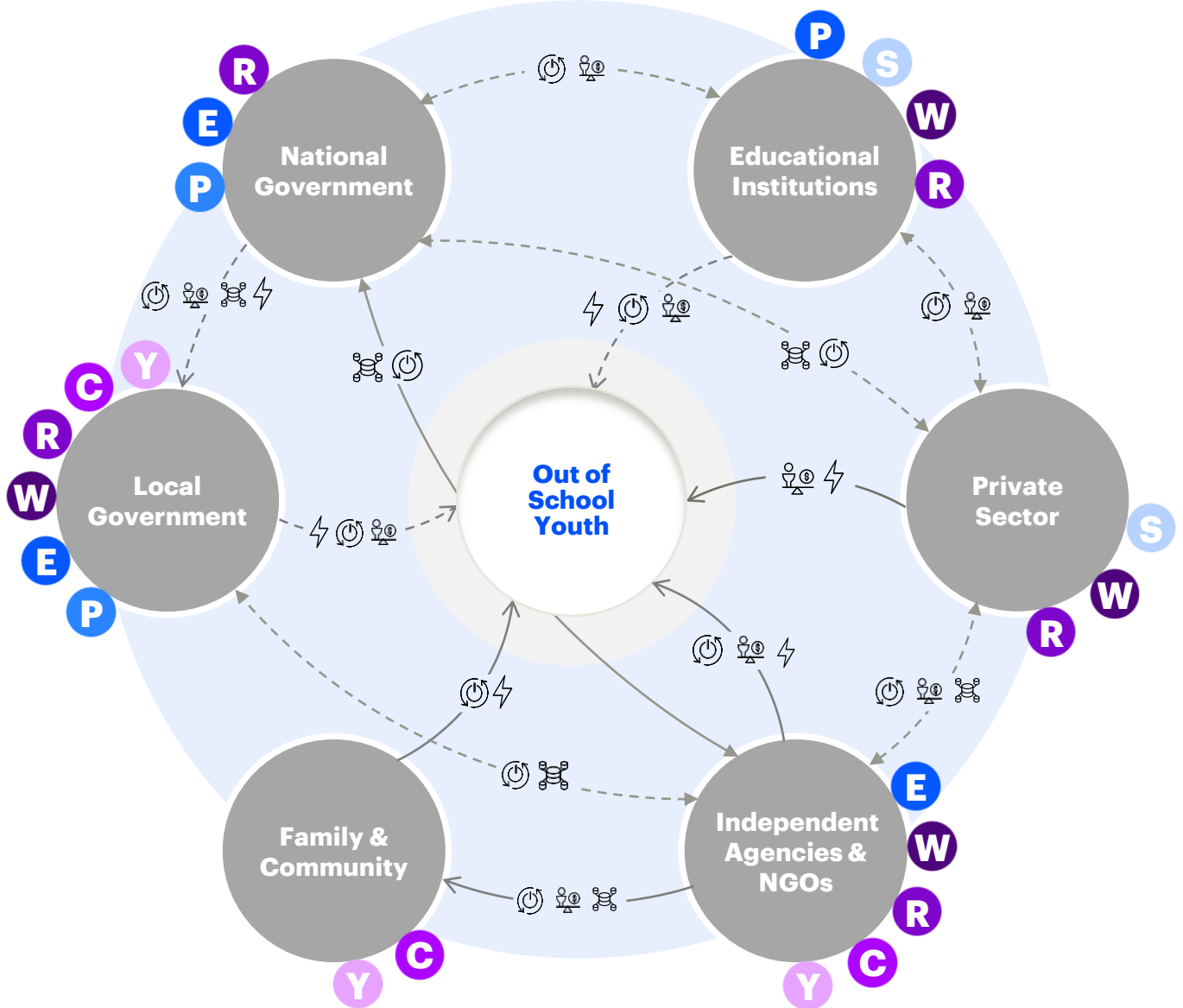
The OSY ecosystem has been represented graphically in this section as well as further discussion on the ecosystem's different components. It should be noted that whilst this ecosystem is representative of the research undertaken as part of this study, biases could exist in the portrayal of the roles, perceptions and interactions represented here due to the qualitative focus of the study. The visual representation on the next page is organized with key ecosystem actors as interrelated spheres (circles). Other elements that have been visually represented in this ecosystem include:

- Connections - The lines in the diagram represent the interactions that each stakeholders have with other stakeholders. The perceived effectiveness of that relationship is represented by either a solid or dotted line. It is important to note that the interaction represented here are based on perceptions that they have about each other as shared in the primary research.
- Perceptions of power, flow of information and resources - The different icons in the diagram represent perceived power & influence, data collection, as well as the flow of resources and information. These dimensions were of particular interest in the context of this study as they can have a large impact on the effectiveness of the functioning of the ecosystem overall. The direction of the arrow denotes the flow of these resources between the stakeholders.
- Activities - There are several activities (as perceived by stakeholders in our primary research) performed by each stakeholder depending on their role and responsibility in the ecosystem. We have listed the various activities and mapped them to each stakeholder based on the type of work performed by them. It should be noted that an activity mapped to a stakeholder may not necessarily mean they are performing it well, as there may be an opportunity for improvement as well.

Further discussion on the key findings of the study and potential opportunities for improvement for a more effective OSY ecosystem, such as increased collaboration between different stakeholders, are presented later in this document.

The OSY Ecosystem

We focused on the key actors in the OSY ecosystem to better understand their roles, perception and interaction with each other. The below diagram is a representation of this ecosystem highlighting the exchange of resources, information flow, influence and data between these actors and the activities performed by them, based on perceptions gathered during our discussions with stakeholders. Each of the primary actors and their defining characteristics are further described in this section.



Activities performed by different actors in the ecosystem

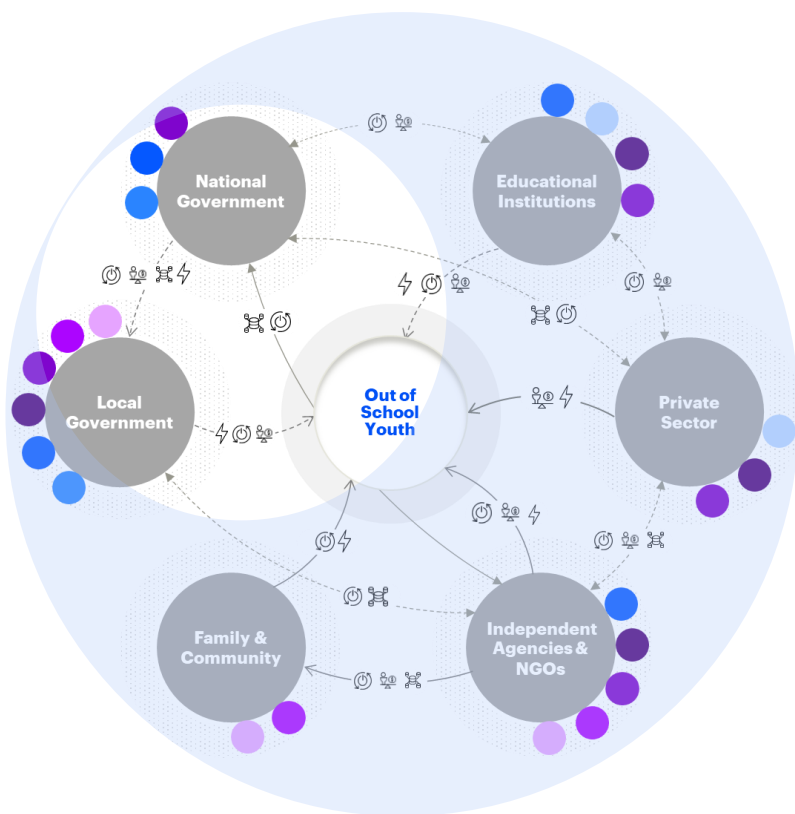
- Power and influence
- Resources
- Data collection
- Information Flows
- Effective relationship
- Opportunity for strengthening relationship

- P Program development**
Designing policy and programs for OSY based on their needs or creating new laws to improve the OSY ecosystem
- E Education & Training**
Provide both formal or informal education through public or private-led initiatives to assist OSY complete basic education
- S Skill Industry Alignment**
Bridging the gap between education and employment by aligning the skills learnt in training to the industry requirements by adapting curriculum

- W Work Opportunities**
Providing real-life work experience to those in vocational training through on job trainings, paid internships, etc
- R Resources, Scholarships Funding**
Provide resources and assistance to address the needs of OSY
- C Community development**
Focus on improving the community by bringing information about available opportunities to them and help in their decision-making process
- Y Youth Needs**
Connect with OSY on a socio-emotional level and understand their needs and aspirations

The OSY Ecosystem

To better understand the ecosystem diagram, a deep dive into each actor of the ecosystem has been detailed below.



National Government

The national government is a key the ecosystem stakeholder whose responsibilities include policy making, along with designing and implementing programs that benefit OSYs. These government agencies include: DepEd/ALS, TESDA, DOLE, DTI, and Local Government Units (LGUs). As part of their role to significantly influence OSYs on their journey, national level agencies develop the policies that created alternate education programs, the Alternative Learning System (ALS), for school drop-outs to get basic education from K to 10, followed by the opportunity to enroll in senior high school or vocational, technical training programs to gain specialized skills for better job prospects. The OSY can also participate in entrepreneurship training programs, trade fairs and employment fairs.

While the national government is a provider of OSY programs, the LGUs are enablers as they are physically and socio-emotionally more closely connected with the OSY community. The relevant national agencies such as DepEd/ALS, TESDA, DOLE and DTI have local staff (or local partners) who implement these training and support programs for the OSY and their families/communities.

Hence, this interaction between national government and Regional agencies / LGUs / local partners is very crucial to ensure the implementation of OSY policies and programs take place effectively. On the other hand, discussions undertaken as part of this project indicated that government agencies share a good relationship with independent agencies and NGOs, who act as a conduit between them and the OSY community, wherever they are present. The government also has been working well with the educational institutions and Universities to design the curriculum for the alternative learning programs.

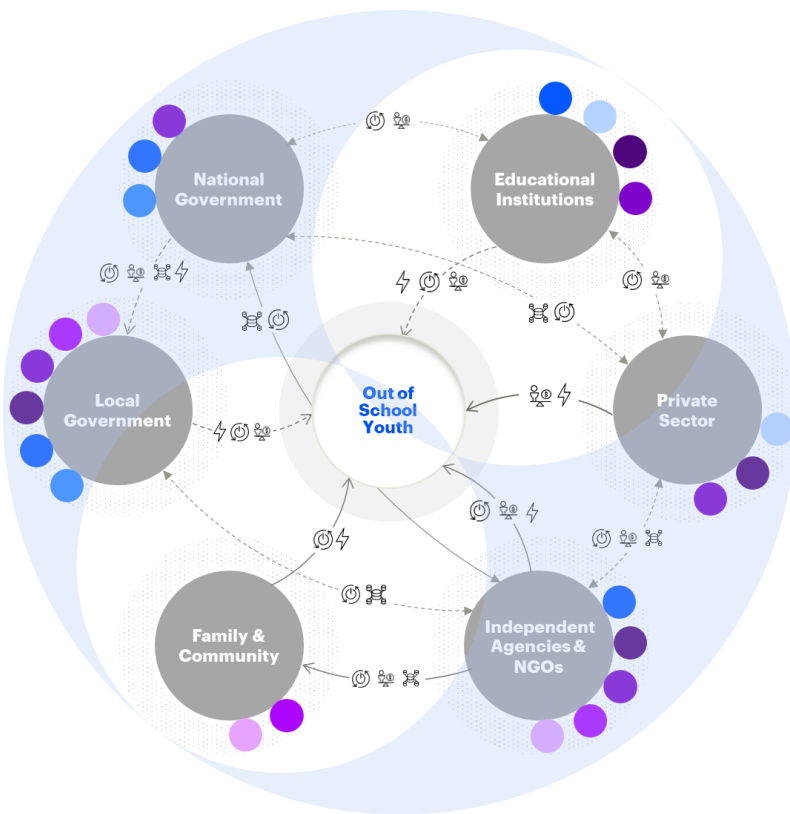
Local Government

The LGUs are closely connected with the OSY and are one of the key sources that help to identify the OSY population, their needs and their pain points. This information is very crucial for understanding the programs or policies that are needed to be implemented to support the OSY, and hence the LGUs act as information carriers to the government and other related agencies to monitor and share this information. However, from discussions with various stakeholders who share a relationship with LGUs, it is evident that they feel that more collaboration between the two parties could result in a more effective ecosystem in terms of outcomes for OSY.

On the other hand, LGUs are allocated a budget to support OSY, making them a key source of resource provider to OSY and their community. These resources could include conducting community welfare programs, educating OSY parents to encourage their children to go back to school or enrol in alternative learning programs, or directly providing them education or employment opportunities implemented government and educational institutions. These decisions are however, in the hands of the chief executive of the community, who may not always share the same agenda as other stakeholders, which means that the OSY may not get the required support as anticipated.

The OSY Ecosystem

To better understand the ecosystem diagram, a deep dive into each actor of the ecosystem has been detailed below.



Educational Institutions

Educational institutions are the main source of providing formal education to youth in the Philippines. Many educational institutions also partner with national and regional government agencies (such as DepEd) to extend several alternative learning programs for those youth who opt for informal ways of learning. Teachers / trainers are one of the key stakeholders who are aware of the students who dropout from school and the difficulties and challenges they face both in school and at home. They can also provide an informal space for learning, where youth are comfortable to share their stories and learn from each other.

The second important role played by some educational institutions involved in supporting OSY is to connect with businesses in the community, so they can teach business skills to students while enrolled in school or ALS or TESDA programs. They are better positioned to create awareness of the workplace as an environment for learning and help OSY transition from school to the workplace. They can also use their learnings about the business environment to modify the curriculum so the OSYs are better prepared for future employment.

Teachers/trainers can share a close bond with their students and can influence their trajectory. However, there persists a larger number of OSY youth that could benefit from support than the number of teachers or trainers that could provide this support. For example, data suggested each ALS teacher has the capacity to take on only 75 OSYs (with 1000 ALS teachers in the Philippines currently), which implies that a high number of OSY would not benefit from their support. This was one of the key challenges highlighted throughout various discussions as part of this study.

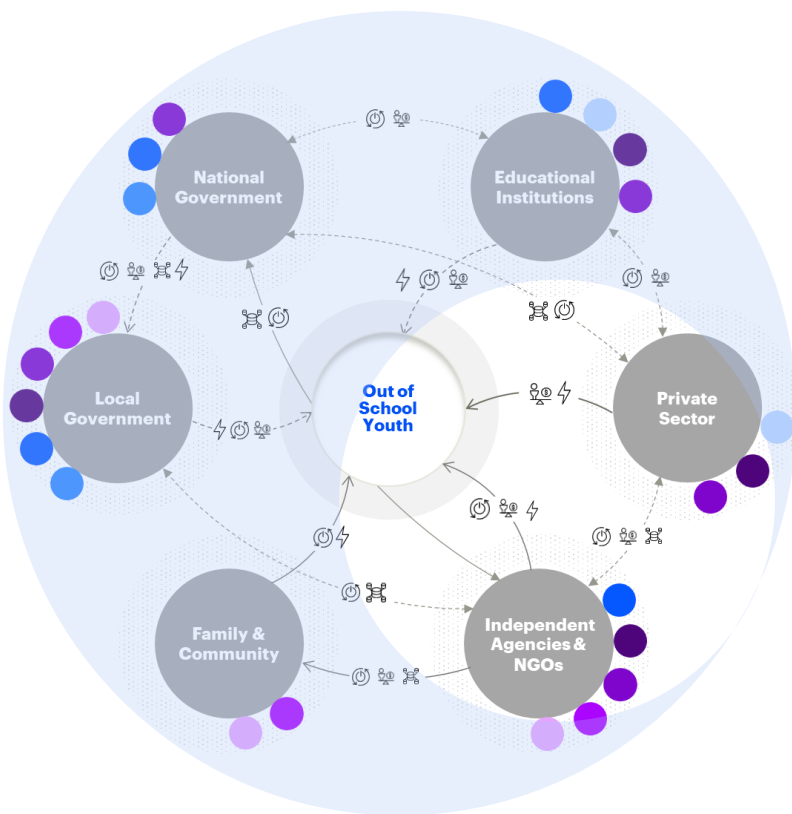
Family & Community

In the ecosystem diagram, data suggests that the family & community are considered to have greatest influence on the OSYs. Being given this pivotal role in the OSY ecosystem, it is important for the family & community to support OSY through their journey and provide them the right guidance and support in achieving their goals. Research cited that family matters are one of the key reasons for school dropout (financial concerns and early pregnancy) and these concerns need to be addressed by other related parties to witness a change in the OSY mindset.

The community including Barangay Captains, Youth Development Alliances (YDAs) are key motivators for OSY and their family encouraging them to pursue education or employment opportunities. Community events, job fairs, orientation sessions, and others are some of the tools that can be used for the welfare and upliftment of the society. Additionally, independent agencies & NGOs work closely with the family & community to spread the word on their ongoing projects, as their word of mouth leads to higher participation and interest among the OSY group.

The OSY Ecosystem

To better understand the ecosystem diagram, a deep dive into each actor of the ecosystem has been detailed below.



Independent Agencies & NGOs

Independent agencies & NGOs are comprised of youth related organizations and NGOs working for the welfare and upliftment of the OSY community. They have a self-motivated mission to support the OSY, however, the extent of their work is highly dependent on external sources of funding. They tend to interact with almost all the stakeholders in the ecosystem to reach out to as many OSY as possible, depending on their mandate. While the large NGOs have a stronger network and larger reach, the smaller NGOs may be present only in smaller number of communities, and sometimes rely on the larger NGOs to leverage their network and resources.

Independent agencies and NGOs directly connect with OSY in the communities they are present, as they provide all kinds of support through seminars, workshop / training, focus group discussions, work-based learnings, etc. For this reason, they act as great partners to several stakeholders in the ecosystem who are unable to directly reach the OSY.

Private Sector

The private sector plays a crucial role in the ecosystem as they are the main providers of job opportunities for OSY. Several industry partners implement programs for OSY, where they provide paid-internships or work-based learnings as part of the OSY's education program, which better prepares them for the future work. This may require the private sector to work closely with the education sector to provide information on the industry requirements, and other partners to facilitate and mobilize these activities.

However, the involvement of private sector in the OSY community can be quite limited either due to their lack of awareness of how they can support OSY or because they don't have the required resources or interest in helping them. It is important for other stakeholders in the ecosystem to engage with the private sector and create training material or guidelines for these enterprises on how to support the OSY community. Due to this lack of awareness, corporates may not be comfortable hiring ALS or TESDA graduates even if they have the right capabilities and skill-set for the job.



04

Stakeholder Roles, Relationships & Perceptions

Key insights from the stakeholder consultations

Key Insights

During the primary research of the study, a wide range of stakeholders were interviewed and their perceptions of the roles and responsibilities, interactions and efficacy of the out-of-school youth (OSY) ecosystem were gathered. From these discussions there were several key findings that are important to highlight, followed by a deep-dive analysis of each stakeholder group's perception of themselves and others in the ecosystem.

Finding

1 Information does not trickle down to the grassroots level (both OSY and agencies that work with OSY) and lack of awareness prevents OSY from utilizing the opportunities available for them



Why is this important?

There are a large number of agencies / stakeholders within the ecosystem working to provide opportunities for OSY, but there is a perception that the resources being spent on building capacity for OSY are known to only a relatively small percentage of the total OSY population (e.g. some OSY mentioned they hadn't heard about ALS or TESDA until their local community held an orientation session).

2 There is no ONE governing body who holds the power to make decisions for the well-being of OSY throughout their journey



In the ecosystem, the decision making for OSY related programs is split across multiple agencies, and this can mean that no one agency is responsible for outcomes and can lead to issues in coordination for different programs, training needs, or for the purpose of employment.

3 Higher focus on qualifications over applied skills which reduces the employability of OSY who pursue ALS or TESDA programs



A common perception among stakeholders within the ecosystem was that the students who graduate from formal education are likely to be better candidates for a job, even if they only hold a degree vs. an ALS / TESDA graduate who may have the relevant competency for the job. This challenge mainly arises as the industry has limited information on the ALS & TESDA programs or its curriculum that could probably make the graduate more suitable for the role they are seeking.

4 Vocational training combined with a practical approach of work-based learning has proven to be a more effective way of preparing the youth for employment



With the ALS / TESDA programs and industry players combining their resources, the learners get exposure to the practical approach through on-job trainings or paid internships, which increases their chances of employability post-graduation. This partnership of education and employment agencies has proven to be an effective tool for improving success among the OSY.

5 Very few private companies involved in the OSY ecosystem and even those involved may not be there for long



Since there are not enough private companies who appreciate the value that OSY could bring to their business, there is very limited involvement of private companies in connecting socio-emotionally with the OSY. While some industry leaders may be empathetic towards supporting OSY, it is not necessary that every subsequent leader in a management role will share a similar vision for OSY, which could then lead to reduced sustainability of the existing funding of programs led by the private sector.



Independent Agencies & NGOs

Youth related organizations demonstrate motivation to help the OSY and an openness and willingness to partner with all different agencies to support OSY needs.



Social development side of our mission is to make the community creative, productive, self-reliant and proud to be a Filipino.

NGO

How I perceive my role

1) As partners and connectors across the ecosystem

Almost all of the independent agencies (IAs) and NGOs that participated in this study mentioned their role as a partner and their close partnership with different actors in the ecosystem including local government, national government agencies, educational institutions, the private sector, and other NGOs.

"Local NGOs tend to act like a connector for OSYs and other stakeholders"

2) Connecting with youth and community at the grassroots level

Several IAs and NGOs referred to their role at the grassroots level, meeting directly with the youth and working at the Barangay level. Others also commented that they play a role in making OSY aware of different programs and opportunities that are available for them, however, some limitations do exist depending on the network and funding of the IA or NGO to reach the OSY.

"NGOs have been helpful in carrying information and delivering programs"

3) Providing education, job training and addressing barriers to participation

Many IAs and NGOs saw their role as facilitators of education programs for youth through career building workshops, work-based learning, seminars, and lectures. While other IAs and NGOs saw their role as supporting youth to address barriers to participation in education or work, such as welfare and basic needs.

"We want it [trainings] to be accessible to the youth as venue of learning, but due to covid we pivoted the project and did it online – OSY were provided with mobile-phone and load allowance"

4) Monitoring and sharing data on OSY with the government

Multiple IAs and NGOs mentioned that they partner with the government to provide information and data on the youth. At least one organization mentioned that they are also active in lobbying for policy and voicing the concerns of the OSYs to government.

"we help as partners, ... , we bring the information"

5) Strong mandate to support youth and social development

Many IAs and NGOs we interviewed commented on their role in help the youth, including aspects such as helping youth to be more productive, self-reliant and proud.

"The idea is to touch the lives of young people in the community, to become somebody in the community."

How others perceive my role and efficacy

1) As a reliable partner

Other actors in the OSY ecosystem spoke of the role of IAs and NGOs to partner and their helpful partnership with NGOs across programs focused on OSY outcomes. Efficacy of IAs and NGO programs was generally well perceived across multiple stakeholder groups.

"They are a very good partner with us, we seek help, and they are responsive to our request."

2) Understand needs and mobilise OSY

Other stakeholders also spoke of IAs and NGOs role at the local level including their knowledge of OSY needs as well as their ability to mobilise OSY for programs and open them up to youth development.

"they also know who the people to reach out to they have a better pulse on the need"

3) Complementary to government activities but with potential overlap

One government department spoke of the complementary and beneficial role of IAs and NGOs for OSY workforce development. However, it was suggested that better coordination and communication could avoid potential duplication of programs.

"the program of the youth organization is complementing what others are doing, but need to talk to each other to avoid duplication"

4) As a provider of information on OSY

Several government bodies reflected that IAs and NGOs play an effective role in carrying information and delivering programs, as they may consider it their own commitment to community development to ensure there is sufficient awareness among the OSY.

"They are great partner in providing assessment and research studies on OSY. We need to strengthen this partnership."

5) Share a common purpose to help youth

Different stakeholders echoed IAs and NGOs own perception of their roles as being led by a common purpose or mandate to support the youth of the Philippines.

"They are binded together because of common motivation, that kind of spirit, intense emotional attraction to the audience is natural to them"



Government Bodies

In this mindset, the national government is the key policy-making body who addresses the needs of the OSY, while the facilitation and implementation is handled by the local agencies



Main role of the government is to reduce number of OSY through effective projects and programs for OSY.

Key person in government

How I perceive my role

1) To provide sound policy and programs to address the needs of OSY

Several national government stakeholders commented that their main role was to create policies and program recommendations for OSY and pass it on to their local counterparts who would then provide direction to the development partners for implementation.

"We are the highest policy making body composing of government labor sector academy"

2) To ensure the programs / resources reach the intended beneficiaries

Several local government officials mentioned that their main role is to ensure the government programs reach the target audience as the Local Government Units (LGUs) are the ones who are more closely involved with the OSY from their region.

"we can set policy direction but the operational must be on the local level"

3) To provide labor market information to increase employability

Several stakeholders pointed out that the labor market information gathered through government surveys is crucial in designing education and training curriculum for the purpose of improving job prospects for OSY. However, other areas of the government find that they would benefit from more regular surveys.

"[public data through surveys] bridging gap between education and employment center"

4) Funding support to set up new business

Certain agencies mentioned they provide seed capital to micro-enterprises, and in another example, a local government agency gave ovens to those who graduated from baking class to start their own business.

"[local agencies] provide seed capital for micro medium enterprise"

5) As lawmakers to introduce specific laws in relation to OSY problems

Several government officials are involved in creating laws such as the ALS Act and Anti-bullying law that are more focussed on dealing with OSY problems as bullying was cited as one of the major reasons for school dropout.

"As a legislator we are by law mandated to create local laws applicable in our town"

How others perceive my role and efficacy

1) Effective programs offered by the government to address OSY needs

A stakeholder from the education sector cited an experience of working with DepEd and said the synergy of the organization coming together to identify and seek out the target audience and engage them in some form of learning was very encouraging.

"DepEd's existing program for OSY, which involves profiling information of OSY has been very helpful for us to bridge the OSY to higher education"

2) Limited information flow hinders the programs reaching the intended beneficiaries

While OSY programs are quite promising, the information about these programs does not trickle down to grass root level and it takes a long time for the government to gather information on the available trainings and job openings, which delays the benefits reaching the target audience. This is certainly true in regions where NGO coverage is not universal, and particularly applies to areas which are difficult to reach.

"OSY know TESDA, but only had interest when we ask TESDA to give orientation"

3) Need to increase focus on employment

Several stakeholders pointed out that ALS programs are focused on education and not gainful employment, as some of the region-specific programs offered are not even relevant for the region (e.g., a rice program in Cebu when Cebu is not a rice growing region).

"Government & private sector linkage is very strong for formal education but for OSY it is sporadic and ad Hoc"

4) Partnerships with local government have been useful to support OSY

Several stakeholders commented that the LGUs (PESOs, Barangay captains) have been critical partners to reach the OSY and some of them even mentioned that if the local government is not involved, they don't even engage with that community.

"local Govt can help to identify where they OSY are..."

5) Limited coordination between national and local agencies

Several stakeholders highlighted the lack of coordination between the national and local agencies and the regional politics as key factors impacting the monitoring and implementing of programs.

"lack of advocacy, coordination and vision - lack of resource allocation from national to local, and local to universities"



Educational Institutions

Educational institutions play the role of empowering education to the youth and children, and also help the youth to transition to the workplace by matching skills with industry needs



An ecosystem is only powerful if the connections are well established

— President of a University

How I perceive my role

1) To empower OSY to pursue higher education for better employment chances

A stakeholder from a public university providing technical and vocational courses felt that it was their responsibility to encourage OSY to enrol in higher education so they have a good degree and better social participation post graduation that would help transition from school to workplace.

"we need assistance of both public and private schools to transition learners to higher education"

2) To align the skills of students to the skills needed by industry

Some educational institutions providing tertiary education commented that they are regularly engaging with industry players to understand their skill requirements so they can provide those specific critical, analytical or innovative trainings in school.

"we are engaged with businesses around the city, so we can help the students with the transition while they are still in school"

3) Take proactive measures to reduce dropout rates in school

Schools are taking steps to reduce dropout rates such as training teachers to create an inclusive environment for both formal and informal learners and educating parents on how to encourage their children to finish schooling.

4) Improve information flow on the ALS program among the education sector

A private college director felt that ALS students are not accepted into higher education due to limited information on ALS curriculum. There needs to be more awareness of what the curriculum offers and how it helps students become skilled worker.

"The reason that majority of universities are not accepting is that they don't know what is included in the ALS programs"

5) To provide an informal space for learning

Some stakeholders mentioned that ALS teachers are reaching out to students through social media platforms (like Facebook, Twitter) so they can have an informal forum for discussion and learning, which is working well for the OSY.

How others perceive my role and efficacy

1) Provide formal and informal learning through partnership with government and private institutions

Whilst efficacy of educational institutions was generally seen positively, we also heard that there can be a problem in the quality across different training institutions and also that the government and education sector could be better organized to prevent wastage of resources.

"they are effective in providing opportunities [for OSY] but not that effective in reaching out to the proper beneficiaries"

2) Prepare youth for employment by linking training to market demand

Perception is still a problem, as students with qualifications / credentials are often given priority over those that attend vocational trainings for potential job opportunities. This is also because some believe that the ALS curriculum is not sufficient, and at this stage formal education is the more appropriate route for learning.

"it is better if we put OSY back to formal education..."

3) To make education more accessible for OSY

Certain stakeholders reflected that costs for OSY to attend schools can be prohibitive, such as the costs to provide for transportation, meal allowances, and basic needs and that educational institutions could provide more scholarships or affordable options for OSY. Others reflected that more effort is needed to ensure that resources for education are not misdirected to the family for other uses.

"Education is free – basic till university but there is still cost that the parent cannot provide"

4) As a resource when conducting research, for example, when mapping education pathways to employment outcomes

A government stakeholder commented that educational institutions had been a key resource in the Philippines talent mapping initiative and that such collaborations were helpful to increase employability of graduates.



Private Sector

Aside from employing OSY, many private organizations provide work-immersion related programs for OSY through on-job trainings, internships, etc to make them skilled for future employment and others provide funding for programs

“ If I help one OSY, they will probably help many more OSY - so that's the vision - the whole society will benefit

Small Business Owner

How I perceive my role

1) Bridging the gap of OSY in terms of education to opportunity for employment

Many industry players felt it is their role to mentor OSY, provide job-specific trainings (entrepreneurship, leadership, financial planning – non-TESDA courses) hand-hold them during interview process and make them employable, as they directly deal with OSY and can directly impact the lives of OSY and their family.

“It's not just helping them and training them, after training if we see they are capable we employ them”

2) Provide resources and assistance to address the needs of OSY

Most private companies said that they invest in OSY through their CSR funds by providing financial support, resources during calamities, or partnering with relevant agencies to address the needs of OSY and help in overall upliftment of the society.

“many businessmen are family oriented and are not large conglomerates - they know that the bigger economic problem needs to be addressed and not just look at our own bottom line”

3) Most suitable stakeholder for providing real-life work experience to OSY

Several stakeholders mentioned that they train OSY at their own workplace such as in their kitchen or dealership, since nobody else will get them a chance, so that the OSY have the relevant skills to either find a job or start their own business.

“Working with me is just a stepping-stone to work into other company”

4) To encourage other private companies to invest in OSY

Some stakeholders commented that since most of the enterprises in Philippines are micro, they do not know where to start in providing opportunities to OSY, and hence a module template or guide can help overcome this challenge.

“...we are inviting more private sector to engage with youth to spread the word and hit our objective for OSY to be taken by the private sector”

How others perceive my role and efficacy

1) Partnering to provide work-based trainings that are more suited for employment

Many educational institutions partner with private companies who help design the curriculum (such as enterprise-based learning) based on industry needs, and this relationship has proved effective to train the OSY from school to the job market.

“they are role models for best practices that can be imitated by the govt itself for different programs for OSY”

2) Effective partners in providing direction, assistance, funding and addressing OSY needs

Several stakeholders were very positive about their partnership with private players, as they have been able to absorb a larger number of beneficiaries and cover more regions due to the support received from private companies.

“Even though some employers are not doing so well they are very eager to help OSY early as possible”

3) More focussed on credentials leading to a qualification gap between graduates and OSY

Several stakeholders pointed out that with industry players not being very clear on their actual skill requirements, they tend to focus more on the degree than the actual skills when hiring for a job position and this puts OSY's at a disadvantage as ALS programs are not well recognized among the community.

“...service and industry sectors hire OSY, but those without certificate will always be at risk to lose job first”

4) Very few private companies involved in helping OSY

With the rising number of OSYs (especially since the pandemic), there is a dire need of more private players to help OSYs and there is also an urgent need to increase the frequency of interaction of private companies with the other stakeholders in the ecosystem to understand the evolving needs and target job profiles of the industry.

“...not many private sector willing to give them [OSY] a chance”

5) Sustainability of programs becomes an issue

A stakeholder from the education sector pointed out concerns related to the sustainability of programs by private sector, as the management of these companies change regularly, and with every new person the vision is different, impacting the continuity of these programs.



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05

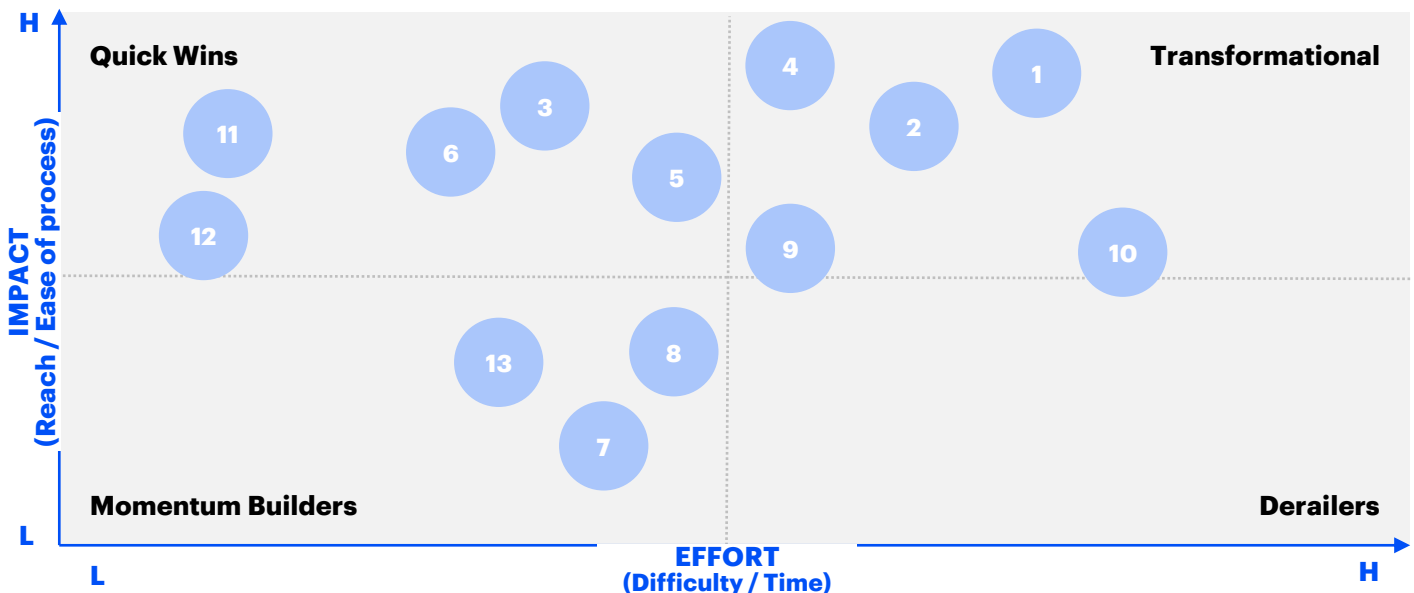
Recommendations
To increase opportunities for OSY

Recommendations

Through the research study several areas have been identified to explore that could further strengthen the out-of-school youth (OSY) ecosystem. These recommendations have been assessed based on both relative effort to implement and the relative impact the recommendation could have on the ecosystem and placed in a matrix as: Quick Wins (Q) – high Impact and low effort, Transformational (T) – high impact, high effort, and Momentum Builders (M) – Low effort, low impact (as depicted in the diagram below).

Category	Long-list of Recommendations	Number
Transformational	Strengthen collaborative efforts, resources and information flow among agencies supporting OSY	1
	Expand outreach and awareness of vocational and technical trainings to reach a larger audience	2
	To provide additional services for disabled persons (PWD) as they tend to dropout at an early age due to inequities in access to opportunities, own insecurities or acceptance by the wider society	9
	Provide educational content and support (incentives) to private sector companies (especially small businesses) to build resources, capacity and operation to assist the OSY community	4
	Increase frequency of data collection and dissemination , such as surveys like the Annual Poverty Survey and the Functional Literacy and Education Mass Media Survey (collected by PSA) that are a key source of information for government-led OSY programs	10
Quick Wins	Strengthen the partnership between government and independent agencies & NGOs supporting OSY for a larger macro impact	5
	Clearly define role of national government and Local Government Units (LGUs) in supporting OSY, and enhance their communication for better outcomes	6
	While education and training is a part of the solution for OSY, there is a need to increase emphasis on employment outcomes for OSY	3
	With the changing business environment, online learning has become a key method of learning. There is a need to shift modules to the online interface , especially for mobiles, as it is the most common device owned by the youth who already have experience and knowledge of using it	11
	Encourage alternative system learners to take an assessment test (aptitude test) and update their competency level (National Registry of Skills) to increase their employability chances based on their current skill-set	12
Momentum Builders	Consider community welfare programs such as parent education, entrepreneurship workshops and career counselling to create a positive environment towards education and employment	13
	Involve educational institutions in policy-making decisions related to OSY as they have first-hand experience of assisting OSY through their difficulties and challenges	7
	There is a need for providing an informal space for discussion , where specific issues related to dropout can be addressed (such as socio-emotional wellbeing)	8

Initiative assessment framework



Recommendations in Detail

1 **Strengthen collaborative efforts, resources and information flow among agencies supporting OSY**

Since there are several agencies working towards supporting OSY, it is recommended there be a *mechanism* (for example, an inter-agency or independent agency) to coordinate planning, monitoring and evaluating programs created for OSY and take actionable steps to ensure the best outcome. This agency could determine ways to leverage the existing infrastructure and resources to drive the identified interventions to achieve a more systematic impact and avoid duplication of services by the various agencies already working in this space.

2 **Expand outreach and awareness of vocational and technical trainings to reach a larger audience**

In the current scope, the ALS teachers have an incentive to get 75 learners on board, after which they don't have any capacity to take on additional learners. Additionally, employers are not fully aware of the curriculum taught in ALS or TESDA programs and may not feel comfortable hiring a graduate from these programs. Increasing capacity of teachers or increasing number of teachers, and conducting seminars, workshops for more awareness on these vocational of technical courses would potentially provide better employment outcomes for OSY, who have limited access to information and programs.

3 **While education and training is a part of the solution for OSY, there is a need to increase emphasis on employment outcomes for OSY**

The OSYs are given an opportunity for education through formal or informal schooling system, but upon graduation they do not receive sufficient guidance on securing a job. There is a need for better collaboration between education, training institutes and the local employment officers and PESO to provide available job opportunities (can leverage the JobStart program) and help students identify which opportunities would match their current skill-set to increase their employment chances.

4 **Provide education content and support (incentives) to private sector companies (especially small businesses) to build resources, capacity and operation to assist the OSY community**

Research suggests that industry players have shown interest in supporting OSY, however, many of them are unaware on how they can help or may not have the appropriate resources to help. It would be a good start to create a model/mentorship program with B2B mentorship support to assist corporates ways in which they could support OSY, and their increased involvement in the OSY ecosystem would help relay the industry skill requirements to the education and training institutes to modify their curriculum.

5 **Strengthen the partnership between government and independent agencies & NGOs supporting OSY for a larger macro impact**

In several regions of Philippines, the NGO and government partnership have worked very well in providing programs along with innovative solutions to meet the local needs. However, these activities depend on NGOs own mandate, criteria and network, which may not necessarily have a universal impact. It is recommended that these activities be further scaled to have a wider macro impact encompassing multiple localities and different social contexts through a stronger public-private partnership as seen in other Asian countries.

6 **Clearly define role of national government and LGUs in supporting OSY, and enhance their communication for better outcomes**

While the national government is a provider of programs / initiatives for OSY, it is the LGUs (especially PESO) who are better positioned to implement OSY related programs and ensure it reaches the proper beneficiaries. To make this relationship work better, it would be helpful to have a policy or law in place that requires both stakeholders to ensure that the opportunities are passed on to the OSY and, also regularly communicate (using existing infrastructure) with each other to ensure data, information and resources flow properly.

7 **Involve educational institutions in policy-making decisions related to OSY as they have first-hand experience of assisting OSY through their difficulties and challenges**

Research suggested that educational institutions have a high / direct involvement in the OSY community, since the teachers/trainers have first-hand knowledge of what is working well for the OSY and what is not. On the contrary, the government bodies pointed out that they face challenges in designing policies/programs for OSY since they don't have all timely and relevant information. It is recommended that senior leaders from educational institutions working with OSY to partner with the government to provide the necessary support to craft such policies and programs.

Recommendations in Detail

8 **There is a need for providing an informal space for discussion, where specific issues related to dropout can be addressed (such as socio-emotional wellbeing)**

One of the key mindset problems faced by OSY is related to depression, anxiety or low self-confidence, which they may not be comfortable sharing with their family or peers. Several stakeholders pointed out that socio-emotional wellbeing concerns are still not discussed openly, and it would be helpful for OSYs suffering to discuss it with experts who could provide the right guidance to overcome it. One of the NGOs we spoke to is already conducting a Self-Emotional Learning Program in their local community, which has helped support youth suffering from depression.

9 **Provide additional services for disabled persons (PWD) as they tend to dropout at an early age due to inequities in access to opportunities, own insecurities or acceptance by the wider society**

Through our discussions with stakeholders in the ecosystem, it has been quite evident that there are limited programs to support PWDs in the Philippines. There is no database on PWDs education status as well, so it would be helpful to connect with the local Youth Development Alliance (YDAs) to get more information about their problems, concerns and design programs for their overall upliftment. It will also be helpful to educate their families and communities so they can be treated better and accepted by society.

10 **Increase frequency of data collection and dissemination, such as surveys like the Annual Poverty Survey and the Functional Literacy and Education Mass Media Survey (collected by PSA) that are a key source of information for Govt-led OSY programs**

It has been pointed out that the surveys mentioned above are key databases to identify OSYs and their education and employment status in the Philippines. This information is crucial for government and other agencies supporting OSY, however, the frequency of surveys is not annual, making it difficult to understand the current situation of OSYs. This has forced stakeholders to conduct their own community/literacy mapping that could be quite expensive and a tedious process.

11 **With the changing business environment, online learning has become a key method of learning. There is a need to shift modules to the online interface, especially for mobiles, as it is the most common device owned by the youth who already have experience and knowledge of using it**

With changing business landscape, there is a need to use digital channels to provide education to the youth. Research suggests that most youth own a mobile device and know how to use it for social media, email and research. It will be useful to adapt and design modules to an online mobile interface, as the youth may not be able to attend physical classes, if they are pursuing education and work together to meet their financial needs.

12 **Encourage alternative system learners to take an assessment test (aptitude test) and update their competency level (National Registry of Skills) to increase their employability chances based on their current skill-set**

It has been highlighted that ALS & TESDA learners / graduates do not necessarily update their competency level, and there is no way to track which of the learners have acquired the relevant skills. It is suggested that they take an assessment test which will help identify their current interests and skillsets, as that will be a key determining factor for employers seeking candidates for a specific role and will speedup the process of hiring and OSYs being hired.

13 **Consider community welfare programs such as parent education, entrepreneurship workshops, career counseling, etc., to create a positive environment towards education and employment**

Research suggested that family/community have the greatest influence on OSY. Discussions with parents highlighted that they often don't fully understand the needs of their children and the opportunities available for their upliftment. Several training institutes are already engaging with families by providing training modules on parent education that has helped create a positive attitude within the community and home. Similar initiatives can be taken at a community level to create a more encouraging environment for OSY and can potentially reduce dropout rates as well.



06

Appendix

Acknowledgements

This study is made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the terms of Cooperative Agreement No. 720492OCA00003. The contents of this paper are the sole responsibility of Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) and Accenture, and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

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The report benefited greatly from the insights and reviews of the EDC USAID Opportunity 2.0 team, including David Hall (Chief of Party), Nancy Wallace (Director), Tania Tzelnic (Technical Advisor), Angelique Roux (Private Sector Advisor) and Ricardo Perez-Pineda (International Coordinator).

The report would not have been possible without the inputs and feedback from the following experts: Assistant Secretary Nikki Rubia-Tutay, Employment and General Administration, DOLE; Assistant Secretary G. H. Ambat, ALS, DepEd; Director Almayda, ALS Taskforce Chair; Director Jerry Clavisellas, Department of Trade & Industry; Charlyn B. Justimbaste, Policy Research and Evaluation Division, TESDA; and Director Casimiro-Igtiben, NEDA.

We are extremely grateful to the participants, including the private and public sector employers, educational institutions, youth and other stakeholders, who generously provided their time to speak to us.



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About Opportunity 2.0

USAID’s Opportunity 2.0 (O2) is a five-year program designed to strengthen national and local capability in the Philippines to provide out-of-school youth (OSY) with quality education and learning experiences, inspire life-long-learning, and lead to improved education, livelihood, or employment opportunities. Through the establishment of partnerships and the strengthening of networks in 12 cities across the country, O2 will reach 180,000 out-of-school youth, train over 2,000 teachers and engage 2,200 companies.

