

Out-of-School Children (OOSC): Changing Landscape of School Attendance and Barriers to Completion

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Outline

1. Introduction

- ❑ Out-of-School Children (OOSC)
- ❑ Study Objectives
- ❑ DepED programs to reduce OOSC

2. Examination of OOSC Prevalence

- ❑ From National Aggregates to Data Disaggregates by Region, by Sex, and Income Groups
- ❑ Determinants of School Non-Attendance

3. Field Work and Insights

4. Ways Ahead

1. Out-of-School Children (OOSC)

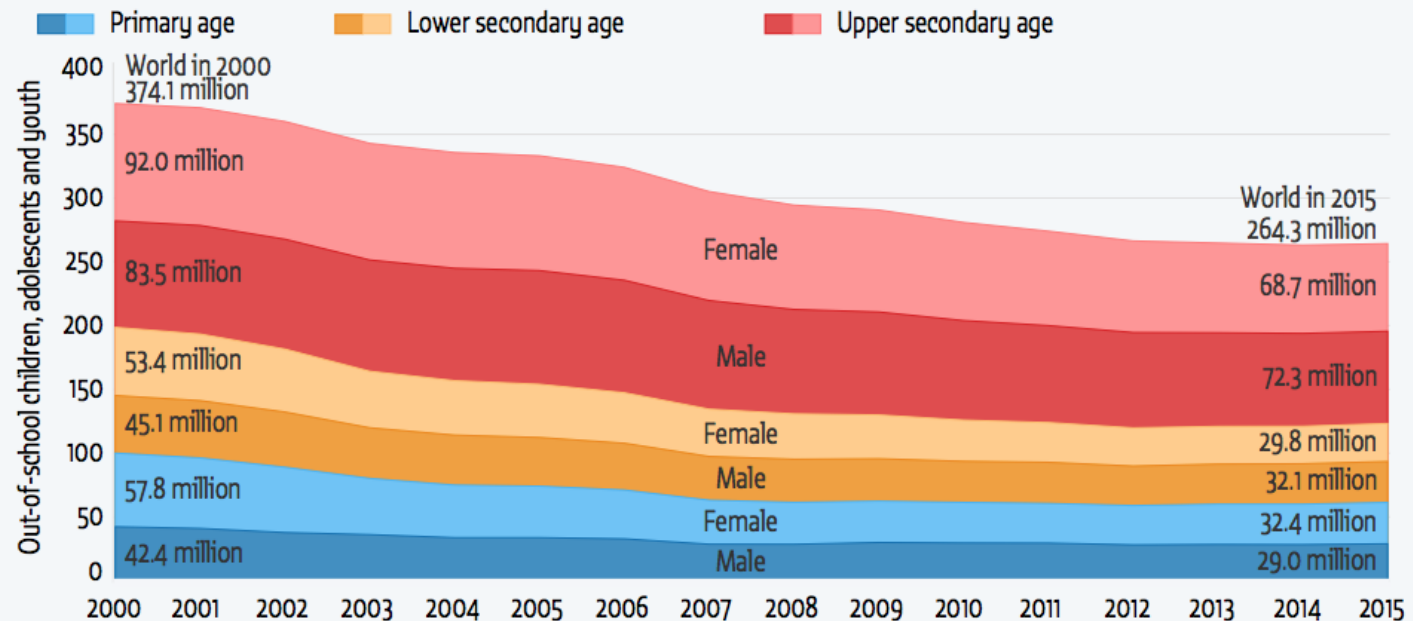
- First report on OOCs in the Philippines prepared by PIDS.
 - Philippine Country Report (one of more than 20 country reports to UNICEF-UNESCO Global Initiative) in 2012, but report only got accepted (with data updates) in 2015 (though draft was well circulated and utilized by DepED).
 - Compared to 2012 data, the 2015 data showed deep declines in OOSC prevalence for 5-yo children and modest declines in primary and secondary ages
 - ❑ Passage and full implementation of mandatory kinder and **K-12 Law**
 - ❑ **Increased resources** made available to DepED
 - ❑ **Effects of CCT** (4Ps) among poor families
- K-12 rollout extending school age by 2 years

1.1 Global Trends in OOSC

- Recent global trends suggest that the number of OOSC fell steadily in decade following 2000, but this progress stopped in recent years.

FIGURE 1

Global number of out-of-school children, adolescents and youth, 2000-2015



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics database.

1.2 Study Objectives

(i) To **estimate and examine** magnitude and rates of OOSC at the national and subnational level

(ii) To **profile OOSC and their families**, discuss reasons why these children are out of school and what makes children at risk of dropping out of school

(ii) To **discuss and recommend policies** for reducing OOSC in the country

Policy Question: What drives the lack of school participation/dropping out, and what can be done to further reduce OOSC in the country?

1.3 DepED programs for reducing OOSC

Program	Description	Profile
Alternative Delivery Modes (ADMs)	Modularized learning and teaching schemes to allow schools to adapt temporarily to changing conditions such as natural disasters and conflicts.	Students in seasonal employment, family separations, income shocks to households, pregnancy. Currently in formal school
Alternative Learning System (ALS)*	Non-formal learning, modularized, delivered in alternative settings by ALS coordinators and teachers	Adults without complete HS degree.

*Flagship program

- Rapid expansion of ALS offerings in certain divisions, some have large operations
- Supported by LGUs, private donors, communities, businesses
- Learners motivated and have almost zero expenses
- Many large programs in jails
- Unclear targets and goals
- Passing rates can be improved, some programs have high passing rates, but completion rates low
- Availability of exams inconsistent
- Take care that it does not turn into a perverse incentive for students in formal schools

2. OOSC Prevalence

- In 2017, about **1.2 Million kids** aged 5-15 were OOSC (**5.3%** about the same as 5.2% in 2014, still lower than 11.7% in 2008); OOSC rate for 5-17 yo is 8.3%

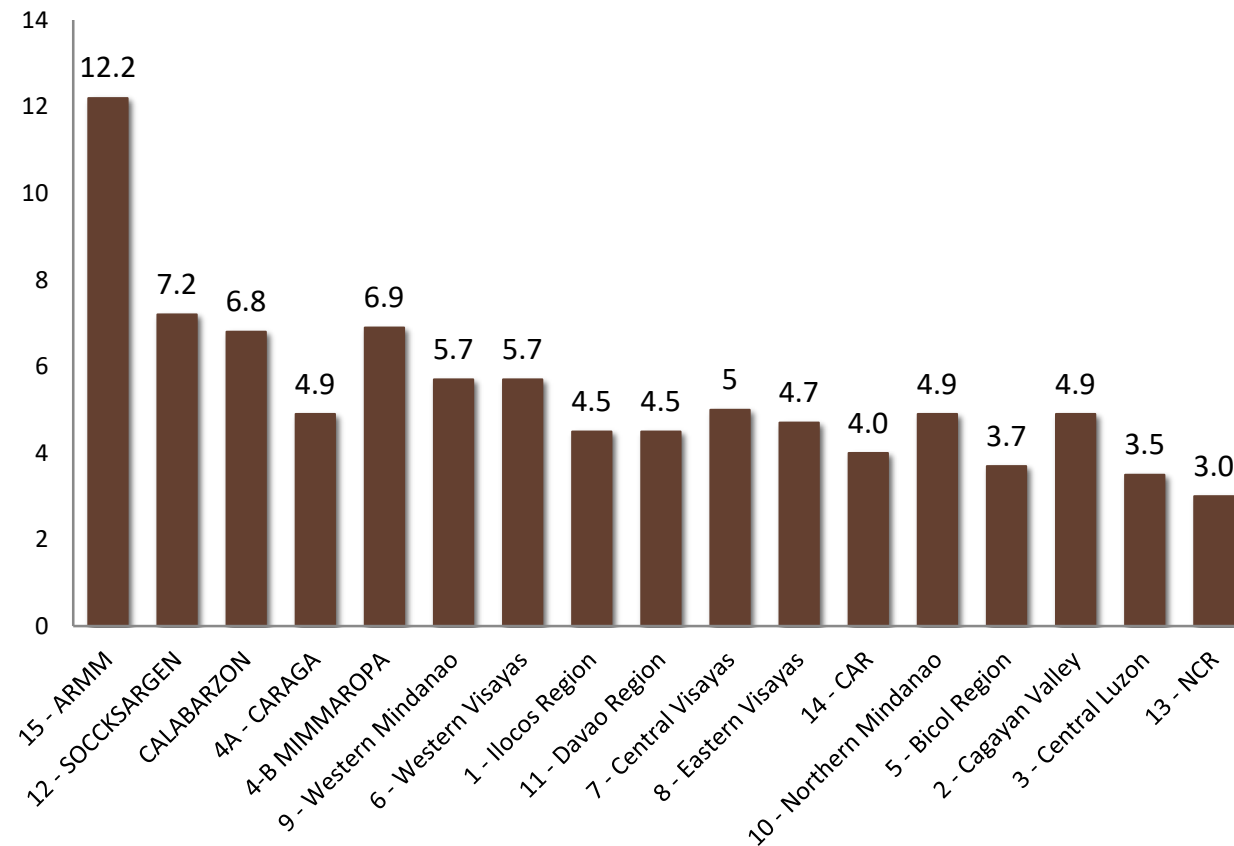
Level	2008	2014	2017	
	Magnitude	Magnitude	Magnitude	Rate
5 year old	776,000	177,000	189,000	9%
6-11 years old	1,270,000	420,000	571,000	4.5%
12-15 years old	980,000	660,000	475,000	5.6%
16-17 years old		---	768,000	17.4%

Source: 2014 and 2017 Annual Poverty Indicator Survey (APIS), Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)

- Increase among Kindergarten-aged and primary aged children; decrease among junior high school aged children; Large number still not in senior high

2.1 Sharp Regional Disparities

Figure 1. Proportion of Children who are Out of School, by Region, 2017



Source: 2017 APIS, PSA

- ARMM still a large challenge to public basic education, also in Mindanao SOCCKSARGEN (very high poverty levels) while OOSC rates lowest in NCR
- MIMAROPA and CALABARZON rates high because of diffuse and difficult terrains or dense population
- Regional differences in OOSC prevalence suggests access constraints and very low income levels are barriers to school participation

2.2 Intersectionalities of Sex and Poverty


3 in every 5

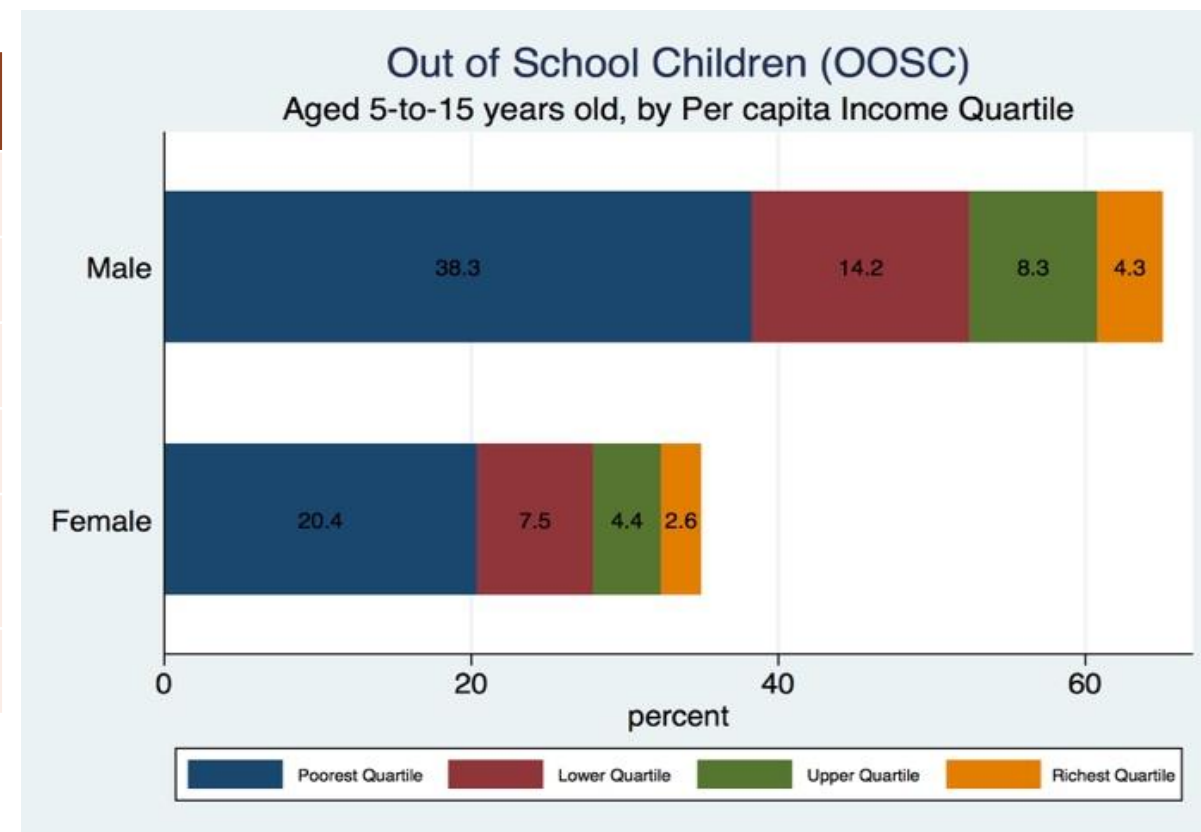
OOSC belong to families
in bottom 25 percent of
income distribution


2 in every 3

OOSC were boys

OOSC Prevalence Rate (in %): 2017

Age Group	Boys	Girls
5 year old	9.1	8.9
6-11 years old	5.4	3.4
12-15 years old	8.0	3.1
16-17 years old	22.3	11.6
Philippines (5-15 years old only)*	6.7	3.8
Philippines (5-17 years old)	10.7	5.7



MAIN REASONS

2.2.1. Reported Reasons Why Kids are Not in School

Reasons for Not ding School	Primary Aged Children						Secondary Aged-Children					
	2014			2017			2014			2017		
	Boys	Girls	Both Sexes	Boys	Girls	Both Sexes	Boys	Girls	Both Sexes	Boys	Girls	Both Sexes
Lack of personal interest	38.2	30.5	36	31.4	27.8	30.2	51.2	29	44.1	60.6	41.8	53.2
High cost of education	15.3	11.2	14.1	13.7	6.4	11.4	25.2	38.3	29.4	22.4	18.9	21
Too young to go to school	9.5	14.6	11	6.9	18.3	10.5						
Illness/Disability	33.7	37.1	34.7	27.0	32.5	28.8	10.4	16.7	12.4	7.8	9.8	8.6
Lack of nearby schools	2.1	2.1	2.1	14.0	0.0	9.6	0.6	2.7	1.3	4.6	4.7	4.6
Employment				0.0	2.6	0.8	6	1.9	4.7	3.4	12.5	7
Other reasons (incl. school records, marriage, housekeeping)	1.2	4.5	2.1	1.4	1.2	1.3	6.6	11.3	8.1	1.2	12.4	5.6

2.3 Boys Also Left Behind in Achievement

National Achievement Test Mean Percent Score by subject, residence and sex (SY 2016-2017)

Residence	Science				HEKASI/Araling Panlipunan				Overall			
	Grade 6*		Grade 10**		Grade 6*		Grade 10*		Grade 6*		Grade 10*	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Rural	31	29	37	34	43	35	51	43	41	36	46	41
Urban	34	33	37	35	47	39	52	45	46	40	47	42
Total	33	30	37	34	44	36	51	44	43	37	46	41
	Filipino				Math				English			
Rural	56	48	54	48	35	37	39	36	42	34	48	42
Urban	59	52	55	50	39	37	38	36	49	42	50	43
Total	57	49	54	49	37	34	39	36	44	37	49	42

Note: Authors' calculations from data provided by DepEd *Missing values = 31.48%;

2.4. Achievement Low and Varying by Area

- Recent NAT results show continuing low overall proficiency levels ($MPS < 50$) for both Grade 6 and Grade 10 students
- Grade 6 are “nearly” proficient in Filipino for problem solving, and information literacy ($50 < MPS < 60$), but low proficiency in critical thinking. Low proficiency dominates in other subject areas. Low proficiency also among grade 10, with least proficiency ($MPS < 40$) in Math and Science.
- Proficiency varying across regions. Among Grade 6 students in 2018, overall proficiency is best in NCR, CALABARZON and ARMM, and least in Davao Region, Bicol Region and Zamboanga Peninsula. Meanwhile, Grade 10 students in the NCR and CAR recorded overall nearly proficient levels particularly for problem solving and information literacy, while students in SOCCSKSARGEN and Zamboanga Peninsula recorded the lowest proficiency levels in all aspects tested.

2.5. Regression Analysis of Non-attendance

- Wealthier less likely to have OOSC, sharper association for secondary-school aged children than primary aged
- Compared to 6yo kids, children aged 7-11 are less likely to be OOSC; Children aged 13-to 15 are more likely to be OOSC than 12-year old kids.
- Every unit increase in pupil-to-teacher ratio associated with increase in odds of nonattendance in school by 6% in primary aged and 3% in secondary aged children
- Boys at higher risk than girls: Girls are 1.9 times in primary, and 2.2 times in secondary to be attending school
- When mothers are more educated, children more likely to stay in school
- For each additional sibling, a child as 1.2 times more risk of being OOSC
- Primary school-age children who are part of families where head is male tend to be less at risk of being OOSC, while for lower secondary school-age children, the risk is higher.

3. Interviews and Field Visits

- ❑ 8 sites, mixed urban/rural, Luzon/Visayas/Mindanao, high and low OOSC rates, primary and secondary levels
- ❑ Division Superintendent or representative, ALS coordinators, other division personnel, principals, guidance counseling coordinators
- ❑ Students-at-risk-of-dropping-out (SARDOs, parents of SARDOs, teachers of SARDOs, ALS learners

3.1. Socio-cultural demand side issues

Age Group	Barriers to school participation and completion	Systemic solutions
Kinder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confusion about start date	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mapping & information campaign
Grades 1-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-readers (leads to anxiety)• Poor academic performance• Undiagnosed learning disabilities• Lack of parental guidance• Abuse and trauma in the home• Poverty, Hunger and cost of transportation• Physical distance from school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remediation• Home visitations• Guidance counseling• School feeding

3.1. Socio-cultural demand side issues

Age Group	Barriers to school participation and completion	Systemic solutions
Grades 7-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barkada • Boys start working • Girls care for younger siblings • Very early pregnancy • Early marriage • Disciplinary problems • Domestic problems (broken families) • Poor attitude toward authority figures and schooling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remediation • ADM (Including Open High School) • Home visitations • Guidance counseling
Grades 10-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of interest because of poor academic performance • Working • Early pregnancy • Poor attitude toward authority figures and schooling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADM (Including Open High School) • Guidance counseling
Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working • Caring for dependents (elderly and/or children) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALS

3.1. Socio-cultural demand side issues

A. Family problems

- main reason for absenteeism and dropping out
 - unstable or absent parental care
 - Abuse and trauma (Domestic/ sexual abuse, incl. incest)
- Children start losing focus, emotionally withdrawing
 - Lack of parental oversight means academic work suffers
- Poor families at greater risk since they are more prone to income shocks and early marriages from early pregnancy

B. Barkada, computer shops and computer games

- Close peer groups engaged in vices together, skip school together
- Computer shops and mobile games lead to absenteeism, lack of sleep, lack of money
- Close dependence on peers and addiction to computer games are symptoms of lack of adult guidance
 - Peer influence channeled correctly can be source of academic and emotional stability

3.1. Socio-cultural demand side issues

C. Economic issues

- Extreme poverty and family size provide multiple sources of risks in non attendance
 - Children not in school because no allowance (20-50 pesos), no transportation, no money for projects, no food
 - Staying home to take care of siblings, transience of families for employment reasons, very young children working
- Delays in schooling makes them overaged, the more overaged they get the less likely they are to stay motivated
- Seasonal work in urban and rural communities

D. Poor Academic Performance

- Often “lack of personal interest” means poor academic performance
- When kids start falling behind in early grades (reading comprehension low), it is difficult to catch up
- Promoting nonreaders beyond the early grades further puts them on trajectory to dropping out
- “Buddy system” used in some schools seem to work to help those left behind in reading and learning

3.1. Socio-cultural demand side issues

E. Early Pregnancy/Marriage

- Pregnancy starts showing up grades 7-11, girls dropout first, followed by the boys once the baby arrives
- No evidence of effective RH education to prevent pregnancies

F. Low Education of Parents

- Low education parents are unable to counsel and guide children as the latter exceed them in educational attainment
- Low education parents seem to have difficulties “forcing” their children to attend school,
 - they have lower levels power in the household, can’t understand report cards
- Since they have no experience with higher level schooling, they cannot help children with academics

3.2. Supply Side Issues

A. Teacher Workload

- How much time is spent on work unrelated to teaching?
 - Teachers are overworked, unable to focus on teaching and on individual needs of students
 - Additional assignments - administrative, guidance, DRR coordinator, budget officer, health officer, safety officer etc
 - Work from other agencies - immunization, DRR, community mapping, deworming, feeding, census, election, anti-drug programs (all require reports)
 - Attendance in trainings and seminars also require reports
- Intervention needed is not salary increase but expansion of admin workforce so teachers can focus on teaching



3.2. Supply Side Issues



B. Performance Incentives may erode quality

- Performance-based bonus (PBB) and the push to report “zero dropouts”
 - Dropout rates become the single most important metric of teacher quality
- While No formal policy of “mass promotion” but the “incentive” systems have created perverse effects
 - Number of dropouts can be traced back to the individual teachers, they feel strong pressure to keep all students on the rolls
 - Even if students do not pass exams, do not meet the required number of days in attendance
 - Each child that falls behind must be “explained” by the teacher

3.2. Supply Side Issues

C. Physical access

- Distance to nearest high schools still long for many students
- Remote communities have few students, not enough to justify a complete school
- When children hit adulthood, they get the education through ALS, but that is too late
- In urban areas there are schools, but not enough classrooms, class sizes large and shifting in practice

4. Recommendations

- PSA should add follow up (multiple response) question on “lack of interest”:

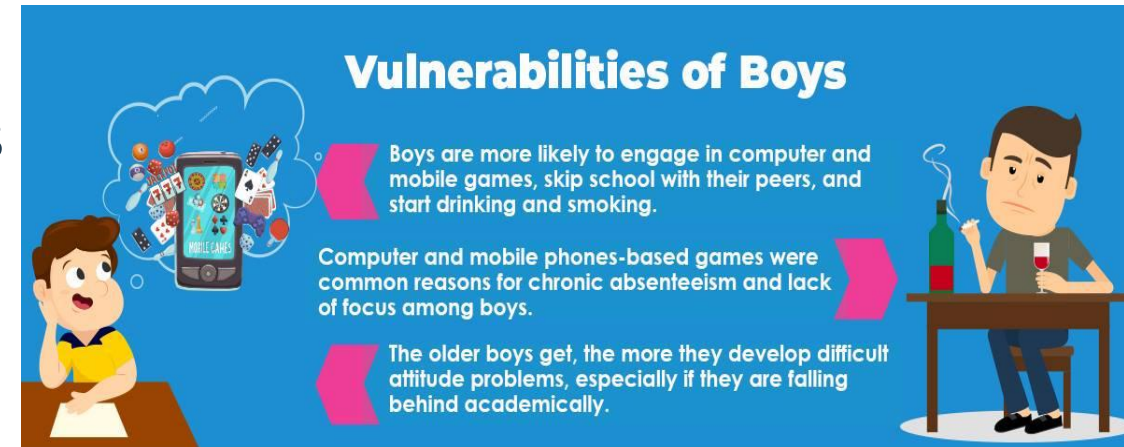
Please tell us which of the following were true when your child left school:

- Grades were low
- Child was older than their classmates
- Child had difficulty reading or following the lessons
- Child experienced bullying –
Child did not like the teacher
- Parents are separated
- A parent is away for work
- Child refused to go to school without explanation
- Child was influenced by friends (i.e. barkada) - Child had previously moved schools

4. Recommendations

➤ Addressing Gender Gap

- Use different learning teachings for boy and girls, incorporating more activity based learning tools
- Adopt Affirmative Action (Hire More Male Teachers) at least for a few years and work with CHED to provide more teaching scholarships to males
- Increase Allowances for Boys (especially for High School) under Pantawid program, implemented by DSWD with DepED, to address differing opportunity costs to schooling of boys and girls



4. Recommendations

- Regarding Teacher workload:
 - Conduct Time-use study for teachers, human resource allocation study (being conducted by ADB)
 - Decongest the workload of teachers, move administrative work to administrative staffing (including guidance counsellors) with DBM support in the long term, and private sector support (and undergrad “interns” with CHED support) in the short term
 - Rationalize trainings and seminars, minimize work from other agencies
- LGU and community support to minimize truancy, monitor computer shops, support funds to schools to help with what they need
- Encourage innovations and scale up “best practices” from the ground
 - peer mentoring, early reading remediation

4. Recommendations

- Conduct reading programs in early ages to foster appreciation for reading and a peer environment that encourages reading
 - Re-examine the practice of putting low performing students together, there is evidence from the field that this practice persists
- Develop special programs for overaged and chronically low performing children
- Provide additional support for students with very low education parents, provide parents with continuing education as well
- Formulate national program to assist specific geographic areas (GIDA, and BARMM), that are being “left behind” in school participation (and learning)

4. Recommendations

- OOSC is largely traced back to children living in poverty and multiple interacting barriers to not only attending school, but also realizing their full academic potential (from large families, transience of families, unstable home conditions, children without adult guidance, accumulated effects of chronic hunger and undernutrition).
Ultimately, the solution to OOSC lies in long-term poverty reduction programs meant to increase the resilience of children and communities to various risks on their welfare. Important for DepED to work hand in hand through a whole-of-nation approach with various stakeholders not only to continue providing improved access to education, but also to ensure quality of education for all.



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2018 PIDS Discussion Paper on
[Out of School Children](#)

2019 PIDS Policy Note on
[“Pressures on public school teachers and implications on quality”](#)

2018 PIDS Policy Note on
[“Barriers and bottlenecks to school attendance: An update”](#)

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