

A “second chance” to develop the human capital of out-of-school youth and adults

Alternative Learning System in the Philippines

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World Bank

July 2018



WORLD BANK GROUP

Philippines Education Note

MAY 2018 | NO.1

Education Policy Note

A Second Chance to Develop the Human Capital of Out-of-School Youth and Adults:

The Philippines Alternative Learning System¹

Introduction

Worldwide, approximately 781 million adults are unable to read or write in any language.² While adult literacy rates have increased significantly over the past several decades, recent progress largely reflects a more-educated younger generation replacing a less-educated older generation. Achievements within age cohorts have been far more modest, as adult learning programs in both developed and developing countries have yielded mixed results. Meanwhile, illiteracy remains an important barrier to poverty alleviation, and lifetime earnings are closely correlated with educational attainment across countries and regions. For many students, completing secondary school is an especially critical educational milestone, as applying to higher-education institutions, technical and vocational training programs, and formal-sector jobs often requires a secondary-education diploma. Individuals who do not complete secondary school often face limited options to both further develop and leverage their human capital.

The Philippines has made remarkable progress in improving its public basic education system over the past decade, yet half of Filipino students fail to complete the full cycle of basic education.³ Currently, almost all Filipino children enter primary school at age 6, but only about 80 percent of primary students complete the sixth grade. At the secondary level, only one-third of Filipino children start junior high school on time, and one-third of those drop out before reaching the tenth grade. Students who drop out of primary or secondary school are often unable to obtain further formal education or vocational training, and many go on to work in



Outline

- International literature on adult learning programs
- Data and surveys
- Findings
 - Challenges for ALS learners (Demand-side)
 - Challenges in delivering ALS (Supply-side)
 - Value of ALS
- Conclusion and policy recommendations



Key challenges to adult learning programs

- International evidence → limited and mixed results
- Highest opportunity cost of time
 - Lost wages, missed child care, missed agricultural work
- Lower brain plasticity
 - Adults do learn, but brain is less malleable than in childhood and early adolescence. Rapid depreciation.
- Higher uncertainty of economic returns
 - Am I going to be able to get a better job at my age?



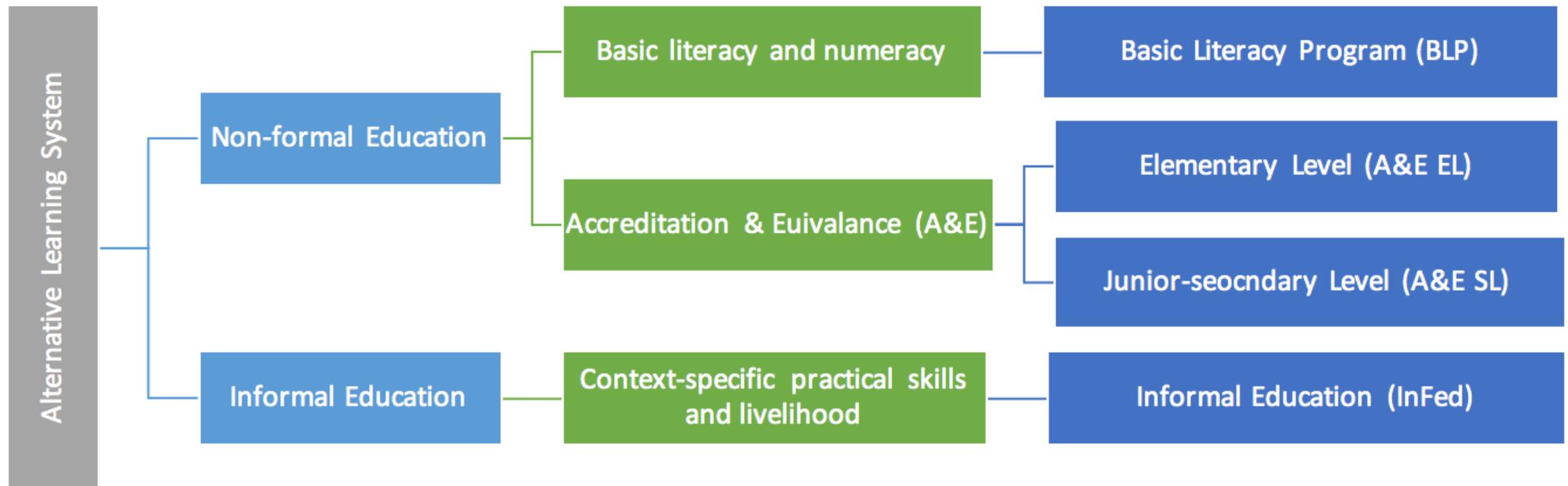
Data and surveys

- Significant challenges in the data for ALS; dropouts are mobile and invisible in the economy and society
- DepEd & WB jointly designed and conducted a series of surveys:
 - The 2013 ALS Survey in NCR plus
 - The 2015 ALS National Data Collection nationwide
 - The 2017 ALS Snapshot Survey in 5 locations in the country



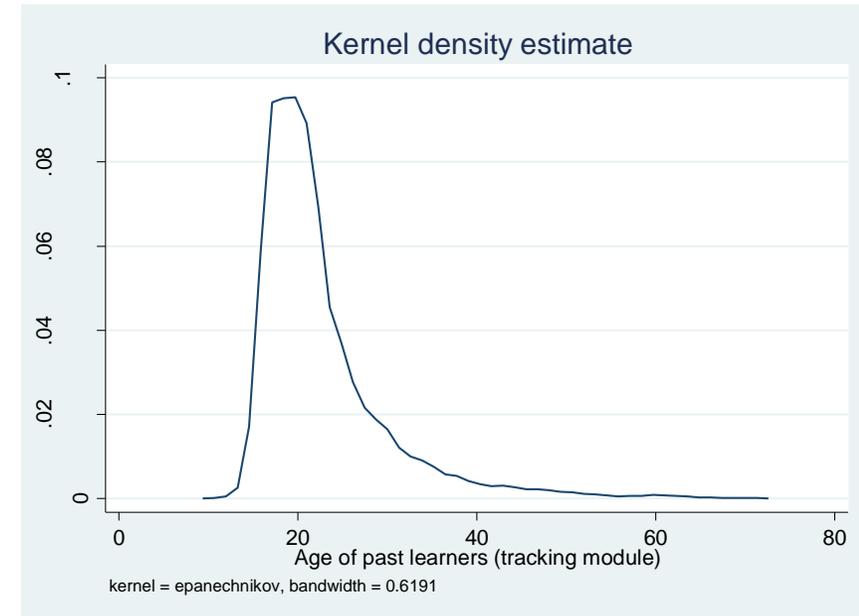
Alternative Learning System..?

- Managed by DepEd
- Delivered by learning facilitators (like teachers) across the country
- Tailored to the needs of individual learners
- With passing of the A&E exam, an official certificate will be granted



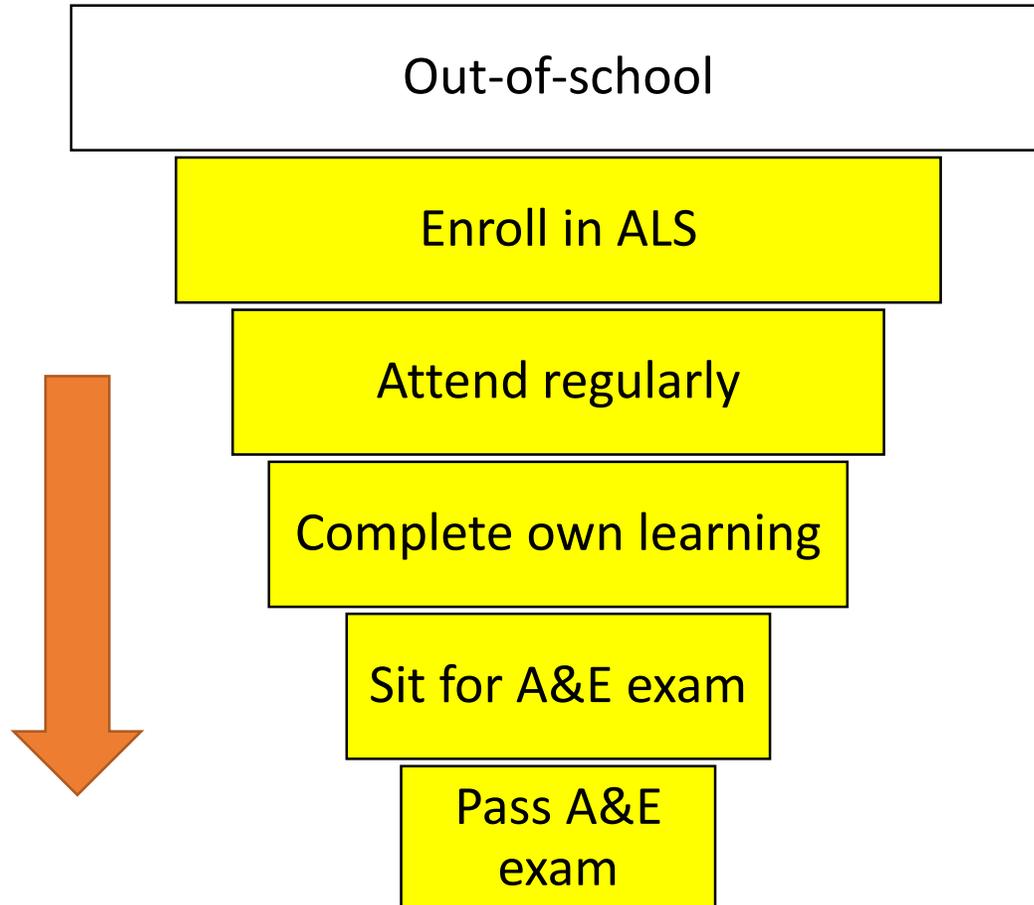
Who are ALS learners?

- Learners: People who (a) are above the school age, (b) did not complete basic education, and (c) are out of school.
 - Potentially 6.6 million* (age 15-30) → 0.6 million enrolled in 2017
 - All age accepted → mostly young adults
 - Mostly school dropouts at HS
- Target population will decline with better education, but this process will be very slow due to the population growth



Education attainment of past learners (tracking module)	Sex of past learners (tracking module)		Total
	Male	Female	
No grade	0.16	0.16	0.16
Some ES	3.54	2.65	3.15
ES graduate	10.11	9.23	9.72
Some HS	86.16	87.80	86.88
HS graduate	0.03	0.15	0.08
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

Demand- side challenges in ALS

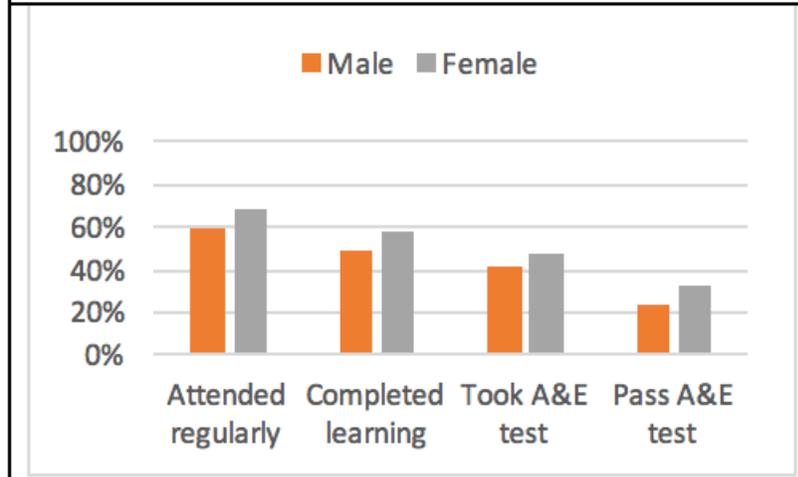


- Emerging progress, but limited performance.
 - less than 10% young ALS prospective learners enrolled
 - 60% of those initially enrolled attended regularly
 - less than 20% of ALS enrollees passed the A&E exam
 - Wide gaps across the country
 - 4% of prospective learners enrolled, and 1% passed the A&E in ARMM

Who are likely performing well in ALS?

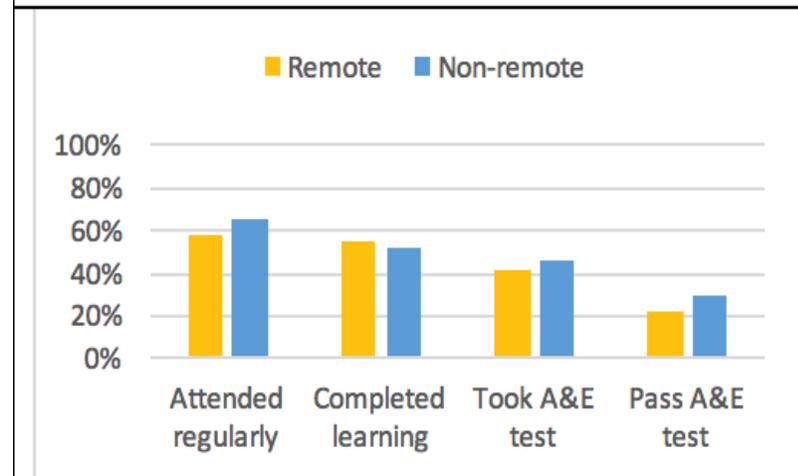
- Attendance, completion own learning, taking the A&E exam, and passing the exam are strongly correlated.
- A simple regression shows:
 - Male and younger enrollees are likely to drop out.
 - Enrollees who *never attended HS* are much less likely to take the A&E exam and pass it.
 - Remote enrollees try to complete learning but are less motivated for the A&E exam.

Figure 21: ALS Performance Indicators by Gender



Source: ALS Snapshot Survey 2017, World Bank.

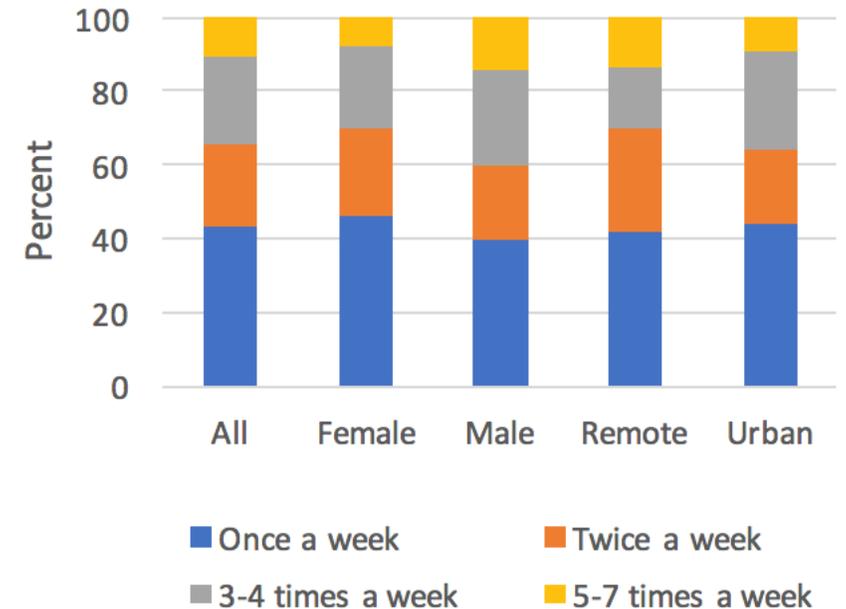
Figure 22: ALS Performance Indicators in Rural and Urban Areas



Learners are coping with high opportunity cost?

- About 60% of ALS enrollees employed; others engaged in unpaid tasks or childcare.
- More than half attend two sessions or more weekly despite high opportunity cost.
- Work hours are shorter for working-ALS learners than the average.
- Outside of ALS sessions, learners use a few hours daily for learning activities (e.g. self-study, talk with teachers, reading, etc)

Figure 11: Frequency of Attendance (sessions per week)



Source: ALS Snapshot Survey 2017; World Bank.

Supply-side challenges in ALS

Operating
expenses

Learning
centers

Learning
materials

Monitoring

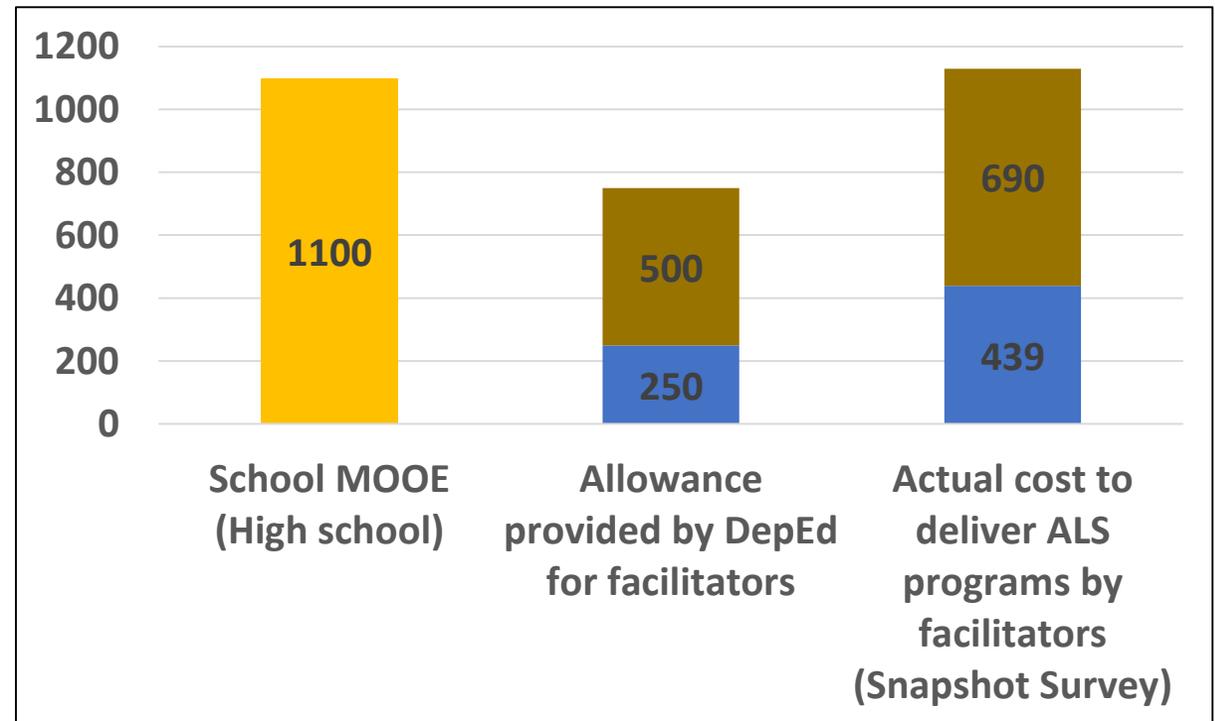
- Delivery of ALS is complex as it needs to be responsive to different localities.



Operational costs to deliver ALS session

- 60% cost paid for transportation and basic supplies such as paper and folders
- Very high trans. cost for remote areas.
- Little resources are left to buy other learning/instructional materials
- Total cost exceeds the allowances given by DepEd by far

DepEd funding and actual expenditures by ALS facilitator (Php) – adjusted to weekly amount

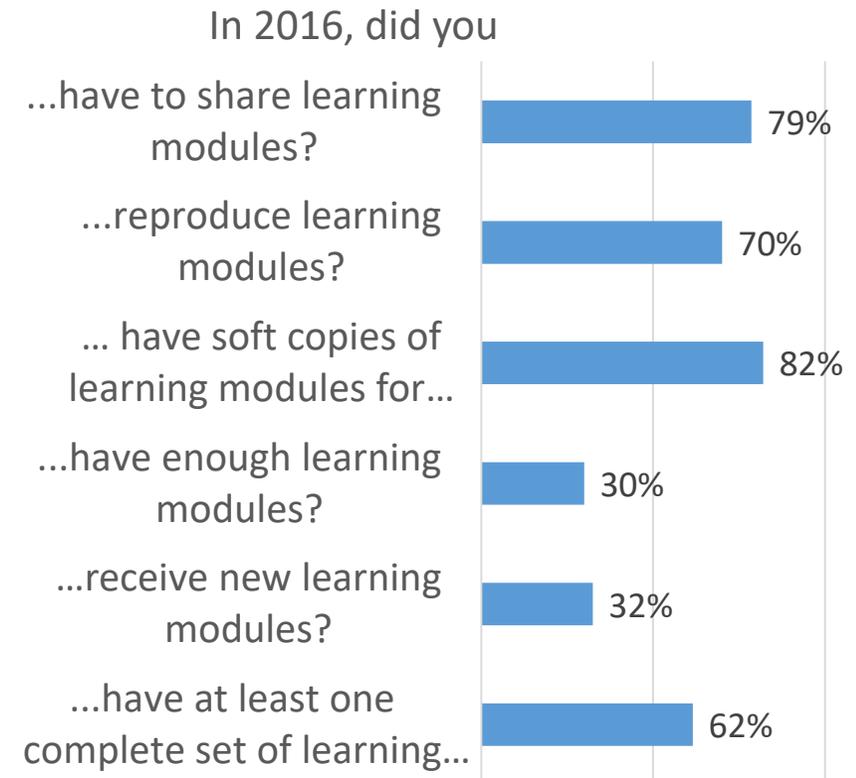


Note: "School MOOE" – computing variable costs per classroom teacher (excluding School fixed amount) using Boncodin Formula

Learning modules used in ALS

- The availability of ALS learning modules are a persistent challenge on the ground
- 70% facilitators don't have enough for their learners nor receive copies
- As a result, only 1 out of 3 active learners can take home the modules for self-learning; but more practices are critical for adult learners.

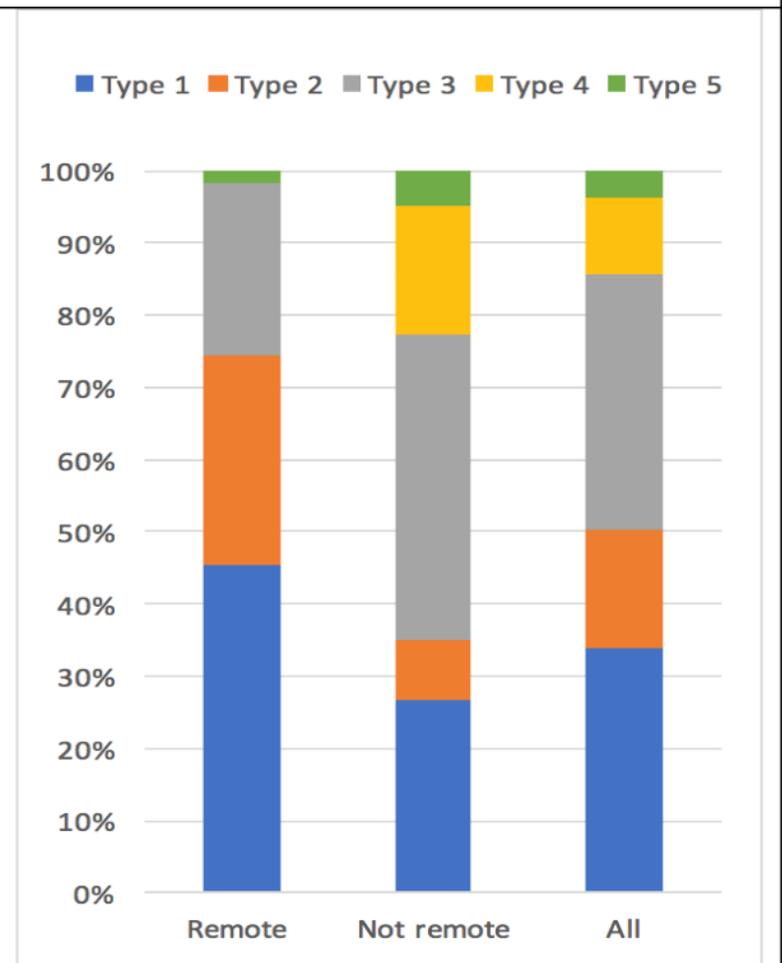
Reported availability of ALS learning modules (% of facilitators)



Quality of learning environment

- ALS facilities vary (e.g. Type 1 – open-air space; Type 2 – light materials like bipa & soft wood; Type 3 – concrete & hard building, etc)
- Sharp contrast between remote and urban learning centers.
- A simple regression analysis shows that the well-equipped facilities (Type 5) is strongly associated with attendance and completion of learners in ALS.
 - Highlights the need to maximize “public schools” that are well-equipped and –located.

Figure 18: Distribution of ALS Learning Facility by Type

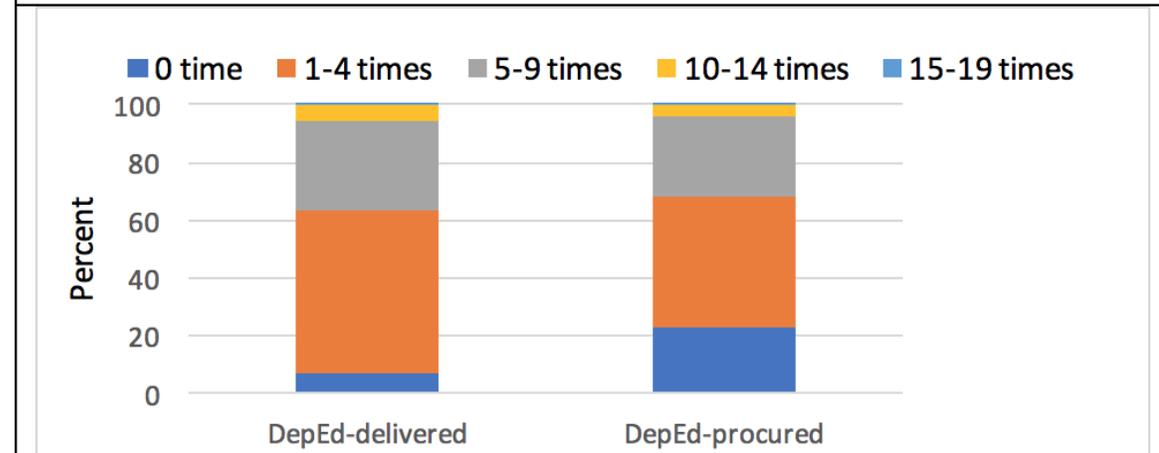


Source: ALS Snapshot Survey 2017; World Bank.

Is the delivery model in ALS effective?

- Though supervision is critical, it is hard and costly for ALS.
- Current supervision mechanism is inefficient for contracted facilitators, but they required more supervision.
- No significant difference in the performance across the two contract types.
- Effectively delivery model should have good supervision arrangement based on “contract-type” of facilitators and “performance-based” incentive mechanism.

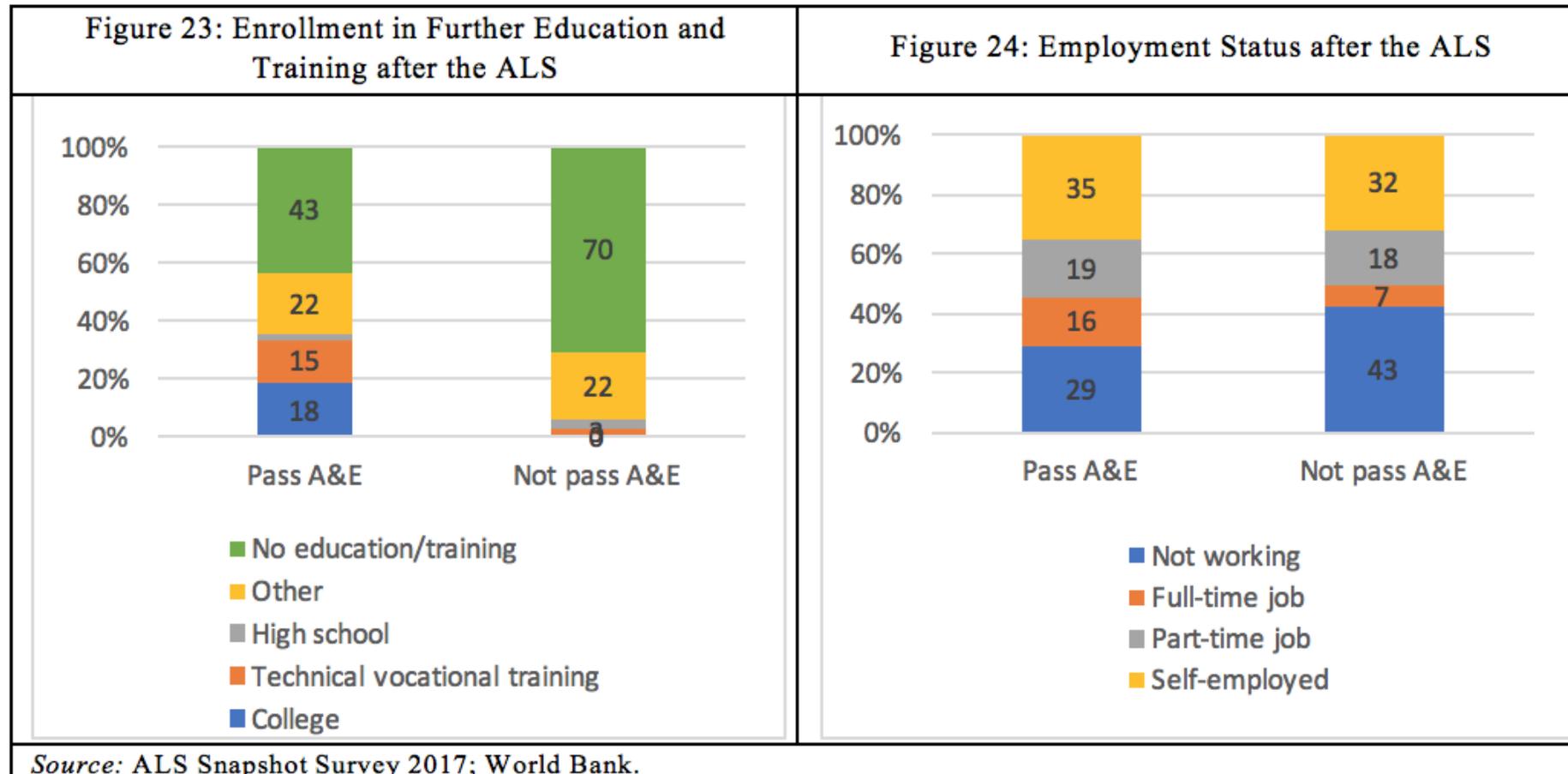
Figure 20: Number of Facilitator Monitoring Visits per Month by Program Model



Source: Yamauchi et al. 2016; ALS National Data Collection 2015; DepEd; and World Bank.

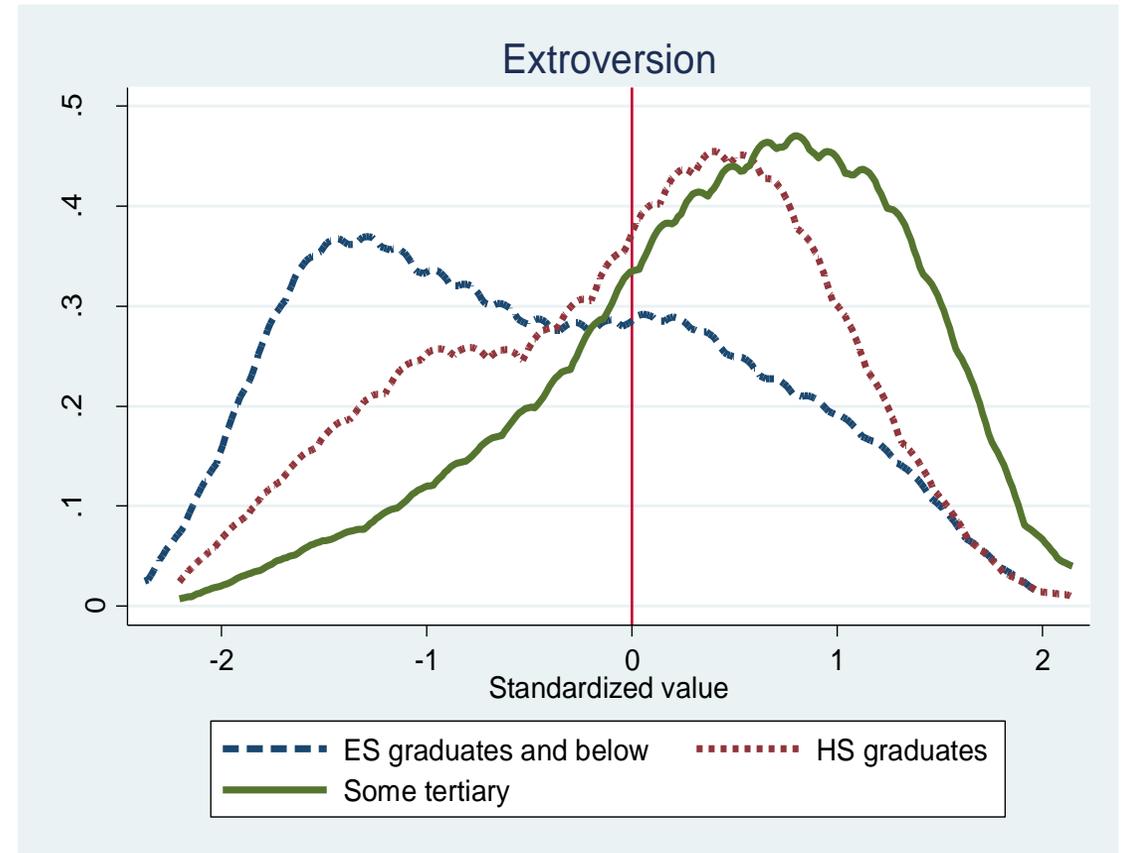
Are learners benefiting from ALS? Who benefits?

The value of the ALS certificate for employment or further education can be high, but this is only depending on the A&E exam result.



Socioemotional skills and ALS learners

- Socioemotional skills (SES) are strongly correlated with increased employability.
- Less educated Filipinos score poorly on grit, decision making, agreeableness, and extraversion.
- 1 std in SES is associated with a 9% increase in ave. daily earnings (approximately US\$2). Particularly large increases among women, young workers, and less-educated workers.



Acosta, Pablo; Igarashi, Takiko; Olfindo, Rosechin; Rutkowski, Jan. 2017. Developing Socioemotional Skills for the Philippines' Labor Market. Directions in Development—Human Development;. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Conclusion

- ALS has potential for enabling enrollees to further develop their human capital, with positive effects on their long-term educational outcomes and employment prospects.
- Yet, current low pass rate shows that the program is not fully effective, especially in ARMM.
- While imperative to address significant challenges we saw, successful reform will require well-designed and prioritized policies coupled with rigorous monitoring and evaluation as ALS is large and complex.



Policy recommendations

Support learners to cope with high opportunity costs for enrollees

- Maximize use of public schools, better information dissemination

Improve the ALS results to reduce uncertainty of economic returns

- A&E exam administration, context-specific skills training

Alleviate financial and operational bottlenecks to ALS implementation

- Address critical shortages but do efficiently
- Effective delivery model with strong monitoring

Focus on disparities in the ALS quality

- ARMM

Increase relevance of the ALS learning content

- Assess competencies, skills and motivations of ALS learners

Improve a synergy between ALS, ADM, and formal schools in policies and field implementation

- Keep good efforts in K-12 and support students at risk while they are in school

Thank you



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Team included Marites Tiongco (DLSU); Vicente Paqueo (PIDS); and field supervisors including Jhat Palma, Rowena Maximo, Kamalanlee Suleiman, Myrna Basanes, and Ildebrando Ruaya.

Special thanks to DepEd for their wholehearted support and guidance.