



2008/ED/EFA/MRT/PI/36

Country profile prepared for the  
*Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2008*  
*Education for All by 2015: will we make it?*

# **Philippines**

## **Non-formal education**

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2007

*This profile was commissioned by the Education for All Global Monitoring Report as background information to assist in drafting the 2008 report. It has not been edited by the team. The views and opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author(s) and should not be attributed to the EFA Global Monitoring Report or to UNESCO. The profile can be cited with the following reference: "Country Profile commissioned for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008, Education for All by 2015: will we make it? For further information, please contact [efareport@unesco.org](mailto:efareport@unesco.org)*

## **Global Monitoring Report on Non-Formal Education (PHILIPPINES)**

**By Carolina Guererro**

### **Part I. Country Level Information on NFE**

#### *1. How is NFE conceptualized in the country?*

At the turn of the century, major changes in the field of Non-Formal Education in the Philippines occurred such as the change in the concept, the approach, the focus, and the outcomes. Consequently, various programs evolved as did problems and issues related to these reforms in Non-Formal Education. The principal area of reform was the shift in the concept from Non-Formal Education to the Alternative Learning System (ALS) which is generally recognized now as “the other side of basic education” (where the one side is the formal education).

Presently, Non-Formal Education is viewed as one of two components of the Alternative Learning System, the other being Informal Education. However, informal education is a very new program unlike non-formal education. Therefore, the major programs now in operation which are the Basic Literacy Program, the Accreditation and Equivalency Program and the Indigenous Peoples Education Program are all nonformal education interventions. These are future Alternative Learning System activities which include:

- National Household Survey on Functional Literacy
- Development of a Special Alternative Learning System Education Curriculum for the Hearing Impaired
- E-Test for the Accreditation and Equivalency Program

In 2006, the Philippine EFA 2015 National Action Plan was drawn up with an identified central goal: to provide basic competencies to all Filipinos in order to achieve functional literacy for all. To achieve this, the Plan identified certain “production” and “enabling” tasks one of which pertains to the ALS which has been tasked to “transform nonformal and informal interventions into an alternative learning system yielding more EFA benefits”.

On the question about a balance between program categories, if one were to exclusively categorize these ALS programs either as literacy/ numeracy, equivalency, social and lifeskills, or income generation, then, we can say that the Basic Literacy Program is categorized as literacy and numeracy, the Accreditation and Equivalency Program is categorized as equivalency, the Informal Education Program is categorized as social and lifeskills, and the Indigenous Peoples Education as cultural education. There is no income-generation program existing. The category on lifeskills however, is a common thread that runs across all Alternative Learning System programs because these programs apply the lifeskills approach in teaching and learning.

For better understanding of the terms in the new paradigm, the following definitions/descriptions are presented below:

**1.) Alternative Learning System** – is a parallel learning system that provides a viable alternative to the existing formal education instruction. It encompasses both the nonformal and informal sources of knowledge and skills

**2.) Nonformal Education (NFE)** – is any organized, systematic educational activity carried outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to a segment of the population

**3.) Informal Education** – is a lifelong process of learning by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experiences at home, at work, at play and from life itself

**4.) Basic Education** – is the education intended to meet basic learning needs which lays the foundation on which subsequent learning can be based. It encompasses early childhood, elementary and high school education as well as alternative learning systems for children, OSY and adult learners and for those with special needs.

**5.) Lifeskills as an approach in ALS** - The Philippines adopts the World Health Organization (WHO) definition of lifeskills. The lifeskills approach to teaching-learning is the principal methodology used in ALS curriculum where active-learning and cooperative-learning strategies are applied.

#### **6.) Functional Literacy**

*A range of skills and competencies – cognitive, affective and behavioral which enables individuals to:*

- *Live and work as human persons*
- *Develop their potential*
- *Make critical and informed decisions*
- *Function effectively in society within the context of their environment and that of the wider community (local, regional, national, global) in order to improve the quality of their life and that of society.*

#### **7.) Children**

pre-school children	-	2-5 years old
school-age children	-	6 to 11 years old (Grade 1 to Grade 6) Elementary Level
	-	12 to 15 years old (1 <sup>st</sup> year to 4 <sup>th</sup> year) Secondary Level

8.) Youth - 15 to 24 years old

9.) Adults - 25 years old and beyond

10.) Out-Of-School Youth (OSY) and adults – youth and adults who lack the 10 years of basic schooling provided by government (Elementary and Secondary levels)

## 2. *What are the legal foundations of NFE policies?*

As always, it is best to trace the source of an educational system such as the ALS to the basic and fundamental law of the land. The Philippine Constitution provides for a free and compulsory elementary education and free secondary education through the Department of Education (DepEd). This means that all Filipinos have a constitutional right to basic education and the DepEd is mandated to provide this service to all Filipinos.

In the 80's, the global community launched a campaign called Education for All (EFA) that aimed to eradicate illiteracy and promote functional literacy for all peoples of the world. Our nation was a signatory to this and as such, committed to providing education for all Filipinos.

Against this backdrop, the Philippine government put in place the following legal measures and commitment that serve as basis for the introduction of ALS in the Philippine educational system:

### ***Republic Act 9155: The Governance Act of Basic Education***

On June 6, 2001, the Philippine Congress passed a law that defined the governance of basic education. Among many of its provisions, this law recognized the ALS as a complement of formal education and a major component of basic education with a clearly defined role within the overall educational goals.

### ***Executive Order No. 356 : Renaming the Bureau of Nonformal Education (BNFE) to the Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS)***

On September 13, 2004, the Office of the President of the Republic of the Philippines renamed the DepEd's Bureau of Nonformal Education to the Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS) through this Executive Order signed by Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Not only does this Order reiterate the Bureau's mandate to address the learning needs of marginalized learners but it also directs BALS to provide a systematic and flexible approach to reach all types of learners **outside** the school system.

In addition, the Executive Order spelled out the functions of the BALS. They include the following:

- To address the learning needs of all marginalized groups including the deprived, depressed and underserved citizens
- To coordinate with various agencies for skills development of the learners
- To expand access to educational opportunities for citizens of different interests, capabilities, demographic characteristics, and socio-economic origins and status
- To promote certification and accreditation for basic education of alternative learning programs both formal and informal in nature.

***In summary, by virtue of this Executive Order, the BALS has been given the stewardship to guide the development of the country's ALS.***

### ***Education for All (EFA) Plan for 2015***

In 2004, the Philippine government once again committed to participate in the global campaign for Education for All by the year 2015. In this Plan, one of the major goals is "transforming all nonformal and informal education interventions into an ALS to yield more EFA benefits". This means that the goal is to have in place a credible ALS (consisting of NFE and Informal Education) that shall cause to increase functional literacy among the marginalized groups of learners.

And to this end, certain tasks will need to be undertaken, namely:

1. Develop and strengthen the DepEd's BALS and mandate it to serve as the government agency to guide the development of the country's ALS.
2. Make available public funds for ALS programs of GOs and NGOs subject to the guidelines of BALS.
3. Build and develop a constituency for ALS development.
4. Conduct research and studies to test cost-effective options for delivering quality ALS.
5. Undertake an inventory of available resources in localities for literacy interventions outside schools.
6. Ensure a vigorous and credible system for reliably assessing, measuring, validating and communicating competencies acquired through NFE and informal education.

***In summary, the EFA Plan for 2015 prescribes urgent tasks that will guide the Department of Education in fulfilling the spirit of RA 9155 and EO 356 and ultimately the vision of the Philippine Constitution. It embodies the various programs, projects and activities necessary to achieve the goal of quality ALS for all marginalized Filipino learners.***

### ***3. How are the NFE programs governed and financed?***

- Official body supervising NFE programmes

The Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS), an office within the Department of Education (DepED) is mandated to serve as the main government agency to guide the evolution of the country's alternative learning system. Among its key function are:

- to promote, improve, monitor and evaluate (but not necessarily deliver) alternative learning interventions for functional literacy of out-of-school youth, and adults, for ethnic minorities and other groups with special educational needs that cannot be met by schools, and for desired competencies that are part of lifelong learning.
- to contract with or make grants to providers of nonformal education
- define and set standards for adult literacy programs
- accredit and recognize providers meeting standards
- monitor and evaluate adult literacy outcomes among individuals and populations

- Other official bodies involved in governance of NFE

Local government units (LGUs), non-government organizations (NGOs) and private groups constitute the support network for ALS at grassroots level.

- Main sources of NFE financing
  - Government through Department of Education provides funds for implementation of ALS programs.
  - Government through LGUs also provide funds such as the countryside development funds and special education funds
  - Donors
- National Budget Allocation and the percentage (%) share of ALS in the National budget of the Department of Education

***CY 2004-2006***

<i>Total annual budget of the Department of Education</i>	-	<b><i>P</i></b>	<b><i>112 B</i></b>
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<i>Total ALS budget of the Department of Education</i>	-		<b><i>76 M</i></b>
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<i>Percentage (%) share of ALS in the budget of the Department of Education</i>	-		<b><i>.068%</i></b>
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***CY 2007***

<i>Total annual budget of the Department of Education</i>	-	<b><i>P</i></b>	<b><i>134.7 B</i></b>
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<i>Total ALS budget of the Department of Education</i>	-		<b><i>230.0 M</i></b>
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<i>Percentage (%) share of ALS in the budget of the Department of Education</i>	-		<b><i>.17%</i></b>
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***Summary:***

From CY 2006 to CY 2007, there was a ***16.9%*** increase in the ALS budget of the Department of Education

- Number of Target Learners

*These are the children 6-11 years old who should be in Elementary Schools (Grades 1 to 6)*

Population	<b>12,280,388</b>
In-school	<b>10,438,329</b>
Out-of-School	<b>1,842,058</b>

*These are the children 12-15 years old who should be in Secondary Schools (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> year High School)*

Population	<b>7,296,824</b>
In-school	<b>3,356,539</b>
Out-of-School	<b>3,940,285</b>

*These are the youth and adults in the labor force 16 years old and above heads of Households who have not completed basic education or are dropouts from school.*

Population	<b>10.5 M</b>
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*Summary of Target Learners for ALS*

6-11 years old	<b>1,842,058</b>
12-15 years old	<b>3,940,285</b>
16 yrs. old and above	<b><u>10,500,000</u></b>

**TOTAL Target learners** **16,282,343 - This represents 20% of the 82M total Philippine Population (2004)**

**4. To what extent is NFE formally supported and managed?**

(Please describe any national monitoring or evaluation mechanisms for NFE)

*Kumustahan sa Barangay* which literally means “Updating in the Village” is an innovative participatory advocacy, and at the same time a monitoring and evaluation strategy that serves as a focal venue for the promotion of nonformal education or alternative learning system at the community level. This mechanism brings together various implementers and stakeholders of nonformal education to document successes and challenges on program implementation at the grassroots level.

This activity takes place at the *Punlaan* or Community Learning Center in the village where learners, implementers and other stakeholders are encouraged to share experiences on the implementation status, issues and gaps of the nonformal education programs and projects in their locale. The Community Learning Center houses all efforts and initiatives on nonformal education. A center is built for each *barangay* or village, however not all centers are operational yet in some parts of the country. The operationalization of the centers is made possible through partnership of the Department of Education with Local Government Units.

The aim of this mechanism is to mobilize local efforts and rally support for sustainable nonformal programs' implementation. On a bigger scale, this mechanism provides wisdom in the formulation of standard policy directions and measures in the implementation of nonformal education programs at the national level.

Please see Annex \_ for the performance indicators being used in the monitoring and evaluation of nonformal education programs and projects.

(Please describe any organized research activities into NFE programmes or NFE training at the national level (e.g. is there a department for NFE at the national university?)

The Bureau of Alternative Learning System has recently set-up an electronic database template that will house data and information on NFE/ALS. Corresponding data gathering forms have been fielded based on a set of indicators for NFE/ALS to support Education for All goals of the Philippines. Uploading and downloading of information will be done electronically. This information exchange is set to be operationalized despite lack of hardware support such as complex servers, local area network and computer peripherals and portals. Funding for these is still being proposed.

At the moment, design and development of MIS and electronic database for NFE/ALS is underway.

Meanwhile, compilation of success stories and region-initiated projects based on small-scale region-specific studies is in place at the regional level. These are being published in various advocacy materials and performance reports. Some have even been documented in film.

(Is there a national framework for the training of NFE educators and trainers? Does this involve recruitment, initial training, refresher training, support and supervision?)

#### On recruitment

The hiring of Mobile Teachers (specialized teachers of nonformal education programs in far-flung and difficult-to-reach areas of the country) is anchored on the existing Hiring Guidelines for Teachers of the Philippine Department of Education. The recruitment and hiring is taken care of by the Division Office in the provinces. Since the nature of work in nonformal education is different and comparatively more difficult than a formal classroom system, a set of new and additional guidelines is being proposed for adoption that will highlight additional qualifications befitting a Mobile Teacher position such as background and experiences in community work, good public relations, etcetera.

#### On initial training

All newly recruited Mobile Teachers undergo basic training both at the national and local levels. The Bureau of Alternative Learning System at the national level provides orientation on NFE programs and projects: how they are implemented, how are learning materials used, and what are the principles and theories surrounding teaching and learning among adults in the NFE.

Meanwhile, induction programs are being provided by either the Regional or the Division Office where new recruits are being ushered in and given orientation in program implementation including administrative aspects of the job.

#### Refresher training

Regular training is very important among NFE implementers such as the Mobile Teachers because just like all teachers in the classroom, their training and preparation took place in a formal school environment through the Teacher Education Institutions in the country.

It is imperative therefore to provide regular refresher courses and training programs to Mobile Teachers and other NFE/ALS implementers. Training programs are being provided both at the national and regional levels. Since funding for training programs is not regularly provided at the national level, sourcing out funds is a continuous effort in order to convene Mobile Teachers at the national level at least once a year. In some cases, registration fee for board and lodging is being charged to training participants when funding from the national office is scarce.

### Support and supervision

The Department of Education is structured with a supervisory hierarchy. Policy, standard and program formulation emanates from the national or central office. These are being carried out at the grassroots level with direct guidance and supervision by the regional, division and district levels.

Support comes in both technical and financial. In-service training is a regular undertaking where regional and division supervisors organize small-scale enrichment programs based on immediate needs and varying work circumstances in their areas. A mechanism called USAPAN (literally means "Talks"), a coined term from Usapan at Aksiyon sa ALS Ngayon (Talks and Actions in the NFE/Alternative Learning System Today) has just been recently put in place. This is a scheme that aims to support the professional growth and develop competence of the Mobile Teachers by organizing them into groups or clusters to obtain updates and learn from each other for better delivery of the NFE/ALS Programs.

Financial support such as a meager amount for photocopying of modules and transportation expenses is also made available to Mobile Teachers. Meanwhile, a welfare benefit package (consisted of hazard pay and additional transportation allowances) has already been proposed to the National Department of Budget and Management for appropriate funding. Also awaiting approval is a proposed career path for Mobile Teachers that entitles them to promotion in a defined career progression scheme, regular training and enhancement programs, scholarships and support to other forms of professional development.

**Part II. Information About Major Types of Nonformal Education Activities**

Types of NFE programs	Core categories	Service Providers	Objectives	Target groups	Enrolments	Teaching learning activities	Outcomes	Remarks
1. Basic Literacy Program (BLP)	<p>The basic literacy program covers the following core categories 1. Literacy and Numeracy</p> <p>2. Life skills training</p> <p>3. Early Childhood Care &amp; Education</p> <p>4. Cultural education</p>	The service providers for these NFE programs belong to categories 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15 & 16	This program aims to provide illiterate out-of-school children, youth and adults the basic reading, writing & numeracy skills	<p>The target groups belong to categories 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, &amp; *12</p> <p>* The Basic Literacy Program will soon be delivered to the hearing impaired learners using sign language and lip reading</p>	<p>The number of enrollees in this program based on local or field level reports are *52,748 enrollees</p> <p>* data to be confirmed through National Household Survey to be conducted this year.</p>	<p><b>Before the actual conduct of the learning intervention</b> the following activities are undertaken: Advocacy &amp; Social Mobilization, Community Survey, Recruitment &amp; organization of learners, conduct of screening &amp; orientation.</p> <p><b>During the actual conduct of the learning intervention</b> the following teaching learning activities are utilized</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured sessions like face to face learning sessions using the Basic Literacy Learning materials</li> <li>• one-on-one individual tutorial</li> <li>• cooperative group learning</li> <li>• demonstration sessions</li> <li>• remediation</li> <li>• active learning strategies</li> <li>• lifeskills approach using the ALS competencies and values</li> </ul> <p>Basically, the teaching-learning approaches in this program utilize the adult learning principles, making it different from the traditional classroom</p>	<p>The number of completers in this program based on local or field level reports are *51,540</p> <p>* data to be confirmed through National Household Survey</p>	<p><u>On Core Categories for Basic Literacy Program</u></p> <p>- Primarily, BLP is categorized as literacy and numeracy program</p> <p>- However, the teaching-learning methodology uses the lifeskills approach which requires special training for the facilitator of learning.</p> <p>- BLP is also categorized under early childhood care and Education because of the special program for mothers (Mothercraft) and the family (Family Basic Literacy)</p> <p>- BLP is also cultural education because the program has been customized for indigenous groups and medium of instruction is mother tongue</p> <p>- All together, BLP is a straight literacy program that uses the lifeskills approach with content modified according to</p>

						<p>approaches.  <b>After the learning intervention</b> the following activities are undertaken:          conduct of the achievement test, post program counseling.</p>	<p>different learning groups</p> <p><u>On Target groups for Basic Literacy Program</u>          - Our data on actual beneficiaries of BLP will need to be validated in a national household survey to be conducted this year.          - However, the mandate is to make the program accessible to out-of-school children, youth and adults who have not acquired the basic literacy skills because either they have never been to schools or they dropped out.          - Strictly speaking, target learners for priority 1 is the 15 years old and above, and priority 2 is those below 15 years of age. This is because, ALS is encouraged to integrate school-age children into the mainstream schooling since it is where much government resources have been poured into.</p>
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Types of NFE programs	Core categories	Service Providers	Objectives	Target groups	Enrolments	Teaching learning activities	Outcomes	Remarks
2. Accreditation & Equivalency Program (A&E) This is a certification of learning for out of school youth and adults who are unable to avail of the formal school system or who have dropped out of formal elementary or secondary education	This program covers the following categories  1. Literacy and Numeracy  2. Equivalency schooling  3. Life skills training	The service providers for these NFE programs belong to categories 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9,12, 13, 14, 15 & 16	This program aims to provide learners a range of alternative pathways in order that they may continue their learning outside of the formal school system and upgrade their skills & competencies and functional literacy	The target groups belong to categories 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9.	The number of enrollees in this program based on local or field level reports are *38,334 enrollees  * data to be confirmed through National Household Survey	<b>Before the actual conduct of learning intervention</b> the following activities were undertaken: Advocacy & Social Mobilization, Community Survey, Recruitment & organization of learners, conduct of screening & orientation. <b>During the actual conduct of learning intervention</b> the following teaching learning activities were utilized <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• face to face learning sessions</li> <li>• individual tutorial</li> <li>• cooperative group learning</li> <li>• active learning strategies</li> <li>• life skills approach</li> <li>• ICT through the use of radio based instruction</li> <li>• digitized learning modules for on line learning</li> </ul> Basically, the teaching-learning approaches in this program utilized the adult learning principles, making it different from the traditional approaches.	*33,401 completers  * data to be confirmed through National Household Survey	<u>On core Categories for the Accreditation &amp; Equivalency Program</u>  - Primarily, the A&E Program is for equivalency schooling - However, the teaching-learning methodology uses the lifeskills approach which requires special training - A&E is also a literacy and numeracy program especially because of the elementary level portion of the program which starts with basic literacy skills development.

						<p><b>After the learning intervention</b> the following activities were undertaken: conduct of achievement test, post program counseling &amp; accreditation &amp; equivalency test</p>		
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Types of NFE programs	Core categories	Service Providers	Objectives	Target groups	Enrolments	Teaching learning activities	Outcomes	Remarks
3. Indigenous Peoples Education (IP Educ) This program addresses the learning needs, interests, aspirations, and worldview of the IPs	This program covers the following categories  1. Literacy and Numeracy  2. Life skills training  2. Cultural Education	The service providers for these NFE programs belong to categories 1, 2, 3, 9, 10 & 15	This program aims to :  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop ALS intervention that is acceptable to the IPs in general and specific IP communities in particular</li> <li>provide illiterate out-of-school youth and adult the basic reading, writing &amp; numeracy</li> </ul>	The target groups belong to categories 1, 2, 4 & 10.	This is a new program of the Bureau and therefore will have only the data from the pilot areas or less than 500 learners for this initial year	The following activities are undertaken: Advocacy & Social Mobilization, Community Survey, Recruitment & organization of learners, conduct of screening & orientation.		<p><u>On Core Categories for Indigenous Peoples Education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Indigenous Peoples Education makes use of the curriculum for Basic Literacy and therefore is categorized as literacy and numeracy.</li> <li>- The content, however, is based on the Indigenous People's Rights Act which makes the program cultural education</li> <li>- The teaching methodology is lifeskills approach and therefore can also be classified as lifeskills training.</li> </ul> <p><u>On Service Providers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The service providers of ALS programs are of the same category</li> </ul>

								<p>whatever program is being provided.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Generally, ALS is provided by private groups, NGOs and local government units using their own sources of funds.</li><li>- On a small scale, the Department of Education, through the Bureau of Alternative Learning System is able to distribute some funds to the local Department of Education units for them to use to contract services of private groups. In this case, the Department of Education supervises the implementation of these programs that use the government (Department fo Education) funds.</li></ul>
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Types of NFE programs	Core categories	Service Providers	Objectives	Target groups	Enrolments	Teaching learning activities	Outcomes
<p>4. Informal Education - This program is focused on the packaging of special interest short term courses for continuing education program for specific interest groups.</p>	<p>This program covers the following categories</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Further or continuing education/further professional development</li> <li>2. Life skills training</li> </ol>	<p>The service providers for these NFE programs belong to categories 1, 2, 3, &amp; 4</p>	<p>This program aims to provide interest-based and lifelong learning for individuals and groups with focus on special interests and life experiences geared towards the promotion of personal development</p>	<p>The target groups belong to categories 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 &amp; 9.</p>	<p>The project is still in its initial stage and no enrolment reports have been submitted.</p>	<p>The activities undertaken are Advocacy &amp; Social Mobilization &amp; Community Survey,</p>	

Types of NFE programs	Core categories	Service Providers	Objectives	Target groups	Enrolments	Teaching learning activities	Outcomes
<p>5. Madrasah Education It is a program for the marginalized migrant Muslim groups who have moved out of their countries due to a problem on peace and order.</p>	<p>This program covers the following categories</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Literacy and Numeracy</li> <li>2. Life skills training</li> <li>3. Religious Education</li> <li>4. Equivalency schooling</li> </ol>	<p>The service providers for these NFE programs belong to categories 1, 2, &amp; 3</p>	<p>This program aims to foster better understanding between the migrant muslims and their host communities.</p>	<p>The target groups belong to categories 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6</p>	<p>This is a new program of the Bureau and therefore will have only the data from the pilot areas or less than 320 learners for initial implementation this year.</p>	<p>The activities undertaken are Advocacy and Social Mobilization and Community Survey.</p>	

## **Conclusion**

Finally, this paper was written with the help of some BALS staff and with the use of

- official reports from the field submitted to my office
- papers that I wrote for different presentation purposes
- existing documents prepared by my office in coordination with other offices for planning purposes

Sources used as reference were:

- Teacher Induction Module – by Dr. Carolina S. Guerrero
- The Other Side of Basic Education – by Dr. Carolina S. Guerrero
- EFA 2015 National Plan of Action – by the Department of Education
- Republic Act 9155
- Executive Order 356
- 5-Year ALS Master Plan 2006-2010
- ALS Performance Indicators