



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



G A B A Y (Guide)

Strengthening Inclusive Education for Blind, Deaf and Deafblind Children

Year 5 Annual Performance Report July 2023 to June 2024



This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was prepared by Resources for the Blind, Inc.

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) or the United States Government.

September 2024

YEAR 5 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

July 2023 to June 2024



SEPTEMBER 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Executive Summary	7
II.	Summary of Results	9
III.	Major Accomplishments and Outputs	15
	A. Intermediate Result 1	25
	B. Intermediate Result 2	80
	C. Intermediate Result 3	151
	D. Others	181
	E. Procurement	229
	F. Human Resource	231
IV.	Status of Milestone Delivered	234
V.	Performance Indicator Tracking Table	236
VI.	Integration of Cross-cutting Issues and USAID Forward Priorities	243
	A. Gender Equality and Female Empowerment	
	B. Sustainability Mechanisms	
	C. Environmental Compliance	
	D. Global Climate Change	
	E. Local Capacity Building Development	
VII.	Stakeholders Participation	251
	A. Internal	251
	1. Gabay Level	
	2. RBI Level	
	3. iSEND	
	4. Other Education Consultants	
	5. Other Medical Consultants	
	B. External	254
	1. DepEd	
	2. LGUs	
	3. CSOs and DPOs	
	4. Parents	
	5. Learners with Disabilities	
	C. USAID/Philippines Support	257
VIII.	Lessons Learned	258
IX.	Financial Summary	262
X.	Snapshots/Media Releases	263
XI.	Last 6 Months Plan	268
XII.	Annexes	269
	A. Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Braille Reading Assessment (BRA) Endline Report	
	B. School Monitoring Report	
	C. Year 4 and Year 5 Annual Debriefing and Symposium Report	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">D. Gaps and Recommendations/Actions on Disability-Inclusive Education in support to Sustainable Developmental Goal 4 (SDG 4) 2030E. Sustainability PlansF. Gabay Accomplishments from Year 1 to Year 5G. “The Guide” Compendium of Gabay Good Practice Documentation	
--	---	--

ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
BHPI	Better Hearing Philippines, Inc.
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CHO	City Health Office
CHWs	Community Health Workers
CSDs	Children with Sensorial Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSWDO	City Social Welfare and Development Office
DBSP	Deaf Blind Support Philippines, Inc.
DepEd	Department of Education
DPO	Disabled People's Organization
EGRA-HI	Early Grades Reading Assessment for the Hearing Impaired
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSL	Filipino Sign Language
H/ATC	Hearing / Audiological Test Center
ILRC	Inclusive Learning Resource Center
IR	Intermediate Result
LGU	Local Government Unit
LSB	Local School Board
LV	Low Vision
MDVI	Multiple Disabilities and Visual Impairment
NGO	Non-Government Organizations
Ophtha	Ophthalmologist
Opto	Optometrist
PAVIC	Parents Advocate for Visually Impaired Children
PDAO	Persons with Disability Affairs Office
PEEC	Primary Eye and Ear Care
PFGE	Partnership for Growth with Equity
RBI	Resources for the Blind, Inc.
SPED	Special Education
STS	School-to-School International
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

LIST OF TABLES & FIGURES

Table 1	Summary of Gabay Results in Year 5
Table 2	Professional Designation of the Participants attended PEEC training sessions conducted by Gabay
Table 3	Number of CHWs attended and completed the training per province and by gender
Table 4	Profile of the CHWs who completed the training
Table 5	Schedule of two-day screening for the three municipalities
Table 6	Breakdown of children screened by site and gender
Table 7	Profile of Findings of Children Screened
Table 8	Persons Served by the Audiological/Hearing Evaluation Centers and Test Results from 2022 to 2024
Table 9	Number of Screened and Referred Learners
Table 10	Gender and Disability of the 23 Referred Learners
Table 11	CSDs enrolled from Non-graded to Grade 3 for SY 2023-2024 as of Dec. 2023: By site, gender, and grade level
Table 12	CSDs enrolled for SY 2023-2024 as of Dec. 2023: By Disability
Table 13	CSDs Enrolled for SY 2023-2024 as of Dec. 2023: By site, gender and grade-level
Table 14	New CSDs enrolled from Non-graded to Grade 3: By site, gender, and grade level
Table 15	Enrollment of CSDs in SY 2022- 2023 and SY 2023-2024 (Non-Graded, Kinder, Grades 1 to 3): Percent Increase
Table 16	SY 2024-2025 Enrollment of LWDs as of Dec. 2023 in new sites by division and grade level (Non- graded, Kinder, Grades 1 to 3)
Table 17	SY 2024-2025 enrollment of LWDs as of Dec. 2023 in the new sites by disabilities
Table 18	Deaf Mentor Participants Per Area
Table 19	Gender and Geographical Distribution of Teacher Participants in Los Baños
Table 20	Gender and Geographical Distribution of Teacher Participants in Bacacay
Table 21	Gender and Geographical Distribution of Parent Participants in Los Baños
Table 22	Gender and Geographical Distribution of Parent Participants in Bacacay

Table 23	Training Participants: Roles, Gender, and DepEd Division in Tanaua4
Table 24	Resource persons and Training participants in each ILRC
Table 25	Results of CRLA administered to Grade 1 Learners last May 2024
Table 26	Summary of Intermediate Results (IR) Activities
Table 27	Milestone Accomplished for Year 5 (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024)
Table 28	Gabay Performance Indicator Tracking Table Year 5
Table 29	Amount of Milestones Received from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024
Table 30	Comparative Expenses Per Quarter and the Total Expenses from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024
Table 31	Quarters 21-22: Six (6) Months Upcoming Activities After Year 5 (July - Dec. 2024)

Figure 1	Age distribution of the children screened under Gabay project
Figure 2	Gabay four essential steps during the screening
Figure 3	Distribution of screened children with and without sensorial disabilities
Figure 4	Distribution of screened children by age groups
Figure 5	Distribution of CSDs enrollment per grade level
Figure 6	Distribution of CSDs enrollment by gender
Figure 7	Distribution of Grades 4-6 enrollees by gender
Figure 8	Distribution of Grade 4-6 enrollees by grade levels
Figure 9	Distribution of Learners by Disabilities` from Grades 4-6 per Division
Figure 10	Distribution of New Enrollees across all sites by gender
Figure 11	Distribution of New Enrollees across all sites by grade levels
Figure 12	Distribution of New Enrollees across all sites by disabilities
Figure 13	Enrollment of LWDs in the new sites by gender
Figure 14	Baseline enrollment of LWDs in the new sites by grade levels
Figure 15	Composition of Participants in the Symposium & Planning Workshops
Figure 16	Gabay's Organizational Chart for Year 5

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gabay (Guide): Strengthening Inclusive Education for Blind, Deaf and Deafblind Children has the overall goal to increase access to quality education for Blind, Deaf and Deafblind learners. This project contributes to the attainment of the goals of USAID/Philippines' Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) and the Partnership for Growth with Equity (PFGE) framework. Gabay promotes broad-based and inclusive economic growth in the Philippines by improving education governance and improving reading skills at the primary level. From Year 1 (2019) to Year 4 (2023) Gabay was implemented in three (3) sites. Two major sites are in Luzon: 1) Batangas City and Batangas Province, and 2) Sorsogon City and Sorsogon Province; One (1) site in the Visayas: Maasin City and Southern Leyte. By Year 5 (July 2023 to June 2024), the project expanded its reach to three (3) additional project sites :

Municipality	Province	Region
1. Los Baños	Laguna	IV-A
2. Bacacay	Albay	V
3. Tanauan	Leyte	VIII

Three Intermediate Results (IR) are:

IR 1 (Improved enrolment of Blind, Deaf and Deafblind children) focuses on increasing the number of children referred to schools for enrollment by training Community Health Workers (CHW) to capacitate them in screening children in their areas and consequently, boost the number of children screened for visual and hearing impairments. On Year 5, the identification and referral of children with other disabilities were included, such as intellectual disability (ID), learning disabilities (LD), autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Over the 5 years of project implementation, the training, screening, and referral strategies of Gabay resulted to a total of 520 referred children with vision and hearing problems for enrollment and a 308% increase in the number of enrollees among learners who are blind, deaf and deafblind.

IR2 (Improved reading performance among Blind and Deaf Learners) emphasizes on improving the reading performance of learners by building capacities of teachers and school officials.

Trainings and workshops were conducted on teaching blind and deaf learners, developing learning materials and intervention programs, using assistive technology, and conducting assessments. These also ensure increased access of deaf and blind learners to learning materials and increased availability and use of assistive technology. Year 5 trainings and workshops also aimed to capacitate the educators and community on intellectual disability (ID), learning disabilities (LD), autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The training programs provided teaching strategies and classroom management strategies that resulted to a wider understanding of disabilities to ensure that the education needs of these children, particularly the reading skills, are adequately supported. The follow-on evaluation of reading performance among kinder, grades 1 to 3 including the non-graded blind and deaf learners was conducted using Braille Reading Assessment and Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) tools, respectively.

IR3 (Improved Local Government attention to the needs of children with sensorial disabilities) primarily aimed to capacitate the community and local government units to advocate for, develop, and sustain inclusive education communities for CWDs. Trainings and workshops led to the development of local CWD champions who are equipped with an increased knowledge of sensorial disabilities, children's rights, and local government policies and services. It also resulted to the development of inclusive education policies and sustainability plans that ensures specific resource allocations for CWDs. The capstone is the establishment of modular ILRCs in all project sites that showcased the cooperative work of the DepEd, LGU, and the community (Parents, DPOs, and CSOs)

II. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Table 1. Summary of Gabay Results in Year 5

Intermediate Result	Performance Indicators	Total Year 5 Target	Quarterly Accomplishment				Total Accomplishment for Y5 (Q17 to Q20)	Annual Performance Achieved to the End of Reporting Period (%)
			Q17 Jul. -Sept 2023	Qtr. 18 Oct. -Dec. 2023	Qtr. 19 Jan. -Mar 2024	Qtr. 20 Apr.-Jun 2024		
IR 1: Improved enrollment of blind, deaf and deaf-blind children	ES.1-56 Number of learners with improved access to education through USG-assisted programs (formerly Number of referred children enrolled at DepEd School) (1)	40	3	41	42	0	86	215%
	Percent increase in enrollment of children with sensorial disabilities Note: Baseline: 135 (SY2019-2020) Numerator: Number of enrolled blind, deaf, and deafblind learners in SY 2022-2023 Denominator: Number of enrolled blind and deaf learners in SY 2019-2020 (2)	+133.33% (270+45 new CSDs)		407.41% Note: Total number of CSD enrollee in existing sites SY 2023-24 = 685 685-135/135 = 407.41	377.78% Note: (645-135)/135 x 100 = 377.78	+308.89% Note: (552-135)/135 x 100 = 308.89%	+308.89%	+308.89%

Outcome 1: Increased referrals of blind, deaf and deaf-blind children not in school to DepEd	Number of referred children for enrollment (3)	40	22	41	42	11	116	290%
<i>Output 1:</i> Increased capacity of health service providers to screen children	Number of Community Health Workers with improved scores (4)	0	114	0	0	0	114	114%
<i>Output 2:</i> Increased number of children screened for visual and hearing impairments	Number of children screened (5)	400	271	0	88	128	487	121.75%
IR 2: Improved reading performance among blind and deaf learners	Reading scores for EGRA – HI (6)	Endline Data	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	-	-
	ES 1.8-1 Number of local basic education policies or deliberated with inputs from USAID supported analyses/ databases (formerly Number of DepEd policies adopting Gabay modules and materials) (7)	3	0	2	0	1	3	100%
Outcome 1: Increased access of deaf and blind learners to learning materials	Number of children with sensorial disabilities reached with USG assistance (8)	0	271	112	53	2241	2677	2677%
	ES.1-3 Number of learners in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings	417	0	361	1726	378	2465	591.13%%

	reached with USG assistance (9)							
Outcome 2: Improved capacity of teachers to teach blind and deaf learners	Number of teachers developed new and appropriate teaching strategies / methods for blind and deaf learners (10)	134	0	77	64	0	141	105.22%
Outcome 3: Improved capacity of DepEd to develop reading interventions for blind and deaf learners	Number of reading interventions developed for blind and deaf learners (11)	134	0	77	64	6	147	109.70%
	Supp 7: Number of parents or community members trained to support children's education with USG assistance (12)	100	0	84	36	0	120	120%
<i>Output 1:</i> Increased availability of assistive technology for blind and deaf learners	Number of learners using assistive learning devices (13)	0	0	64	32	260	356	356%
<i>Output 2:</i> Increased capacity to develop learning materials for blind and deaf learners	ES.1-10 Number of primary or secondary textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) provided with USG assistance (formerly Number of primary or secondary textbooks and other teaching	75	222	371	161	6695	7449	9932%

	and learning materials (TLMs) that are inclusively representative provided with USG assistance) (14)							
<i>Output 3:</i> Improved capacity of DepEd officials and teachers to conduct reading assessment to deaf learners	ES.1-6 Number of educators who complete professional development activities with USG assistance (15)	134	0	139	130	23	292	217.91%
	ES.1-12 Number of education administrators and officials who complete professional development activities with USG assistance (16)	50	0	30	24	0	54	108%
IR 3: Improved local government attention to the needs of children with sensorial disabilities	Number of inclusive-education policies created by LGUs (17)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
	Number of LGUs with resource allocations for children with disabilities (18)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
	Number of new resource centers (19)	3	0	0	3	0	3	100%
Outcome 1: Improved capacity of parents/ disabled people's orgs. (DPOs)/ civil society orgs. (CSOs) to	Number of LGU engagement plans developed by parents/ DPOs/ CSOs/peers (20)	0	0	5	3	0	8	800%
	ES.1-13 Number of	3	0	3	0	0	3	100%

engage local governments	parent teacher associations (PTAs) or community-based school governance structures engaged in primary or secondary education supported with USG assistance (21)							
Output 1: Increased knowledge of parents/DPOs/CSOs on sensorial disabilities and children's rights	Number of individuals participating in trainings with increased knowledge of sensorial disabilities and children's rights (22)	45	0	55	121	0	176	391.11%
Output 2: Increased knowledge of parents/DPOs/CSOs on Local Government policies and services	Number of individuals participating in trainings with increased knowledge of LGU policies and services	45	0	55	121	0	176	391.11%

III. MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OUTPUTS

From June 2019 to July 2023, Gabay was implemented in three (3) sites: Batangas City and Batangas Province, Sorsogon City and Sorsogon Province in Luzon, and Maasin City and Southern Leyte in the Visayas.

By June 2023, USAID approved the 18-month extension of Gabay from July 1, 2023 (to December 30, 2024). The rationale for the extension is anchored on:

1. R.A. 11650 *“A Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners with Disabilities...”* (2022) that highlighted the child find system, Inclusive Learning Resource Center (ILRC), and special needs education teachers.
2. RA 11106: *“Filipino Sign Language Act”* (2018) that emphasized on FSL as a medium of instruction, deaf teachers’ promotion, and FSL in teacher education programs.

The project extension continues to pursue the following intermediate results:

IR1: Improved enrollment (through screening of disabilities and referrals to DepEd);

IR2: Improved reading performance (through teachers and parents training, specialized and assistive technology equipment, learning resources and reading assessments); and

IR3: Improved local government attention (by engaging Persons with Disabilities Affairs Office or PDAO and LGUs).

The objectives of the Gabay extension is also aligned with the 2023 – 2028 Philippine Development Plan that focused on its three (3) additional project sites:

Municipality	Province	Region
1. Los Baños	Laguna	IV-A
2. Bacacay	Albay	V
3. Tanauan	Leyte	VIII

With the approval of Gabay's 18th-month extension, the focus shifted towards Modular ILRCs using the developed ILRC Operations Manual as a reference to its three (3) identified additional sites.

DepEd and LGU Courtesy Calls and Orientation in Additional Sites

With this, Gabay conducted courtesy visits and orientations to the DepEd Central Office, as well as the regional and division offices, schools and LGUs involved in these target sites, as part of their planned activities to model the Modular ILRC establishments.

The purpose of the meeting was to establish mutual understanding and cooperation among the relevant stakeholders for the successful implementation of Project Gabay's 18-month extension.

By achieving the stated objectives, the meeting aims to ensure that all participants are well-informed, aligned, and prepared to contribute effectively to the project's continued progress.

1. Inform and update on the 18-month extension of Project Gabay, providing a comprehensive understanding of the project activities,
2. Discuss and clarify the roles and involvement of the participating agencies in the implementation of the Project Gabay extension,
3. Gain awareness of the upcoming activities that will be undertaken during the extension period, and
4. Establish and strengthen relationships, facilitate communication, and foster collaboration among the involved parties.

1. DepEd Central Office

June 29, 2023 | 2:30pm–3:30pm | Office of the Undersecretary for Curriculum & Teaching (OUCT)



Attended by Undersecretary for Curriculum and Teaching, USEC Gina Gonong, the meeting was held between RBI – Gabay and DepEd Officials from Bureau of Learning Delivery, Student Inclusion Division and Bureau of Educational Assessment, Research Division.

It began with a video presentation showcasing Gabay Accomplishments for Year 4 and was followed by an Orientation of the project extension activities for Year 5 (18 months – July 1, 2023 to December 30, 2024) discussed by RBI Executive Director, Ms. Amelia Torrente and Gabay Deputy Chief of Party, Ms. Amy Mojica.

“We’re happy that you are extending, Mam. You did a lot of help in these areas.”

-USEC. Gina Gonong, Undersecretary, Curriculum & Teaching

“Mam, actually what is good with the activities of Gabay, is that we are harmonizing it with what we have in DepEd. In fact, several times, we have conversation with Mam Yolly.

For example, the ILRC. This will also help DepEd in establishing many as required by RA11650 and even the FSL which is quite controversial for the Deaf. In fact, we also made some suggestions on those activities from our end to continue what Gabay has been doing”

- Dr. Jun Tuguinayo, Chief, Student Inclusion Division

Gabay Chief of Party, Dr. Yolanda Quijano presented the three (3) upcoming activities of the project namely, the (1) Symposium on Disability-Inclusive Education; (2) Year 4 Annual Debriefing; and (3) Planning Workshop for Year 5 Implementation.



USEC Gonong approved the activities presented and asked about the scaling up of the project activities as model for other divisions and LGUs despite funding and personnel constraints.

The meeting opened the floor for discussion with the following:

Comments

1. IRR of RA11650 – still within the legal strand and will be routed for the approval of the Secretary (3rd Inter-agency Workshop done)
 - Draft ILRC Manual is with Dr. Jun Tuguinayo for his final comments in accordance with the Draft IRR
2. According to DepEd Order No. 8 Series of 2021 – permission is not needed if it will not hamper school official function and outside of official time
3. Dr. Ric Nolasco and Dr. Therese Bustos as consultants during the FSL Breakout

The meeting ended with hope to strengthen inclusive education more as a result of DepEd and Gabay partnership and collaboration.



2. Region IV-A – CALABARZON

A. DepEd Region IV-A & Division of Laguna | July 6, 2023 @ DepEd Division of Laguna



The courtesy visit in DepEd Region IV-A and Division of Laguna began with a presentation of Gabay accomplishments and introduction of the activities for Year 5. In response, Regional Director Atty. Alberto Escobarte assured full commitment to Gabay. Assistant Regional Director, Dr. Loida Nidea also expressed her excitement by encouraging the Division Office especially the District Supervisor and Los Baños Central School to maximize the expertise and support of RBI for the next 18 months.

B. LGU – Los Baños, Laguna | July 10, 2023 @ Los Baños Municipal Mayor’s Office



Attended by Los Baños Municipal Mayor, Hon. Anthony Genuino, the visit, and orientation was a good start to discuss the involvement of LGU as project's partner in implementing the program.

As a 1st class municipality, the local government of Los Baños expressed their interest and support as it has started building the Los Banos Children Center intended for children abandoned by parents.

C. Los Baños Central School | July 10, 2023



Following the visit to LGU Los Baños, the Gabay team headed to Los Baños Central School to visit the room, which can possibly serve as an ILRC and to talk with the School Head and SPED Teachers.

3. Region V – Bicol

A. DepEd Region V & Division of Albay | July 18, 2023 @ DepEd Region V & Division of Albay



On behalf of Regional Director, Dr. Gilbert Sadsad, Assistant Regional Director (ARD), Dr. Bebiano Sentillas conveyed his support in the conduct of the activities planned in Gabay's extension. Having served for the out-of-school youths and PWDs in DSWD for three (3) years, ARD Sentillas understands the program and its impact to the parents, teachers and learners benefiting from the trainings to be conducted.

"We are on the same boat for this aspect. I'm glad for the support you are providing. It was also the result of the program I advocated for child inclusion not just about getting enrollees but expanding to other disabilities. Child-mapping- parent denial- more opportunities for children, where will these children be placed after identifying? Before, Daraga was the sole municipality with a SPED center. I am happy that we'll be able to open new SPED programs." – Assistant Regional Director, Dr. Bebiano Sentillas.



In the same way, Albay Schools Division Superintendent, Dr. Nene Merioles also reiterated to provide support for the upcoming training of teachers, and link to LGUs who have control over the PWD population.

Excited and grateful for the timeline of the activities, the Division of Albay emphasized the need to train and prepare teachers for mainstreaming and receiving LWDs. It was seconded by Region V Supervisor-In-Charge of SPED, Dr. Elisa Suarez by mentioning that there was a clamor of the teachers during their training expressing their desire to be trained with basics. She suggested to create a core group to do the outputs for the incoming training.

Dr. Sentillias also added that the challenge of DepEd- “resources” in terms of budget for construction, equipment, and specialization still remains but they are happy that this program extends the opportunity to help another division in their region replicating the best practices from Sorsogon and Sorsogon City for the past four (4) years.

B. LGU – Bacacay, Albay | July 19, 2023 @ Bacacay Municipal Hall



The Municipal Mayor was represented by the first priest elected as Councilor of Committee on Education, Hon. Emmanuel Alparce who expressed interest with the project.

C. Bacacay East Central School | July 19, 2023



The Gabay team headed to Bacacay East Central School to see the room that can possibly be used as the ILRC. It was found out that they only have three (3) SPED Teachers handling many students with disabilities but due to the distance from home to school, most of the students are attending modular classes.

4. Region VIII – Eastern Visayas

A. DepEd Region VIII | July 24, 2023 @ DepEd Region VIII



Assistant Regional Director, Dr. Ronelo Firmo welcomed the Gabay Team on behalf of Region VIII Director, Dr. Evelyn Fetalvero who extends her regards and support for the Year 5 implementation. The discussion revolved around the status of Tanauan 1 which is already a SPED Center. ARD Firmo recommended Tanauan 2 or 3 and checked Tanauan 1 as it is also highly congested in terms of space for the establishment of ILRC.

B. LGU Tanauan, Leyte | July 24, 2023 @ Tanauan Municipal Mayor's Office



The Municipal Mayor was represented by retired judge, Councilor of Committee on Education, Hon. Ephrem Adom who willingly accepted the Gabay programs and activities in their town.

Gabay reiterated the need for child find and list of PWDs in the municipalities which the MSWDO committed. Same as LGU Bacacay, Albay, LGU Tanauan, Leyte also requested for a MOA to formalize the partnership between Gabay.

C. DepEd Division of Leyte & Tanauan 2 Central School | July 25, 2023



Just like the two (2) other divisions, the Division of Leyte warmly appreciated and welcomed Gabay program and activities. On behalf of their Schools Division Superintendent, the two (2) Assistant Schools Division Superintendents committed to give their full support on the upcoming activities of Gabay.

Dr. Dean Ric Endriano shared the RBI's medical intervention support and the importance of including DepEd for the DOH partnership to be updated on medical interventions. For educational interventions, Dr. Endriano shared the good practices in

the Division of Maasin City and Southern Leyte, also expressing the need to work with RBI to utilize the embosser and swell machine training available in the region.



Upon checking the schools, it was agreed that Tanauan 2 Central School shall be considered as the school for the establishment of the ILRC with the following information:

For documentation and monitoring purposes as the project started its implementation to the three (3) additional sites , Gabay provided a needs assessment form to gauge the specific needs to be addressed and prioritized for DepEd and LGUs. Result of these assessments was presented during the Gabay Planning Workshop on Year 5 Implementation last September 21-22, 2023.

A. INTERMEDIATE RESULT 1

Improved enrolment of Blind, Deaf and Deafblind children

- Primary Eye and Ear Care (PEEC) Training for Community Health Workers (CHW)
- Screening of Children with Eye and Ear Problems in Gabay Additional Sites
- Screening of Children with Disabilities in the Municipality of Tanauan Districts I to III
- Children with Hearing and Vision Problems Consultations for Diagnosis and Interventions (A Special Report)
- Update on Persons Assessed by the Audiological and Hearing Test Centers of Sorsogon City East District Health Center, Batangas Provincial Health Office, and the Maasin Health Center
- Children Referred for Enrollment
- Enrolled Referred Children (SY 2023-2024)

A.1 Primary Eye and Ear Care (PEEC) Training for Community Health Workers (CHW) – 2023 August 10 to 11

Gabay promotes the thought that caring for CSDs is a collective responsibility and accountability of each community member. Over the course of four consecutive years from 2019 to 2023 Gabay fostered partnerships with Local Government Units (LGUs) by working in collaboration with City and Municipal Health Offices (C/MHO), with frontline workers at the grassroots level such as Community Health Workers (CHWs) composed of Barangay Health Workers (BHWs), Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS), Rural Health Nurses, and Midwives. The project also worked closely with DepEd school nurses, community leaders, and teachers. They have been partners of Gabay to identify, assess, assist, and refer children with eye and ear problems so that these children can avail of medical services, interventions, and ultimately, school enrollment.

From January 2020 up to December 2022, Gabay has trained a total of 858 CHWs, DepEd Nurses, and other stakeholders. Of the total, there were 327 (38.11%) from Batangas City and Batangas Province, 302 (35.2%) from Sorsogon City and Sorsogon Province, and 229 (26.7%) CHWs from Maasin City and Southern Leyte. The trainings were conducted through a combination of five (5) zoom-based sessions and one (1) face-to-face session. Table 2 shows the designation of the number of participants in each site.

Table 2. Professional Designation of Participants who Attended PEEC Training Sessions Conducted by Gabay

Gabay Sites	Municipal Health Officer (Doctor)	Health Nurses	Health Midwives	BHWs/ BNS	DepEd Nurses	Others	TOTAL
Batangas City & Batangas Province	10	50	60	165	25	17	327
Sorsogon City & Sorsogon Province	1	28	41	171	10	51	302
Maasin City & Southern Leyte Province	2	20	26	122	10	49	229
TOTAL	13	98	127	458	45	117	858

Notably, the largest group of participants comprised BHWs and BNS, accounting for 53.38% of the total, followed by midwives at 14.8%. Gabay's reach also extended to Persons with

Disabilities (PWD) organizations and Barangay Leaders within the community, with 13.63% of them actively participating. Furthermore, Rural Health Unit (RHU) nurses (11.42%) and DepEd nurses (5.24%) contributed significantly to the training initiative. Despite their many responsibilities, 1.51% of Municipal Health Officers (MHOs) also participated in these sessions.

Since January 2020 to December 2022, a total of 3,264 individuals underwent screenings conducted by these trained CHWs, DepEd Nurses, and Community Leaders. Within this cohort, 374 children were identified with eye and ear problems and subsequently referred to resource centers for support. These children were either not enrolled at the time of screening or were enrolled in barangay schools without access to Gabay-trained teachers and materials.

Although mass screening activities were paused from January 2022 to June 2023, individual screenings by CHWs in their respective communities continued, resulting in additional referrals to schools. As of June 2023, Gabay recorded a total of 432 CSDs enrolled from Kindergarten to Grade 3 for the school year 2022-2023, marking a significant twofold increase from the initial enrollment of 165 children when Gabay's journey began in 2019.

Gabay attributes this substantial increase in enrollment to its training of community health workers (CHWs) for eye/ear screening, school referrals, and its collaborative advocacy efforts with local government units and disability organizations.

With the support of a USAID extension for 18 months and the application of best practices in existing sites, Gabay has expanded its reach to three new sites: the Municipalities of Los Baños in Laguna Province, Bacacay in Albay Province, and Tanauan in Leyte Province.

During courtesy visits and introductions in these new sites, Gabay encountered concerns related to limited teacher resources and the challenges of modular teaching in remote areas. However, the identification of fewer deaf and blind students has led Gabay to plan for Primary Eye and Ear Care (PEEC) training and screening activities.

The objectives of this PEEC Training are:

1. **Community Health Worker Engagement.** It aims to establish eye and ear care services by actively engaging Community Health Workers (CHWs) and other essential service providers who serve as the frontline healthcare providers in the community. Their active participation ensures that eye and ear care become an integral part of the community's health services.
2. **Capacity Enhancement.** PEEC training is designed to enhance the capabilities of these frontline workers, empowering them to excel in their day-to-day roles as crucial partners in the project's implementation. By improving their skills and knowledge, they become more effective in identifying, assessing, and addressing vision and hearing issues.
3. **Integration into Primary Healthcare.** An overarching goal of PEEC training is to institutionalize primary eye and ear care within the framework of primary healthcare services. This integration facilitates the early detection of vision and hearing problems, reducing the hurdles posed by learning difficulties among children with sensorial disabilities. Ultimately, it paves the way for improved access and quality education for these children through proper referrals

Attendees were Community Health Workers, including RHU Nurses, RHU Midwives, Brgy. Nutrition Scholars, Brgy. Health Workers, and DepEd Nurses, all hailing from the new sites: Municipalities of Los Baños, Bacacay, and Tanauan. This two-day training was conducted via Zoom, with Gabay primarily facilitating the event. Eye and ear specialists, who served as key contributors, expounded on relevant topics drawing from Gabay's developed module on Primary Eye and Ear Care (PLM1).

The actual total attendance was 114 participants of CHWs from the three (3) municipalities. Of the these, 30 or 26.31% of CHWs were from Los Banos, 40 or 35.08% from Bacacay, and 44 or 38.6% from Tanauan. Table 3 shows the number of CHWs reached during the training.

Table 3. Number of CHWs who Attended and Completed Training per Province and by Gender

Municipality	Total Number of CHWs		
	Male	Female	Total
Los Banos	1	29	30
Bacacay	3	37	40
Tanauan		44	44
Total	4	110	114

Of the total number of 114 participants, 4 (3.5%) are males and 110 (96.5%) are females. PEEC aimed to encourage the participants to conduct a re-echo of the training among other CHWs. BNS, Midwives, and Nurses also hold many barangays, handling BHWs and they travel by schedule to these areas. Table 4 presents the profile of the total number of participants who completed the training.

Table 4. Profile of the CHWs who Completed the Training

Municipality	BHWs/ BNS/ BSPO		Midwives		Nurse		MHO/ Physician		Others, DepEd Nurses/ Teachers		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	TOTAL
Los Banos		27							1	2	1	29	30
Bacacay		10		16	3	8		2		1	3	37	40
Tanauan		20		10		6		1		7		44	44
Total	0	57	0	26	3	14	0	3	1	10	4	110	114

Out of the 114 participants, 57 (50%) are Barangay Health Workers (BHWs), Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS), and Barangay Service Point Officers (BSPOs). The BSPOs are additional to the Community Health Team or (CHT).

There are different categories of community-based health and nutrition workers that operate at the community level, including the BHWs, BNS, and, BSPOs. This CHT was most recently established by the current administration to identify and attend to the health needs of the poorest households in the country. So, it was interesting that the LGU also engaged the BSPOs to join the training, particularly from Tanauan.

Online resource speakers - eye and ear specialists - demonstrated practical applications. CHWs played dual roles, alternating as patients and screeners during these practical demonstrations. To facilitate participant inquiries effectively, the training incorporated breakout groups, with dedicated facilitators assisting each subgroup.

Essential topics included the referral system, inclusive education, and disaster awareness, contextualizing them with real-world examples drawn from CHWs' recent practices. The necessary tools and materials for the training, such as manuals, E-charts, pinhole devices, otoscopes with penlights, and screening forms, were provided and shipped to participants prior to the training.

Participants were informed that following the online training, a practical face-to-face screening session must be conducted simultaneously in the three municipalities the following week, particularly during the activity *Screening of Children with Eye and Ear Problems in Gabay Additional Sites*. This is where participants gained hands-on experience under the guidance of eye and ear professionals at designated screening sites.

Such practical application of their newly acquired skills reinforced their capabilities and solidified the eye and ear care program's success within communities.

The PEEC training concluded with participants reciting commitment statements, solidifying their role as advocates for people with disabilities. They were now trained screeners capable of identifying children with eye and ear difficulties and were committed to referring these children and improving their lives, particularly children with disabilities.

Gabay envisions a ripple effect where CHWs, representing various units, will disseminate the training to their fellow CHWs. While the virtual training provided valuable knowledge and insights, real proficiency requires practical application, especially when dealing with numerous children. Without continuous practice, there is a risk of skill deterioration or forgetfulness. Under the guidance of eye and ear specialists present within or near the area, these trained CHWs will surely engage in community screening actively. Typically, CHWs perform their daily routines, including house-to-house visits for various health-

related services like vitamin distribution and blood pressure checks. Incorporating new tasks or skills, such as vision and hearing screening for children, demands confidence, knowledge of where to refer cases, and familiarity with the appropriate steps. Therefore, these newly acquired skills should be integrated into their routine tasks, becoming a default aspect of their responsibilities. In sum, Gabay targets to collaborate with health officers to institutionalize this Primary Eye and Ear Care (PEEC) process within their service areas.

Drawing from Gabay's experience, it is evident that the process of referring children for enrollment could thrive continuously due to advocacy and training programs. However, these barriers persist: financial constraints, including the often prohibitive costs associated with surgical operations and laboratory procedures; scarcity of healthcare service providers within the community, especially in remote and underserved areas; and under-prioritization by some local governments in supporting medical expenses.

Gabay intends to maintain connections with the trained CHWs, through the Field Coordinators of Gabay. Gabay also provided a list of available eye and ear specialists in the area so that CHWs seek assistance from additional specialists. This initiative ensures a referral process, minimizing delays in patient care. Gabay recognizes that the PEEC training does not conclude when the session ends; instead, it marks the beginning of an ongoing commitment.

A.2 Screening of Children with Eye and Ear Problems in Gabay Additional Sites

Vision and Hearing Screening has been conducted since January 2020 and to December 2022 but was temporarily stopped from March 2020 to February 2021 due to the pandemic, which mandated strict social distancing measures. On March 2021, screening was resumed when face-to-face interactions were gradually allowed with adherence to safety protocols such as face shields, masks, and gloves.

By December 2022, a total of 3,264 children had been assessed by trained CHWs and evaluated by specialists. Of these, 933 children or 28.58%, were identified with sensorial disabilities, 2,331 children although not classified as having sensorial disabilities, exhibited

issues that may be resolved through further assessments, the provision of eyeglasses, ear cleaning, and, in some cases, surgery unrelated to eye and ear conditions.

Gender representation in the screening data shows it is almost equal, with 1,658 (50.8%) male and 1,606 (49.2%) female. In terms of age distribution (Figure 1), majority of the screened children, 1,443 (57%), fell within the 5- to 9-year age group and the least or 22 (1%) were aged 19 years and older. It is interesting to note that a significant number of eye and ear problems are reported in children between the ages of 5 and 9.

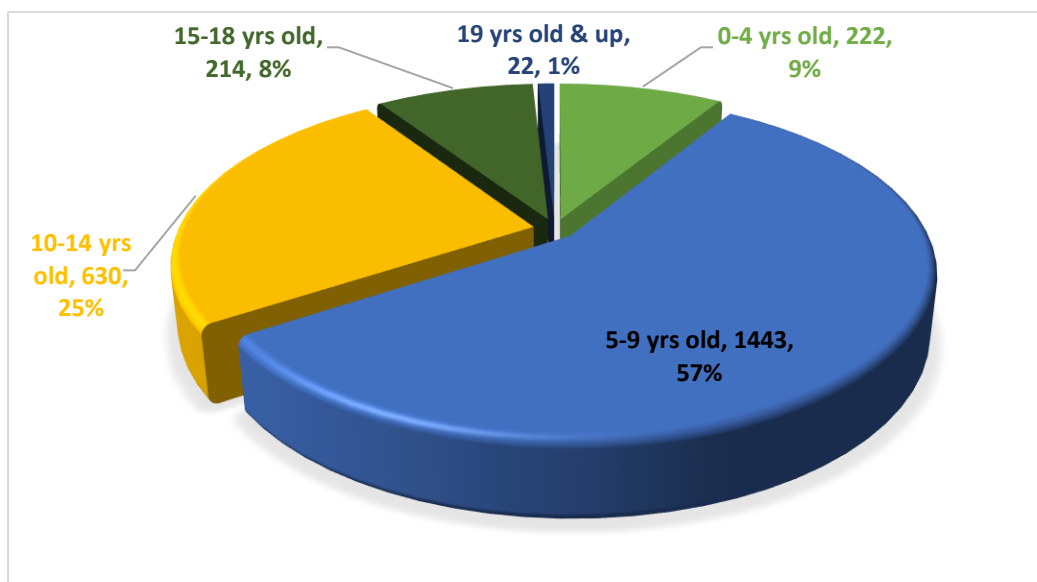


Figure 1. Age Distribution of the Children Screened under Gabay Project

Each child identified with potential eye and ear issues was referred to nearby specialists for further evaluation. Gabay collaborated closely with LGU MSWDOs for travel arrangements and partnered with organizations like the Eye Hear Foundation to address surgical expenses, ensuring that these children received essential medical assistance. The diverse nature of these cases required tailored interventions, with some children requiring both eye and ear follow-up examinations, while others needed ENT procedures for ear cleaning, addressing infections, and various ear-related problems. For those referred for audiometry, they underwent tests using Gabay's specialized equipment at selected Audiological/Hearing Test Centers. Concerning eye conditions, some children were referred to ophthalmologists for in-depth examinations, especially if cataracts or internal issues were suspected. Meanwhile, those with refractive errors were referred to optometrists for necessary corrections.

When educational interventions were deemed necessary, parents had the choice of enrolling their child in a local barangay school, in which case Gabay extended support by training the teachers to accommodate children with sensorial disabilities. Alternatively, if parents opted for central schools with established SPED centers but faced travel expenses, Gabay stepped in by providing materials and enhancing the skills of the SNEd teachers responsible for these children.

With Gabay's 18-month extension and its expanded focus on three additional sites—namely, the Municipalities of Los Baños, Bacacay, and Tanauan—screening activities will remain a pivotal component of its mission. This expansion also encompasses children with sensorial disabilities and other disabilities, aligning with the project's goal of establishing modular Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRCs). Preceding the screening activities, the Primary Eye and Ear Care (PEEC) Training was conducted as an essential first phase, equipping CHWs with the requisite knowledge and skills. The screening activities serve as the second phase, providing an opportunity for CHWs to apply their acquired skills effectively.

Gabay's screening activities continue to thrive through collaboration with Local Government Units (LGUs), DepEd, and various PWD organizations, reflecting commitment to holistic community well-being.

The primary aim of screening infants and primary school-aged children is to proactively reduce the risk of future eye and ear problems. This involves the initial assessment of their conditions and referral to eye and ear specialists for necessary interventions, management, and treatment. Additionally, this screening serves the purpose of early identification of children who may require educational support, particularly those who are not yet enrolled in school.

The objectives of the screening are:

- 1. Capacity Building.** Gabay collaboratively conducted screenings, enhancing the skills and confidence of trained Community Health Workers (CHWs).
- 2. Strengthened Referral Networks.** Gabay worked closely with local eye and ear doctors, reinforcing the referral systems within the community. This ensures that

identified children are referred not only for medical attention but also for school enrollment

3. **Community Engagement.** Local partner organizations were mobilized to actively participate in identifying children with sensorial disabilities, fostering a sense of community involvement.
4. **School Enrollment.** New schools were enlisted to accommodate the children who were newly identified through the screening. Additionally, teachers of these schools will be recruited and offered the opportunity to partake in future training programs provided by Gabay.
5. **Fostering Partnerships.** Gabay promoted collaboration and mutual partnerships between Gabay and LGUs, DepEd, and other stakeholders committed to working together to address the needs of children with sensorial disabilities.

Gabay initiated communication with the Mayors of the three municipalities and established connections with the Municipal Health Offices (MHO). This crucial step facilitated the engagement of trained Community Health Workers (CHWs) in the screening process alongside Gabay and specialists.

If local eye and ear specialists were not readily available, Gabay identified specialists from its Manila partners.

Trained CHWs were responsible for bringing children with eye and ear complaints to the screening venues. It is worth noting that the endorsement to the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO) played a pivotal role, as this office maintained a list of children with eye and ear problems whom they could notify about the activity.

Gabay requested the concerned municipalities to provide suitable areas for vision and hearing testing that adhered to physical distancing guidelines. Prior to the screening process, specialists and Gabay conducted orientation sessions to refresh the CHWs on their acquired skills, explained expected scenarios, and set up the necessary equipment. Following this, the trained CHWs were divided through random selection into various roles.

The screening process consisted of four essential steps (Figure 2). CHWs initiated the process by conducting child profiling, obtaining consent, and conducting interviews. Subsequently, patients were divided into two groups based on the nature of their complaints.

Children with eye complaints were directed to CHWs responsible for visual acuity testing and eye examinations, using materials and tools provided by Gabay. On the other hand, children with ear complaints, accompanied by their guardians, were assessed by CHWs who administered clap and voice tests and conducted ear examinations.

Children confirmed to have vision and hearing problems, as well as those suspected of having issues, proceeded to the third step, where they were assessed by medical specialists. This step included Optometrists, Low Vision Clinicians, and/or Ophthalmologists for eye issues, and Audiologists or Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) specialists for ear problems. CHWs were also assigned to assist the specialists.

Children identified with certain problems during the screening were referred for further evaluation, partnering with nearby facilities when necessary. The final step, the fourth step, focused on educational intervention and referral. During this stage, the Gabay team guided the referral process, whether medical or for school enrollment if the child was not yet enrolled. Gabay interviewed primary guardians or parents to determine their school preferences, considering financial considerations and distances.

If a school was selected, Gabay recorded the names of schools for future teachers and school head training to ensure the child received appropriate educational support.

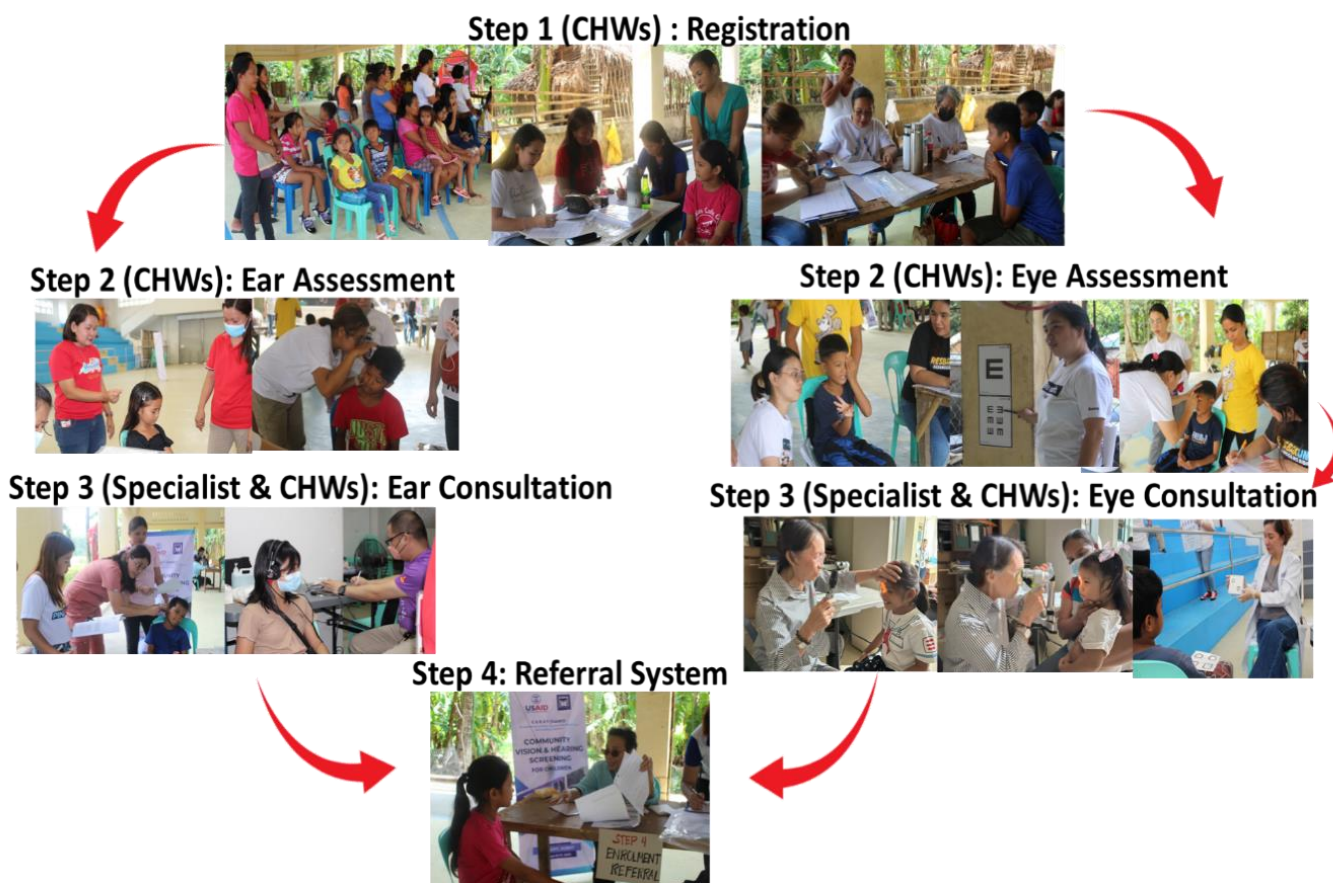


Figure 2. Gabay Four Essential Steps during the Screening

Two days were allocated for screening in each municipality. Depending on the venue, Bacacay presented two venues due to the remote distances of the barangays, while Los Banos and Tanauan utilized the same venues for two consecutive days.

Following the screening, a brief closing ceremony was held to distribute certificates, and officials had the opportunity to express their impressions and commitment to the two-day screening conducted.

Table 5. Schedule of Two-day Screening for the Three Municipalities

Municipalities	Date of Screening	Venue of the Screening
Bacacay, Albay	August 16-17, 2023	Brgy. Cabasan Gymnasium (1 st Day), Bacacay East Central School (2 nd day)
Tanauan, Leyte	August 23-24, 2023	Municipal Health Center of Tanauan
Los Banos, Laguna	August 24-25, 2023	Municipality of Los Banos Gymnasium

During the mass community eye and ear screening, a total of 271 children were evaluated. These children, aged between 0 and 19 years, presented various eye and ear complaints, both with and without additional disabilities, irrespective of their enrollment status.

Out of the 271 children screened, the distribution by municipality is as follows:

Table 6. Breakdown of Children Screened by Site and Gender

Municipalities	Male	Female	TOTAL
Bacacay	65	48	113
Los Banos	53	50	103
Tanauan	28	27	55
TOTAL	146	125	271

Figure 3 illustrates the distribution of screened children with and without sensorial disabilities, with 188 children (69%) having sensorial problems and 83 children (31%) without sensorial problems.

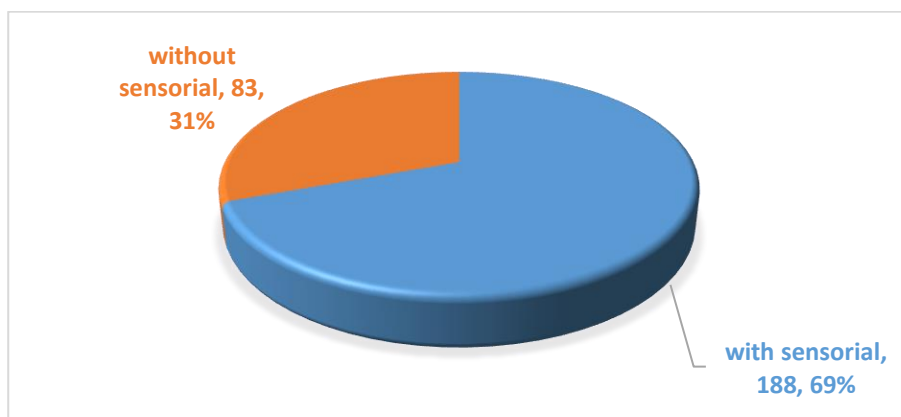


Figure 3. Distribution of Screened Children with and Without Sensorial Disabilities

As mentioned in the report's rationale, children aged 5 to 9 years have consistently constituted the largest segment of the screened population since January 2020. However, during the screening at the three new sites, 10-14-year-olds were more prevalent, accounting for 102 children (38%), while 5-9-year-olds were slightly fewer at 100 children (37%). This was followed by 15-18-year-olds at 34 children (13%), 0-4-year-olds at 31 children (11%), and ages 19 years and above at 4 children (2%).

Figure 4 below presents the distribution of the number of children screened across different age groups.

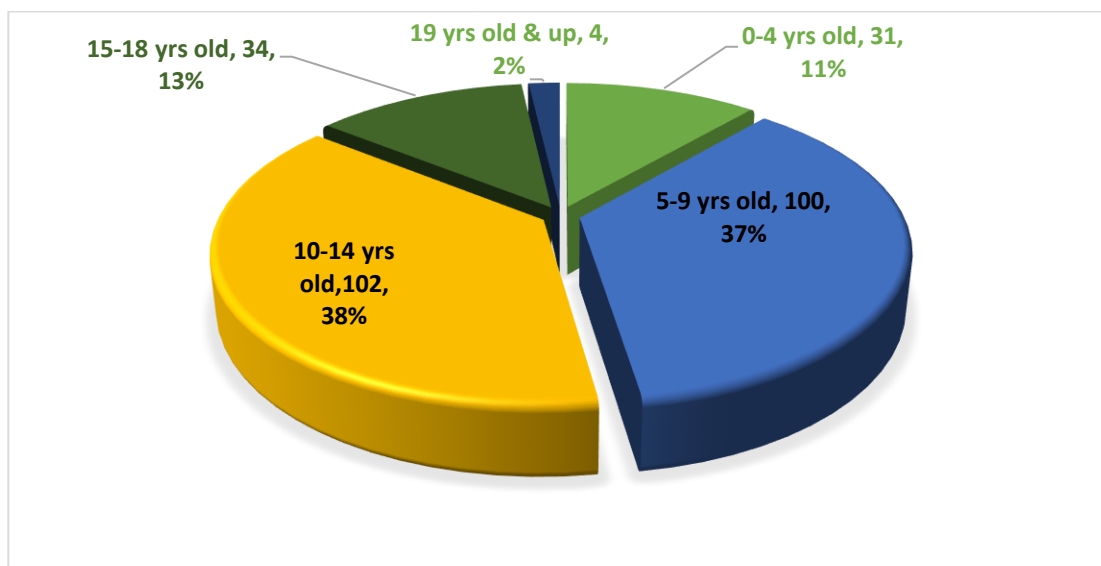


Figure 4. Distribution of Screened Children by Age Groups

Municipality of Bacacay

Bacacay, a 2nd class municipality in Albay Province, Philippines, covers a land area of 122.13 square kilometers, accounting for 4.74% of Albay's total land area. As of the 2020 Census, its population stood at 72,485 residents, constituting 5.27% of Albay's total population and 1.19% of the Bicol Region's overall population.

Among the municipalities in Albay, Bacacay boasts the highest number of barangays, coming second only to Legazpi City. In the 2020 PSA population survey, it ranked 8th among the 15 municipalities and 3 cities in Albay Province.

During a courtesy visit with the Local Government Unit (LGU), the Councilor In-Charge for the Education Committee mentioned that out of Bacacay's 56 barangays, 26 are located on islands, and transportation primarily relies on boats.

For the remaining barangays, motorcycle transportation is common, with some individuals having private vehicles. Notably, during the screening process, it was observed that many CHWs owned motorcycles.

Gabay conducted the screening in Bacacay on August 16 and 17, 2023. The team had to travel for approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes from the main town to Barangay Cabasan to conduct the first day of screening.

This decision was made to accommodate patients residing on nearby islands, as traveling to the town center would have been both distant and costly for them. During the screening, it was noted that several patients had to walk for nearly 2 hours from their homes to the gymnasium where the screening took place. The MSWDO informed the team that the Mayor and other high-ranking LGU officials were in Manila at that time. Nevertheless, Gabay proceeded with the screening, with the support of the LGU focal person and the overseeing physician, who directed the CHWs. Prior to the screening, orientations were conducted for CHWs by the Specialists



Ear Specialist (left) and Eye Specialist (right) conducting an orientation session for CHWs before the actual screening activity.

On the second day, the screening venue was shifted to Bacacay East Central School, where patients from the town center were catered to.

In summary, a total of 113 children were assessed. Among these, 34 (29.82%) were referred to ophthalmologists for further evaluation, 15 (13.16%) were referred to optometrists, 26 (22.8%) were referred to Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) specialists for cerumen removal and infection, 16 (14%) were referred for further audiological evaluation, and 5 (4.38%) were referred to other specialists.

Regarding enrollment, six (6) children were referred to day care and resource centers for enrollment. These children included a 4-year-old with Bupthalmos condition in both eyes, a 5-year-old with Aphakia in both eyes, another 5-year-old with congenital cataract in both eyes,

and three (3) children aged 11 months, 11 years, and 4 years who were found to have profound hearing conditions and required further audiological evaluation.

Additionally, some currently enrolled children in barangay schools may require support for materials and training from the Inclusive Education Resource Center (ILRC). Two (2) of these children, both 5 years old, have Microphthalmia and nystagmus conditions in both eyes, and three (3) other children enrolled in barangay schools have profound hearing conditions in both ears, necessitating further evaluations.



Actual screening activities in the Municipality of Bacacay

Children requiring follow-up eye and ear checks were referred to Tabacco Hospital for necessary interventions.

Municipality of Tanauan

Tanauan, situated in Leyte Province, holds the status of a second-class municipality, and is nestled along the coastline. Tanauan encompasses a land area of 78.41 square kilometers (PhilAtlas), accounting for 1.24% of Leyte's total land area. In the 2020 Census, population was 57,455 residents, representing 3.23% of Leyte province's overall population and 1.26% of the Eastern Visayas region's total population.

Tanauan is one of the 40 municipalities in Leyte Province and ranks 6th in the province in terms of the highest number of barangays. It remains one of the more densely populated towns in Leyte.

Given the environmental factors and a significant portion of the population living below the poverty line, Gabay anticipated encountering numerous cases of eye and ear problems during its screening in Tanauan.

The screening activities took place on August 24 and 25, 2023. Before commencing the screening, Gabay paid a courtesy visit to the Mayor's office where the Mayor expressed her gratitude for selecting Tanauan as the screening location and assured her full support. She also mentioned that they typically refer patients to Leyte Provincial Hospital (LPH), which offers free cataract surgery for adults. Gabay informed the Mayor that for identified children requiring surgery, they will collaborate with partners at Tacloban City East Visayas Regional Medical Center (EVRMC) and the Eye Hear Foundation, with whom RBI other department maintains connections.



Courtesy visit to the Mayor's office prior the actual screening activity.

The MHO designated the health center as the screening venue, accommodating the ear specialist's request for a quiet room and the eye specialists' requirement for a dark room. Despite the limited space, the event was well-organized, and the Community Health Workers (CHWs) played a valuable role by actively assisting the team over the course of two days.

Gabay also coordinated with the partner organization, Eye Hear Foundation, for the medical interventions needed for the identified children. The Department of Health (DOH) visited and observed the proceedings, as Gabay had communicated with DOH Region 8 regarding the screening activity.

For other referrals, the Mayor recommended Leyte Provincial Hospital for cases that may require free operations for 11 years old up, and Gabay also established a connection with partner EVRMC for pediatric medical interventions related to eye operations.

In summary, a total of 55 children were assessed in Tanauan. Out of these, 10 (18.18%) were referred to ophthalmologists for further evaluation, 2 (3.63%) to optometrists, 4 (7.27%) to ENT specialists for cerumen removal and infection, and 14 (25.45%) to undergo further audiological evaluation in Tacloban City.

Nearly all the patients presented with both ear and eye problems. Most of these patients were able to receive accurate diagnoses for their conditions . because of Ophthalmologists and audiologists along with the availability of suitable examination rooms.

Regarding enrollment, eight (8) children were referred to day care and resource centers for enrollment since they were not yet part of any schools. These children included six (6) siblings and cousins, aged 2 years (2), 3 years, 6 years, and 14 years, all of whom have congenital cataracts in both eyes. Additionally, two (2) other children, aged 2 years and 16 years, have profound hearing conditions, and required further audiological evaluation. These children had not yet been enrolled in any schools. There were also other children referred for ENT and audiological evaluations who might subsequently be referred to DepEd for enrollment once their cases are confirmed.



Actual screening activities in the Municipality of Tanauan

Notably, one (1) family was identified with a congenital cataract condition that was traced as far as their grandmother.

All four (4) female siblings inherited the condition, all the children of the three married siblings also have cataracts. About eight (8) children, who are siblings and cousins, attended the screening and were diagnosed with congenital cataracts by Dr. Ambrosio, an Ophthalmologist. Their three (3) mothers and one (1) aunt accompanied them to the center and were included in the referral to Leyte Provincial Hospital for free surgery. Many of these children had developed amblyopia and lazy eye due to delayed interventions, prompting Dr. Ambrosio to recommend them as emergency cases, particularly for those aged 7 years and below.

Municipality of Los Baños

Los Baños stands as a first-class municipality within Laguna Province. It is situated in the landlocked region of Laguna, distinct from the other two sites.

Los Baños covers a land area of 54.22 square kilometers, which accounts for 2.81% of Laguna's total land area (PhilAtlas). In the 2020 Census, the population of Los Baños 115,353 individuals that represents 3.41% of Laguna province's total population and 0.71% of the

overall population of the CALABARZON region. Unlike Bacacay and Tanauan, Los Baños comprises only 14 barangays.

The screening was conducted on August 25 and 26, 2023 at the Municipal Evacuation Center. Gabay collaborated with an ear specialist from the Rotary organization in Laguna. Before starting the screening activity, Gabay had a courtesy visit to the Vice Mayor of Los Baños, Ms. Josephine Evangelista.



Courtesy visit to the Vice Mayor's office prior the actual screening activity

In summary, a total of 103 children underwent assessment in Los Baños. Among these, 24 children (23.1%) were referred to ophthalmologists for further evaluation, 18 children (17.3%) were directed to optometrists, 20 children (19.23%) were referred to ENT specialists for issues related to cerumen removal, perforated ear, and infection, 20 children (19.23%) required further audiological evaluation, and 4 children (3.84%) were referred to other specialists like speech pathologists.

In terms of enrollment, six (6) children were recommended for placement in day care and SPED centers. These children included three (3) 9-year-olds, a 15-year-old, a 3-year-old, and a 5-year-old, all of whom had profound hearing conditions requiring further audiological evaluation. Additionally, one (1) child, enrolled in a barangay school, was identified with congenital glaucoma in both eyes.



Actual screening activities in the Municipality of Los Banos

In addition to facilitating medical referrals to specialized healthcare providers, Gabay took proactive steps to collaborate with schools serving children with disabilities to provide them with necessary materials and training support in the upcoming months. Moreover, for those children who had not yet been enrolled in schools, preferences for suitable educational institutions were identified.

MHOs and CHWs were further encouraged to conduct re-echo sessions to ensure that screenings for children with disabilities were conducted regularly, integrating this task into their daily routines or home visitation schedules.

Gabay recognizes the importance of diligently following up with the children identified as requiring medical and educational assistance. While potential delays due to financial constraints and document preparations may arise in addressing medical concerns, it remains essential to ensure that these cases are regularly monitored through the assistance and facilitation of Gabay staff in order to guarantee proper interventions and achieve closure.

Enhancing Barangay Awareness. A notable observation highlighted that not all barangays were adequately informed about the scheduled screenings. This discrepancy became apparent through the inclusion of barangay addresses in the forms, underscoring the need for improved communication and coordination. Ensuring that Community Health Workers (CHWs) re-echo the training and conduct screenings independently can address this issue effectively.

Essential Coordination. Gabay placed significant emphasis on the critical importance of coordination and partnerships between key offices, such as the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO), the Municipal Health Office (MHO), the Mayor's Office, and the DepEd District office. These collaborative efforts were pivotal in ensuring the success of the screening process. However, challenges arose in municipalities where such collaboration was lacking.

Boosting CHWs' Confidence. Recognizing the pressing need for further training of Community Health Workers (CHWs), Gabay proposed providing additional practical exposure to help them build confidence in performing primary eye and ear care. Encouragingly, many of the CHWs displayed enthusiasm and actively applied their knowledge during screening activities.

Challenges in Connecting with ENTs and Local Specialists. Gabay encountered difficulties in establishing connections with Ear, Nose, and Throat specialists (ENTs), leading to their absence at the three screening sites.

Nonetheless, referrals were made. Immediate access to ENT services, particularly for basic ear care, was considered preferable for children in need. To address this, there is a need to strengthen partnerships with local ENTs, optometrists, and ophthalmologists to ensure the sustainability of healthcare initiatives.

Role of Medical Professionals in the Screening. Dr. Evelyn Ambrosio, an ophthalmologist, and Dr. Joan Felix, an optometrist, and Low Vision Practitioner, played pivotal roles in the screening process. Their prompt examinations facilitated the identification of primary problems and enabled urgent interventions. Additionally, the presence of three (3) Audiologists at the screening sites was integral, as they conducted audiometry with patients and assessed cases requiring further evaluation.

Facilitating Patient Transport. The active involvement of MSWDO and MHO in facilitating patient transport to specialist clinics proved essential for further medical interventions. This ensured that scheduled check-ups for children received financial support from the Local

Government Unit (LGU), alleviating travel expenses for families in need since most patients reside in the far-flung areas.

Support for Low Vision Learners and Cataract Patients. Gabay plans to conduct low vision assessments for children who have undergone cataract surgery in partnership with RBI LV Department. There were children with cataracts who were also referred to Eye Hear Foundation.

Hearing Aid Assistance. To provide support for children identified as needing hearing aids, Gabay intends to draft a letter addressed to Municipal Mayors and MSWDOs. This letter will explore the possibility of providing hearing aids to young deaf children following their audiological tests. Gabay has also communicated with partner ear specialists during the screening to prioritize these children when their organizations will be distributing free hearing aids within the community.

Monitoring Referrals and Enrollments. There is a commitment to continuously track referred children to verify their enrollment status and explore ways to provide them with additional support.

Engagement with DepEd Divisions. Advocacy efforts will be directed towards DepEd divisions to promote the acceptance and enrollment of identified children with sensory disabilities in schools.

In conclusion, Gabay's ongoing efforts will be pivotal in improving healthcare and educational access for underserved communities. It is hoped that the conducted screenings will further enhance and create positive change in the lives of these children.

A.3 Screening of Children with Disabilities in the Municipality of Tanauan Districts I to III

Another screening was conducted in August 2023 in the municipality of Tanauan resulted in more children being referred for enrollment. As such, Gabay conducted secondary screenings focusing particularly on schools in Tanauan District III. The screenings were conducted by Gabay-trained Community Health Workers (CHWs) and DepEd Clinic Teachers.

Gabay embarked on the second screening campaign across schools in Tanauan Districts I, II, and III to identify children with potential eye and ear problems. The primary aim of screening young and primary school-aged children is providing early diagnosis and consequently, early intervention. Most importantly, through the screening, children who will be needing educational support will immediately be referred to the appropriate schools through the facilitation of DepEd partners.

Furthermore, the screening activity in the area strengthened the collaboration and teamwork of the stakeholders, in particular the LGU and DepEd, when it comes to serving the needs of LWDs. They were able to explore their roles and how they can effectively communicate with each other with the ultimate goal of assisting children with disabilities and their families.

The key stakeholders involved in this activity were the following: Mayor's Office, Municipal Health Office (MHO), DepEd Division and District offices of Tanauan, Community Health Workers (CHWs), and Gabay and specialist teams.

Gabay also established connections with local eye and ear specialists, particularly those affiliated with the Eastern Visayas Regional Medical Center (EVRMC) in Tacloban City and Maasin City Health Center Audiological/ Hearing Center,

The screenings were conducted with the active involvement of trained clinic teachers. This collaborative approach provided hands-on experience for the clinic teachers and CHWs, reinforcing their skills in conducting initial screenings and identifying children with potential health issues. Parental consent was required for the screenings.





On the first day at Tanauan II Central School, initial screenings identified a child with suspected cataract. She was promptly scheduled for follow-up check-ups at East Visayas Regional Medical Center (EVRMC) on the upcoming week.

The second day was conducted in Tanauan I Central School. Approximately seven (7) students were identified with myopia and astigmatism; two (2) were from Mohon Elementary School, who were referred by the District Supervisor due to initial reports of possible vision problems.

The third day screenings were conducted for Kinder students in San Roque Elementary School. Here, no eye problems were detected. However, a number of children were diagnosed with ear issues, primarily impacted cerumen (earwax), possibly caused by frequent swimming in the nearby sea. Some children had foreign objects lodged in their ears. These findings were discussed with the master teacher and she was advised to inform the parents and ensure that these cases will be followed up. And if necessary, the child must be brought to specialists at EVMC for further evaluation.

The final day of screening for Tanauan III District was held at Salvador Elementary School located in a remote area and away from the town center and the sea. Out of the forty (40) children screened, fourteen (14) were identified with hearing and vision problems and/or other health issues and required further evaluation by specialists.



In summary, the screening in Tanauan Districts resulted to a total of 131 children assessed with hearing and vision and/or with other health concerns.



Table 7. Profile of Findings of Children Screened

Gender	With Ear Problem	With eye problem	With other manifestations	No disability	Total
Male	16	13	1	43	73
Female	11	4	1	42	58
Total	27	17	2	85	131

Table 7 shows the gender breakdown: 73 male children (55.7%), and 58 female children (44.3%).

Table 7 also reveals that among the children screened:

- 27 children (20.61%) exhibited ear problems, with symptoms ranging from suspected deafness to infections, as well as severe cases of impacted earwax. These conditions necessitated medical interventions including referrals for thorough cleaning and further audiological assessments.
- 17 children (13%) were identified with eye problems. These included refractive errors such as myopia and astigmatism, requiring corrective measures like glasses or specialized ophthalmological care. Some children faced more severe visual impairments that needed referral for detailed ophthalmological evaluations.
- 2 children (1.52%) had other notable health manifestations, indicative of underlying conditions that could impact their overall development and daily functioning. In some cases, these conditions coexisted with the above children with ear or eye problems, suggesting a need for health management plans.
- 85 children (65%) were found to have no apparent disabilities or problems during the initial screening.

In Salvador Elementary School, located in remote part of Tanauan, several children with learning disabilities needed enrollment support. A Gabay-trained resource teacher was assigned by the District Supervisor to assist these learners to ensure that the needs of disabled children are appropriately addressed and supported especially when they transition into mainstream classrooms.



The initial check-up for children with identified eye problems was conducted on May 10, 2024, at EVRMC, with Gabay staff providing assistance. For the next phase, another group of children was scheduled to visit the Maasin City Health Audiological/Hearing Testing Center (A/HTC).

The Gabay staff coordinated with the Mayor's office for transportation support and arranged with Maasin City H/ATC for the involvement of trained para-audiometrists to assess the patients. Additionally, some children were scheduled for ENT (Ear, Nose Throat) consultations at EVRMC.

With the establishment of a referral system, Gabay has ensured that even without its direct involvement in the future, the Tanauan LGU and DepEd are well-informed about where to refer children who need medical interventions. This system is designed to create a sustainable framework for ongoing medical support, ensuring that local authorities are equipped to handle similar health needs effectively.

The Gabay team offered these observations and recommendations:

- The screening results highlighted a significant number of children with undiagnosed and untreated ear and eye problems. This underscores the critical need for regular health

screenings in schools to identify and address these issues early, especially in rural and underserved areas. Expanding regular screening programs is of utmost importance.

- Some children exhibited multiple health issues, such as the co-occurrence of eye and ear problems with other developmental or behavioral manifestations. This highlights the complexity of their health issues that leads to the recommendation that comprehensive assessments are essential to address the full spectrum of their health and educational needs.
- The involvement of trained CHWs and local educational staff in the screening process demonstrates the effectiveness of community-based approach. However, this should be followed by an aggressive and effective mechanism by the LGU and DepEd to monitor the progress of children referred for appropriate medical attention.
- Advocate for the integration of school health screenings into local educational policies and institutionalize the practice to ensure that health screenings become a standard part of school and community activities.

A.4 Children with Hearing and Vision Problems Consultations for Diagnosis and Interventions (A Special Report)

August 23, 2023 - the Gabay project conducted mass Eye and Ear screening in the Rural Health Unit of the Municipality of Tanauan, Leyte together with invited Dr. Izovelle Pineda, Audiologist, Dr. Evelyn Ambrosio, Ophthalmologist and also with the trained Community Health Workers in Tanauan, Leyte.

May 4, 2024 – Joylaen Sabsal was provided with hearing aid. The patient arrived in Maasin City SPED Center with her father, Mr. Maximo Sabsal and with the Gabay team, they travelled to Tanauan, Leyte. The hotel accommodation and meals of the patient and her father were provided by Gabay. On May 4, they travelled with Ms. Fatima Ria Publico for their appointment at the Our Lady of Fatima ENT Center, Tacloban City on May 4, 2024. Ms. Teresita Soria, Audiometrist of the said Health Center used a syringe containing the solution to create the of

the earmold of the patient's left ear in preparation for the provision of the hearing aid. All travel expenses of the patient and her father were provided by the project.

The following were observed and noted in this activity:

- The support of the parent and the teachers were important in getting the support from the LGU. It was necessary that the Field Coordinator had to give explanation to the father regarding on the situation on the loss of the hearing impression and he understood the unpleasant incident.



There is a need to patiently explain to the parents and the child about the upcoming procedures and the need for the hearing aid. They need to be convinced.

The ear impression and hearing aid was delivered to Philear for earmold and hearing adjustment for the patient was delivered on May 16, 2024 by the Gabay FC.

May 10, 2024

- the children

screened and identified with vision problems during the August 23, 2023 screening program were referred to the Eastern Visayas Medical Center, a long-term partner of the Resources for the Blind, Inc. Notably, the Local Government of Tanauan and Rural Health Center doctor, led by Dr. Alyanna Ginette Herrera, committed to continue the eye and ear screening in the community in the coming years in partnership with the Tanauan District School Teachers so that students identified in the screening can be immediately referred for enrollment in schools that would be most convenient for the LWDs. It should be noted that



the current policy of DepEd emphasizes that no school can deny enrollment or access to education to LWDs.

The objectives of the May 10 activity is for the trained Community Health Workers to: 1) conduct initial screening of an individual (preferably school-age children) and 2) refer these children identified with vision problem and hearing problems in coordination with the Gabay Field Coordinator to partner Eastern Visayas Medical Center (EVMC).

Prior to May 10, Ms. Fatima Ria C. Publico, Gabay Field Coordinator, and Ms. Joy Fidelis, Branch Directress of Resources for the Blind Cebu Inc., coordinated with EVMC for instructions on the required preparations and processes.

On May 10, 2024, six (6) children were accompanied by their parents for the eye check-up in EVMC. Throughout, they were assisted by Ms. Maricris Benitez, SPED Teacher of Tanauan II Central School. Upon arrival at EVMC, they were assisted by the Head Nurse, Ms. Agnes Pedrosa to obtain the registration ID of the patients. Then, Ms. Cristina Omilo and two other Low-vision staff guided them to the Outpatient Department of the Eye Center located on the third floor of the building where the parents and the children were instructed to wait for their names to be called. The waiting time was approximately 40 min. Two Ophthalmologists were part of the project activity.

Advincula siblings. The mother informed the Ophthalmologist, Dr. Joan Balano, that all members of their family have cataract problems and that the left eyes of her daughters Efril Grace Advincula and Grashela Advincula underwent surgery in 2019 under Dr. Gatchalian. However, they were unable to do the required follow-up visits because of pandemic years. Dr. Balano also conducted the following: 1) visual acuity examination to determine the visual clarity or sharpness of vision; 2) pupil examination; and 3) Optical Coherence Tomography in order to monitor and provide the latest diagnosis of the current status of the patient's eye. After these tests, the patients were given eye drops to make their pupils larger and were instructed to have laboratory tests in preparation for the scheduled cataract surgery. Dr. Balano also forwarded the diagnosis of the Advincula sisters to Dr. Douren Espina for low vision testing.

Suyom siblings. Unard and Yurie Surom were accompanied by their father. Dr. Jose Vicente Avestruz reviewed the diagnosis of Dr. Ambrosio then proceeded to interview the father on pertinent medical history. Dr. Ambrosio conducted the visual acuity of Unard Suyom using the Snellen chart, results of which was: VA is 20/50. He recommended proceeding to Low Vision Center for further assessment by Dr. Espina. Yurie Suyom underwent VA and pupil examination but failed the tests because of her cataract problem. She was needs advised to go to the Laboratory to undergo tests in preparation for the scheduled surgery.

Patient Catudio. Roxielyn Catudio was accompanied by her mother. The mother provided the doctor with the medical health history and the vision management history. A visual acuity examination was conducted, and it was seen that the patient had difficulty reading and recognizing faces and things. She also cannot identify the letters and numbers shown to her. The doctor advised the patient to directly to proceed to Dr. Espina for further low vision assessment.

Patient Lumapas. Kayzelle Lumapas is also a low-vision patient who was initially assessed by Dr. Joan Balano. During this assessment, it was found that Kayzelle had difficulty recognizing things and instead used hand movements to touch specific things for recognition. After learning about the child's health history, particularly the vision testing, the patient was advised to have another check up with Dr. Douren Espina for further assessment.

After these consultations in the EVMC Eye Center, the patients and their guardians proceeded to the Low Vision Center, where six (6) trained Low vision staff and Optometrist Dr. Douren Espina assessed them using the LogMar test in order to assess both near and distance vision. Refraction assessment was also done to ensure the most appropriate refractive errors. Of six patients, two (2) or Suyom Unard and Efril Grace passed the eye exam and were prescribed eyeglasses. The other four (4) patients were instructed to proceed with laboratory tests in preparation for eye surgery schedules.

Dr. Espina, identified patients two (2) patients with a serious low vision problem: Kayzelle Lumapas and Roxielyn Catudio. They failed all examinations.

Patients were provided specific instructions about the required follow up schedules. Moreover, the doctor emphasized the need for early intervention in education as well as

medical support. After the Low Vision Assessment and prescription of Low Vision Devices, the need for training and other services should be discussed with the family and patients.

The assigned Gabay Field Coordinator (FC) noted the following observations:

- The guardians did not attend Gabay Parents' Training last January 20-21, 2024 so, they had no background knowledge about their children's condition, and they were not aware of the medical service providers, specific for their need, in the locality and region.
- Efril Grace Advincula, with a cataract problem, was given hope. She is positive and hopeful that the eyeglasses she will receive will help her to be more competitive in her studies despite her vision problem.
- This experience showed that a referral from Ophthalmologist to the Low Vision Center is a long process. Patients had to undergo painful and temporary treatment/s before availing of the final diagnosis. Another lesson learned was to be in the EVMC early to avoid long waiting lines and times.
- Even if the parents were not familiar with the vision or eye problems of their child, they are very supportive and dedicated in helping their child.
- The community are grateful for the continuous support of Gabay.
- Ms. Maricris Benitez, SPED Teacher of Tanauan II Central School was very accommodating her true concern was shown as she guided parents.
- EVMC staff were very accommodating and friendly to the patients: Ms. Agnes Pedrosa, Head nurse, Ms. Cristina Omilo, staff in Low Vision Center, EVMC Ophthalmologists Dr. Roa Lingad, Dr. Jose Vincent Avestruz, Dr. Joan Balano and Dr. Douren Espina
- Because all patients' parents in this activity were indigent families, The LGU, particularly the MSWDO provided the budget for travel and meals. This assistance for children with disability should be continued.
- The role of the Gabay's Field Coordinator (FC) was crucial and very helpful in terms of processing the required documents of the patients, recording the data of the patient's diagnosis, and arranging and coordinating the schedule and documents with the hospital, in this case, EVMC.
- The Gabay FC also learned in this activity: learning the medical terms used in eye diagnosis and procedures, helping the patient's family plan for the next steps, and being acquainted with different types of eye problems.

- Additionally, the FC also made inquiries about other department services, for example, the availability of Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) specialists in case there would be a need to refer students with ear problems.
- After screening activities, the Gabay FCs facilitated laboratory tests, surgeries, and provision of eyeglasses. To sustain this after the project ends, teachers and the LGU-MSWDO can continue this kind of assistance to disabled learners. Linking up with the private sector and civil society groups can help provide the financial needs of the patients, especially for laboratory and surgery requirements.
- Consistent coordination of Eastern Visayas Medical Center for new referrals of children with low vision problems, and patients with ear problems to be referred to an ENT Doctor.





A.5 Update on Persons Assessed by the Audiological and Hearing Test Centers of Sorsogon City East District Health Center, Batangas Provincial Health Office, and the Maasin Health Center

The Audiological and Hearing Test Centers (A/HTCs) of Sorsogon City East District Health Center, Batangas Provincial Health Office, and Maasin City Health Center were established by USAID through the Gabay project in collaboration with the Local Government Units on February 21, 2020, October 28, 2020 and November 04, 2020, respectively. The equipment of these centers include a set for diagnostic hearing evaluation: Computer Set with licensed MS Office software, Diagnostic Audiometer, Tympanometer, Video Otoscope, Pediatric Hearing Aid Test Kit (Listening Tube, Battery Tester, Air Puffer, eight (8) sets of Hearing Aid for Moderate, Severe & Profound with two (2) packs of Batteries and Hearing Aid Dehumidifier and Manual.

Table 8 shows the total number of persons who underwent audiological/hearing evaluation conducted by the three centers from 2022 to 2024.

Table 8. Persons Served by the Audiological/Hearing Evaluation Centers and Test Results from 2022 to 2024

Test Center	Gender			Category			Test Results
	Male	Fe- male	Total	Child - ren	Adult	Total	
Year 2022							
1. Sorsogon City East District Health A/HT Center	29	30	59	34	25	59	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With hearing impairment = 44 ear infection = 2 cerumen removal = 8 normal hearing = 5
2. Batangas Provincial Health Office A/HT Center	Report included in Year 2023						
3. Maasin City Health A/HT Center	16	5	21	15	6	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With hearing impairment = 15 normal hearing = 6
Year 2023							
1. Sorsogon City East District Health A/HT Center	51	58	109	68	41	109	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With hearing impairment = 55 ear infection = 23 cerumen removal = 14 other problems = 9 normal hearing = 8
2. Batangas Provincial Health Office A/HT Center	124	136	260	223	37	260	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With hearing impairment=165 impacted cerumen = 19 normal Hearing = 76
1. Maasin City Health A/HT Center	20	18	38	26	12	38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With hearing impairment = 23 ear infection = 1 impacted cerumen = 3 normal hearing = 11

Test Center	Gender			Category			Test Results
	Male	Fe- male	Total	Child - ren	Adult	Total	
Year 2024 (as of June 2024)							
1. Sorsogon City East District Health A/HT Center	38	30	68	23	45	68	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With hearing impairment = 20 ear infection = 17 cerumen removal = 15 normal hearing = 16
2. Batangas Provincial Health Office A/HT Center	26	36	62	47	15	62	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With hearing impairment = 52 normal hearing = 10
3. Maasin City Health A/HT Center	46	64	110	14	96	110	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With hearing impairment = 19 ear infection = 3 normal hearing = 88
TOTAL	350	377	727	450	277	727	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With hearing impairment = 393 ear infection = 46 impacted cerumen = 22 cerumen removal = 37 other problems = 9 normal hearing = 220

This shows that the Batangas Provincial Health Office A/HT Center served the greatest number of persons (322 or 44.29%), all of whom underwent audiological/hearing evaluation that was conducted by para-audiometrists. Sorsogon City East District Health A/HT Center evaluated 236 (32.46 %); Maasin City Health A/HT Center evaluated 169 (23.25%) that registered the lowest. A total number of 393 (54.06%) children and adults suffered from hearing impairment ranging from mild, moderate, severe, and profound. The other ear problems include infection and impacted cerumen while the other problems refer to those children with down syndrome and cerebral palsy. From the total number of 727 persons evaluated, 220 or 30.26% had normal hearing.

In terms of hearing aids provision, only children with mild to moderate hearing loss were provided hearing aids based on the advice of the Gabay Audiologist-Consultant. For Sorsogon City East District Health A/HT Center, 10 hearing aids were dispensed (seven from USAID and three from LGU Bulusan, Sorsogon) for learners with hearing problems.

The Batangas Provincial Health Office A/HT Center dispensed 11 hearing aids to children and 24 to adults. One of hearing aids was provided by USAID while 34 were sponsored by the Provincial Government of Batangas. Six (6) hearing aids from USAID are now in process for distribution for school children.

The Maasin City Health A/HT Center dispensed five (5) hearing aids (provided by USAID) to school children, the remaining two (2) are now in process for distribution. The Maasin City LGU distributed twelve (12) hearing aids to school children and adults with hearing problems.

A.6 Children Referred for Enrollment

The access of children with disability to formal education is a primary concern of the Gabay project. By the end of the 4th year of the project in June 2022, enrollment data shows that the project has achieved this goal of increased access to formal education in the target sites. There was a three-fold increase in enrollment from the baseline of 165 in 2019 to the total number of 432 learners by the end of the School Year 2022 to 2023.

This notable accomplishment is attributed primarily to the strong child find strategy that the Gabay implemented. Trainings were conducted for CHWs, teachers and school staff, representatives of various organizations, and parents. There was also an enhanced advocacy launched. Gabay worked closely with the LGU and DepEd to support these activities. As a result, many children were found, diagnosed appropriately, and then referred to schools for appropriate placement in the formal school system.

This Year 5, the same strategy, improved by the lessons learned in year 1 to 4 was implemented in the three (3) new areas.

It should be noted that for Year 5, the project did not just focus on blind and deaf children but to a wider range of disabilities. As a result of these initial efforts, of the 271 children screened in Q17, a total of 22 learners were referred to schools (Table 9 and Table 10):

Table 9. Number of Screened and Referred Learners

Additional or New Sites	Total Number Screened	Total Number of learners referred to Schools
1. Bacacay, Albay	113	6
2. Los Baños, Laguna	103	8
3. Tanauan, Leyte	55	9
Total	271	23

Table 10. Gender and Disability of the 23 Referred Learners

Sites	Visual Disability		Hearing Disability		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Los Baños, Laguna	1	0	5	0	6
Bacacay, Albay	1	4	2	0	7
Tanauan, Leyte	0	3	3	3	9
Total	2	7	10	3	22

A.7 Enrolled Referred Children

Once the children have been referred to DepEd schools, they are appropriately processed for enrollment. At the onset of this Schoolyear 2023 -2024, three (3) of the 23 referred children were enrolled. The children are all males. Two (2), who are deaf, are currently placed as non-graded and one (1), diagnosed as low vision (LV), was placed in kinder. They are all from Los Baños, Laguna. It was noted that one learner who was diagnosed as deaf is already 15 years old. He was enrolled as a non-grader. Such case reinforces the importance of early screening and diagnosis to ensure timely intervention.

In the previous years of implementation (July 2019 to June 2023), the focus was on the following disabilities: deaf, hard of hearing (HOH), blind, low vision, multiple disabilities (MDVI), and deafblindness. In the project extension or Year 5, other disabilities like autism, intellectual

disability, learning disability, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) were added to its scope of disabilities.

This report reflects data on enrollment of CWDs, who received Gabay interventions. It is a result of data gathered by the Field Coordinators from divisions and schools. The documents provided were from signed data forms provided by school heads and teachers, who are Gabay partners.

This has 3 sections: 1) SY 2023-2024 Enrollment of CSDs in Existing Sites as of Dec. 2023, 2) School Year 2022-2023 vs. SY 2023-2024, and 3) Enrolment of Learners with Disabilities (NG, K-G. 3) in Additional Sites for SY 2024-2025 as of Dec. 2023. These provide details of division enrollment figures, disability distribution, gender, and grade-level enrollments.

The last part provides details on the progress and challenges encountered. The term "existing sites" refer to the target areas of Gabay from 2019 to 2023 (Year 1 to Year 4), which are: Divisions of Batangas City, Batangas, Sto. Tomas City in Region IVA, Divisions of Sorsogon City and Sorsogon in Region V, and Divisions of Maasin City and Southern Leyte in Region VIII. "Additional sites" are the new target areas starting June 2023 (Year 5), namely, the districts of Los Baños- Laguna, Bacacay – Albay, and Tanauan - Leyte.

Section 1: SY 2023-2024 Enrollment of CSDs in Existing Sites as of Dec. 2023

The following discussion is on the enrollment data of CSD in existing sites. CSDs include those who are deaf, blind, deafblind, have multiple disabilities with visual impairment (MDVI), and those with low vision.

Enrollment of Non-Graded, Kinder to Grade 3

- a. By division/site. As shown in Table 11, the total number of CSDs enrolled for all areas is 522. The largest enrollment of CSDs is in Batangas Province with 206 students (39.46%), followed by Sorsogon Province with 168 enrollees (32.18%), and Southern Leyte enrollment with 54 students (10.34%). Sorsogon City, Batangas City, and Maasin City follow with 37 (7.09%), 28 (5.36%), and 29 (5.55%) students, respectively.

Table 11. CSDs Enrolled from Non-graded to Grade 3 for SY 2023-2024 as of Dec. 2023: By Site, Gender and Grade Level

Site	Non-Graded		Kinder		Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	OT
Batangas City	6	3	0	1	4	4	3	2	2	3	15	13	28
Batangas Province	70	65	16	19	10	3	9	2	3	9	108	98	206
Sorsogon City	2	4	3	3	5	4	1	5	7	3	18	19	37
Sorsogon Province	53	54	13	10	8	10	7	5	5	3	86	82	168
Maasin City	9	5	2	2	2	0	3	1	2	3	18	11	29
Southern Leyte	15	11	3	2	6	1	1	3	5	7	30	24	54
Grand Total	155	142	37	37	35	22	24	18	24	28	275	247	522
	297		74		57		42		52		522		

b. By grade level. Referring to Table 11 and Figure 5, non-graded has the highest enrollment with 297 students (57%), followed by Kinder with 74 (14%). Among the grade levels 1, 2, and 3 the highest enrollment is in grade 1. This shows a decreasing enrollment rate as the level increases.

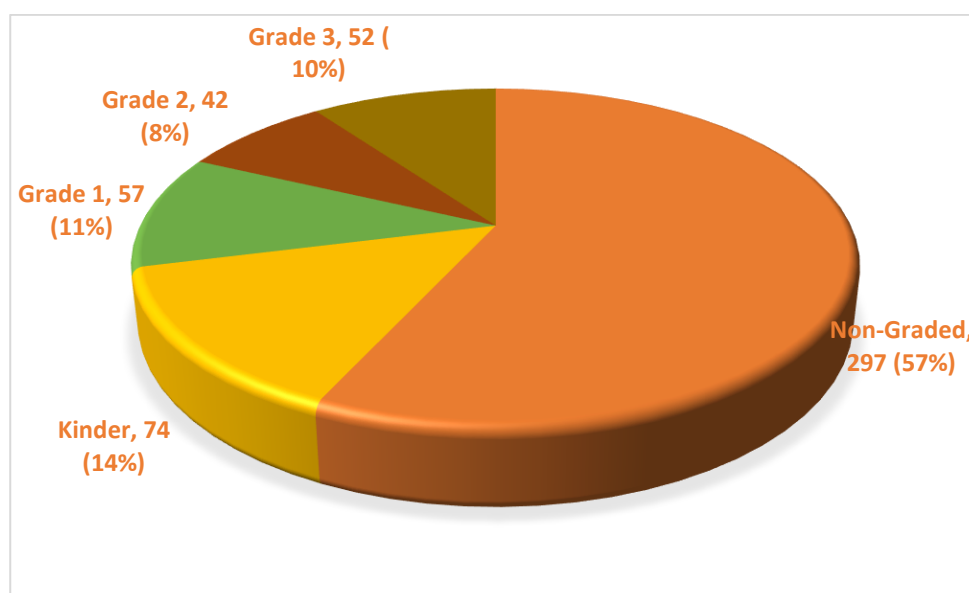


Figure 5. Distribution of CSDs Enrollment per Grade Level

The higher enrollment in non-graded categories vis-a-vis the graded categories, can be ascribed to several factors. For one, first time enrollees particularly for students who start their schooling

at a later age are considered in non-graded level. Another reason is parents with a disabled child frequently choose or perhaps advise to enroll their child in non-graded program because there is that concern that the child may not be able to cope academically, emotionally, and socially with the more structured set-up.

- c. By gender. Across all sites (Figure 6), there are more enrolled male students (275 or 52.68%), than female students (247 or 47.32%). The same trend is observed for Non-graded, Grades 1 and 2 enrollment data. But for Kinder and Grade 3 enrollment, there are more females.

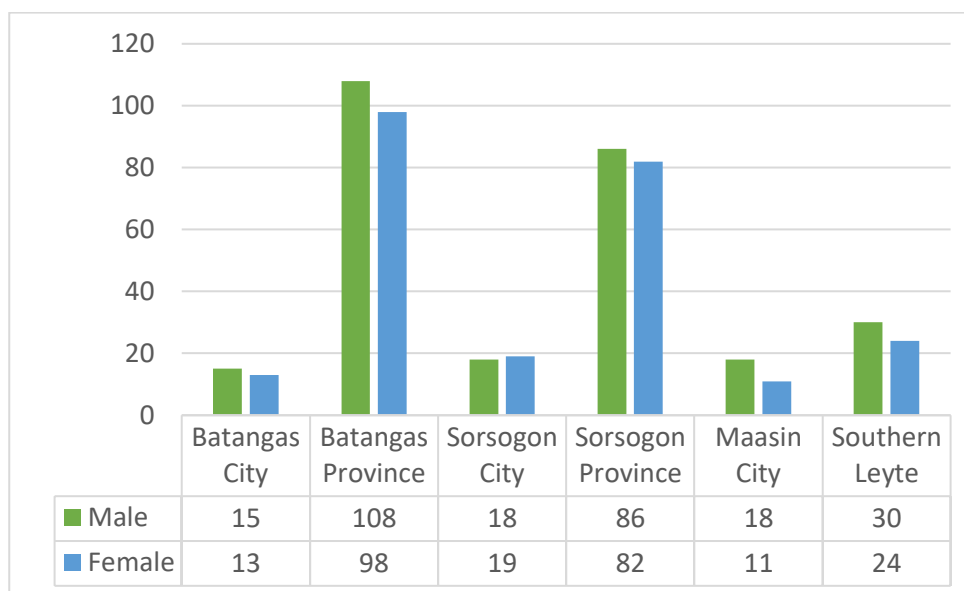


Figure 6. Distribution of CSDs Enrollment by Gender

Except for Sorsogon City, in general, there are more male CSDs enrolled than female (Figure 2). In detail, the data shows:

- Sorsogon Province - Male enrollment is higher for Kinder, Grades 2 and 3; female enrollment is higher for Non-Graded and Grade 1.
- Southern Leyte - Male enrollment is higher for Non-Graded, Kinder, and Grade 1; females enrollment is higher for Grades 2 and 3.
- Batangas City – Male enrollment is higher in Non-Graded and Grade 2; female enrollment is higher in Kinder and Grade 3.
- Maasin City - Male enrollment is higher in Grades 1 and 2; female enrollment is higher in Grade 3; the same number of enrolled female and male in Kinder.

- Sorsogon City - Females enrollment is higher in Non-Graded, Grade 1, and Grade 3; male enrollment is higher in Grade 1, and the same number of enrolled female and male in Kinder.

d. By disability. Table 12 shows that among the 522 enrollees, the majority of the enrolled CSDs are deaf students (330 or 63.22%), followed by low vision learners (104 or 19.92%) and then Blind learners with 49 (9.38%) enrollees.

Multiple disabilities with blindness with 20 (3.83%) and there are 10 students with Multiple Disabilities with Low Vision (MDLV), comprising 1.91% of the total. There are 2 (0.38%) deafblind students enrolled - one (1) in Batangas Province and one (1) in Sorsogon.

Table 12. CSDs Enrolled for SY 2023-2024 as of Dec. 2023: By Disability

Type of Disability	Batangas City	Batangas Province	Sorsogon City	Sorsogon	Maasin City	So. Leyte	Total
Low Vision	9	23	7	51	3	11	104
Blind	1	17	7	13	3	8	49
Deaf	18	142	20	96	19	35	330
DeafBlind		1		1			2
Deaf Low Vision				4			4
Multiple Disabilities with Blindness		11	2	3	4		20
Multiple Disabilities with LV		9	1				10
Multiple Disabilities with Deafness		3					3
Total Sensorial	28	206	37	168	29	54	522

In all target areas, there are low vision, blind, and deaf students enrolled. It was also noted that except for the low vision and deaf low vision enrollment, Batangas Province has the highest enrollment of CSDs for the rest of the disability categories. Deaf Low vision enrollees

(4 or 0.77%) are only in Sorsogon; Multiple disabilities with deafness enrollees (3 or 0.57%) are only in Batangas Province .

Enrollment of Grades 4-6 CSDs

The Grades 4-6 CWDs cohort has been under Gabay's guidance since 2019. This group had been direct beneficiaries of Gabay intervention programs. This intervention assistance included training for school teachers and officials that had a positive impact on the improvement of classroom strategies and school policies as well as on attitudes; training for parents/guardians/primary caregivers that resulted to better homecare, improved attitude (because of better understanding of the disability), and increased involvement in the child's education; training of LGU officials which resulted to awareness, improved local programs and policies, and financial allocations. Moreover, these groups of children benefited from the FSL Dictionary and other educational resources that were developed and distributed through the technical assistance of Gabay.

- a. By division-site. Table 13 presents that for the SY 2023-2024 (as of Dec. 2023) a total of 118 CSDs are enrolled in Grades 4 to 6, with Batangas Province having the highest enrollment (49 or 41.52%) followed by Sorsogon Province (23 or 19.5%). Southern Leyte has 9 or 7.63% enrolment. Both Sorsogon City and Batangas City exhibit identical figures, each with 16 learners (13.56%). Meanwhile, Maasin City represents 5 learners, making up 4.24%.

**Table 13. CSDs Enrolled for SY 2023-2024 as of Dec. 2023:
By Site, Gender and Grade Level**

Site	Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		TOTAL		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Batangas City	1	5	5	2	3	0	9	7	16
Batangas Province	8	15	2	6	11	7	21	28	49
Sorsogon City	4	3	1	1	3	4	8	8	16
Sorsogon Province	6	2	5	10	0	0	11	12	23
Maasin City	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	5
Southern Leyte	8	1	0	0	0	0	8	1	9
Grand Total	32	26	13	19	17	11	62	56	118
	58		32		28		118		

The high CSD enrollment in Batangas Province in Grades 4-6 is tangible proof of the province's sustained commitment, DepEd's strong support, and that Gabay intervention strategies may have had a positive impact.

The technical assistance of Gabay enhanced inclusive practices of LGU health programs and classroom instruction. Gabay also equipped the LGU to develop programs and policies that promote inclusion of persons with disabilities in their schools and communities.

- b. By gender. In general, majority of CSDs enrolled from Grades 4 to 6 are predominantly males with a total of 62 or 53% while females only registered 56 or 47% (Figure 7).

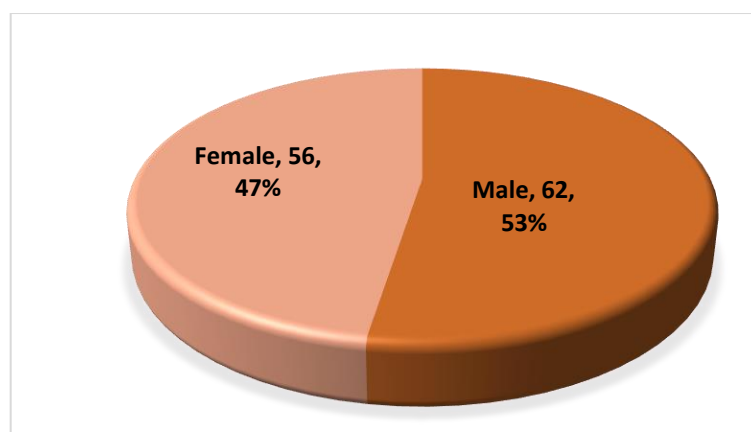


Figure 7. Distribution of Grades 4-6 Enrollees by Gender

- c. By grade level. Of the 118 CSDs enrolled in existing areas, in general, the highest enrollment is in Grade 4 with 58 or 49% enrollees, followed by Grade 5 with 32 students (27%), and then Grade 6 with 28 students (24%). This indicates a decrease in the number of students as they progress to higher grades, a trend that is usually observed. However, the breakdown of data reveals differently with that in Batangas Province, for example, there were more students enrolled in Grade 6 than in Grade 5; in Sorsogon Province there are more students in Grade 5 than in Grade 4 and then drops to zero enrollment for Grade 6. The enrollment data also shows that in both Maasin City and Southern Leyte (Region 8 – Eastern Visayas) there are no CSDs enrolled in Grades 5 and 6 and Maasin had the least number of students enrolled in Grades 4, with 5 students only.

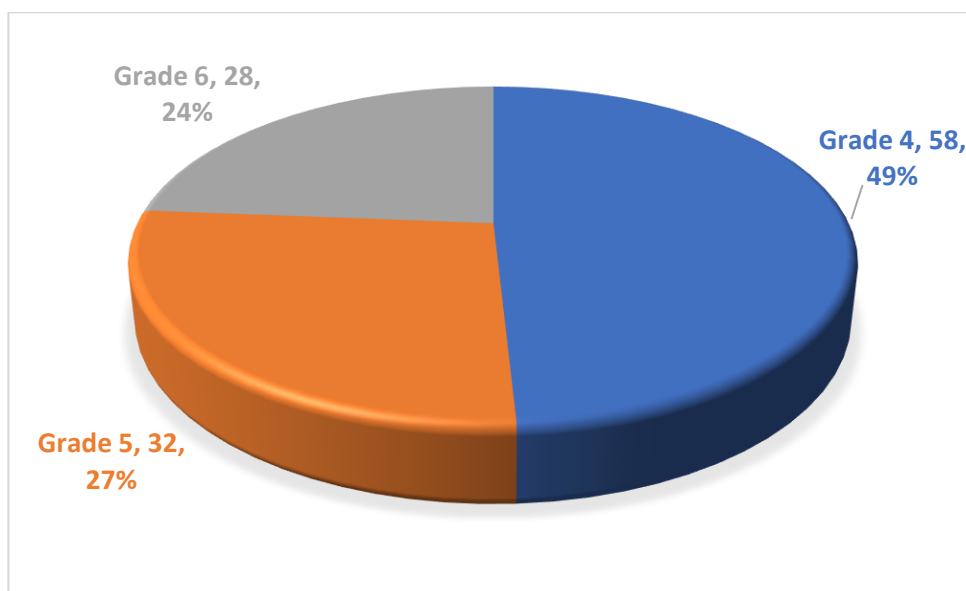


Figure 8. Distribution of Grade 4-6 Enrollees by Grade Levels

These data signal the need for appropriate technical and financial support to ensure that CSDs continue schooling making efforts for the dropouts to be back in schools (through an effective “balik-aral” program). There may also be a need to look into the factors influencing these fluctuations in enrollment numbers by having a better understanding of the dynamics of student progression across grades, particularly in the higher grades (Grades 4 to 6) within the socioeconomic and political contexts of these areas. Gabay may need to further investigate to understand the reasons why there is low (or zero) enrollment in Maasin City and Southern Leyte. Initially, Gabay is considering validating if the reasons could be these: 1) children have transferred to other schools 2) children are hindered due to personal and family challenges. Determining the root causes are crucial for Gabay so that evidence-based recommendations can be formulated for DepEd and LGU and the appropriate actions can immediately be implemented.

- d. By disability. Regarding the types of disabilities among enrolled learners as shown in Figure 5, the predominant category is individuals with deafness, constituting 92 or 78% of the total. Following closely, those with Low Vision comprise 18 (15.25%) individuals. The category of Blind learners follows, accounting for 8 (6.78%) of the total.

Among the 92 Deaf learners, they exhibit dominance in Batangas Province, comprising 39 individuals or 42.4%. Sorsogon follows with 19 (20.65%) learners, and Batangas City with 14 (15.22%) learners. Sorsogon City and Southern Leyte both have an equal share of 8 (8.7%) learners each, while Maasin City contributes 4 (4.35%) Deaf learners.

In the case of the 18 Low Vision learners, the majority, specifically 7 learners or 38.88%, hail from Batangas Province. Sorsogon City and Sorsogon both share the same count, each with 4 Low Vision learners, representing 22.22%. Batangas City contributes 2 (11.11%) learners, and Maasin City has 1 (5.55%) learner.

Among Grades 4-6, there is a total of 8 Blind learners distributed across Sorsogon City, Batangas Province, and Southern Leyte. Sorsogon City leads with 4 (50%) learners, followed by Batangas Province with 3 learners at 37.5%, and Southern Leyte with 1 learner, constituting 12.5%.

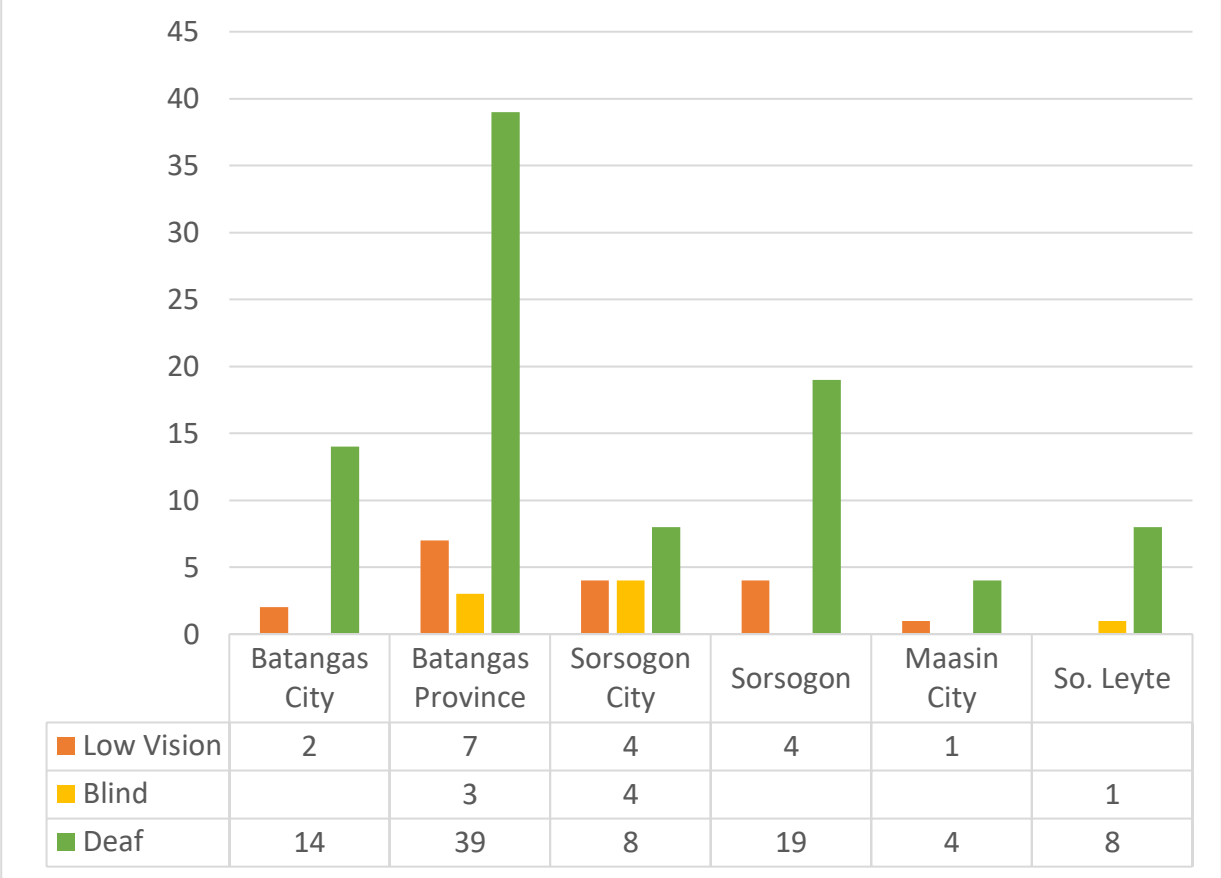


Figure 9. Distribution of Learners by Disabilities from Grades 4-6 per Division

CSD Enrollment SY 2023-2024 for New Enrollees as of Dec. 2023

The Gabay monitoring data show new CSD enrollees for SY 2023-2024. The identification and enrollment of these new students is a result of referrals by Gabay-trained community health workers and leaders, who were actively part of Gabay initiatives. This may also have been a result of active community advocacy campaigns that was enhanced by the presence of the project. Community advocacy campaigns was an integral part of action plan prepared by Gabay designated school and community champions for CSDs and inclusive education. On the other hand, the training of health workers strengthened the community’s child find system. This dual approach - trainings and advocacy campaigns - reflect the multifaceted strategy of the project in order to ensure that the maximum number of children with disabilities are reached and received the education support that they need and deserve, being their right.

- a. By division. As outlined in Table 4, the current school year has witnessed the enrollment of 112 new students, spanning from non-graded to Grade 3. Out of the total 112, a significant proportion of 54 individuals, constituting 48.21%, hails from Sorsogon Province. Following closely, 33 new students, representing 29.46%, originate from Batangas Province. Additionally, 9 students (8%) joined from Sorsogon City, while 6 (5.36%) find their educational path in Batangas City. Southern Leyte welcomes 8 new students, constituting 7.14% of the total, and Maasin City contributes 2 students, comprising 1.8%.

Table 14. New CSDs Enrolled from Non-graded to Grade 3: By Site, Gender and Grade Level

Site	Non-Graded		Kinder		Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3		Total		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Batangas City	1	2		1	1		1				3	3	6
Batangas Province	9	15	2	3	2		1	1			14	19	33
Sorsogon City	1	1			2			2	2	1	5	4	9
Sorsogon Province	17	12	7	6	4	6		1	1		29	25	54
Maasin City	1			1							1	1	2
Southern Leyte	4	1		1	2						6	2	8
Grand Total	33	31	9	12	11	6	2	4	3	1	58	54	112
	64		21		17		6		4		112		

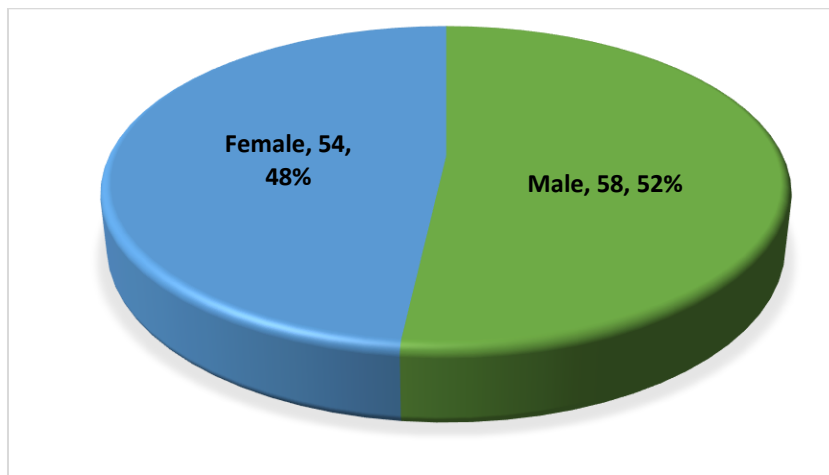


Figure 10. Distribution of New Enrollees across all Sites by Gender

- b. By Gender. Figure 10 and Table 14 show that the gender distribution of the 112 new enrollees is relatively balanced, with 58 (51.78%) males and 54 (48.21%) females.
- c. By grade level. Most new enrollees (64 or 57%) are in non-graded classes (Figure 11). This may be due to these reasons: 1) thorough preparation and readiness in the resource room and self-contained class before they were enrolled in the grade levels; 2) CSDs enrolled at a later age so they needed to initially attend a preparatory transition program and in this program, the suitable grade level or program will be determined by the Resource or Special Needs Education (SNEd) teacher.

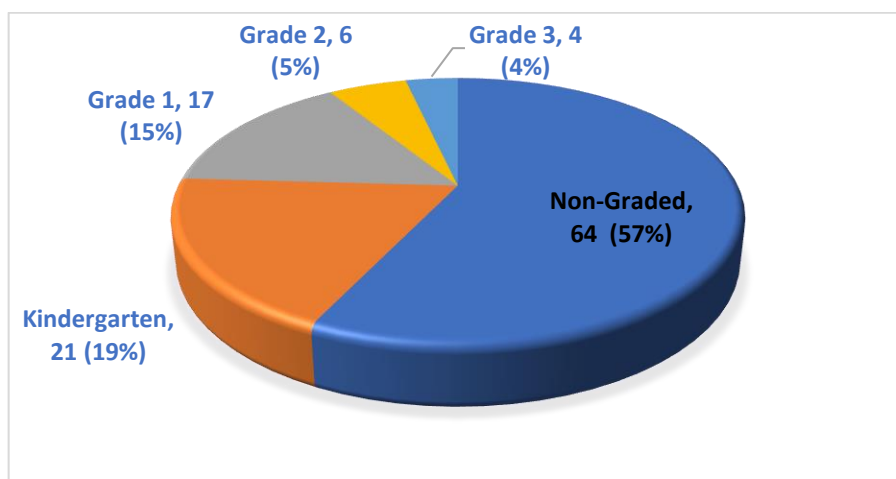


Figure 11. Distribution of New Enrollees across All Sites by Grade Levels

Twenty-one (21) or 19% of the new enrollees are in Kindergarten And the level with the least number of new students is Grade 3.

- d. By disability. As shown in Figure 12, majority of the new enrollees are deaf learners (71 or 63.4%) and then, low vision children (32 or 28.56%). In contrast, Blind learners account for a smaller portion with 6 individuals, equivalent to 5.36%, and Multiple Disabilities with Blindness come next with 3 individuals, contributing 2.68% to the overall count.

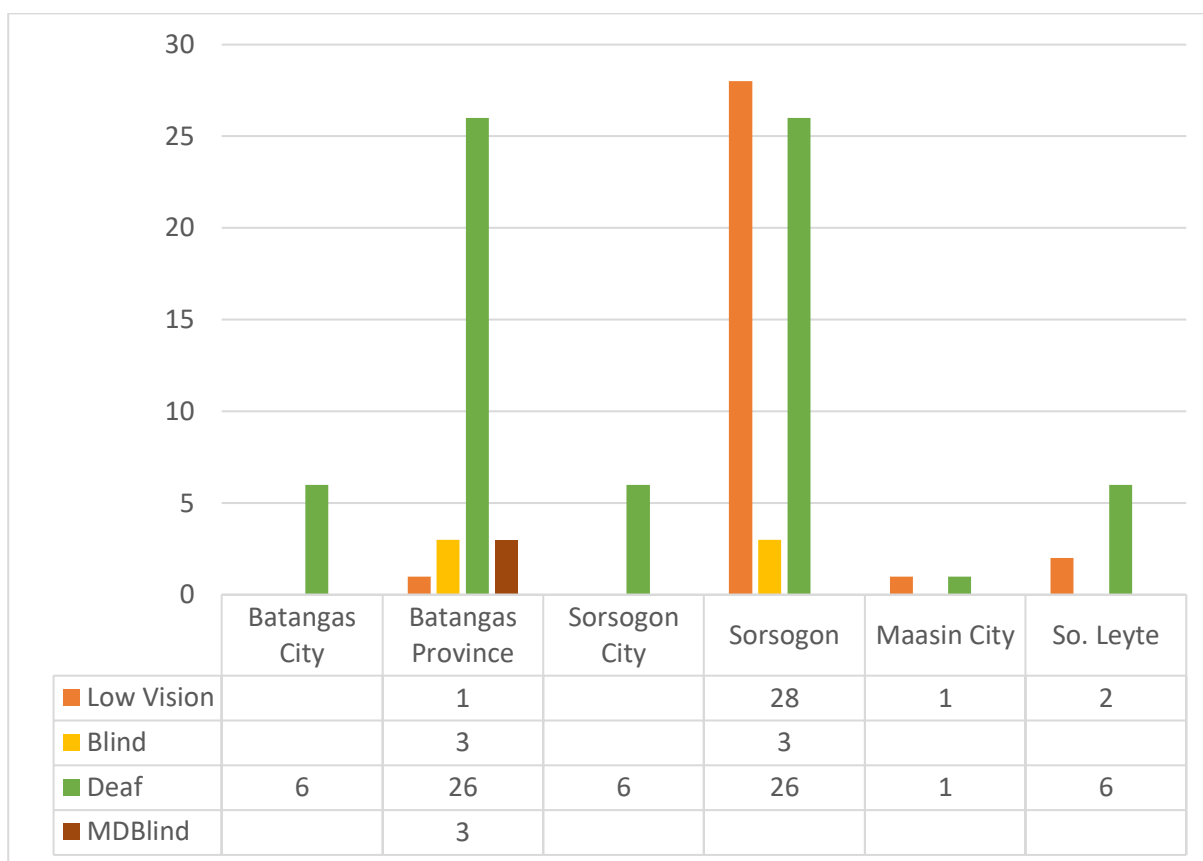


Figure 12. Distribution of New Enrollees across All Sites by Disabilities

Section 2: School Year 2022-2023 vs. SY 2023-2024

Based on the data gathered by the project monitoring team and as summarized in Table 15, for SY 2022-2023, the total number of CSDs enrolled in existing areas for Non-graded, Kinder, and Grades 1 to 3 levels was 432 students. This increased to 522 for SY 2023 to 2024, indicating a 20.83% increase in enrollment.

This increase is a positive development that affirms the efforts of DepEd and the community (through the LGU) to reach CSDs and their families. It should also be emphasized that, the total number of enrollees in all existing project sites increased (no decrease in enrollment reported). Note that Gabay has been working with DepEd, the LGU, and other civil society groups in these areas/divisions since 2019 to strengthen social inclusion programs, particularly for CSDs.

Table 15. Enrollment of CSDs in SY 2022- 2023 and SY 2023-2024 (Non-Graded, Kinder, Grades 1 to 3): Percent Increase

Site	School Year 2022-2023	School Year 2023-2024	Percent Increase
Batangas City	23	28	21.74%
Batangas Province	186	206	10.75%
Sorsogon City	31	37	19.35%
Sorsogon Province	119	168	41.18%
Maasin City	26	29	11.54%
Southern Leyte	47	54	14.89%
Grand Total	432	522	20.83%

Sorsogon Province had the highest increase in enrollment at 41.8% , from 119 enrollees in SY 2022-23 to 168 in SY 2023 -24. Batangas City and Maasin City had the least increase in enrollment. It was noted that Region VIII target sites had the least increase in enrollment if compared to Region IVA and Region V.

Section 3: *Enrolment of Learners with Disabilities (NG, K-G. 3) in Additional Sites for SY 2024-2025 as of Dec. 2023*

The three (3) new Gabay sites are: 1) Municipality of Bacacay (3 districts) in the Province of Albay; 2) Municipality of Los Baños (1 district) in the Province of Laguna; and 3)

Municipality of Tanauan (4 districts) in the Province of Leyte. The scope of disabilities in the new project sites include other disabilities besides sensorial disabilities.

The eye and ear screening process for CWDs and the informal advocacy activities in the project sites commenced in August 2023. The formal advocacy activity was for these sites was launched in September 2023 through a Symposium. Currently, Gabay has been actively involved in facilitating enrollment referrals for the CWDs identified to ensure that the children identified will have access to education and intervention in the opening of SY 2023-2024.

The following data are gathered from the new project sites.

- a. By division, gender, and grade level. As of December 2023 (Table 16), the total enrollment of LWDs (Non-graded, Kinder, Grades 1 to 3) across the new sites, is 249. Of the 249, majority (150 or 60.24%) are in Los Baños. Bacacay has 88 (35.34%) enrollees and Tanauan has 11 (4.42%) enrollees. Ongoing monitoring are being conducted to validate or update these data.

Table 16. SY 2024-2025 Enrollment of LWDs as of Dec. 2023 in New Sites by Division and Grade level (Non- graded, Kinder, Grades 1 to 3)

New Site	Non-Graded		Kinder		Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Bacacay Albay	44	21	1	0	4	1	5	2	8	2	62	26	88
Los Banos Laguna	77	43	7	3	8	1	2	3	2	4	96	54	150
Tanauan Leyte	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	2	4	1	6	5	11
Grand Total	121	64	8	5	13	2	8	7	14	7	164	85	249
	185		13		15		15		21		249		

- b. By gender. Across all sites (Figure 13), majority of CWDs enrolled are males (164 or 65.86%) and 85 (34.13%) are female. Even if the data is detailed per area, it was noted that there are more male enrollees than female.

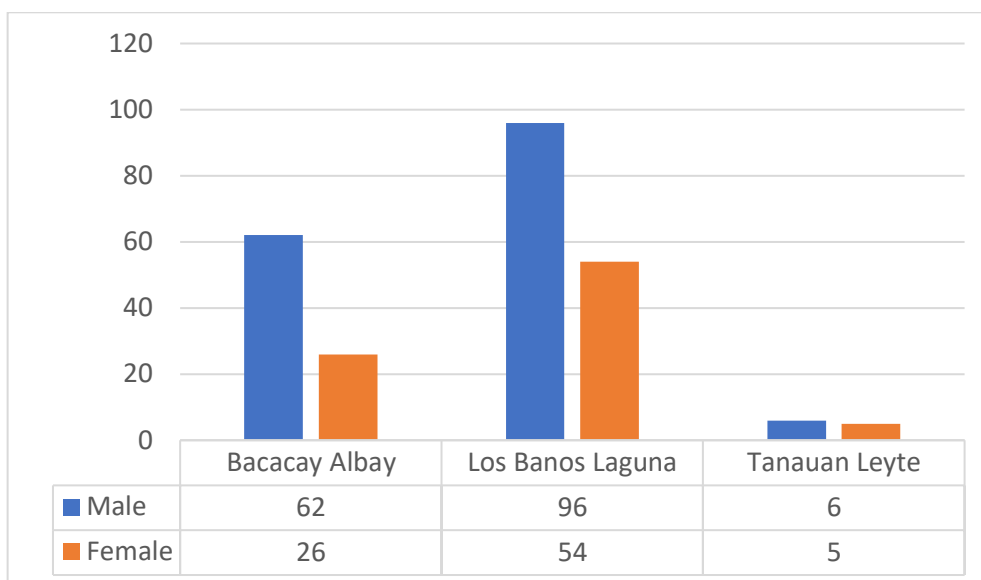


Figure 13 Enrollment of LWDs in the New Sites by Gender

- c. By grade level. Figure 14 illustrates that most enrollees (185 or 74.3%) are enrolled in non-graded classes and only 64 (25.70%) are in Kinder and Grades 1 to 3. Further inquiries may be conducted by Gabay to determine the reasons for the high enrollment in non-graded classes within the district.

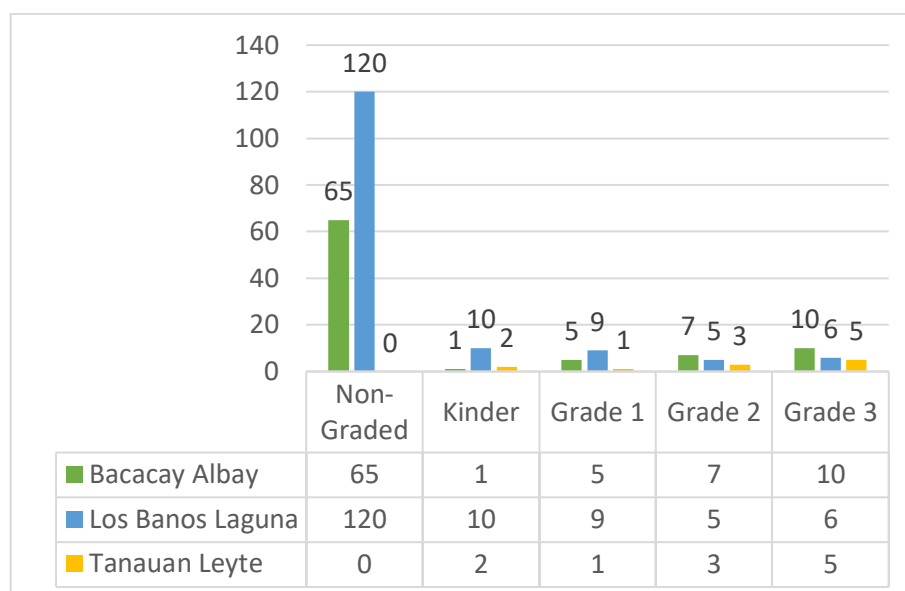


Figure 14. Baseline Enrollment of LWDs in the New Sites by Grade Levels

- d. By disability. Table 17 shows that of the 249-total number of LWDs enrolled across all new sites, the most prevalent type of disability among the individuals surveyed

is Intellectual Disabilities, affecting 61 individuals, constituting 24.50% of the total. Following closely is the category of individuals facing challenges in Remembering, Concentrating, Paying Attention & Understanding, with 58 individuals accounting for 23.29%.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is the third most prevalent disability, impacting 47 individuals and representing 18.87% of the total. Deafness ranks fourth, with 13 individuals (5.22%), while Blindness and Physical Disorders share the fifth position, each affecting 11 individuals (4.42%).

Down Syndrome is the sixth most common disability, identified in 10 individuals (4.02%). Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Difficulty in Applying Adaptive Skills share the seventh position, each affecting 6 individuals (2.41%).

Low Vision follows closely, affecting 5 individuals (2.01%). Cerebral Palsy is identified in 4 individuals (1.61%).

Challenges in Basic Learning & Applying Knowledge are faced by seven (7) individuals (2.81%), positioning this category in the tenth position. Learning Disabilities related to Reading and Communication and Global Developmental Delay share the eleventh position, each affecting three (3) individuals (1.20%). The category of 'Others' also involves three (3) individuals (1.20%). DeafBlindness is identified in one (1) individual (0.40%), while Multiple Disabilities with Visual Impairment (MDVI) is not reported among the surveyed population.

Table 17. SY 2024-2025 Enrollment of LWDs as of Dec. 2023 in the New Sites by Disabilities

Type of Disability	Bacacay Albay	Los Banos Laguna	Tanauan Leyte	Total
Sensorial				
Low Vision	2	1	2	5
Blind	6	5		11
Deaf	5	8		13
DeafBlind	1			1
MDVI				0

Type of Disability	Bacacay Albay	Los Banos Laguna	Tanauan Leyte	Total
ADHD	1	5		6
Autism Spectrum Disorder	12	35		47
Cerebral Palsy	4			4
Intellectual Disability	1	59	1	61
Down Syndrome		10		10
Global Developmental Delay		3		3
Difficulty in Basic Learning & Applying knowledge	7			7
Difficulty in Applying Adaptive Skills	6			6
Difficulty in Displaying Interpersonal Behaviour				0
Difficulty in Remembering, Concentrating, paying attention & understanding	40	13	5	58
Learning Disability: Reading and Communication		2	1	3
Physical Disorder	3	6	2	11
Others		3		3
Total	88	150	11	249

B. INTERMEDIATE RESULT 2

Improved reading performance among Blind and Deaf learners

- Training of Deaf Trainers for Mentoring Teachers and Parents in Gabay Sites
- Training of Teachers, School Heads, Supervisors, Parents and Guardians in Educating and Supporting Learners with Disabilities in an Inclusive Setting
- Inauguration of Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRC): Launching and Training of SNED Teachers on the Use of Assistive Teaching Technology
- Turnover of Additional Equipment (embosser), Learning Resources (Sensory Materials and Pictures Exchange Communication System or PECS) and Braille Translator to the Modular ILRCs
- Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Braille Reading Assessment (BRA) Endline Report – Annex A
- School Monitoring and Technical Assistance Report – Annex B

B.1 Training of Deaf Trainers for Mentoring Teachers and Parents in Gabay Sites

Over the past four years, Gabay has been working towards achieving its principal goal of strengthening inclusive education for children with sensorial disabilities, specifically those who are deaf, blind, or deafblind. As part of its ongoing efforts to achieve this objective, Gabay

has undertaken several activities aimed at improving the reading performance of these children. In pursuit of this objective, two fundamental evaluation methods applied include Early Grade Reading Assessments (EGRA) for Deaf Students and Braille Reading Assessments for Visually Impaired Students, with assessments conducted from Kindergarten through Grade 3.

The results of these assessments indicated progress in certain learning areas. In the EGRA assessments for Deaf Students, significant improvements were observed in their Filipino Sign Language (FSL) receptive and expressive vocabulary, as well as FSL letter identification. These findings indicate that the educational interventions and strategies implemented by Gabay have had positive impact on deaf students' language skills and foundational reading abilities.

However, despite these encouraging developments, certain challenging areas still require focused attention. For deaf students, there remains a need for improvement in English language skills and comprehension, as well as FSL comprehension, particularly in reading sentences and short stories. This highlights the complexity of language acquisition and comprehension for deaf individuals and underscores the need for continued support and tailored strategies in these specific areas.

Additionally, Gabay and its consultants provided valuable recommendations for further improvement:

1. To increase the frequency of Deaf Mentors' visits to teachers, who are working with deaf students. The guidance and expertise of deaf mentors can significantly contribute to the skills and knowledge of both deaf learners and teachers.
2. To continuously provide Braille reading materials for blind students which is a crucial resource to support their learning.

The overall goal of this training program is to equip the Deaf mentors of Gabay with the necessary skills so that they can provide valuable support to both educators and parents of deaf children, thereby improving their children's reading performance. The specific objectives are:

1. To enhance Visual Gestural Communication (VGC) Skills. Deaf Mentors will refine their proficiency in Visual Gestural Communication.
This means they will become even more adept at using visual cues and sign language to convey stories effectively, making the learning experience engaging and accessible.
2. To develop Instructional Activities. Deaf Mentors will learn how to create innovative instructional activities that revolve around signed stories. These activities will be tailored to enhance students' sign language proficiency and reading comprehension. By doing so, they will foster a deeper connection with storytelling, sign language, and reading comprehension.

There were eight (8) participants in the training, six (6) Deaf mentors from the old sites, and two (2) new Deaf mentors from the additional project sites.

Table 18. Deaf Mentor Participants per Area

Gabay Project Site	Deaf Mentor	
Batangas and Batangas City	Mr. Ron Daryl Quino Mr. Inigo Alfonso Asilo	2
Sorsogon and Sorsogon City	Mr. Omar Emata Mr. Ryan Clint Marcaida	2
Southern Leyte and Maasin City	Mr. Floyd Benedict Basco Mr. Heron Ocson	2
Bacacay, Albay	Ms. Daneline Delos Santos	1
Tanauan, Leyte	Mr. Ronald Christian Domingo	1
	TOTAL	8

The activity started with a short opening program highlighted by Dr. Yolanda S. Quijano, discussing the objectives and rationale of the activity. This was followed by a brief



walkthrough of the results of EGRA for Deaf Learners from Kinder to Grade 3, which was discussed by Mr. Justine Barcenas, Gabay Deaf Mentor and Field Coordinator. The results show that the teaching methods and approaches used by Gabay have had a good effect on the

language skills and basic reading abilities of deaf students. However, even though these improvements are promising, there are still some areas for improvement. Deaf students still need to work on improving their English language skills and understanding, as well as their comprehension of FSL, especially when it comes to reading sentences and short stories.

It was immediately followed by a short review of the introduction to FSL, Knowing the Deaf Learners, and Visual Gestural Communication (VGC) discussed by Mr. Inigo Asilo, Deaf Mentor from Batangas City. This topic highlighted the importance of VGC especially in teaching young children who are starting to learn sign language.

Another important topic was the Sign Parameters discussed by Mr. Ron Daryl Quinio, Deaf Mentor from Batangas City. He discussed the five key parameters when signing: handshape, palm orientation, location, movement, and non-manual markers. This topic emphasized that understanding and correctly using these parameters are extremely important to ensure accuracy. If the sign is not accurate, the meaning of the sign may change or not understood.



The succeeding sessions continued, focusing on reviewing last year's mentoring sessions for developing skills in Basic Filipino Sign Language (FSL) for Kinder to Grade 3. This session covered various topics, including basic greetings, emotional expression, common adjectives, and opposite words, the basic alphabet, numbers from 1-30 and beyond, basic opposite words, and basic verbs. The session facilitators included Mr. Floyd Benedict Basco and Mr. Heron Ocson of Southern Leyte, and Mr. Omar Emata and Mr. Ryan Clint Marcaida of Sorsogon.



The final session of the day was led by Dr. Antonia Blanca, Gabay's Deaf Education Consultant. This session focused on creating instructional activities for a story. Dr. Blanca also discussed how Deaf Mentors could effectively guide teachers, parents, and deaf learners in the field. She also provided a sample lesson plan as a template for the participants. The participants were split into four groups, each assigned to a specific grade level (Kindergarten to Grade 3). Their task was to choose three stories from Gabay's FSL stories and develop a lesson plan, with at least five activities for each story.



During the workshop, it was noticed that the Deaf Mentors faced initial challenges in preparing their lesson plans. However, with Dr. Blanca's guidance, they eventually succeeded in completing their lesson plans and visual aids, as well as planning for their demonstration lessons. The following half-day session continued the workshop, allowing participants to further prepare for their demonstration lessons.

On the last day of the training, during the demonstration lessons, each group effectively conducted their teaching sessions. They showed creativity by using visually engaging materials, expressive facial expressions, body language, and maintaining eye contact. These teaching techniques received positive feedback and valuable suggestions from consultants and observers, including representatives from the Philippine Federation of the Deaf. It was also observed that the Deaf Mentors' manifested their adaptability and willingness to integrate these feedbacks and recommendations into their teaching methods. This eagerness to adapt and improve will not only serve to enhance the skills of the Deaf Mentors but also will contribute significantly to the overall improvement in the development of reading skills provided to deaf learners in Gabay sites.



One of the challenges encountered during the course of the training was the difficulty of some of the Deaf Mentors specifically in making lesson plans as some of them do not have a background in education. Dr. Antonia Blanca patiently worked closely with each group of Deaf Mentors, providing guidance and support in the preparation of lesson plans, the development of activities, and the creation of instructional materials necessary for their demonstrations.

Another challenge that arose during the training was the disruption of its continuity. This disruption occurred on the second day due to a change in the venue for the training session. It is worth noting that the training was conducted concurrently with other activities organized by Gabay, in which the Deaf Mentors were also participating. This logistical challenge required

flexibility and adaptability from the participants, which was also observed from the Deaf Mentors.

B.2 Training of Teachers, School Heads, Supervisors, Parents and Guardians in Educating and Supporting Learners with Disabilities in an Inclusive Setting

2023 November 10 to 12, Los Baños, Laguna

2023 November 17 to 19, Bacacay, Albay

2024 January 19 to 21, Tanauan, Leyte

Objectives of the Training for Teachers, School Heads and Supervisors in Los Baños and Bacacay.

The primary goal of the 3-day “*Training of Teachers, School Heads, and Supervisors in Educating Learners with Disabilities in Inclusive Setting*” was to enhance the knowledge, skills, and right attitudes of teachers, school heads, and supervisors towards appropriate instructional approaches for CWDs in the context of the principles of universal design for learning and inclusive education. By the end of this training, participants were expected:

1. To have the knowledge, skills, and a positive attitude necessary for educating children with disabilities;
2. To have the ability to assess students' strengths, skill levels, interests, abilities, and learning needs as bases for the creation of appropriate accommodations and instructional modifications; and
3. To be able to set achievable learning objectives, effectively utilize available teaching materials, and adapt as necessary to cater to individual needs.

Teacher participants were grouped into various disability types they handled, which are: 1) Deaf and Hard of Hearing, 2) Blind and Low Vision, and 3) Other Disabilities: Autism, Intellectual Disability, Learning Disability, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Schools Heads had the option to choose their disability group. These were the specific training objectives for each group:

Disability Group 1: Deaf/Hard of Hearing (Deaf/HOH):

1. Equip teachers with the proficiency in Sign Language, enabling them to create an inclusive classroom environment;

2. Align the training with legal mandates, including Republic Act 11106, and ensure compliance with the rights of deaf learners;
3. Enhance the skills of teachers on the adapted Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) on Filipino Sign Language (FSL);
4. Provide ongoing support for effective implementation of the adapted MELCs on FSL; and
5. Broaden the skills of teachers of learners with special needs and general education teachers.

Disability Group 2: Blind/Low Vision, DB, and MDVI:

1. Recognize the unique needs and challenges of students who are blind, deafblind, with low vision and multiple disabilities within a classroom setting, as well as to recognize the needs and challenges of students in Braille reading and writing;
2. Describe collaborative approaches to working with learners who are blind, deafblind, with low vision, and with multiple disabilities; and
3. Explain and demonstrate strategies and adaptations for teaching curricula tailored to specific disabilities, incorporating Braille reading and writing as essential elements for students with visual impairments.

Disability Group 3: Other Disabilities (Intellectual Disabilities, Autism, etc.):

1. Provide diverse instructional strategies for effective learning access for children with intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, and other learning disabilities based on classroom assessment;
2. Customize materials and technologies for Autism and Intellectual Disabilities; and
3. Promote family partnership and collaboration in team-based learning.

Objectives of the Training for Parents in Los Baños and Bacacay. The overall goal of this training program is to enhance the knowledge and skills and right attitudes of parents in supporting educators in providing access and quality instruction to children with disabilities, through:

1. Engagement in effective parents-schools' partnerships and productive working relationships;
2. Understanding and exercising their roles in the provision of education interventions for children; and

3. Advocating for the rights to education for ALL among children with disabilities.

Specific Objectives per disability group are:

Disability Group 1: Parents of Deaf and Hard of Hearing:

1. Understand and appreciate the Filipino Deaf culture,
2. Analyze and connect the relationship between gestures and signs,
3. Know appropriate gestures to communicate and employ non-verbal communication skills as one communicates with other people,
4. Perform in FSL replies to greetings and use signs appropriately to describe oneself, and
5. Engage in one-on-one conversation with the Deaf and share basic information related to the topic.

Disability Group 2: Parents of Blind, low vision, deafblind and MDVI

1. Understand the unique needs of children with blindness, low vision, deafblindness, and multiple disabilities with visual impairment;
2. Learn the fundamentals of Braille reading and writing to support their children in basic communication and advanced reading and writing tasks;
3. Learn accessible technology that can aid their children in daily life and education, such as screen readers and speech-to-text software; and
4. Guide parents in making their home environment Braille-friendly by using tactile materials and Braille labels.

Disability Group 3: Parents of children with autism, intellectual disabilities, and other disabilities

1. Understand the importance of learning care skills, life skills, and functional academic skills in promoting the independence of their child with disability;
2. Gain empathy and understanding of their child's challenges by successfully completing simulated tasks, such as sensory overload experiences and fine motor skills challenges;
3. Experience a typical school day from their child's perspective, fostering empathy and insight into their child's daily experiences;

4. Gain knowledge about available resources, materials, and support services at their child's school, enabling them to access and utilize these resources effectively; and
5. Acquire specific skills for supporting their special needs children, such as behavior modification techniques, through hands-on workshops and practical experience.

Day 1

The opening program commenced with a Doxology by RBI low vision professionals, followed an opening message by RBI officials, and the acknowledgement of participants. Next was a brief and comprehensive overview of the Gabay its activities in Year 5 (July 2023 to December 2024). In Los Baños, this was conducted by Dr. Yolanda Quijano, Gabay Chief of Party (COP) and in Bacacay, by Ms. Amy Mojica, Deputy Chief of Party for Gabay (DCOP).

In Los Baños, Dr. Editha Atendido, the Schools Division Superintendent of DepEd Division of Laguna was present and gave an opening message to all participants. She highlighted DepEd's commitment to marginalized groups, especially children with disabilities, and



lauded Gabay: *“This Gabay project serves as a potent fuel, urging us to further promote inclusion in our schools. It reignites our motivation, guiding our leaders and personnel in determining the course of action.”* _The Honorable Municipal Mayor of Los Baños, the host municipality, also attended the opening ceremony and he expressed his gratitude for the partnership of the Los Baños LGU with the Gabay project. He also acknowledges the role of RBI as implementer and USAID as funder. Mayor Genuino then pronounced the plans of the Los Baños LGU, under his leadership, to construct a state-of-the-art facility for children in Los Baños, in which he will see to it that the needs of CWDs will be provided and also plans to establish the ILRC this facility. He also announced the upcoming "Panalo Card" initiative, an LGU project that extends benefits and discounts to both public and private school teachers.



In Bacacay, Dr. Nene Merioles, the Schools Division Superintendent of Albay was present to provide support to the participants and to the activity. She noted that many of the attendees were first-time participants in this type of training and as such added, *"You are very fortunate, and I believe that this*

achievement is possible as it is focused on one community, allowing you to genuinely witness the impact. We are eagerly anticipating the near future, and your municipality will undoubtedly be one of those at the forefront of promoting inclusivity."

The next plenary session was *"Connecting One's Experiences on CWDs with Learning Expectations,"* that was focused on linking their personal experiences with their expectations in the context of CWDs. The goal was to explore participants' expectations and their experiences with working with CWDs, focusing on the challenges and successes. Participants were organized into groups based on their roles. Gabay staff were facilitators for the group activity. For 20 minutes, each group discussed and described their experiences on metacards provided to them, which were then categorized into challenges and successes. A selected group presenter summarized their insights in 5 to 7 minutes. Presentations highlighted learnings from the experience of participants, emphasizing their progress in connecting children's experiences with learning expectations. After each presentation, facilitators provided comments to the presentation. In addition to these comments and suggestions, facilitators also commended the dedication and innovation demonstrated by the participants in overcoming challenges they encountered. The facilitators also informed the participants that unanswered questions or concerns will be addressed in upcoming sessions of the training. To emphasize the crucial need to enhance the knowledge and skills of teachers, school heads, supervisors, and parents or guardians, Gabay facilitators recounted facts about successful and famous individuals with learning disabilities. This was also meant to inspire and motivate the participants. Participants also actively shared their experiences and insights.

Participants then, transitioned to 2 groups for the breakout sessions - parents in one group and in the other group were the teachers, school heads and supervisors.

Guidelines for group/breakout sessions were explained. Teacher participants were also grouped into various disability types they handled, which were: 1) Deaf and Hard of Hearing, 2) Blind and Low Vision, and 3) Other Disabilities. Schools Heads had the option to choose their disability group. The day's training content was outlined, spanning three days with a focus on inclusive education and understanding specific disabilities. Participants were guided to make the most of their time in the breakout sessions to foster a collaborative and enriching learning environment. Participants proceeded to their respective groups.

Teachers, School Heads, and Supervisors. After the plenary or joint sessions, Dr. Quijano led the first session for teachers, school heads, and supervisors on *"Universal Design for Learning and Inclusive Education"*. She started with strategies for designing a diverse and accessible learning environment and then explained the principles of UDL, emphasizing multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression to cater to diverse learning styles. The focus was on fostering inclusive classrooms by incorporating differentiated instruction techniques and adapting instructional materials to meet the needs of students with varying abilities. The need for collaborative communication with students, parents, and educational professionals, and promoting a cohesive and supportive learning atmosphere were also underscored.



A session on *"Assessment of Children with Disabilities using available DepEd Checklist, Multi-Factored Assessment Test (MFAT), and other tools"* was also held by Dr. Olores, the former Chief of the Special Education Division of the Bureau of Elementary Education Central office of DepEd. In this session, teachers were taught to effectively assess and understand the unique needs of children with disabilities. She encouraged the teachers to conduct assessments and interpret results. From this gathered information, teachers will be able to tailor fit instructional strategies with individual strengths and challenges of students with disabilities.

The DepEd Curriculum for Learners with Disabilities was also presented. This was an orientation on the specific curriculum adaptations for Deaf, Blind, Low Vision, Deafblind, and other disabilities so that teachers and school heads can effectively implement the principles of inclusive education. This enabled them to design their instructional approaches, materials, and assessments to meet the unique and diverse learning needs of their students with disabilities. Additionally, school heads received insights into curriculum planning, resource allocation, and the overall management of inclusive educational programs within their schools.



Parents. The first session for the parents was on the rights of CWDs which was presented by Ms. Marie Joyce Lopez, a blind professional and advocate and also a Project Manager in RBI, for Los Baños and Mr. Alicando, a visually impaired professional and advocate, for Bacacay. Included in the first session was the rights of children, especially those with disabilities, and the principles of the CRPD which can be used a tool for advocacy. It was emphasized that parents of children with disabilities has a crucial role in creating an inclusive and supporting environment that upholds the rights and dignity of their children.

The next session's topic was about the Roles of Parents in terms of home support, school collaboration, and services in the community. The discussions revolved around strategies for developing strong communication skills to effectively convey their child's needs and advocate for appropriate support and building strong support networks such as connecting with other parents, support groups, and advocacy organizations.

The resource persons for this were: Ms. Rosemary Alonzo, Project Manager of the parent-support group PAVIC (Parent Advocates for Visually Impaired Children) and a mother of a learner with multiple disabilities with visual impairment; Ms. Marcelia Garcia, President of Deafblind-Support Philippines and a mother of a person with deafblindness; and Ms. Catherine Lopez, President of Autism Society of the Philippines-Laguna Chapter and a mother of a professional and an advocate with autism.

The last topic for the day was entitled “Person-Centered Planning: Creating a Dream Map” which was a workshop facilitated by Ms. Amy Mojica. For this activity, participants were tasked to draw a dream map for their child with disabilities. The main goal of this activity was to help the parents plan about their child’s choices and dreams for the future and create an action plan through a team process for them to achieve their goals. The session ended with all participants sharing their outputs. The mapping process provided them with valuable insights into the unique qualities, goals, and potential of their children with disabilities.



Day 2

Parents, teachers, school heads and supervisors attended specialized breakout sessions, with each session addressing a specific disability group, namely: a) Deaf and Hard of Hearing (HOH), b) Blind/Low Vision/DeafBlindness, c) Multiple Disabilities with Visual Impairment, and d) Other Disabilities encompassing Intellectual Disability, ASD, and Other Learning Disabilities.

a) Breakout Group: Deaf/HOH Learners

In Los Baños, the activities for the group were led and facilitated by Mr. Jesdelton Romo, a Deaf Professional associated with the Philippine Federation of the Deaf (PFD), Deaf Mentors from Region IV A namely Mr. Ron Daryl Quinio and Mr. Inigo Asilo, and Deaf Mentor Lead and Gabay Field Coordinator Mr. Justine Barcenas. In



Bacacay, the group was led and facilitated by Ms. Katherine Bilaro, a Deaf resource person from the Albay Association for the Deaf, Dr. Blanca, a retired deaf teacher, and Deaf Mentor Lead and Gabay Field Coordinator Mr. Justine Barcenas

The discussions covered by the speakers/facilitators were:

- Understanding deaf learners – the prevalent misconceptions surrounding deafness and understanding of the “deaf culture” or the unique cultural aspects within the Deaf community .
- Deaf-friendly terminology and various communication modes were also introduced.
- different parameters, non-visual markers, and handshapes.
- introduction to FSL, and sign language parameters.
- Understanding and learning visual gestural communication (VGC) to facilitate effective communication with individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing
- Introduction to alphabets and numbers, essential greetings, and common words utilized in both home and school environments.

The interactive nature of the sessions incorporated activities such as Hellen Keller games, message relay, and the collaborative creation of short stories using the learned FSL vocabulary. These engaging elements cultivated an inclusive learning environment that embraced diversity.

The final required output for the training was also explained to the participants. This is a lesson plan that integrated the FSL into the MELCs. The participants were also told that on Day 3, their group will present a mini demonstration showing how to manage a class with a deaf student or deaf students.



b) Breakout Group: Blind/Low Vision Learners/ Deaf Blindness/ MDVI

The sessions for this group in Los Baños were handled by: Ms. Joyce Lopez, who is a RBI focal person for the blind, Ms. Mojica, Ms. Rhoda Nocum, a retired multi-awarded special education teacher for learners with visual impairment, Ms. Adelaida Elamparo, an expert in braille and has co-authored DepEd learning materials and modules for the blind. And Ms. Rosemary Alonzo, Ms. Mary Grace Torres, and Ms. Marcelia Garcia who are parents and advocates of children with visual impairment with additional disabilities and deafblindness.

In Bacacay, the following resource persons facilitated the activities for the day: Ms. Maricar Gabriel, Ms. Amy Mojica, Mr. Jonathan Alicando, a blind professional, and Ms. Rosemary Alonzo and Ms. Marcelia Garcia, who are parents and advocates of children with visual impairment and with additional disabilities and deafblindness.

The highlight of the activities was the *“Talakayan: Understanding and Responding to the Educational Needs of Children with Visual Impairment”* The Talakayan discussions focused on understanding and responding to the educational needs of learners with blindness, low vision, deafblindness, and multiple disabilities with visual impairment. The panelists shared their insights on inclusive learning, challenges faced by educators and parents, effective support systems, collaborative approaches, and the role of adaptive technology in ensuring the educational success of these types of learners. The discussion also emphasized the emotional and social aspects of these learners within the educational context. The Talakayan concluded with reflections on how supporting children with visual impairment or multiple disabilities can be professionally and personally rewarding.

There were also sessions on Pre-Braille Reading and Writing wherein participants learned to understand the foundational concepts essential for students with visual impairments. This also covered techniques and exercises aimed at developing tactile discrimination, fine motor skills, and spatial awareness. Through hands-on activities, participants gained proficiency in pre-Braille skills that is the foundation for transitioning into Braille literacy.

During the Basic Braille session, participants delved into the tactile writing system for individuals with visual impairments. Lectures covered the Braille alphabet, contractions, and basic punctuation. Participants engaged in practical exercises, such as reading and writing Braille, so they can familiarize themselves with the tactile language. The goal was to equip participants with skills in facilitating Braille literacy and in effectively supporting individuals who rely on this communication system.

In Bacacay, “*Educating Children with Low Vision*” was presented by Ms. Arminia Mojica. She covered the following topics about children with low vision: technical definitions of pertinent terms, the complex aspects of low vision, the educational interventions needed, the daily challenges they face, and the diverse range of optical and non-optical devices and tools designed to address these learning challenges and enhance their educational experience.



Lectures conducted were interactive and participatory; exercises were designed to simulate real-world scenarios, providing participants with the opportunity to apply their knowledge in practical situations. By combining theoretical understanding with hands-on practice, participants were equipped with skills and they have also gained the confidence to manage their classrooms with visual impaired students using Pre-Braille and Basic Braille instruction.



c) Breakout Group: Learners with Other Disabilities

The group sessions in Los Baños were led by Dr. Tess De Mesa, a professor and consultant for learners with disabilities, Mr. Ian Lopez, an autistic professional, Ms. Ana Mauleon, the Director of the Autism Resource Center in Los Baños and an experienced educator, Ms. Ana Tan Pascual, an occupational therapist and director of Eye Can Occupational Therapy.

In Bacacay, the resource persons were Ms. Catherine Lopez, President of the Autism Society Philippines (ASP) Laguna Chapter, Ms. Ana Mauleon, and Ms. Trisha Chang, a practicing Occupational Therapist

The discussions and activities covered:

- Dyslexia – characteristics, strategies for understanding learners with dyslexia and addressing their educational needs, developmental monitoring, screening procedures, the diagnostic process, the importance of early detection for timely intervention; Reading problems associated with dyslexia
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) – definition of ASD, pertinent statistics about the prevalence of ASD in comparison to other disabilities, the common misconceptions. Challenges that they face which includes communication and interaction skills both in verbal and non-verbal communication, how to address these communication barriers, practical strategies
- Communication challenges faced by children with disabilities and consequently the obstacles encountered by the child, the teacher, and caregiver/s.
- Occupational therapy strategies that teachers and the family/caregivers can realistically implement at home or in school to cope with specific difficulties that have been considered barriers to communication and interaction.

- Personal hygiene, grooming and self-care, and independence - common misconceptions that result to CWDs experiencing further exclusion; The rationale of teaching CWDs about Teaching self-care independence, encapsulated by the acronym SELF; Empowering children as they master the control over their physical well-being which leads to the feeling of autonomy and confidence. Actual practice exercises wherein participants (divided into groups) demonstrated how self-care, grooming, and personal hygiene should be taught to a child.
- Practical Money Skills for CWDs - teaching CWDs how to understand and manage financial resources; structured and sequential teaching strategy; How money skills contribute to overall independence and empowerment of learners with disabilities.
- Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) – causes and characteristics of children with ADHD as well as assessment methods used for ADHD learners, programs and intervention strategies.
- Global Developmental Delay (GDD), and Intellectual Disability (ID) – characteristics of children with GDD and ID which includes cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of their development; How teachers can identify the red flags for early diagnosis and intervention; Techniques that teachers can also use in handling students with GDD and ID in their classrooms for specific situations; How the teacher can work with the parents and help them manage the child at home to ensure that the home strategies are consistent and aligned with the strategies of the teacher; behavior of adolescents with IDs, particularly in terms of sexuality and tips on how to manage specific scenarios.

Emphasized was the crucial role in of teachers in identifying students with disabilities such as autism and dyslexia. Tips were provided in identifying typical manifestations, indicators and characteristics of autism exhibited by children on the spectrum discussion. However, participants were cautioned that teachers should never give a final diagnosis to parents. Teachers should only note down their observations and together with other school officials and following the school's and DepEd's protocols, parents should be informed and advised to see a developmental pediatrician, who will give the final diagnosis. The school and or the LGU can also help the parents in seeking diagnosis of a specialist.

Teachers were provided with teaching strategies in dealing with autistic and dyslexic children and practical home management strategies that teachers can advise and guide parents to support the child's education in school.

To support the topic on Autism, Mr. Lopez, a self-advocate, narrated his personal journey to demonstrate the capabilities of individuals with autism. From his point of view, he discussed about Autism Spectrum Disorder, the causes, signs, and symptoms, misconceptions. He also shared which strategies that were effective in managing learners with autism at home and in school, based on his experiences.



DepEd officials contributed to the discussions by provided tips on dealing with familiar and common situations encountered by teachers with parents of CWDs. The participants were reminded to always coordinate and communicate with their principal and with other colleagues such as the SPED teacher, for example. They should also be updated and defer to existing DepEd policies to avoid legal problems in the future and to really aim to be in a good relationship with the parents in the best interest of the child with autism or whatever disability.

Participants actively participated in discussions by sharing their insights and experiences. They also asked questions and sought practical advice from the resource persons and other consultants present .



For the last session of Day 2, the 3 breakout groups joined in the plenary area to attend a session on Disaster Risk Reduction Management (DRRM) for Children with Disabilities. The resource persons were Ms. Quitans, the MDRRMO of Los Banos, and Mr. Bryan Berdin, the DRRM Officer of the Municipality of Bacacay. This session focused on developing an understanding of how to safeguard children with disabilities in the event of natural disasters or emergencies. It primarily aimed to equip teachers, school heads, and parents with basic DRRM concepts and strategies and its legal basis. The speakers also shared some tried and tested practical strategies that was being done in their respective municipalities and listened to the suggestions made by disability self-advocates.

Teachers gained insights into creating inclusive disaster preparedness plans tailored to the specific needs of students with disabilities. The session delved into strategies for effective communication and evacuation procedures, considering the diverse needs of children with various disabilities. School heads found the information particularly helpful in implementing school wide DRRM policies that prioritize the safety and well-being of all students. Parents also learned the importance of and how to create personalized emergency plans for their children with disability.

Day 3.

On Day 3, first, all participants jointly attended the sessions. However, the participants sat together in groups in preparation for the last sets of activities of the day. The first session was on “*Accommodation and Modification for Learners with Disabilities in an Inclusive Classroom*” that enhanced the knowledge and skills of educators on how to create inclusive learning environments.

Led by Dr. Quijano, the session explained in detail strategies for effectively accommodating and modifying teaching approaches to cater to the diverse and unique needs of learners with disability. Participants learned how to create an inclusive atmosphere that promotes equal access to education.

The discussion covered the identification of individualized accommodations, the implementation of modified instructional materials, and the utilization of assistive technologies. Practical examples through the video discussions shown illustrated successful approaches in adapting curriculum content to meet the unique learning needs. This session enhanced their also equipped them with enhanced understanding about the tools needed to foster a supportive and accessible learning environment.

Another plenary session was on “*Learning Educational and Resource Network (LEARN)*”, a session led by Mr. John Vincent Cabizares, who is a Low Vision Professional and considered to be an IT expert in assistive technology for children with disabilities. Mr. Cabizares presented how current assistive technologies enriched the learning experiences of LWDs and have effectively enhanced their reading and communication skills. A range of assistive technologies and devices designed to bolster the educational experience of CWDs were shown and demonstrated. His presentation covered an array of assistive tools facilitating communication, mobility aids, and adaptive computer technologies. Specifically, he briefly described software and devices for the blind and low vision, provisions for sign language resources for the deaf, and communication boards for children with difficulty with verbal communication. The key emphasis throughout the session was on the pivotal role of accessible learning materials. Mr. Cabizares underscored that for both teachers and students there are now resources and tools available with diverse formats, ensuring accommodation for various and distinct learning needs.

[Parents.](#) The last topic for the parents' breakout was “Literacy Rich Environment at Home” facilitated by Ms. Amy Mojica. The main goal of this session is for the parents to identify the learning styles of their child and learn strategies on how to make their homes more “literacy-rich” that could stimulate the students with disabilities to participate in language and literacy activities in their daily lives thereby giving them the beginning understandings of the utility and function of oral and written language.

The workshop provided parents with insights into their child's learning styles, practical strategies for creating a literacy-rich environment, ideas for stimulating language and literacy activities, and tools for fostering foundational understandings of language. The hands-on activity encourages parents to actively engage in the learning process and apply the concepts discussed in the workshop to their own homes.

Teachers, School Heads, and Supervisors. Next, was group work. Each group was given hands-on activities that focused on the development of lesson plans and worksheets based on the DepEd adapted MELCs for LWDs. Through this collaborative exercise, participants were able to apply the concepts learned during the session to real-life scenarios. As a group, each disability or breakout group worked to design lesson plans that incorporated accommodations and modifications for LWDs. This interactive group activity encouraged the exchange of ideas on the best inclusive classroom and teaching practices. It also provided an opportunity for participants to share creative strategies in adapting lesson content that reflects the marks of an inclusive classroom experience. In culmination, each group did a mini demonstration presentation. Each group showcased their lesson plan and worksheets. School Heads and Supervisors provided their comments and feedback after these presentations. This reinforced the practical application of accommodation and modification strategies and engaged participants to observe and learn from diverse and inclusive education approaches.





Clearing House. In conclusion, this plenary session was conducted wherein participants had the opportunity to clarify issues and concerns, seek further explanations, and engage in discussions that aimed to solidify the concepts covered throughout the training during the clearing house.

Teacher and school heads were also provided with clear guidance and instruction about post-training activities and outputs. The importance and rationale of the lesson plan output were explained, and they were reminded that the lesson plan should align with the specific disability of the intended student or students. They were provided with customized templates designed for SNEd and GenEd teachers, respectively.

To ensure smooth and organized submissions, a designated drop box link was created by Gabay as a centralized repository, wherein participants can submit their completed assignments on or before December 15, 2023.

The submitted lesson plans are being reviewed and edited by Gabay Consultants and Specialists. This review aims to refine and enhance the content of the plans, ensuring that these are aligned with the tenets of inclusive education. Once finalized, these lesson plans will be packaged and compiled for distribution to teachers for them to utilize.

Training Evaluation and Post-test. Facilitated by Gabay staff, participants then accomplished a post-test to assess knowledge retention and to gauge the effectiveness of the training program. Simultaneously, they also accomplished the training evaluation forms that provided feedback on the training sessions and allowed them to share their insights on the content, delivery, and overall learning experience.

The Closing Program. The closing program featured highlights from the training sessions, emphasizing key learnings and the impact of the training on their attitudes and perceptions. Selected participants express their thoughts and reflections on the training. Training certificates were also distributed. The training concluded with a closing prayer.

Below is the collated feedback on the training:

1. Desire for More Comprehensive Training: Training was not sufficient for learning diverse techniques in handling and teaching children with disabilities. The participant hopes to be engaged in another training that provides a more in-depth exploration of these techniques and interactions.
2. Suggestion for Co-Located Venue and Accommodation: Recommends having the training venue and accommodation in the same location to streamline the training schedule and facilitate an early start.
3. Request for Basic Sign Language Resources: Since participants are not accustomed to teaching deaf pupils, there is a request to include basic sign language in the handouts for reference. Visual aids, such as pictures of sign language, are suggested to aid in learning.
4. Positive Experience for First-Time Trainees: Expressed happiness as being part of the training, especially in the group focused on deaf and hard-of-hearing learners. As first-time attendees, the participants are eager to learn sign language and suggest including visual aids in the handouts.
5. Concerns About Teaching “ Pre-conceived Poor Performers”: Expressed the need to learn strategies for catering to students who are “pre-conceived as poor performers” in class, specifically those who may exhibit delayed competencies. Sought guidance on handling students who appear disengaged despite efforts like singing and dancing.

There is a need to conduct a follow-up training on Filipino Sign Language (FSL) and Visual Gestural Communication (VGC)/Non-Manual Signals for storytelling lessons. The consistent support of Deaf Mentors is also essential for schools with deaf enrollees.

When possible, Gabay consultants and mentors may provide targeted technical assistance to further enhance their capabilities in designing their programs for CWDs.

Training Participants

Los Baños: Teachers, School Heads, and Supervisors

Table 19 below provides an overview of the attendance during the training in the Municipality of Los Baños. Note that the venue of the training was in Los Baños, but participants were from the different project sites of Gabay, namely: Laguna, Sto. Tomas City, Batangas City, and Batangas province.

Table 19. Gender and Geographical Distribution of Teacher Participants in Los Baños

Division/ Sites	SEND		GenEd		School Head		Supervisor		OVERALL TOTAL		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Laguna	3	6	3	35	5	9		1	11	51	62
Sto. Tomas City			1	6		2		1	1	9	10
Batangas City		5		4				1		9	9
Batangas	1	6	1	7					2	13	15
TOTAL	4	17	5	52	5	11		3	14	82	96

Of the total 96 attendees, majority were female (82 or 85.42%), and 14 (14.58%) were male. Geographically, 62 or 64.58% were from the province of Laguna. This majority was intentional and part of the training plan to promote and foster engagement among the members of the education community within Los Baños (the new project site) and other close by municipalities. These participants were initially identified and earmarked as qualified and willing to support the needs of learners with disabilities in their municipalities. The rest of the participants were from existing project sites within Batangas, a neighboring province of Laguna: Sto. Tomas City (10 or 10.41%), Batangas City (9 or 9.37%), and Batangas (15 or 15.62%),

The target participants for this training were teachers, school heads and supervisors, in consideration of their crucial leadership roles in shaping education programs and policies in their areas. Teachers were composed of General Education teachers and Special Education teachers.

Majority of the selected teacher participants (57 or 59.47%) were general education teachers in line with the one of DepEd’s priorities, which is to emphasize the implementation of inclusive regular classrooms and consequently promote inclusive communities, particularly for CWDs.

Also, among the participants were 21 (21.87%) Special Education Teachers. Their personal experiences and stories of actual classroom experiences were found to be valuable to the general education teachers and to school heads (16 or 16.66%) and supervisors (3 or 3.12%), who were also important resource persons in terms of explaining some relevant DepEd policies for inclusive education. The sharing of experiences from diverse experiences and backgrounds were also helpful in identifying concerns that may lead to revisiting existing education policies and classroom practices. The training program was purposively designed to provide a rich learning environment, fostering cross-disciplinary discussions and the exchanges of varied perspectives.

Bacacay: Teachers, School Heads, and Supervisors

Participants who took part in the 3-day training included teachers, school heads and supervisors from the divisions of Albay, Sorsogon City, and Sorsogon (Table 20). Teacher participants were composed of Special Needs Education (SNEd) teachers and general education (GenEd) teachers.

Table 20. Gender and Geographical Distribution of Teacher Participants in Bacacay

Division	SNEd		GenEd		School Head		Supervisor		OVERALL TOTAL		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Albay		2	4	42	1	5	2	2	7	51	58
Sorsogon City	1	2		10		1		1	1	14	15
Sorsogon				9		1		1		11	11
TOTAL	1	4	4	61	1	7	2	4	8	76	84

Of the 84 participants, majority were females (76 or 90.5%). Geographically, most participants (58 or 69%) were from Albay, 15 (18%) from Sorsogon City, and 11 (13.1%) were from Sorsogon. It should be noted that the venue of the training is in Municipality of Bacacay, the new target sight, the participants consists of educators from within Albay province, Sorsogon City, and Sorsogon province.

Of the 70 teachers, majority (65 or 92.86%) were general education teachers, and 5 (7.14%) were Special Education teachers. Of the 84 participants, majority were teachers (70 or 83.33), 8 (9.5%) were school heads, and 6 (7.1%) were supervisors.

The presence of teachers, school heads, and supervisors paved the way for diverse and open discussions from the classroom practice to education policy.

Los Baños: Parents

A total of 17 of the targeted 20 participants composed of parents of learners with blindness/low vision/DB/MDVI, parents of learners who are deaf/hard of hearing, and parents of learners with autism/LD/ID/ADHD attended the training via face-to-face at Los Baños Central Elementary School as shown in the table below. Several parents were not able to participate in the training due to lack of available help for caring their other younger children at home, and others had work commitments on Fridays. Additionally, some parents who attended only on the first or last day were not officially included in the list of attendees. The breakdown of participants indicates that 12 (70.59%) are parents of children with autism/intellectual disability (ID)/attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) /learning disabilities (LD), 3 (17.65%) are parents of children with blindness or low vision, and 2 (11.76%) are parents of children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

Table 21. Gender and Geographical Distribution of Parent Participants in Los Baños

Los Baños, Laguna	Number of Participants		
	Male	Female	TOTAL
Parents of Learners who are Deaf/HOH	0	2	2
Parents of Learners who are Blind/LV/MDVI/DB	0	3	3
Parents of Learners with Autism/ADHD/ID/LD	1	11	12
TOTAL	1	16	17

Bacacay: Parents

In Bacacay, Albay as presented in the table below only 13 out of the intended 20 parents were present at the training held at Bacacay East Central School. Like the situation observed in the Los Baños training, some parents were unable to participate, citing work commitments on

Fridays and the absence of someone to accompany their child with a disability who would be left at home. Additionally, some parents were unable to participate due to the inclement weather, particularly heavy rains during the training sessions. Of the total number of participants, eight (8) or 61.54% are parents of children with autism/ADHD/ID/LD, four (4) or 30.77% are parents of learners with deafness or hard of hearing, and one parent of a child with visual impairment.

Table 22. Gender and Geographical Distribution of Parent Participants in Bacacay

Bacacay, Albay	Number of Participants		
	Male	Female	TOTAL
Parents of Learners who are Deaf/HOH	0	4	4
Parents of Learners who are Blind/LV/MDVI/DB	0	1	1
Parents of Learners with Autism/ADHD/ID/LD	0	8	8
TOTAL	0	13	13

2024 January 19 to 21, Tanauan, Leyte



Attendees of the 3-day training program were SNEd and GenEd teachers, school administrators, and supervisors, as well as parents and guardians from educational divisions: Leyte, Maasin City, and Southern Leyte. Other participants were daycare center teachers who provided

early intervention services for children up to 4 years old, representatives from the Municipal Social Welfare Development Office of LGU Tanauan and the municipal PDAO Focal.

Table 1 shows the roles, gender distribution, and division of the participants.

Table 23. Training Participants: Roles, Gender, and DepEd Divisions in Tanauan

Role	Sex	Sites			Total
		Leyte	Maasin City	S. Leyte	
GenEd	Male	3	0	0	3
	Female	69	6	10	85
	Total	72	6	10	88

SNEd	Male	0	0	0	0
	Female	0	5	3	8
	Total	0	5	3	8
School Head	Male	7	0	0	7
	Female	3	0	2	5
	Total	10	0	2	12
Supervisor	Male	0	0	0	0
	Female	3	1	2	6
	Total	3	1	2	6
Day Care/ MSWDO/ PDAO	Male	1	0	0	1
	Female	2	0	0	2
	Total	3	0	0	3
Parents / Guardians	Male	4	0	0	4
	Female	31	1	0	32
	Total	35	1	0	36
Total	Male	15	0	0	15
	Female	108	13	17	138
	Total	123	13	17	153

There was a total of 153 participants with most or 123 (80.4 %) from Leyte; 17 (11.11%) from Southern Leyte, and 13 (8.5%) from Maasin. Majority (138 or 90.2%) of the participants were female, while 15 (9.8%) were male and all were from Leyte division. Most (88 participants) were General Education (GenEd) teachers and majority were females (96.6% of GenEd participants). All Special Needs Education (SNEd) teachers were females.

Of the School Heads, 5 (41.7%) were female while 7 (58.33%) were male. All (6 or 100%) Supervisors were female. Three (3) attendees represented daycare/MSWDO/PDAO of which 2 (66.7%) were female and 1 (33.33%) was male.

Majority (31 or 88.6%) of parents and guardians were female, while 4 (11.43%) were male. Relative to the number of educators (88 or 57.5%), there were less of parents and guardians (36 or 23.52%).

In the opening program, Ms. Amelia Torrente, Executive Director of RBI, gave the welcome remarks and Dr. Mariza Magan, the Schools Division Superintendent of Leyte delivered the motivational address. Ms. Amy Mojica, the Deputy Chief of Party for Gabay, provided an

overview of the Gabay Year 5 Activities and introduced the local Deaf Mentors who offered their support to teachers in the Leyte, Maasin City, and Southern Leyte Divisions.

In *"Connecting Your Experiences with Children with Disabilities (CWDs) to Learning Expectations,"* participants shared their experiences and expectations of working or handling children with disabilities. Some teachers shared the joy of achieving small learning improvements; Another, on frustrations experienced. A school head also shared her experiences of meeting CWDs during her room-to-room checks. Parents emphasized the importance of their support and involvement in their child's education, rather than just relying on the teachers.

The topics for the breakout group of Supervisors, School Heads, and Teachers, were:

1. *"Universal Design for Learning and Inclusive Education"* - Dr. Yolly Quijano discussed strategies on how teachers can establish inclusive and accessible learning environments as guided by the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, such as offering multiple means of representations, engagements, and expressions to accommodate diverse learning styles. . It emphasized customization and accommodation and how teachers can integrate these in their instructional practices.
2. *"Assessment Tools"* – facilitated by Dr. Mirla Olores, Gabay consultant. She emphasized the importance of effective and fair individual assessment for LWDs. Also discussed were the various resources such as the DepEd Multi-Factored Assessment Test (MFAT), the Gabay-developed Modified MFAT, and other appropriate assessment tools of the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD). She stressed the significance of collaboration throughout the assessment process, covering from planning to implementation and interpretation of results.
3. *"An overview and principles of the Adapted DepEd Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs)"* with emphasis on the Filipino Sign Language Curriculum - facilitated by Dr. Antonia Blanca. Dr. Blanca elaborated on strategies for adapting curriculum content and materials to meet the specific needs of deaf learners, emphasizing picture and print-rich environments, and modifications personalized to language proficiency levels and individual learning objectives. She provided examples of scaffolding strategies to enhance comprehension and retention among deaf students. She also briefly discussed the FSL.

4. *“Curriculum for the blind learners”* – facilitated by Ms. Gina Acuzar, a multi-awarded SNEd teacher of the blind. She introduced foundational literacy skills for blind learners, emphasizing a multi-sensory approach to teaching letter recognition, sound-symbol correspondence, and comprehension as well as for to teaching basic numeracy concepts to blind children. She demonstrated techniques for braille reading and writing, including proper hand and finger positioning. She also highlighted hands-on activities to teach concepts such as shapes, textures, sizes, and spatial relationships. Examples of sensory-rich activities in subjects like science, art, and outdoor education were provided.

The topics for the breakout group of parents and guardians were:

- *“Rights of CWDs”* – facilitated by Mr. Michael John Orais, a low-vision professional, advocate and Focal Person of the Persons with Disability Affairs Office (PDAO) in Maasin City. He explained the importance of knowing the fundamental principles expressed in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). These serve as powerful advocacy tools to champion inclusivity and to uphold the dignity of their children.
- *“Roles of Parents”* - a panel discussion was conducted with the following as panelists: 1) Ms. Rosemary Alonzo, Project Manager of the parent-support group Parent Advocates for Visually Impaired Children (PAVIC) and a mother of a person with multiple disabilities with visual impairment; 2) Mr. Edgardo Garcia, Vice-President of Deafblind-Support Philippines and a father of a person who is deafblind; 3) Ms. Catherine Lopez, President of Autism Society of the Philippines-Laguna Chapter and a mother of a professional and an advocate with autism; and 4) Ms. Pamela Almanza, PSDS of Tanauan II District, and a parent of a person with Down Syndrome. The discussions centered on empowering parents with strategies that aimed on improving communication skills to effectively articulate the needs of their child and to advocate for support. They also shared their personal journeys being a parent of a CWD.

For the plenary session, participants were divided into three (3) breakout groups according to types of disabilities they prefer or need: 1) Deaf/HOH, 2) Blind/Low Vision/Deafblindness, and 3) Other Disabilities: IDs, LDs, ASD and ADHD.

Deaf/HOH Group. The breakout sessions for deaf learners were conducted under the guidance of : 1) Mr. Justine Barcenas, Gabay Field Coordinator and Lead Deaf Mentor, 2) Mr. Jesdelton Romo, Secretary of the Philippine Federation of the Deaf, and 3) Mr. Heron Ocson, deaf mentor from S. Leyte, 4) Mr. Floyd Benedict Basco, deaf mentor from S. Leyte, 5) Mr. Ronald Christian Domingo, the newly tasked Deaf Mentor for Leyte, and 6) Dr. Antonia Blanca, Gabay Consultant. The general aim of the sessions was to cultivate the inclusive mindset by increasing awareness and understanding of the deaf.



Among the topics covered were the cultural aspects that contribute to misconceptions about the Deaf community, an introduction to Filipino Sign Language (FSL), sign language parameters , inclusive terminologies the fundamentals of Visual Gestural Communication or VGC that is also known as Non-Manual Signals in the Adapted Curriculum in FSL, which is considered to be a tool for overcoming communication barriers.

Dr. Blanca provided guidance to the teachers in the selection of a Lesson Plan for the mini demo, which is the required output.

Blind/Low Vision Learners/ Deaf Blindness/ MDVI Group. A Talakayan on “*Understanding and Responding to the Educational Needs of Children with Visual Impairment*” was conducted. This was facilitated by Ms. Maui Gabriel and Ms. Amy Mojica together with panelists: Ms. Rosemary Alonzo, Mr. Edgardo Garcia, Mr. Michael John Orais, and Ms. Gina Acuzar.



Participants wore blindfolds or low-vision simulation masks to simulate the experience of individuals with visual impairments and were asked to do simple tasks such as walking or make a purchase. After the activity, a debriefing was conducted so that participants can process the simulation activity. This activity developed empathy, brought about by a better understanding of the daily experiences of children who are blind or have low vision.

The panel discussion focused on determining the educational needs of learners with blindness, low vision, deafblindness, and multiple disabilities with visual impairment.

Among the crucial points reached regarding the instructional needs of these learners were: 1) they need clear and specific descriptions and instructions which can be done by avoiding vague concepts or language and by incorporating concrete objects; 2) they need emotional and social support and guidance which must be part of the curriculum.



Hands-on activities on Braille Reading and Writing were facilitated by Ms. Gina Acuzar. Participants did exercises on Braille reading techniques and practical writing using slate and stylus. Ms. Armina Mojica facilitated the topic "*Educating Children with Low Vision*". She also discussed the optical and non-optical devices available for children with low vision.

Learners with Other Disabilities Group. Ms. Catherine Lopez, President of the Autism Society Philippines (ASP) Laguna Chapter, and Ms. Ana Mauleon, Director of the Autism Resource Center in Los Baños, Laguna covered the topics: Learning Disabilities (LDs)- Dyslexia, Attention-Deficit

Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Global Developmental Delay (GDD), Intellectual Disability (ID) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).



For each specific disability, practical strategies, and interventions that parents can use to support the development and education of their child were also discussed. Effective teaching methodologies and communication strategies for teachers were also introduced.

The “Life Skills Training” was facilitated by Mr. John Paul O. Mallari, an occupational therapist with over 22 years of experience. This focused on teaching life skills, specifically grooming and hygiene, communication skills, and practical money management skills. He introduced the use of a spiraling curriculum and emphasized the need to teach these skills early on and on using diverse teaching methods such as hands-on experiences, kinesthetics, and visuals. It was also stressed that teachers need to collaborate with the children’s families to ensure consistency in teaching life skills at home and in school. The overall aim of teaching life skills is to promote independence.



Mr. Ricardo Alejo, the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officer (MDRRMO) of Tanauan, Leyte outlined their plans, programs, and services that also included children with disabilities. He urged educators to collaborate with them so that their office can improve the support provided for these vulnerable groups during disasters.

Mr. John Vincent Cabizares, who specializes in assistive technology for children with disabilities, facilitated the topic, "*Learning Educational and Resource Network (LEARN)*." He demonstrated various technologies designed to enhance learning, including software and devices for the blind, low vision, deaf, and those with communication challenges.

He described various assistive technologies for the deaf that provide tools and resources for sign language interpretation and communication and recent technological advancements that offer solutions such as communication boards and devices for verbal and non-verbal communication.

Supervisors, School Heads, and Teachers Group. Dr. Yolanda Quijano discussed accommodation and modification strategies for inclusive educational settings. After which, teachers were organized into groups based on the specific types of disabilities they were involved in. Each group collaboratively developed lesson plans and activities for the individual needs of students with disabilities. Each group also presented short teaching demonstrations on how to teach CWDs and how to manage a class with students with disability.



After each presentation, school heads, supervisors, and consultants provided feedback. As a final training output, teacher-Participants were guided to develop lesson plans for the various disabilities discussed in the training. SNEd and GenEd teachers were provided with customized templates. Gabay also set up a dedicated link to drop box wherein participants can submit their outputs by February 15, 2024.



Parents and Guardians Group. "Person-Centered Planning: Creating a Dream Map" activity was led by Ms. Amy Mojica. Parents were taught how to develop dream maps, which are actionable plans aimed at helping their children achieve their dreams. After the activity, they were asked to present the dream maps.



B.3 Inauguration of Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRC): Launching and Training of SNED Teachers on the Use of Assistive Teaching Technology

In Quarter 19 of Year 5, Gabay established Modular ILRCs in the new target sites: Bacacay, Los Baños, and Tanauan. These ILRCs were equipped with specialized equipment, assistive devices and learning materials for use of teachers, parents, and the children with disabilities themselves.

Launching of the Modular ILRCs. For this Quarter 19, three (3) modular ILRCs were launched. The formal launching program or ceremony was conducted in the ILRCs as a symbolic act to reaffirm the partnership and commitments of the stakeholders involved – USAID, DepEd, the LGU, and civil society partners. Publicly, stakeholders showed their support for an inclusive learning environment and community where children with disability will be provided with opportunities to grow and be active and contributing member of society through accessible learning equipment and materials that support their education.



The Modular ILRC of Tanauan II Central School was launched on January 24, 2024 with Ms. Yvette Malcioln, Deputy Director of the Office of Education of USAID as the special guest. Together with her were Assistant Regional Director, Region VIII, Dr. **Ronelo Al. K. Firmo**, **Hon. Mayor Gina Merilo**, Mr. Jason Gabuena, Principal of Tanauan II Central School and Mr. Gary Jamora, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of RBI who led the ribbon cutting and unveiling of the ILRC marker.

In the opening program, Mr. Gary Jamora, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Resources for the Blind (RBI) gave the welcome and opening remarks. Ms. Malcioln highlighted the USAID support to inclusive education for Filipino children with disabilities through its financial support that spanned for the last five years in Gabay project sites. Hon. Mayor Gina Merilo of Tanauan delivered a message expressing her appreciation to the USAID for choosing Tanauan as one of the project areas and assured the full support and cooperation of the municipal officials for the establishment of the ILRC. Likewise, Asst. Director Firmo emphasized that Region VIII has been receiving assistance from USAID in various forms like school buildings during typhoon Yolanda, learning resources and trainings for teachers and committed to ensure the full utilization of the resources given.



The Los Baños Central Elementary School Modular ILRC was launched on January 31, 2024. To grace and witness the occasion as well as the ribbon cutting and unveiling of the ILRC marker were Ms. Yvette Malcioln and Mr. Henry Grageda of USAID, Representative of Laguna, Ms. Carina Macalos who is the Provincial Government Assistant Department Head of the Laguna Governor’s Office, Asst. Director, Region IVA, Dr. Loida N. Nidea, Laguna School Division Superintendent Dr. Editha Atendido and other DepEd and LGU officials with the school principal, Mr. Rodel Guevara. Messages of support were also given by Hon. Ruth Hernandez, the Laguna 2nd District Representative and by the Los Baños Municipal Mayor, Hon Anthony Genuino



“We believe that ALL children, regardless of race, age, or disability have a right to education. Inclusive Education is a process of responding to diverse needs of ALL learners by increasing participation in learning. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is committed to the inclusion of people who have physical and cognitive disabilities and those who advocate and offer services on behalf of people with disabilities. This commitment extends from the design and implementation of USAID programming to advocacy for and outreach to people with disabilities.” – USAID Office of Education Deputy Director, Ms. Yvette Malcioln.

Ms. Malcioln thanked the local government of Los Baños and the DepEd Division of Laguna for their partnership to house and care for these equipment and learning devices and ensure that they can be accessible to the school children, their parents, and other stakeholders.

Ms. Malcioln thanked the local government of Los Baños and the DepEd Division of Laguna for their partnership to house and care for these equipment and learning devices and ensure that they can be accessible to the school children, their parents, and other stakeholders.

“In the four years of implementing Gabay, enrollment of deaf and blind learners has tripled in areas where we initially work namely Batangas, Sorsogon and Southern Leyte. We hope for the same success here in Los Baños, Laguna, the first ILRC in the Division of Laguna. Congratulations! We see this as an excellent example of how our projects can be sustained and continued to support the country’s journey to self-reliance in implementing disability inclusive education.”

This was followed by a special message given by Provincial Government Assistant Department Head, Ms. Carina Macalos on behalf of Laguna Provincial Governor, Hon. Ramil Hernandez who extended the province’s gratitude for having such innovation for the first time through the ILRC.

“For all the parents, this is a great initiative because we know that your children will be given a lot of assistance and will be of advantage in using the materials, we have now in this resource center. Not all children are given a chance like this, so we are really grateful for collaboratively working to make sure that our people with special needs are given special attention.” – Provincial Government Assistant Head, Ms. Carina Macalos



“Today is an important occasion here in the province of Laguna and the municipality of Los Baños. The new Learning Center that you have built bought the promise of a brighter future for the children who will walk through its doors. This inauguration marks the realization of our collective dream and the fulfillment of our responsibility and obligation for the youth to ensure that their fullest potential will be harnessed and their abilities will be honed and developed.”– Laguna 2nd District Representative, Hon. Congresswoman Ruth Mariano-Hernandez



Cong. Ruth emphasized that the creation of this learning facility reflects dedication to establishing an atmosphere which all individuals regardless of ability have equal access to knowledge, opportunities, and possibilities. *“This facility therefore transcends its physical confines. It stands as a symbol of inclusivity and manifestation of a shared conviction that education*

transcends limitations. It is true that this facility will open up a wall of possibilities for our learners and provide them with the resources and tools they need to succeed in their educational pursuits.”

She also mentioned that the ILRC is a place that advocates not only for academic achievement but also for the echoes of resilience and grit, encouraging everyone to be advocates of inclusivity and at the same time, to harness the full potential of Laguna learners including the special children.

“On my end, as your representative in the lower house, I am one with you in advocating for an inclusive education and to maintain the delivery of high-quality education for our students.”

As a testament to this, being a member of the Committee on Basic Education in the House of Representatives, she was among the principal authors of some bills in Congress namely, the Public Schools of the Future in Technology Act or PSOFT Act. This is to institutionalize a program for the integration of digital technology and innovations, processes, and instruments in facilitating teaching and learning processes that would enhance the performance of students and teachers.

Another bill proposed in Congress that is now approved for 3rd and final reading and is now elevated in the Senate is the Basic Education Mental Health and Well Being Promotion Act. This is to promote the emotional, psychological, and mental health well-being of learners and teachers so as to enhance their classroom and learning preparedness through the deployment of mental health professionals who will be assigned in the different public schools in our country.

As her conclusion, Cong. Ruth encouraged everyone to celebrate the Inauguration of the ILRC not just as a mere completion of a project or unveiling a facility, but a beginning of a legacy for the future generations of the community. *“May this stand as reminder that an investment in education is an investment in the future. And that the youth who pass through these doors hold to a brighter, more prosperous Philippines.”* She also pointed out that by inaugurating this ILRC, we are unlocking minds, opening doors, and ushering in a more promising future for our learners. No child will be left behind, and everyone will have access to a high-quality education that to become productive citizens of the society. *“Let us mark this moment as a shared victory for inclusivity, understanding and progress. Together, let us continue to be the light to those in darkness.”*

On behalf of DepEd Region IV-A CALABARZON, this was responded by a champion of Special Education herself, Assistant Regional Director, Dr. Loida Nidea through her response message sharing her experience that she used to handle similar activities as a principal of a special school 10 years ago. She shared that in DepEd CALABARZON, they have established a program called “CALABARZON” based on DepEd’s MATATAG Agenda which means: **MA**ke the curriculum relevant; **TA**ke steps to accelerate the delivery of basic education, **TA**ke good care of learners; and **GI**ve support to teachers.

Dr. Nidea pointed out how the these four (4) core programs in the MATATAG Agenda are being addressed by this ILRC:

- (1) *Why? Because whatever will be taught among the learners in Los Baños, is an example of making the curriculum relevant. Why? Because this ILRC will implement adaptive strategies to make sure that the competencies of the learners will be developed whatever their conditions are. Seeing the LWD’s performance, they will learn differently because of their conditions, but because of the SPED teachers trained well, then these children will be able to learn.*
- (2) *Take steps to accelerate education. What are we doing? Under the project CALABARZON which means **Complete and Accessible Learning Atmosphere for Better Academic Results through Zones Of Networking**. This is an example of a zone of networking. We all know since 1907 when DepEd was established, it never existed alone. It always has its partners, its stakeholders, and number one is the Local Government Unit. So, we thank the LGU and of course our members in the Congress because they come up with bills and we have heard the honorable good congresswoman that she sponsored already several laws about mental health and other that will benefit not only our children with special needs but the rest of the learners in school.*

Dr. Nidea put an emphasis that this ILRC is one of the target facilities that they wanted to be established in all 23 SDOs of CALABARZON. They already have two (2), one in Cabuyao which is DepEd funded, and one in Lipa which is LGU funded. After they launched the CALABARZON project, this is the first ILRC through the Gabay project. She expressed her gratitude to SDS Edith and her team and LBCES Principal, Sir Rodel who was with them in the Gabay workshop, so that all of these will be realized. And, lo and behold, in at least three (3) months, the Inauguration is now being conducted.



“Indeed, we make a difference in the lives of these children. And I say we cannot do it alone in DepEd. So, we say to the LGU, thank you, Also to RBI-Gabay Project through the USAID. We all know that trainings in DepEd cannot be that complete without the participation of our stakeholders - RBI, the consistent partner specially for children with visual impairment.” – DepEd Region IV-A Assistant Regional Director, Dr. Loida Nidea.

ARD Nidea thanked everyone involved and mentioned to DepEd people to take good care of the facility. She concluded by quoting the adage, *“To whom much is given, much is expected. Therefore, for us to receive more, let’s take good care of the facilities and show to them that we are giving every child in Los Baños the opportunity to become educated so that eventually, he/she will live a meaningful life in a mainstreamed society.”*

Speaking as an uncle of a child with autism, Mayor Ton empathized parents as he knows the hardship of her sister. As a testament to it, he shared that in the coming months, the LGU together with all the principals of Los Baños will be going to Japan to see the best practices of Japanese Universities.



“That is how much we value education here. That is why when PSDS Cambe mentioned to me that USAID is helping, maybe six months ago, I did not hesitate. I said that is good. We are one with you, because, we really need all the help that we can get from the different stakeholders for us to be able to uplift the educational standard in Los Baños.” – Los Baños, Municipal Mayor, Anthony Genuino.

Mayor Ton expressed his joy in this new milestone of unveiling the new facility sharing that he came just from Manila and drove beyond the speed limit just to attend this very momentous and special occasion for the town. *“I need to be here to assure you that the Local Government of Los Baños will be very supportive of this project.”*

He also reiterated what Cong. Ruth said, that this is not the end but just the start of a brighter education for everyone in Los Baños. *“Rest assured, the Los Baños local government will not only be supporting but will be funding more programs in terms of education so that all the kids will have equal education standard here in our country. If the 1st world countries can do it, we can also do it in our municipality. Thank you very much.”*

To wrap up the Los Baños ILRC inauguration ceremony, RBI Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Gary Jamora delivered his closing message with an emphasis on the collaborative efforts of RBI’s partners and stakeholders.



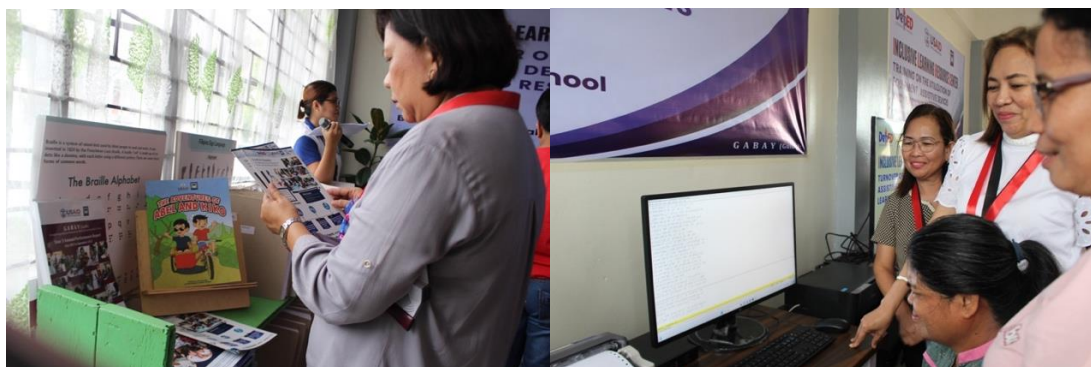
Mr. Jamora mentioned that we, project stakeholders have laid the foundation for a center of learning that embodies the principles of information, innovation, and inclusion coupled with the values of respect and responsibility for persons with disability.

“ This modular ILRC stands not just as a physical structure but as a symbol of our collective commitment to the pursuit of knowledge and the empowerment of future generations inclusively. Let this moment enable us to be reminded that education knows no bounds and no limits, and its transformative power can shape a brighter future for individuals and society at large. As we, service providers and duty bearers embark on this educational journey together, let us foster an environment of collaboration and respect regardless of disability in the community.” – RBI Chairman of the Board, Mr. Gary Jamora.



To formally launch the modular ILRC, a “Turnover Ceremony” was conducted the ILRC in Bacacay, Albay last February 21, 2024. As supplement to the Training of Teachers in Educating Learners with Disabilities conducted last November 17-19, 2023, a Training on the Utilization of the donated equipment was also held among the teachers of the blind in Bacacay Districts February 20 to 21, 2024.

The Turnover Ceremony started with an open house where the guests observed the utilization of donated equipment, assistive devices and learning resources. It was also an opportunity for project stakeholders to interact with the officials and teachers within Bacacay District. Gabay Management and Staff gave a short orientation on the USAID donated resources for the ILRC. DepEd and LGU Officials witnessed the teachers making learning materials using Braille equipment.



To represent the people of Bacacay in receiving the donations, Honorable Municipal Mayor Edsel Belleza who had an equally important meeting to attend, gave his special message through Mr. Andres Barcellano. Honorable Belleza emphasized that the Bacacay ILRC is a testament to everyone’s commitment in providing quality education for all.



“These resources are not mere tools. They are bridges to knowledge, understanding and inclusivity. By supporting our learners with diverse needs, we are fostering an environment where every child can flourish. Education is the cornerstone of progress in ensuring disability as a responsibility we proudly embrace.” – Bacacay Municipal Mayor Hon. Edsel Belleza through Mr. Andres Barcellano.

Gabay Chief of Party, Dr. Yolanda Quijano formally turned over the equipment, assistive devices and learning resources to Bacacay East Central School ILRC. Present to receive were: DepEd Albay Superintendent Nene Merioles and Bacacay Municipal Mayor's Representative, Mr. Andres Barcellano. Present to witness were Division Supervisor in charge of SPED, Dr. Jean Baloloy, Bacacay East PSDS, Dr. Jocelyn Paz, BECS Principal, Dr. Judith Belen and Municipal Councilor-in-charge of Education, Hon. Emanuel Alparce.



“On behalf of United States Agency for International Development or USAID, RBI-Gabay is pleased to turn over all the resources to be housed in the ILRC and to be used by teachers, parents and children with disabilities.”

This was followed by a message of commitment from the DepEd Division of Albay Schools Division Superintendent, Dr. Nene Merioles. She also expressed their appreciation to USAID and Gabay for making the technical and equipment assistance provided. The DepEd community committed to fully support the implementation and utilization of the ILRC.



“This is such an eye opener to all of us, to the Local Government Unit, to us in the Department of Education, that if we can do something that would benefit our learners, then we should not wait and miss the chance of helping these learners achieve quality education.” - DepEd Division of Albay, Schools Division Superintendent, Dr. Nene Merioles.

A message of commitment was also delivered by Dr. Jocelyn Paz, the Bacacay East Public Schools District Supervisor.



“...the gathering this afternoon is a great manifestation of a strong partnership – our partnership with LGU, with Gabay, USAID and other stakeholders in our municipality.” – Bacacay East PSDS, Dr. Jocelyn Paz

Dr. Paz also mentioned the commitment of the Local School Board with the support of Honorable Alparce’s that it will allocate funds (SEF) for the support and the sustainability of this program. Moreover, monitoring and providing technical assistance to our school heads.

In conclusion, RBI Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Gary Jamora delivered his closing video message that emphasized the gains brought about by the collaborative efforts of RBI’s partners and stakeholders.



“ This modular ILRC stands not just as a physical structure but as a symbol of our collective commitment to the pursuit of knowledge and the empowerment of future generations inclusively. Let this moment enable us to be reminded that education knows no bounds and no limits, and its transformative power can shape a brighter future for individuals and society at large. As we, service providers and duty bearers embark on this

educational journey together, let us foster an environment of collaboration and respect regardless of disability in the community.” – RBI Chairman of the Board, Mr. Gary Jamora



Trainings of SNED Teachers on the Use of Assistive Teaching Technology in the Three Modular ILRCs. The training conducted aimed to equip teachers with knowledge and skills to be able to use the equipment, assistive devices, and learning resource donated by RBI-Gabay (funded by USAID) for the ILRC. The teachers were also taught how to produce educational materials in Braille format, to access online reading materials for their students who are deaf or have other disabilities. The topics covered by the training were: 1) Learning the Basics of Screen Readers and their Function, 2) Online Resources for the Deaf and Other Disabilities, 3) Introduction to Braille, and 4) Using Braille equipment and software (i.e. slate and stylus, braille translator software, braille printer or embosser, Duxbury Braille Translator, Optical Character Recognition or OCR software). Participants experienced using the equipment and assistive devices hands-on and learned how to customize education materials.



Table 24. Resource Persons and Training Participants in each ILRC

ILRC and Date of the training	Participants	Resource Persons
Tanauan II Central School January 22 – 24, 2024	13 (9 teachers and 4 DepEd Officials and staff)	Mr. John Vincent C. Cabizares – IT professional and LV Ms. Lorrie Barboza – RBI Mr. Ron Esquivas – RBI IT staff
Los Baños Central Elementary School January 30 – 31, 2024	10 teachers	Mr. John Vincent C. Cabizares – IT professional and LV Ms. Maui Gabriel – Gabay Training Officer Mr. Ron Esquivas – RBI IT staff
Bacacay East Central School February 20 - 21, 2024	13 (11 teachers and 2 from LGU)	Mr. John Vincent C. Cabizares – IT professional and LV Ms. Maui Gabriel – Gabay Training Officer Mr. Ron Esquivas – RBI IT staff

B. 4 Turn-over of additional equipment (embosser), learning resources (Sensory Materials and Pictures Exchange Communication System (PECS)) and braille translator to the Modular ILRCs

March 25, 2024. Additional equipment and supplies to produce braille books (embosser, braille translator, and braille paper) were turned over to Los Banos Central School ILRC. Manipulative and sensory materials were also donated to develop further the cognitive skills among learners with disabilities. Accepting these donations were: Dr. Roderica Camacho, Division SNEd Supervisor, Mr. Rodel Guevarra, and Mr. Julius Vasquez who represented the Mayor’s office. A refresher training was also conducted for teachers who are expected to utilize the said equipment.



May 6, 2024. Gabay turned over the additional equipment and learning materials for the Bacacay ILRC. The new resources included an embosser (a braille printer), braille translator software, 10 tablets with installed various adaptive and learning software, and sensory learning materials for learners with disabilities. Furthermore, the Pics for PECS software, a comprehensive library of picture symbols for visual communication, was installed.



The turnover ceremony was presided by Gabay's Deputy Chief of Party, Ms. Arminia Mojica. She formally handed over the equipment and materials to Bacacay East Central School Principal, Ms. Judith Bellen, and Bacacay East District Public Schools District Supervisor, Dr. Jocelyn Paz. The event was witnessed by Dr. Jean Baloloy, Albay Division Supervisor in-charge of SNEd, along with the DepEd Central Office Bureau of Learning Delivery-Student Inclusion Division Supervising

Educational Program Supervisor, Ms. Ria C. Cereno, SNEd teachers, and some SNEd students from BECS and their parents.



In response, Ms. Judith Bellen expressed their gratitude for the additional resources. She emphasized that while the equipment is housed in BECS, these will be accessible to all the learners and educators/teachers of Bacacay. She conveyed their aspiration that these resources would also reach

LWDs in remote barangays and islands of Bacacay.

Ms. Mojica also facilitated a brief orientation on the utilization of sensory materials through a tactile learning approach. In attendance were the SNEd teachers of BECS and two representatives of Bacacay LGU, who are responsible for the custody of the ILRC.





Gabay IT Staff, Mr. Ron Esquivias, also orientated the educators on the use of the embosser and braille translator. Each participant had the opportunity to practice using the equipment and software.



The licensed Pics for PECS version 15 was installed on one of the ILRC computers. Participants were introduced to the software and shown how to access the thousands of high-quality images organized in different categories. The participants were pleased to learn that in using the new equipment and new IT skills, they no longer needed to download pictures from the internet.

May 9, 2024. Gabay turned over additional equipment and learning sensory learning materials to Tanauan ILRC:

- an Embosser
- tablets
- low vision assistive devices
- sets of manipulatives and sensory learning materials for enhancing the motor and cognitive skills of students with disabilities (Big Shapes, Movable Alphabet, Colored Beads Chain, Wooden Clock, Shape Sorting, Color Wood Lacing Beads, Alphabet Sandpaper)

Gabay also ensured the provision of braille paper.

Gabay further enhanced communication accessibility by installing the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), Version 15 Download for windows, designed to aid individuals with communication difficulties. PECS utilizes pictures to assist individuals in expressing needs and desires, regulating sensory experiences, and promoting comfort. PECS, as a form of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), employs pictures to assist individuals, particularly those with language or communication problems which is prevalent among children with developmental disabilities. The training manual, Kick Starter Kit with laminated pictures, and schedule board kit will soon be delivered at Tanauan ILRC.

Seven (7) eyeglasses were provided to children identified with eye difficulties, addressing issues such as high-powered glasses and refractive errors.

In attendance were Mr. Dean Ric Endriano, Region VIII SNEd In Charge, alongside Dr. Socorro Ausa, the Division Supervisor In-Charge of SNEd for the Division of Leyte. Also present were Honorable Councilor In-Charge of Education, Mr. Paul Cinco, Tanauan II District Supervisor, Dr. Mariza Martillo, and teachers. Specifically, District Supervisor, Dr. Mariza Martillo accepted the additional equipment and sensory learning materials.



These are the key responses of attendees during the turnover program:

- Hon. Paul Cinco, who is the prime mover in crafting the Municipal Resolution on Inclusive Education, as councilor in-charge of education. In doing so, he consulted with Gabay, particularly with COP Dr. Quijano, which underscores the role of Gabay in guiding the LGUs.

Hon. Cinco also announced the successful passage of the Resolution aimed at hiring Occupational Therapists (OTs) and Physical Therapists (PTs) for a salary grade not lower than 15, marking a groundbreaking initiative which will be first time for a municipality. This development was particularly significant given the scarcity of specialists in PT and OT in rural areas plus the high costs of availing services which is a major economic constraint faced by their parent constituents. Hon. Cinco's himself is a parent to a son with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

- Mr. Endriano, Region VIII SNEd In Charge, hopes that other schools in Region VIII will benefit from the learning resources and initiatives of the Municipality of Tanauan. He acknowledged the transformative impact of projects like Gabay and anticipated further positive developments. He reminded the school officials and teachers to responsibly utilize the USAID provided equipment and learning materials.
- Dr. Ausa, Division Supervisor In-Charge of SNEd for the Division of Leyte, emphasized the importance of maximizing the utilization of resources for the benefit of students. She expressed optimism that the innovative approaches demonstrated by Tanauan II would inspire other municipalities under the division of Leyte to adopt similar initiatives.
- Dr. Martillo, District Supervisor of Tanauan II District, extended her gratitude for the unwavering commitment of the USAID and RBI through the Gabay project. She assured the officials present that the school will practice responsible stewardship, ensuring that the materials provided would be utilized for the benefit of students. Dr. Martillo hoped for more LWD enrollees in the upcoming school year.



Guests provided their Messages: Mr. Dean Ric Endriano (left), Hon. Paul Cinco (center), and Dr. Marisa Martillo (right).

Gabay further enhanced communication accessibility by installing the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), Version 15 download for windows, designed to aid individuals with communication difficulties. PECS utilizes pictures to assist individuals in expressing needs and desires, regulating sensory experiences, and promoting comfort.

PECS, as a form of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), employs pictures to assist individuals, particularly those with language or communication problems which is prevalent among children with developmental disabilities. The training manual, Kick Starter Kit with laminated pictures, and schedule board kit will soon be delivered at Tanauan ILRC.

In addition to these provisions, 7 eyeglasses were provided to children identified with eye difficulties, addressing issues such as high-powered glasses and refractive errors.

After the turnover ceremony, Mr. Ron Esquivias conducted a refresher session on how to use the provided embosser. Ten (10) SNEd and GenEd teachers, who had participated in the phase 1 training on January 22-23, 2024, were present. Each participant had the opportunity to explore the braille embosser and produce a braille embossed output.



Mr. Esquivias also provided an orientation on the content of the tablets, which included apps such as audio books for the blind from RBI and FSL Stories developed by Gabay, along with various features tailored for blind individuals.



A session with Dr. Quijano, focused on the concept of tactile learning, underscoring the significance of hands-on experiences in enhancing comprehension and memory retention.



Dr. Quijano also facilitated a workshop. Participants were divided into three groups to on work collaborative exercises. Each group was tasked with selecting sensory materials from tools displayed on the table and formulating lesson objectives.

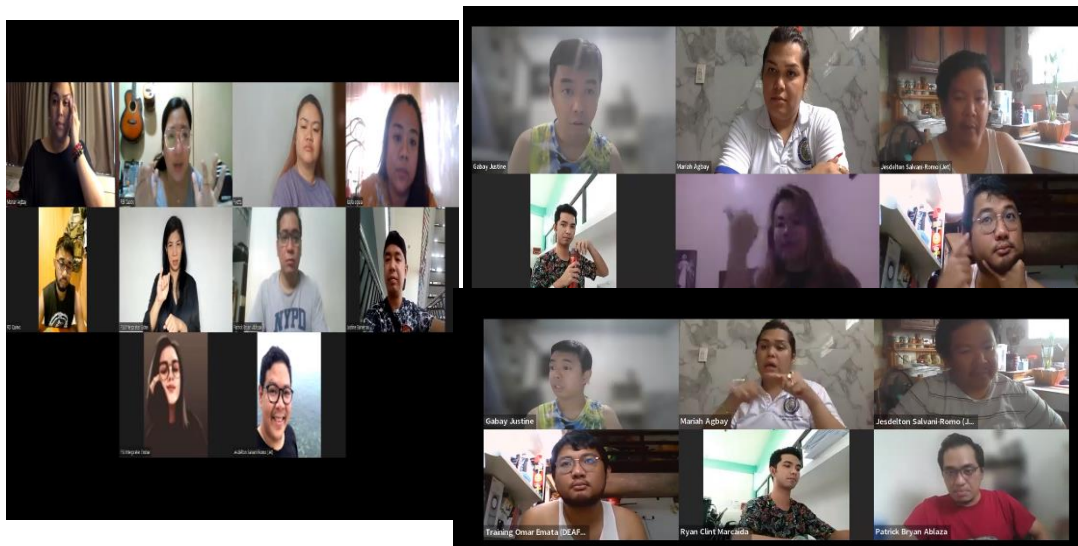


The inputs were compiled into a comprehensive table for presentation and further discussion. Feedback and comments from both the group members and facilitators were sought.



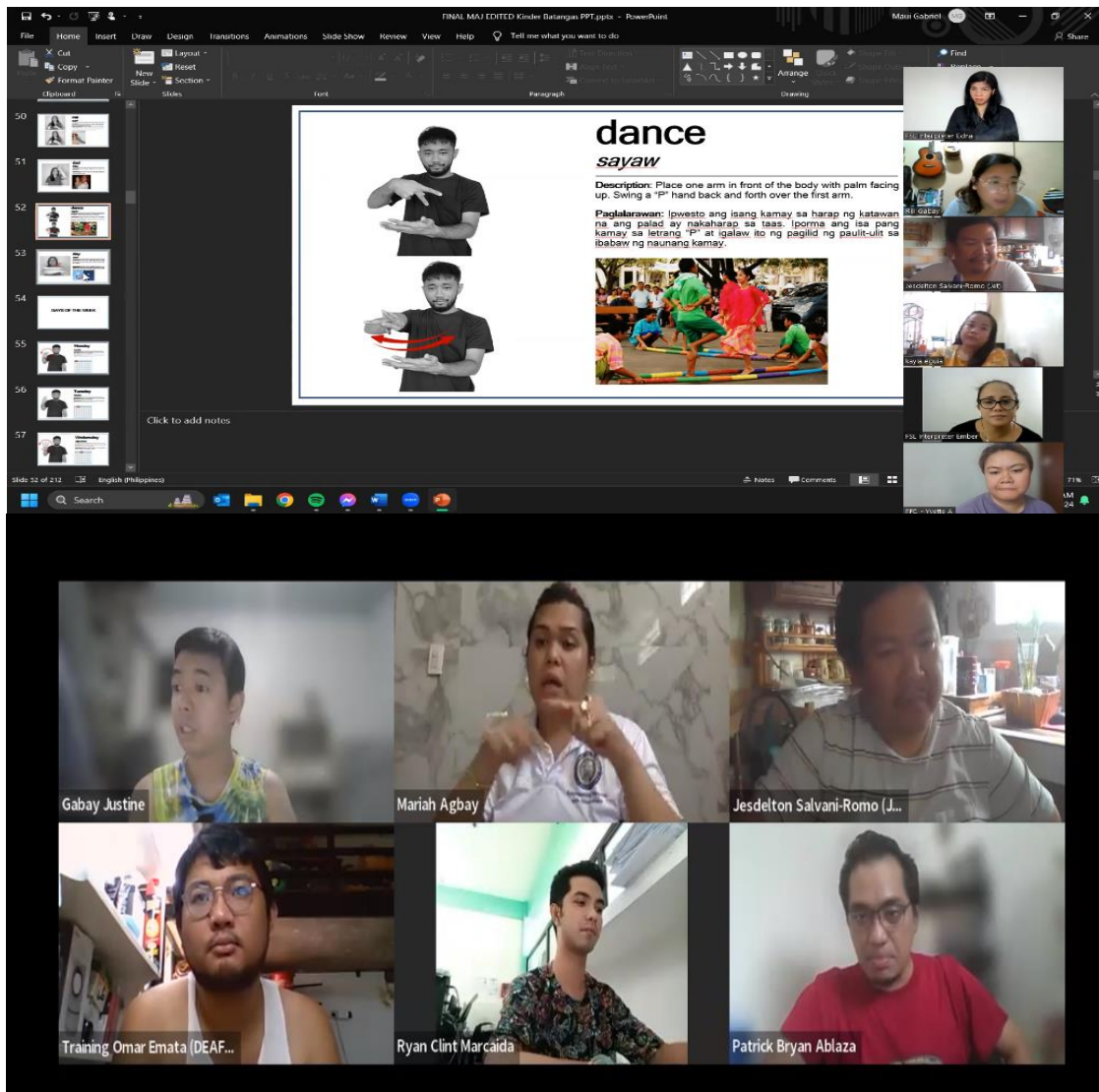
B. 5 Updates on Revision of the FSL Dictionary to Compilation of FSL Vocabulary Words (Batangas and Laguna; Sorsogon and Albay; Southern Leyte, and Leyte), Kinder to Grade

Gabay appreciates the initiatives of the Philippine Federation of the Deaf (PFD) for leading the revision of the FSL Dictionary to Compilation of FSL Vocabulary Words. As of July 3, 2024, the review team has made significant progress in revising the FSL Dictionary. The team is composed of Gabay Deaf Mentors, PFD officers, and Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino's FSL Unit staff. It has completed the review for Batangas and Sorsogon, ensuring accuracy in written descriptions and sign images. Currently, the team is reviewing the materials specific to Southern Leyte. Translations into Waray language have been finalized, enhancing accessibility for Waray-speaking Gabay site, Leyte.



The ongoing revisions involve updating written descriptions and capturing high-quality images of signs. Once the review team finishes examining all remaining materials, the next steps include plotting and formatting the content in MS Word.

The final output will be ready by September 2024 and presented in PDF format for the ultimate review. Upon completion, the revised FSL Dictionary will be saved in USB drives and endorsed to the Department of Education (DepEd) for future reference in teaching deaf learners.



B.6 Production and Distribution of Additional Learning Materials to Project Partners

Gabay conducted the symposium *“Final Activity, Learning and Consultation Workshop on Disability-Inclusive Education: Best Practices and Recommendations,”* 2024 June 24 to 25, at the Pontefino Hotel in Batangas City. Participants attended onsite and virtually through zoom. During this symposium additional materials were turned over to DepEd, LGUs, and DPOs.

DepEd materials were distributed to regions, divisions, and schools, while LGU materials were distributed to provinces, cities, and municipalities.

Gabay explained that some of these were additional copies of previously given materials, while other materials serve as supplementary to previously provided resources.

Onsite participants were called forward to receive the learning materials. For online participants Regions V & VIII, materials were sent via parcel packages.

Gabay also announced upcoming deliveries, including the Revised Version of Filipino Sign Language (FSL) Vocabulary Words and Prototype Lesson Plans Batch 4, designed for children with disabilities such as Intellectual Disabilities (ID), Learning Disabilities (LD) – Dyslexia, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), as well as braille sheets. Below are the photos of the materials provided to the partners.



B.7 Research Status Report: Assessment of Competencies on Disability Inclusive Education for Special and General Education Teachers in Sorsogon and Albay Provinces

According to the World Health Organization, a significant number of people worldwide face vision and hearing impairments. In 2019, it was estimated that around 2.2 billion people had some form of vision impairment, while projections indicate that by 2050, approximately 2.5 billion people may experience hearing loss.

In the Philippines, the exact number of individuals with hearing impairment remains uncertain due to the absence of a centralized data collection system for the deaf community. However, estimates suggest that there are approximately 1 million deaf people living in the country. These individuals encounter numerous challenges, such as limited access to education and job opportunities, as well as a lack of sign language interpreters and support services. Moreover, over two million Filipinos are living with visual impairment, with many of them residing in rural areas where eye care services are challenging to access, especially for those below the poverty line.

Recognizing the importance of equal rights for all citizens, including those with disabilities, the Philippine government has enacted various laws to ensure access to quality education and support for people with disabilities. The Republic Act 7277 of 1992, for instance, aims to make education accessible to all disabled individuals, enabling them to develop their full potential and life skills.

The Republic Act 10533 of 2013, also known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act, strengthens inclusivity in education and provides more opportunities for children with disabilities to reach their full potential. To facilitate this inclusivity, proper training for Special Education (SPED) and General Education teachers on teaching competencies must be conducted.

Moreover, the government's commitment to inclusivity is reinforced by Republic Act No. 11106, which recognizes Filipino Sign Language as the national sign language for the deaf community. Additionally, Republic Act No. 11650, approved in 2022, emphasizes the importance of inclusive education and establishes inclusive learning resource centers to support learners with disabilities.

Universal design for learning (UDL) has gained popularity as a pedagogical practice in recent years, promoting inclusive teaching strategies that accommodate the needs and abilities of all learners. UDL aims to create a flexible learning environment that presents information in multiple ways, engages students through various methods, and offers options for demonstrating learning.

However, while inclusive education is mandated in the new curriculum, the acceptance, awareness, and competencies of general education teachers in such settings need assessment. Studies have shown that teacher attitudes and preparedness play a crucial role in the success of inclusivity in education. Proper training and support are necessary to enable teachers to effectively teach students with special needs in inclusive classrooms.

Gubat Campus of Bicol University in cooperation with Gabay- Resources For The Blind Inc. project aims to conduct a study on the level of competencies of SPED and GenEd teachers handling primary grade students with hearing and visual impairment of the two provinces, Sorsogon and Albay. A Memorandum of Agreement was signed to outline the terms and conditions to formalize the collaboration for this research.

Generally, this study aims to develop a training program for SNEd and GenEd teachers handling primary grades and parents appropriate in the context of disability inclusive education.

Specifically, this study will try to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. Determine the professional practice of the teachers of the Blind/Low Vision, Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing,) Deafblind, MDVI in terms of:
 - Length of service,
 - Educational attainment,
 - Trainings attended, and
 - Types of programs provided to Blind-Low Vision, Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing students (e.g., Special education class, Regular class, Inclusive education program).
2. Ascertain the levels of Teaching Competencies on Disability Inclusive Education; and
3. Design a Training Program on Disability Inclusive Education for SPED and GenEd Teachers in Sorsogon and Albay provinces.

The research method employed is a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches, known as a quali-quantitative research method. Qualitative research is utilized to conduct interviews with primary teachers, allowing for an in-depth exploration of their experiences and perspectives. On the other hand, quantitative research is used for statistical analysis of the gathered data from the respondents. Statistical procedures, such as scoring, frequency count, weighted mean, and percentage score, will be applied to analyze the data.

To select the participants for the study, purposive sampling was utilized. The target respondents were schools in Sorsogon and Albay that offer education programs for the Blind/Low Vision, Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing, Deafblind, and MDVI. A set of survey questions were developed to gather data from these schools.

The instrument used for assessing the competencies of the participants is based on an adopted proficiency level description, which is derived from the Competency Measurement Model by Russo (2016). This instrument facilitates the evaluation of the teachers' capabilities in handling students with special needs.

In the months of April and May 2024, six (6) researchers who are faculty of Gubat Campus, Bicol University visited the selected schools of Sorsogon and Albay provinces with educational programs for the blind/low vision, deaf and deafblind learners. A total of 318 teachers-respondents were identified, 118 from Sorsogon and 200 from Albay.

The highlight of the preliminary research activity was the distribution of research questionnaires. With the approval to conduct this research by the two Schools Division Superintendents, coordination meetings with the principals/focal persons were held to discuss the purpose of the study and identify the respondents. In some schools, Focus Group Discussions were conducted, while in others, a one-to-one discussion took place because of the changes in schedule caused to Work from Home scheme due to high heat index experienced in the two provinces.



Courtesy calls and coordination meetings with the Principals by the Researchers

During the Focus Group Discussions (FGD), teachers commonly expressed their sentiments and challenges encountered in handling classes with Special Needs Education (SNEd). Thus, some teachers mentioned that mainstreaming learners with special needs is a burden on their part since they were not trained how to handle this type of learners.



The actual research process highlighted the giving of instructions for accomplishing the questionnaire. Many questions were raised, and these were all answered by the researchers. These questionnaires were retrieved after one week from the distribution. The analysis of the data gathered started in the month of June and will be completed by July 2024.

FGD with teachers and the Principal

Learnings, observations, and recommendations are:

- It is important to undergo the process of conducting courtesy calls and coordination meetings with the Schools Division Superintendents, Public Schools District Supervisors and Principals to conduct FGD to ensure cooperation of the teachers.
- Some of the teachers were working from home during data gathering. So, google forms may be used for them.

- The teachers were cooperative and enthusiastically accommodated the researchers. But some were not able to accomplish the questionnaire on time due to their hectic schedule and too much work. Others considered answering questionnaire as a burden for them.
- Based on initial information gathered, it is recommended to pursue the conduct of capability building programs for these teachers for their professional growth and development during the period when their schedules are less occupied.

B.8 Report on Meeting cum Workshop on Dyslexia

Gabay project was granted on its 5th year an 18-month extension and six months was allotted for the implementation of activities related to various learning disabilities. Besides CSDs, the project design now includes CWDs with intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and learning disabilities, specifically dyslexia.

Learning disability is the most prevalent among the four types of disabilities, with about 13-14% of the school population qualifying for special education. Half of these students are classified as having a learning disability, with 85% of them having a primary learning disability in reading and language processing. An estimated 15-20% of the population have some symptoms of dyslexia. The National Institutes of Health, USA, reported that 60-80% of those with learning disabilities have problems with reading and language skills or dyslexia. However, there are no specific statistics on dyslexia in the Philippines.

April 2024. Gabay received its approval of additional milestones with programs related to assessment of children with reading problems or at risk of dyslexia among grades 1 and 2 learners in Sorsogon East Central School and Bacacay East Central School in Region V. Prior to the approval, several exploratory meetings for possible collaboration were held together with USAID and ABC+ to seek expert consultants from Philippine Dyslexia Foundation.

June 13, 2024. USAID initiated a meeting cum planning workshop in Legazpi City. USAID officials Ms. Yvette Malcoiln, Deputy Director of the Office of Education and Mr. Henry Grageda, Project Management Specialist and Gabay's Agreement Officer Representative lead the meeting, with Mr. Grageda as facilitator. The objectives of the meeting were:

1. To introduce the assessment of children with reading problems or at risk of Dyslexia,
2. To discuss specific activities to DepEd officials of Region V and concerned divisions, address issues raised and plan for the implementation in the two pilot schools, and
3. To get the DepEd approval for the implementation of the new activities.

Twenty-two (22) attended this meeting:

- Officials of DepEd Central BLD-SID Office and Project Management Service, DepEd Region V, DepEd Divisions of Albay and Sorsogon City;
- School Heads of Bacacay East Central School and Sorsogon East Central School;
- Specialists of the Philippine Dyslexia Foundation and the ABC+ project; and
- Gabay management and staff



Mr. Grageda outlined the objectives of the meeting and stressed the critical role of the involvement of stakeholder in developing programs for children at risk of dyslexia. He acknowledged the valuable contributions of ABC+ of the Comprehensive Reading Literacy Assessment (CRLA) results and discussed key planning parameters, including the

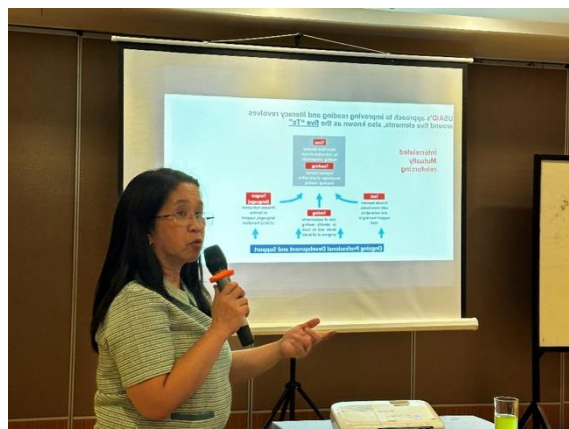
start of the schoolyear, CRLA outcomes, and the ongoing commitment to disability-related initiatives.

The opening message of Ms. Yvette Malcioln, Deputy Director of the Office of Education at USAID Philippines emphasized the importance of expanding Gabay’s reach to include children at risk of dyslexia and the effect of lead poisoning. She highlighted the significance of the presence of officials and their active involvement in the discussions about these issues, adding that educational success is a gradual process which relies heavily on establishing strong linkages, as underscored by Dr. Sadsad during the online Asia-Wide Seminar on Accelerated and Remedial Education.



Highlights of the meeting were:

1. Overview and accomplishments of Gabay project past five years of implementation (Mr. Gregada);
2. Update and status of the ABC+ Project Implementation in Region V (Ms. Ina Aquino, Chief of Party);
3. CRLA results in Region 5 with a brief discussion on the potential causes and mitigating strategies for emergent readers (Ms. Ina Aquino);
4. Activity proposal of Gabay that highlighted the critical need for assessing learners with reading problems or at risk of dyslexia among grades 1 and 2 learners; (Dr. Yolanda Quijano)



These were the key issues identified and clarified:

- Students were progressing without basic reading skills
- Some students who were identified as emerging were retained in the grade level
- There is a need for tool validation in various divisions and an initial validation in Manila
- Classroom grouping for those who will be assessed
- eMFAT has limitations, for example, it cannot assess other reasons for reading difficulty (e.g. malnourishment)

The recommendations conceived by the group were:

- Determine if the tool can be replicated and what interventions are needed post-development
- Complete a full cycle to enhance tool sensitivity
- Safeguarding, validity, and reliability of the tool; in-service training for teachers
- Conduct MFAT before eMFAT to assess emerging reading learners
- Develop actionable responses based on ABC+ CRLA results; focus on identifying students at risk of dyslexia
- Categorize students based on performance levels
- Consider decision-making based on assessment data, including the number of students tested with MFAT
- Decide on whether to administer assessments to all students or a random selection
- Include child nutrition status data as part of student profiling
- Include teacher training in the plan and develop resources; expand data management for learners with disabilities
- Identify and include necessary elements in MFAT screening; consider language use for testing.

Based on the discussions, below were the agreements reached:

1. Reading Assessment to learners at risk of Dyslexia will be administered to identified emerging readers in Grade 2 who will be enrolled in SY 2024-2025 in the two pilot schools: Sorsogon East Central School and Bacacay East Central school. Identification

of emerging readers will be based on May 2024 CRLA results that was administered to Grade 1 pupils.

2. PDF agreed and will:

- a) Develop items for the eMFAT and the Manual for Testing
- b) Conduct content validation of the eMFAT and revisions
- c) Conduct orientation on the use of the eMFAT
- d) Conduct eMFAT to the 2 target schools
- e) Analyse, summarize, and present the results
- f) Develop the Workshop Design and Conduct the Teacher Training- on Preparing IEP-Reading Intervention

3. Gabay agreed and will:

- a) Conduct the Orientation on the conduct of the Modified MFAT
- b) Conduct vision and hearing screening and inquire about lead testing
- c) Monitor and coordinate with teachers conducting the Modified MFAT
- d) Analyse and summarize the MFAT Results

4. Target Samples for Grade 2 learners at risk of dyslexia

Table 25. Results of CRLA Administered to Grade 1 Learners last May 2024

A. From Pilot Schools

Sites	# of Emerging learners	# of developing learners	Total	# of Teachers in Grade 2
Sorsogon East CS	83	0	83	12
Bacacay East CS	3	31	34	9
TOTAL	50	31	117	21

B. From ABC +

Sites	# of Emerging learners	# of developing learners	Total
Sorsogon East CS	83	0	83
Bacacay East CS	23	34	54
TOTAL	50	31	117

5. Language to be used for testing: USAID recommended Filipino to be translated to Bicol for Bacacay East Central School and to 2 languages for Sorsogon East Central School (Filipino and North Sorsoganon).
6. Two target schools will send the Basic Education Enrolment Form for each student (without a name) for enhancement by Gabay to include vision and hearing screening results, lead testing results, health profile, and parent information on reading performance.

Next Steps of Gabay. As part of the preparation in the implementation of Part 1 of eMFAT, Gabay will collect information for Grade 2 reading assessments from two schools, focusing on students enrolled in the 2024-2025 school year.

This will include data from the CRLA for Emerging Learners as of May 2024 when the students were in Grade 1, the Mother Tongue language used for assessment, and the number of Grade 2 teachers who will be trained. Gabay will also enhance the Basic Education Enrollment Form for each student by adding vision and hearing screening results, lead testing results, health profile, and responses to interview questions about parents' reading performance. Additionally, there will be reproduction of forms.

Gabay will conduct the Part 1 of the eMFAT with the following planned activities:

- Conduct vision and hearing screening by CHWs and lead testing to selected Grade 2 learners with reading problems or at risk of Dyslexia in Sorsogon East and Bacacay East Central Schools
- Orientation to division and school officials and selected Grade 2 teachers on the conduct of the Modified MFAT (Part 1 of Enhanced MFAT) to selected Grade 2 learners in 2 schools

After the implementation of eMFAT Part 1, Part 2 will then be implemented by the Philippine Dyslexia Foundation.

Updates on Lead Testing for the Dyslexia Assessment

June 22, 2024. Gabay had a virtual meeting with Ms. Larah Ibañez, Executive Director of Pure Earth (PE) Philippines (PH), a leading global non-profit organization addressing toxic pollution. PE PH conducted the first survey of blood lead levels in the Philippines in 2021-2022. Ms. Ibañez gave an update on their initiatives related to lead poisoning testing. She provided information about the testing process and the key findings. Based on the findings, she emphasized the importance of incorporating lead testing in the future initiatives of the DepEd, which can be done in partnership with the Department of Health (DOH). The discussion included Lead Testing Options for Children (how it is done and the price) for Gabay's future consideration.

June 27, 2024. As recommend by Ms. Ibañez, Ms. Maricar Gabriel, Training Officer and Ms. Cristina Labastida, Field Coordinator for Region 5 attended the training on Community Risk Assessment on Lead in Valenzuela City.

The training was conducted by Dr. Lyn Crisanta R. Panganiban, PE PH National Consultant for Public Health and Toxicology. The training focused on the impact of lead exposure on health and key steps in conducting community health risk assessment.

Challenges and Issues. The recommended portable lead analyzer and testing kit are not included in the approved budget allocation. Gabay will need to explore alternative funding sources to secure the necessary funds for these.

This may require additional time and effort which could potentially delay project completion. Also, waiting for Pure Earth's available testing kit and calibrated lead analyzer may also result to delays.

C. INTERMEDIATE RESULT 3

Improved local government attention to the needs of children with sensorial disabilities

- Planning Workshops
- Rollout Training of Inclusive Learning Resource Center (ILRC) Leaders (Los Baños, Bacacay & Tanauan)
- Local Ordinance for Programs and Services to Children with Disabilities and DepEd Memorandums on Utilization of Materials provided

C.1 Planning Workshops – 2023 September 21 to 22

The learning and consultation workshops focused on three different topics geared toward establishing and managing Modular ILRCs in Pilot Schools. During the courtesy visits and orientations last 2023 July to the new sites - Municipalities of Los Baños, Bacacay, and Tanauan, Gabay sought collaboration with the LGUs and DepEd officials on establishing Modular ILRCs in the identified and selected schools.

Building on Gabay’s previous learning experiences and the provision of essential equipment and assistive technology to the current sites of Batangas City East Elem. School, Maasin SPED Center, and Sorsogon East Central School, Gabay remained committed to providing the same level of specialized resources and equipment to the new sites. However, with the expansion to other areas, Gabay also recognizes the need to cater to a broader spectrum of disabilities, including children with autism, intellectual disorders, and other disabilities. This expansion aligns with RA 11650, “An Act Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education,” signed by President Roa Duterte on March 11, 2022.

Below are the three components in the establishment and management of ILRCs in the pilot schools.

1. ILRC Operations Manual

In the previous sites’ experiences and learning, Gabay undertook the task of developing an Operations Manual and Guidelines for effective operations of Centers that have been established. The Manual and Guidelines underwent a four-phase process, including drafting,

review, validation, and finalization. Throughout this journey, Gabay sought and incorporated valuable feedback from stakeholders.

By considering the inputs of various parties involved, the final draft of the Operations Manual specifically on the establishment and management of the ILRC emerged, addressing concerns, and incorporating recommendations, particularly from DepEd Officials.

This Manual was utilized as a blueprint for the establishment of ILRCs in the new sites and will be in adherence to relevant laws, guidelines, and legal mandates. The Operations Manual includes provisions from Republic Act 11650 and other DepEd guidelines to ensure consistency in supporting inclusive education goals.

With the Operations Manual now complete and encompassing valuable insights, Gabay eagerly anticipates its presentation at the Planning Workshops. The Manual also illustrated the list of equipment and assistive devices for blind, low-vision, and deaf children. With these expansions to another set of disabilities, there were additional manipulative tools and assistive devices provided to the selected three (3) schools.

In addition to sharing the Operations Manual as a reference to inspire and guide similar initiatives, the Planning Workshops hold paramount importance in Gabay's goal to promote inclusive education. During the workshops, Gabay intends to engage key stakeholders, including DepEd and LGU representatives from the Divisions of Laguna, Albay, and Leyte, as well as other relevant education authorities (consultants) and experts.

Through interactive sessions and practical exercises, the Planning Workshops encouraged participants to customize the Operations Manual to suit the unique needs and circumstances of each municipality by developing their ILRC Implementation Plans as outputs of the activity. The goal is to empower these municipalities and schools to establish ILRCs that align with their specific contexts while still upholding the principles of inclusive education outlined in RA 11650.

For Gabay to assist the General Education Schools which are not Special Education Centers but are enrolling learners with disabilities, pilot schools are identified to model the Modular ILRCs.

2. Implementation of Adapted Kindergarten and Grades 1-3 MELCs in Filipino Sign Language, Additional Curriculum Content for Learners with Visual Impairment (Kinder and Grades 1-3), & K-12 Transition Curriculum for Learners with Disabilities

In addition to the Manual as a reference for Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRCs) in the new sites, Gabay also supports the utilization of the existing DepEd policies on curriculum, which include the integration of Adapted Kindergarten and Grades 1-3 Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) in Filipino Sign Language. This catered to learners who are deaf or hard of hearing, enabling them to access education more effectively.

Furthermore, Gabay facilitated the implementation of Additional Curriculum Content for Learners with Visual Impairment in Kindergarten and Grades 1-3. This curriculum adaptation aims to accommodate learners with visual impairments, providing them with a more inclusive learning experience and addressing their specific needs. The initiative will also focus on the K-12 Transition Curriculum for Learners with Disabilities. This curriculum is designed to facilitate a smooth and successful transition for learners with disabilities from basic education to the next phase of their educational opportunities. By supporting the implementation of this transition curriculum, Gabay aims to ensure that learners with disabilities are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to pursue further studies or meaningful employment as applicable.

3. Strengthening Support Services of the LGUs and Stakeholders

In the implementation of ILRC, DepEd recognizes the importance of collaboration and partnership with local government units (LGUs) and community stakeholders. DepEd acknowledges that it cannot work in isolation and that active involvement and support from LGUs and stakeholders are crucial in ensuring the success of inclusive education.

The involvement of LGUs and community stakeholders starts with the identification and support of children in need of special education services. LGUs and stakeholders are likewise instrumental in providing support to schools as they collaborate in terms of school structures and facilities that are conducive to inclusive learning environments. This might involve improving physical accessibility for learners with disabilities, ensuring the

availability of assistive devices and technology, and creating a safe and inclusive atmosphere for all students.

In addition to the physical support, LGUs, and community stakeholders can also offer other resources and assistance to schools. This might include financial aid, donations of educational materials and equipment, and capacity-building programs for teachers and staff on inclusive teaching methods and strategies.

The collaboration between DepEd, LGUs, and community stakeholders is essential to address the diverse needs of learners and promote inclusivity in education that benefits all learners, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds. The planning on strengthening support services helped the ILRC initiative that aims to foster a truly inclusive education system.

The workshops also served as platform to discuss and strategize the implementation of Modular Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRCs) in the three additional Divisions located in Laguna, Albay, and Leyte. Gabay aims to facilitate open and constructive discussions on innovative practices to foster a sense of collaboration and shared responsibility among participants.

Among the 83 participants, there were 30 or 36% males and 53 or 64% females as shown in the graph (Figure 15).

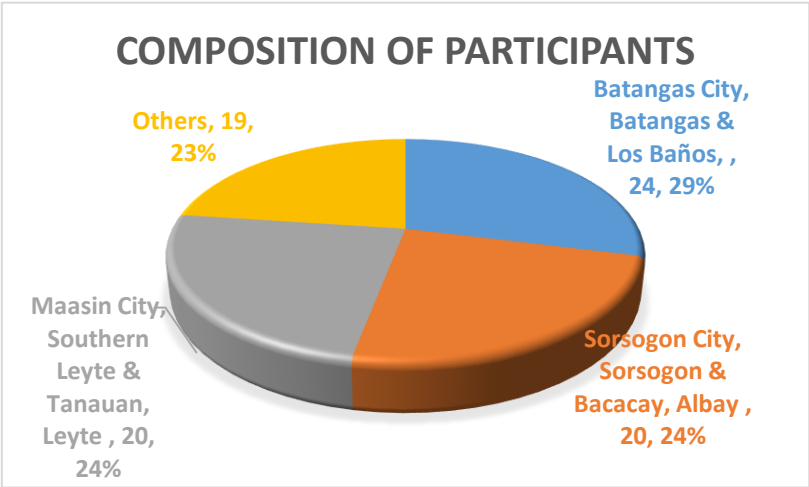


Figure 15. Composition of Participants in the Symposium and Planning Workshops

In terms of project sites, there were 24 or 29% from Batangas City, Batangas and Los Baños-Laguna; 20 or 24% from Sorsogon City, Sorsogon & Bacacay-Albay and another 20 or 24% from Maasin City, Southern Leyte, and Tanauan-Leyte. The remaining 19 participants or 23% represent the other offices and organizations cited above.

The needs assessment results conducted by Gabay in the additional sites of Los Baños-Laguna, Bacacay-Albay, and Tanauan-Leyte were also presented. Designated DepEd officials comprehensively shared the status of the number of schools and teachers catering to LWDs, followed by the pre-service and in-service trainings on special needs education received by teachers and school administrators in recent years. Problems and challenges confronting them in the provision of educational services to LWDs were clearly outlined. From the LGUs of these municipalities, information on how the Local School Board functions in relation to prioritizing and addressing concerns of people with disabilities was highlighted.

Workshop mechanics and groupings were discussed comprehensively by the main Facilitator, Dr. Brenda Corpuz, Dean, College of Education, Technological University of the Philippines. Four workshops were conducted as discussed below:

WORKSHOP 1: Establishment of Modular ILRC in Pilot Schools by Strengthening the Support Services of LGUs and Stakeholders

WORKSHOP 1 focused on *Establishment of Modular ILRC in Pilot Schools by Strengthening the Support Services of LGUs and Stakeholders*. This Workshop was participated in by 15 DepEd officials at the regional and division offices, district supervisors, principals and teachers of the pilot sites: Los Baños Central Schol, Division of Laguna-Region IVA, Bacacay East Central School, Division of Albay – Region V, and Tanauan II Central School, Division of Leyte – Region VIII.

They were complemented by 13 LGU officials, namely the Mayor, Councilor In-Charge of the Education Committee, heads of the Municipal Health Office and Social Welfare & Development Office with the representative from the Persons with Disability Affairs Office and organization working for persons with disability in the municipalities of Los Baños - Laguna, Bacacay-Albay and Tanauan-Leyte.

The Facilitators of the Workshop were **Dr. Brenda Corpuz** and Ms. **Angelita Esdicul**, former Assistant Director of the Bureau of Elementary Education, DepEd Central Office, and Gabay **official and staff**.

The Workshop aimed to: i) highlight the importance of collaboration and cooperation of DepEd, LGUs, NGOs, organizations for/of people with disabilities, parents, and other stakeholders in establishing and implementing the ILRC, ii) determine the critical roles and functions of the persons involved in the Modular ILRC, and iii) develop implementation plans for the Modular ILRC in schools to cater to the diverse learning needs of students with disabilities.

Resources Speakers were invited to share experiences on the functional areas of the Modular ILRC Implementation Plan. **Ms. Zeny Concon**, Senior Education Program Specialist, Student Inclusion Division, Bureau of Learning Delivery, DepEd Central Office and **Dr. Rosalina Panganiban**, Education Supervisor In-Charge of Special Needs Education (SNEd), Division of Batangas City provided information about **Child Find**. **Mr. Bonifacio Egido**, Persons with Disability Affairs Office (PDAO) Focal Person, Southern Leyte discussed on how his office, located, screened and referred individuals with disabilities for medical and educational interventions while Mr. **Michael John Orais**, PDAO Focal Person, Maasin City and **Hon. Mark Dominguez**, *Councilor-Committee on Education Municipality of Bulusan, Sorsogon* deliberated on the *provision* of support services to learners with disabilities.



The participants were then divided into three groups in accordance with their pilot sites. Critical questions that elicit responses relevant to the preparation of the Modular ILRC Implementation Plan were deliberated on by the participants.

These questions include:

- a) *What do you think are your main roles and responsibilities in the establishment and management of ILRC?*

- b) *Based on your data on children with disabilities gathered by the PDAO or MSWDO, how do you support the implementation of child find, screening, and referral to increase enrolment?*
- c) *How do you support the educational needs of children with disabilities in your municipalities to ensure that they could complete their basic education?*

Three outputs on the Modular ILRC Implementation Plans of i) Los Baños Central School, Division of Laguna, ii) Bacacay East Central School, Division of Albay, and iii) and Tanauan II Central School, Division of Leyte were completed. These Plans cover the period from October 2023 to November 2024. These Plans contain the functional areas of 1) **Refurbishment of Classroom(s) as Support Service Area (s), 2) Child Find, 3) Screening & Referral, and 4) Support Services** with the corresponding activities, timeline, persons involved, budget allocation and source, and output indicator. Los Baños Central School added an area on **Policies**.

These Plans were presented in the Plenary Session where feedbacks were given by the participants, and USAID and Gabay officials to address issues on relevant activities as well as budgetary allocations.



Workshop 2A: Implementation of Adapted Curriculum for Blind, Low Vision, Deafblind, and MDVI

This workshop was designed to support the implementation of the Adapted Curriculum for Blind, Low Vision, Deafblind and MDVI in the new project sites of Gabay namely Los Baños, Laguna, Bacacay, Albay and Tanauan, Leyte.

The attendees were asked to share practical tips and specified achievable strategies to implement the curriculum in their workplace. The workshop was held on Sept. 21-22, 2023 at the 2F Hazel Function Room Sequoia Hotel, Manila Bay.

There were eight (8) attendees of the workshop consisted of Mr. **Emmerson Gito**, Blind Mentor, Bacacay Albay, two SNEd teachers from Los Baños Central School namely, Ms. **Revo M. Bayot** and Ms. **Lerle Gallelo**, Gabay education consultants, Mrs. **Adelaida Elamparo** and Mrs. **Rhoda Nocum**, and three parents' advocates; Mrs. **Rowena Fernandez**, Parents Advocates for Visually Impaired Children (PAVIC), Mrs. **Celia Garcia**, Deafblind Support Philippines, and Ms. **Lorrie Barboza**, Chief Braille Production, RBI. Guest speaker, Ms. **Lench Ann Perilla**, SNEd Teacher, San Vicente Elem. School, Quezon City Division, who is an experienced SNED Teacher and a blind person herself, presented a session on the Adapted Curriculum for Blind, Low Vision, Deafblind and MDVI specifically on the Filipino Braille Code and the Unified English Braille and emphasized the importance of aligning the learner's learning style in introducing the Adapted Curriculum specifically in developing the child's reading skills.



The workshop included a discussion in response to the following key questions: (1) *What available training designs for teachers, school heads, and parents do your organizations/agencies have that can be used in the incoming activities?* (2) *Do you have learning packages for the aforementioned learners with disabilities enrolled in ILRC?* (3) *If none, do you have the capacity to develop*

the learning packages with Gabay resources within a month? Attendees provided feedback using the forms distributed in response to the key questions. The group gathered all inputs from the participants and utilized this information to come up with an overall output which was presented by **Ms. Revo M. Bayot, SNEd Teacher, Los Baños Central School, Laguna Division**. Below is the summary of the group's outputs presented in the plenary session:

- ***Skills Training for Special Need Education Teachers (SNEDs)*** on Filipino and Unified English Braille. Teachers' in the group also requested for the Bureau of Learning Delivery, DepEd Officer to released copy of the revised Filipino Braille Code that they can use as reference in the field.

Initially the group proposed to conduct the training during the semestral brake schedules on Jan. 24 – 30, 2024, however, parents' advocates suggested to have the training earlier. Thus, the proposed dates are from Oct. to Dec. 2023. The proposed budget training for 30 SNED teachers is P82, 500.00, the budget is inexpensive as the proposed training venue and transportation expenses of the teacher- participants is proposed to be covered by the Dept. of Education.

- ***Orientation for GenED Teachers and School Administrators on handling Children with Disabilities.*** The group recommended a 2-day training orientation for general education teachers that will focus on understanding the unique educational needs of children with disabilities. This includes testimonies from professional blind/deaf advocates and parents and practical strategies in accommodating learners with disabilities in their classroom through the principle of the Universal Design for Learning and Inclusive Education. The group proposed budget of P177,000 for 120 GenEd and school administrators to Gabay, still the group requested for the Dept. of Education to cover the venue and travel expenses of participants.
- ***Braille Skills Training for Parents.*** Members of the group unanimously agreed that training parents to use braille is important for supporting the literacy development, communication, independence, and overall well-being of their blind children. Thus, the group proposed to train 60 parents of blind children from the three sites. Parents from PAVIC who are Braille literate will team teach with Gabay consultants to conduct the training. With the support from the LGUs thru Persons with Disability Affairs Office (PDAO) and the Dept. of Education, a budget of P105,000 was proposed to Gabay Project.
- ***Learning Packages*** that includes Developing Routines, Tips to Introduce Reading, and Tactile Books and Toys. The SNEd Teachers will also create video clips teaching Braille and Functional Curriculum to deafblind learners.

The feedback received from the attendees was significantly positive. They appreciated the opportunity to network with other professionals and service providers. During the plenary presentation, Ms. Michelle Chen, Director, Education Office, USAID/ Philippines, Pacific Islands, and Mongolia commented that the group's output is achievable and workable to be integrated within Gabay's activities.

Overall, the "Implementation of Adapted Curriculum for Blind, Low Vision, Deafblind, and MDVI" workshop was a success. The outcome of the workshop was providing attendees with clear and actionable strategies to successfully utilize the Adapted Curriculum in the target schools/districts/divisions. Additionally, attendees learned the importance of connecting with service providers like PAVIC, Deafblind Support Philippines and Gabay in supporting learners with special education needs in their communities. Attendees left the workshop with a greater understanding of their roles and the importance of networking. This includes working with the Local Government Unit to provide training for parents of children with special educational needs. Gabay will build on this success and plan to work with them implementing some actionable strategies recommended in the workshop.

WORKSHOP 2B: Implementation of Adapted Curriculum for Other Learners with Disabilities.

WORKSHOP 2B is on the *Implementation of Adapted Curriculum for Other Learners with Disabilities*. This workshop has a total of six participants and facilitated by Dr. *Mirla Olores*, RBI Consultant & Former Chief of Special Education Division, Bureau of Elementary Education, DepEd.

It has the following objectives: a) highlights the importance of partnership between NGO's, organizations for /of people with disabilities, and other stakeholders in providing education services to the teachers, school administrators, supervisors and parents of Other Learners with Disabilities and learners themselves, and b) determine the critical roles and functions of these partners in terms of i) providing training to SNEd and GenEd teachers, school administrators, supervisors and parents of learners with autism, ADHD, behavior problems, cerebral palsy and other physical disabilities enrolled in Kinder to Grade 3 at Los Baños ES, Bacacay ES, and Tanauan II ES, and ii) furnishing appropriate learning materials for these teachers and learners by November 2023.

This was attended by **Ms. Anna Tan Pascual**, Eye Can, **Dr. Marites Balba**, Division Supervisor In-Charge of SNEd, Division of Sto. Tomas City, Batangas, **Mr. John Angelo Gibas**, Rotary Club of Hearing and Speech, **Ms. Dianne Domingo**, SPED Teacher, Los Baños Central School, Division of Laguna, **Ms. Jana Marie Rosales**, and **Ms. Maria Rosary Cariaso**, ADHD Society of the Philippines.

Dr. Salvacion Olinares, Supervising Education Program Specialist, Student Inclusion Division, Bureau of Learning delivery, DepEd, Central Office discussed the DepEd Adapted Curriculum for Other Learners with Disabilities as input to the workshop. In addition, the participants deliberated on the same questions responded to by participants in Workshop 2A but focused on other learners with disabilities.

The outputs of the Workshop include the following:

- **Training designs for teachers, school administrators and supervisors** on Personal Hygiene, Good grooming, communication skills, Practical money and Functional Academics such as Science, English, Mathematics and Pre writing which shall be delivered through Simulation Activities, Case Studies & Role Play, Visual Schedule & Support, Sensory Activities, Team Teaching and Peer Interaction.
- **Parent training** that includes the topics above but with inclusion of Parental Simulation Training, A day in the life of people with disabilities, Support Group Meetings, Resource Familiarization, Skill Building Workshops, and Understanding Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs).
- **Learning Packages** that include Care skills package, Life skills package, and Functional academics' package. The Functional academics package is done through the efforts of SNEd teachers in the Division of Laguna.



Workshop 3: Implementation of the Task Force on Filipino Sign Language and Adapted Curriculum for Kindergarten and Grades 1-3 MELCs for FSL



Workshop 3 had a specific focus on implementing the Mother Tongue Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) for Kindergarten and Grades 1-3, as well as establishing a Task Force for Filipino Sign Language (FSL). A total of 14 participants attended this workshop, comprising various stakeholders: three (3) officials from

the Department of Education (DepEd) central office, two (2) directors from organizations serving the deaf community (Leyte Island Association for the Deaf and Philippine Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf), two (2) representatives from the Philippine Federation of the Deaf (PFD), two (2) representatives from the College of St. Benilde School of Deaf Education and Applied Studies (CSB-SDEAS), two (2) representatives from Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF) – FSL Unit, two (2) deaf mentors from new project sites, and the consultant specializing in deaf education, **Dr. Ricardo Ma. D. Nolasco**, a Filipino linguist and professor from the UP Department of Linguistics, along with Gabay staff, who facilitated this workshop.

The workshop has three primary objectives:

1. To consult with DepEd partners, including KWF, organizations/institutions related to the Deaf community, and FSL experts, regarding the establishment of a Task Force on Filipino Sign Language,
2. To emphasize the importance of collaboration among non-governmental organizations (NGOs), disability-related organizations, and other stakeholders in providing educational services to teachers, school administrators, supervisors, parents of deaf learners, and the deaf learners themselves, and
3. To determine the critical roles and responsibilities of these partners in terms of providing training to Special Needs Education (SNEd) and General Education (GenEd) teachers, school administrators, supervisors, parents of deaf learners in Kinder to

Grade 3 at Los Baños ES, Bacacay ES, and Tanauan II ES, and supplying suitable FSL learning materials for these teachers and learners by November 2023.

Resource speakers were invited to share their expertise related to interventions for the deaf and the use of Filipino Sign Language (FSL). Ms. **Nica Regine Lico-Jaucian**, Senior Education Program Specialist from the Bureau of Curriculum Development at DepEd Central Office, provided an overview of the latest Kindergarten and Grades 1-3 Mother Tongue MELCs for FSL. **Dr. Dorothy Tarol**, Supervising Education Program Specialist from the Student Inclusion Division at the Bureau of Learning Delivery, presented an update on the current status of FSL implementation. The final speaker, **Dr. Salvacion Olinares**, Supervising Education Program Specialist from the Student Inclusion Division at the Bureau of Learning Delivery, introduced the establishment of the 2023 Task Force on Filipino Sign Language and Transitional Guidelines on the Use of Filipino Sign Language in Basic Education.

Following these presentations, participants were asked for their top five concerns regarding the implementation of the MELCs and wrote them on metacards. Subsequently, they collectively identified the priority issues that needed attention as a group. Once the issues were identified, the group developed an implementation plan for the Kindergarten to Grade 1-3 Mother Tongue MELCs for FSL.

The group's implementation plan covered seven key areas: Advocacy, Training, Learning Delivery, Learning Resources, MELCs Curriculum Orientation, Manpower/Policy Formulation, and Monitoring and Evaluation. This plan was introduced during the Plenary Session, during which participants and representatives from USAID and Gabay provided input to address concerns related to specific tasks and financial allocations.

The Workshop Outputs on the Implementation Plans (Workshops 1 – 3) are found in the Annex.

Workshop 4: Documentation of Gabay's Good Practices

In pursuit of achieving excellence in the delivery of services in strengthening inclusive education, the USAID-RBI Gabay project recognizes the importance of building the capacities of its partners in the field.

This entails capturing, sharing, and using the learning experiences of project stakeholders in Batangas, Sorsogon, and Southern Leyte as the project implementation comes to an end.

Some initiatives of partners in the form of stories, processes, methodologies, or activities emerged as Good Practices which means that these practices have provided breakthrough results, have shown effectiveness in addressing specific issues, or have greatly contributed to the project's overall goal.

The documentation of these Good Practices is the project's strategy in providing learning opportunities for its staff as well as its stakeholders to reflect on what works and what unique approaches to adopt to constantly improve future service delivery and ensure organizational excellence. It provides practical models in policy making or program implementation to continuously uphold the vision, mission, and goals of Resources for the Blind Inc.

The following are the objectives of the **Workshop on Documentation of Gabay Good Practice**:

1. Explain the significance and guidelines of documenting and sharing Good Practices,
2. Provide support on the production of Good Practice Documentation based on Gabay's Advocacy and Messaging #IAmAble,
3. Write and produce six (6) Good Practice Documentation in the three (3) Gabay existing sites (2 per site) highlighting the following:
 - Gabay IECRC: Access to Learning Resources (Batangas City)
 - Gabay Act of 2021: LGU Support to CWDs for Sustainability (Batangas Province)
 - Gabay Teachers Training/Capacity Building: Improved Teaching Strategies (Sorsogon City)
 - Gabay Screening & Hearing Testing: Partnership with Local Health Units (Sorsogon Province)
 - Gabay Advocacy: Community Involvement of Persons with Disabilities/Disabled People Organizations (Maasin City)
 - Gabay Increase in Enrolment: Referral to DepEd and Parent's Advocacy (Southern Leyte)

WORKSHOP 4 participants worked on the “Documentation of Gabay’s Good Practices. Attended by a total of 15 participants from the six (6) existing sites and one (1) from Resources for the Blind, Inc., the workshop was facilitated by Gabay Communications Officer, Ms. Shev Payo with its Resource Speaker, International Multiplatform Journalist, Mr. **Stanley Gajete**. Mr. Gajete holds the role as the head of Communications and Reporting for the Enhancing Resilient Communities (ERC) Flagship Initiatives in the Philippines with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA).

Day 1

The workshop started with the introduction of participants followed by the setting of objectives and outputs. Anchored in Gabay’s advocacy, #IAmAble, the first topic entitled “Best Practice to Document Good Practices” was discussed virtually through a pre-recorded video of Mr. Gajete. This gave the participants an idea on what is considered a good practice, its characteristics, parts, processes, and pointers on how to write a good practice documentation.

The participants were given the Gabay Good Practice Documentation Guideline that includes the template for them to fill up in Gabay’s context. They were tasked to prepare for a maximum 10-slide presentation as their Output 1.

In the afternoon, the second topic was about the “Techniques and Tools on Documentation” which the participants found challenging but interesting. This includes tips on photography, mobile storytelling, textual narratives, audio recordings, photo essays, and social media cards/infographics.

Group 2 and Group 6 opted to do the outputs in the context of their division. All outputs and references are in the link below:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1uMBjfC4Jg-7mozV91cXkQZGV_gJQcJNR?usp=sharing

Day 2

The second day started with the continuation of the workshops and the presentation of Outputs 1 and 2. With the presence of the resource speaker, Mr. Gajete asked feedback about their experience in making their outputs during the two workshops.

“This workshop is very beneficial. The outputs were quite difficult, but I learned a lot. I will be able to use this not just for Gabay but for my other activities especially in monitoring on the ground.” -Dr. Rosalina Panganiban, Batangas City SPED Supervisor

“This activity has helped me maximize the use of my cellphone in my reports when documenting in the field. Or maybe I can even be a vlogger. ☺” – Supt. Genis Murallos, Maasin City Schools Division Superintendent



Through this feedbacking and sharing of experiences, the restriction on capturing photos relative to data privacy and child safeguarding was also discussed and brought up. Mr. Gajete emphasized the importance of consent/waiver and provided tips on safe shots especially when dealing with minors (blurring, backshots, etc.). He also provided the participants with suggestions to improve the outputs presented.

Attendees were able to exchange ideas, ask questions, discuss challenges, and receive feedback in the workshop sessions they were assigned.

To continue the momentum of the workshop and ensure attendees can apply what they learned and implement their proposed implementation plan, the Gabay team through the leadership of Dr. Yolanda Quijano, Chief of Party will follow the following steps:

1. REVIEW – the modular ILRC plans prepared in accordance with the needs assessment and propose alternative actions, if needed.

2. INTEGRATE – create connections of training activities and provision of learning resources prepared by Service Providers into the Modular ILRC Plans.
3. DRAFT the ILRC Implementation Plans considering the Service Providers/Resource Speakers, time frame & budgetary allocation.
4. COMMUNICATE the Draft ILRC Implementation Plans to the key project implementors: the DepEd Divisions and schools with their LGU partners for feedbacking.
5. FINALIZE the ILRC implementation plans and carry on the implementation process as targeted.



C.2. Rollout Training of Inclusive Learning Resource Center (ILRC) Leaders

1. *Los Baños Central Elementary School, Los Baños, Laguna, 2023 November 6 – 8*
2. *Bacacay East Central School, Bacacay, Albay, 2023, November 20 to 21*
3. *Tanauan Gym. Tanauan, Leyte, 2024, January 16-18*

This 3-day training is a rollout training of the *Harmonized Inclusive Education Community Resource Center (IECRC) Operations Manual*. For Year 5, the scope of the Gabay project does not just revolve around meeting the existing intermediate result indicators; the Year 5 strategy emphasizes the establishment of the Modular Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRCs).

In accordance with the implementation plans generated during the Planning Workshops conducted, the finalized ILRC Operations Manual needs to be rolled out. The rationale of this roll-out training program for ILRC Leaders was grounded on the perspective that the LGU, members of the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) sector, and DepEd Officials, particularly the Local School Board (LSB), will lead the establishment of ILRCs.

As such, they should have a clear understanding about the barriers that make it difficult for the disabled to participate in their communities and how disability exclusion prevents them from reaching their full potential. ILRC leaders should also be diligent and tenacious advocates for the rights and welfare of CWDs. Hence, this rollout training was designed by Gabay to equip ILRC leaders with basic information on the rights and needs of PWDs and to guide them on how they should approach setting up the ILRCs in their communities. The training was also meant to challenge ILRC leader participants to start and lead advocacies that will reframe common stereotypes seemingly believed by educators and community members. It underscored how they can pursue practical and sustainable policies, which will address not just the physical and academic needs of CWDs, but will also promote values and standards that their community should uphold to be able to create an inclusive living environment for PWDs.

The specific objectives of the training are the following:

- To establish an inclusive environment by having an increased awareness about persons with disabilities, children’s rights, local government policies and services;
- To introduce and implement guidelines that will facilitate the establishment and operation of the Inclusive Learning Resource Centers intended to support learners with disabilities (LWDs) in inclusive educational settings; and
- To generate Sustainability Plans for the Municipality of the LWDs in Los Baños.

To achieve these objectives, below is the 3-day training design:

<i>Day 1 – Disability Sensitivity Awareness Orientation (DSAO)</i>
➤ Understanding Persons with Disabilities (Blind and Low Vision, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Autism Self-Advocates)
➤ Rights of Children and Inclusive Education
➤ Legal Basis and Local Government Policies on PWDs including RA11650
<i>Day 2 – ILRC Roll Out</i>
➤ <i>Talakayan</i> : Inclusive Learning Resource Center (ILRC) Operations Manual with the Glimpse of Valenzuela and Batino ILRCs

➤ Review of Workshop Output: Role Definition
➤ Presentation of the Implementation Plan for the Establishment of the Modular Inclusive Learning Resource Center (ILRC) for Los Baños Central School
➤ Disaster Management for Children with Disabilities
➤ Workshop on Sustainability Planning in accordance with RA11650
<i>Day 3 – Sustainability Planning Presentation</i>
➤ Presentation and Feedback of Sustainability Plan

The training activities provided lectures on disability sensitivity awareness, panel discussions, workshops, and sustainability planning. The resource speakers included PWDs, LGU Officials and NGOs or Civil Society Groups for Disability Sector. The training was also designed to provide meaningful exposure for participants to experience an activity that promotes inclusion and as such takes into consideration the diverse needs of participants and speakers with disabilities. For instance, in all sessions, sign language and blind guides were present and the blind resource persons successfully demonstrated how they were able to participate and contribute to the activities using technological innovations and devices.

Day 1

The program was hosted by the Gabay Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, Ms. Giselle Bombay, RBI Project Manager and Blind Advocate, Ms. Joyce Lopez, and Ms. Mojica, Gabay DCOP. The opening program began with a doxology and the Philippine National Anthem. In Bacacay, the Gabay team expression of condolences to the community for the demise of Mayor Armando B. Romano. Participants were acknowledged.

Mr. Gary Jamora, Chairman of the Board of RBI, welcomed the participants and gave the opening message, which highlighted the importance of synergy, sensitivity, and sustainability. In Bacacay, through Ms. Cheryll Villalon, a representative of the Office of the Mayor, the newly installed Mayor Edsel Belleza expressed his gratitude and support to the USAID funded Gabay project and to the disabled members of the Municipality. To represent the LGU champions for the ILRC of Bacacay, Honorable Emmanuel Alparce, Counselor of Bacacay expressed his gratitude and commitment to the project. He also emphasized the renewed commitment the Bacacay LGU to support the needs PWDs, especially disabled children who will need education in cooperation with DepEd. This was followed by a musical special number by the project beneficiaries and educators from existing project areas in Batangas, Sorsogon, and Southern Leyte.

Dr. Yolanda Quijano, Chief of Party of Gabay, then led the setting of objectives session. A video on the Gabay Accomplishments was shown. She also provided a brief background and orientation about the Gabay Year 5 and the implementation plans for Bacacay. Dr. Quijano also emphasized the importance of the involvement of the Bacacay ILRC Leaders and various stakeholders in the establishment of ILRC, as provided by the Republic Act 11650.

In connection with Objective 1 of the training program, the next set of resource persons, who are self-advocates, tackled the foundation topic, *“Understanding Persons with Disabilities”* that provided the participants contextual and valuable information about various disabilities. The goal of these talks was to enhance the awareness of the participants about PWD, their rights as well as to provide basic information about relevant local government policies and services.

The self-advocate speakers for the blind were Ms. Joyce Lopez (Los Baños) and Mr. Jonathan Alicando (Bacacay); for the deaf is Mr. Justin Barcenas; and for the autism is Mr. Ian Ferdinand Lopez (Los Baños); for low vision are Mr. Michael John Orais and Mr. John Vincent Cabizares (Tanauan). All the resource persons have completed their college education and are now professionals. They are also active in various advocacies in their own disability groups. They also shared their personal experiences and discussed about the challenges that a disabled child/person experience in their family, community, and schools.

The unique stories about their journey served as real-life examples were meant to challenge ILRC leader participants to head start advocacies to reframe common stereotypes seemingly believed by educators and community members. In their stories and discussions, they included the following important points in understanding their disability:

- Misconceptions
- Basic courtesy rules
- The role of the family and community in helping CWDs reach their full potential.

Some highlights of this session were:

- For some participants, it was the first time for them to see how a blind person can read, as Ms. Lopez read slides using her braille/assistive device.

- An interpreter was present to verbally echo the discussion of Mr. Barcenas. Participants said that it was their first time to attend a training with a deaf speaker with a deaf interpreter, and thus providing them with firsthand exposure on how to provide an inclusive educational environment.
- Basic signs were introduced to participants and they had fun. As a result, some expressed their desire to join further trainings on Filipino Sign Language (FSL) to have higher sign language skills.
- Mr. Lopez added an important point that it is the role of the family, school, and community to plant the seeds of ambition on children so that, with their help, PWDs can build and realize their aspirations.
- Resource Speakers also narrated their unique personal experiences of their life's challenges as disabled and the impact of the attitude of their family, school, and community on their eventual inclusion. They firmly asserted that given the opportunity, PWDs will not just thrive but can actually contribute and be a vital member of society.

In connection with understanding persons with disabilities, the following topics were also explained:

1) "Rights of Children and Inclusive Education" which highlighted the inevitable and crucial junction of the implementation of inclusive education with the rights of CWDs. They further emphasized that besides the right of children to be protected from harm, listened to by their parents and government and government, children have the basic right to good education. These very important points called the attention of participants that the basic context of putting up an ILRC is the comprehensive and sustained implementation of inclusive education by stakeholders such as DepEd and the LGU. In knowing and understanding the rights of children, participants were made aware that the establishment of the ILRC is a must and not a choice and is in fact now a law.

2) "The Legal Basis and Local Government Policies on Persons with Disabilities" was outlined by Mr. Alicando and Mr. Ronnel del Rio, a disability champion, blind advocate, and the Batangas LGU Focal Person. He briefly ran through the UN Convention Rights of Persons with disability, RA 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013), RA 7277 (Magna Carta for Disabled Persons), and RA 11650 (Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners

with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education Act). With these, the LGU and DepEd are tasked to ensure that these are implemented and sustained.

Before the day ended, participants wrote on metacards their learnings and posted it on the wall of the “Gallery of Learnings”. They posted their pending questions on the “Questions” wall. These questions were intended to be addressed during the succeeding sessions.

Day 2

The first activity of the day was a short session that was a recap of the sessions of Day 1 and questions of the participants, particularly those posted on the “question” wall, were entertained, and responded to.

With the goal of introducing and implementing guidelines that will facilitate the establishment and operation of the Los Baños ILRC, the second day began with the “*Talakayan: ILRC Operations Manual with a Glimpse of Valenzuela and Batino ILRCs.*” Ms. Amy Mojica, the Deputy Chief of Party, led the *talakayan*.

The *Talakayan* focused on the Gabay ILRC Operations Manual. During this session, the participants were introduced to the basic parts of the manual - background, purpose, provisions, and scope that conformed with the tenets of RA 11650.

Next, a video documentation was presented featuring the ILRC leaders of existing Gabay project sites when they visited the ILRCs of Valenzuela and Batino. The video highlighted, what can be, the ILRC best practices as well as the necessary ILRC equipment. It also showed how the centers were designed and managed. The purpose of the showing this video is to encourage the ILRC leaders of Los Baños to visit these centers and benchmark. They may find this useful in planning for the establishment of the ILRC, which may possibly be within the Child Care Center facility, one of the flagship projects of the Los Baños Municipal Mayor, Hon. Anthony Genuino.

Lastly the following sections were briefly discussed:

- Preconditions
- Facilities, assistive technology, devices, equipment, learning materials

- Support and services
- Communication and advocacy
- Management and staff's roles and responsibilities
- Partnership with LGUs, private schools and practitioners
- Programs with budgetary allocation
- Monitoring & evaluation

After *Talakayan*, the Implementation Plan for Los Baños was presented by Dr. Eva Marie Cambe, the Los Baños Public School District Supervisor and by Dr. Rodel Guevarra, the School Principal of Los Baños Central Elementary School. In Bacacay, the presentation was prepared and presented respectively by Dr. Arlene N. Cabais (PSDS, Bacacay) and Ms. Judith A. Bellen (School Principal). In Tanauan, Dr. Pamela Almanza (PSDS, Tanauan) and Mr. Jason Gaduena (School Principal) presented their implementation plan.

The “Implementation Plan for the Establishment of Modular Inclusive Learning Resource Centers” for the period July 2023 to December 2024 formulated by ILRC leaders last 2023 September 21 to 22 held in Sequoia Hotel in Parañaque City. The review covered the specific activities, timeline, budget allocation and source, role definitions for the modular ILRC which will be established in Bacacay East Central School. Output indicators were also identified and described.

The “*Disaster Management for Children with Disabilities*” sessions were conducted by Ms. Cynthia Quintans, the Los Baños Local Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Management Officer, by Mr. Bryan Berdin, LDRRMO of Bacacay and by Mr. Ricardo Mazo, MDRRMO of Tanauan . They discussed the components of an inclusive disaster management plan that includes, but not limited to, these: accessible early warning systems, risk reduction and management strategies for persons with disabilities. They also shared the disaster management strategies being implemented, particularly for PWDs and/or CWDs in their respective municipalities and their planned improvements in order to enhance their capabilities in creating and implementing inclusive disaster management strategies that is in accordance with existing local policies and national laws, particularly RA 11650. They added that their office is doing continuous efforts (“a work in progress”) to improve their plans and strategies to further ensure the safety of their constituency. Both assured that they will keep

in mind and echo to their offices the important things they learned from the training about the features and considerations they urgently need to include in their DRRM plans in order to factor in and meet the special safety measure needs and requirements of their constituents who have disabilities.

Dr. Quijano conducted a workshop on “Revision of Role Definitions and Sustainability Planning” for the leaders of the three new sites. The general approach of RA 11650 and its major tenet that institutionalizes the establishment of the ILRC indicate long term impacts in terms of: local policies, budgetary allocations, infrastructure, personnel requirements, and others. Thus, to ensure the successful continuity of the ILRCs after the Gabay technical intervention and USAID financial assistance, there is a need to develop a Sustainability Plan. ILRC leaders of these sites have already prepared the ILRC Implementation Plan and further is the development of the Sustainability Plan. The plan will serve as a blueprint for future implementers and ILRC leaders and ensure that the ILRC provisions in RA 11650 are adhered to.

Participants were grouped into three: (1) LGU; (2) DepEd; and (3) CSOs/DPOs and Parents. Dr. Quijano explained that the development of the sustainability plan was anchored on Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of United Nations (2015), which specifically aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.” The sustainability plan should also reflect Gabay’s commitment:



Participants were provided with a template for the plan and followed this process in developing the sustainability plan:

Mechanics of the Sustainability Planning

1) There will be three (3) groups representing the following offices:

Group A: LGU offices Group B: DepEd Offices

Group C: Parents Group D: NGO & CSO

Elect your Group Chairperson and Rapporteur.

2) Review your Role Definitions (Workshop output in the Nov. 21 & 22). You may update the roles but if your agency does not have yet the specific roles, please write your roles in the implementation of the ILRC.

3) Then discuss and write your Sustainability Plan following the format shown.

4) Templates (Roles & Sustainability Plan) will be provided to you by the Gabay staff. As soon as you complete the Outputs, please give these to the Gabay staff for encoding, ready for the presentation tomorrow morning.

These outputs were then presented to the general group and comments from the Gabay Team and participants were solicited. The sustainability and next steps plans were signed by the members of the group and were submitted to the Gabay team. (See Annex).

First activity on the third day was the presentation of Sustainability Plans. Each group presented starting with the CSO/DPO/Parent group, followed by the DepEd group and the LGU group. After each presentation, the other groups were asked to comment or ask questions regarding the presentation.

After all presentations was the closing program. Selected participants spoke about their impressions of the training. Mr. Edgar Sarabia, Los Baños PDAO Focal Person, shared his appreciation knowing that more Los Baños LWDs will benefit from the plans and programs from this collaboration of the LGU offices, DepEd, and other civil society groups. He reported that there are 5,573 PWDs in Los Baños as of Nov. 3, 2023. With the Gabay project intervention specifically the ILRC, a lot of learners with disabilities will be catered not because they are privileged but because it is their rights.

“Napakalaking bagay sa akin ng Training na ito dahil natalakay dito kung paano natin tulungan o pakisamahan ang mga persons with disabilities. Ako po ay natutuwa na marami pong kagaya ko ang makikinabang sa mga plano at programa sa pakikipagtulungan ng bawat isa.” - Mr. Edgar Sarabia, Los Baños PDAO Focal Person

Ms. Maria Elisa Roman, Rotary Club of Los Baños Treasurer voiced:

“ I am happy that I attended here. I am looking for beneficiaries in partnership with other organizations in terms of provision of wheelchairs and assistive devices. Resources are there. So, it is just a matter of tapping and connecting each other. At least now, there are more opportunities opened because of this program.”– Ms. Maria Elisa Roman, Rotary Club of Los Baños Treasurer

Training Participants

Los Baños

In attendance were 23 participants representing various offices from the Local Government Unit (LGU), officials from DepEd and Los Baños Central Elementary School (LBCES), and representatives from Civil Society Organization (CSO), Disabled People Organization (DPO) and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA).

Bacacay

In summary, there was a total of 34 training participants. The following offices of the Bacacay LGU were represented: Municipal Disaster and Risk Reduction Management Office (MDRRMO), Municipal Health Office (MHO), Office of the Mayor, Sanguniang Bayan, Sangguniang Barangay, Rural Health Unit (RHU), Municipal Social Welfare Development Office (MSWD), Person with Disability Affairs Office (PDAO). From DepEd, participants were teachers (Gen Ed and SPED), principals, school heads, and Supervisors (PSDS).

Tanauan

The total number of ILRC leaders who participated was 23. The following offices of the Tanauan LGU were represented: Municipal Disaster and Risk Reduction Management Office (MDRRMO), Municipal Health Office (MHO), Office of the Mayor, Sangguniang Bayan, Sangguniang Barangay, Rural Health Unit (RHU), Municipal Social Welfare Development Office (MSWD), and the Person with Disability Affairs Office (PDAO). From DepEd, participants were teachers (Gen Ed and SPED), principals, school heads, and Supervisors (PSDS).

Overall, training participants found the conduct of the training very satisfactory. For several

participants, it was their first time to attend this type of training and many of the topics were new to them. As such, they learned from the lectures and activities, and by how the training was conducted (i.e. the presence of sign language interpreters, involving self-advocates as resource persons, and how the resource persons and participants used assistive devices).

The most common recommendations are to improve the venue and to invite more trainees who may be considered ILRC leaders.

C.3. Local Ordinance for Programs and Services to Children with Disabilities and DepEd Memorandums on Utilization of Materials provided

As part of Gabay's efforts in collaboration with the LGU and DepEd in additional sites, there have been updates in the Municipality of Tanauan, one of the new Gabay sites.

For LGU Tanauan, a local ordinance, facilitated and authored by Hon. Paul Cinco, Chair of the Committee on Education, who participated in the Symposium in September 2023, was recently approved.

The ordinance, entitled "Institutionalizing Inclusive Education and Establishing an Inclusive Learning Resource Center for Learners with Disabilities in the Municipality of Tanauan, Leyte, and Providing Funds Therefor," passed on its 3rd and final reading on June 2024.

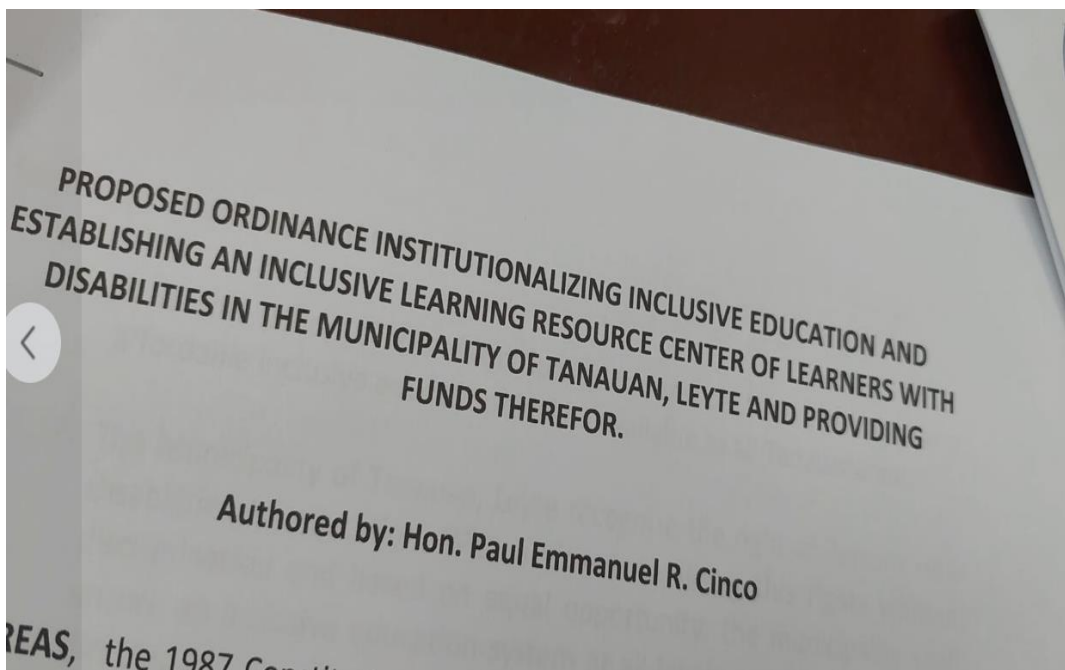
This ordinance ensures that the LGU of Tanauan, Leyte, will implement the mandate of Republic Act 11650, "Instituting a Policy of Inclusion and Services for Learners with Disabilities in Support of Inclusive Education Act."

Additionally, the Inclusive Learning Resource Center (ILRC), launched last January at Tanauan II Elementary School, the first ILRC in the Division of Leyte will see sustained support and improvements. The municipality will provide free therapy sessions for learners with disabilities, including the hiring of two occupational therapists and one speech therapist. Furthermore, the LGU will directly pay for services from accredited diagnostic centers to assess indigent children with disabilities.

Hon. Paul Cinco mentioned that this initiative was inspired by Batangas Province's local ordinance on the institutionalization of Gabay practices to enhance services for children who are blind, deaf and those with other disabilities.

The DepEd Division of Leyte has also released a memorandum on adopting learning resource materials for schools, teachers, parents, and children with disabilities in schools of Tanauan Districts. This ensures access to materials to improve services for learners with disabilities.

Below are the images of the ordinance and the memorandum.



Department of Education
REGION VIII
SCHOOLS DIVISION OF LEYTE

May 8, 2024

DIVISION MEMORANDUM

No. 323 s. 2024

ADOPTION AND UTILIZATION OF THE GABAY MODULES AND LEARNING MATERIALS

To: Assistant Schools Division Superintendent
Chief Education Supervisors
Education Program Supervisor
Public Elementary and Secondary School Heads
All Others Concerns

1. DepEd Order No. 72. Series of 2009, which aims to increase participation rate through Inclusive Education, serves as the backbone of the Inclusive Education Program of Region VIII. In support of the EncluEd Program of the Regional Office, the Division of Leyte has partnered with the non- government

Table 26: Summary of Intermediate Results (IR) Activities

IR1	IR2	IR3
<i>Primary Eye and Ear Care (PEEC) Training for Community Health Workers (CHW)</i>	<i>Training of Deaf Trainers for Mentoring Teachers and Parents</i>	<i>Planning Workshops</i>
<i>Screening of Children with Eye and Ear Problems in Gabay Additional Sites</i>	<i>Training of Teachers, School Heads, Supervisors, Parents and Guardians in Educating and Supporting Learners with Disabilities in an Inclusive Setting (Los Baños, Bacacay & Tanauan)</i>	<i>Rollout Training of ILRC Leaders (Los Baños, Bacacay & Tanauan)</i>
<i>Screening of Children with Disabilities in the Municipality of Tanauan Districts I to III</i>	<i>ILRC Inauguration: Launch Ceremony + Training on Utilization of Equipment (Tanauan, Los Baños and Bacacay)</i>	<i>Local Ordinance for Programs and Services to Children with Disabilities and DepEd Memorandums on Utilization of Materials provided</i>
<i>Children with Hearing and Vision Problems Consultations for Diagnosis and Interventions (A Special Report)</i>	<i>Turnover of Additional Equipment and Learning Materials to ILRCs (Los Baños, Bacacay, Tanauan)</i>	
<i>Update on Persons Assessed by the Audiological and Hearing Test Centers of Sorsogon City East District Health Center, Batangas Provincial Health Office, and the Maasin Health Center</i>	<i>Updates on Revision of the FSL Dictionary to Compilation of FSL Vocabulary Words (Batangas and Laguna; Sorsogon and Albay; Southern Leyte, and Leyte), Kinder to Grade</i>	
	<i>Production and Distribution of Additional Learning Materials to Project Partners</i>	
<i>Children Referred for Enrollment</i>	<i>Research Status Report: (Bicol University)</i>	
<i>Enrolled Referred Children (SY 2023-2024)</i>	<i>Report on Meeting cum Workshop on Dyslexia</i>	

D. OTHERS

- USAID Visits
- US DepEd-Gabay Study Visit on Disability Inclusive Education (Miami, Florida, USA)
- Provision of Technical Assistance on Good Practice Documentation in Batangas, Sorsogon and Southern Leyte
- Documentation and Compilation of Good Practices of Gabay Project Partners
- Year 4 and Year 5 Debriefing and Symposium (Annex C)

D.1 USAID Visits

A. USAID Tanzania’s Visit to Gabay Inclusive Education Community Resource Center and Hearing/Audiological Test Center

As the project embarks on its 18-month extension, Gabay remains steadfast in its mission of promoting equitable access to quality education for children who are blind, deaf, and deafblind. Together with USAID and its continuous advocacy and partnership, Gabay remains purposeful in its dedication and open to other partners specifically, the USAID Tanzania, Office of Education on its visit to create a brighter and more inclusive future for the children it serves.

USAID Tanzania, Project Management Specialist/Acting Deputy Director of Office of Education, Ms. Laura Kikuli visited the Gabay’s Inclusive Education Community Resource Center (IECRC) at Sorsogon City East Central School and the Hearing/Audiological Test Center (H/ATC) at Sorsogon City East District Health Office on August 15, 2023.

The objectives of the visit were to:

1. Heighten the visibility of the IECRC as Gabay’s preconceived model of the ILRC (in accordance with RA11650) and H/ATC among stakeholders to advocate the importance of access to learning resource materials and screening, identification, and referral for children with sensorial disabilities,
2. Show Gabay project’s implementation good practices in terms of medical and educational interventions in partnership with the Department of Education and Local Government Units, and
3. Discuss opportunity on reading interventions sustainability with USAID Tanzania and USAID Philippines.

Preliminary Activities

In preparation for the upcoming visit, Gabay Chief of Party along with Sorsogon Field Coordinator and Communications Officer went in advance on August 14, 2023 for prior coordination and set up. This was to make sure that everything was well prepared and coordinated with partners and officials from DepEd Division of Sorsogon City and the City Government of Sorsogon.

August 14, 2023 (Monday)

A. Sorsogon East Central School (SECS)



Dr. Quijano led the meeting and program orientation with SECS Principal, Mr. Ernesto Deyto together with Public School District Supervisor, Dr. Teresa Hapita and Sorsogon City Division SPED Supervisor, Dr. Beverly Laban. Dr. Laban was the supervisor when the IECRC in Sorsogon City was launched back in 2020 before the pandemic. She is now happily back after being assigned to other division function and gladly expressed her gratefulness to see visible results and impact of Gabay in Sorsogon after 3 years.

After the meeting, the resource center was cleaned, decorated, and set up by custodian-in-charge, teacher for the blind, Ms. Helen Jerus together with SECS SPED Coordinator, Ms. Kiara Adison, and other SPED teachers.



Learning and Advocacy Materials, Braille Equipment and Assistive Devices were labeled and displayed in preparation for the tour and visit the next day.



In time with the first day of Brigada Eskwela, parents of children with disabilities volunteered to help in setting up, organizing, and cleaning the resource center.

B. Sorsogon City East District Health Office



The team headed to the Hearing/Audiological Test Center (H/ATC) as the next itinerary in preparation for the visit. Dr. Quijano met one of the District Health Officers, Dr. Nikki Jamisola and gave a program orientation to the two (2) Community Health Workers trained as the H/ATC Para-Audiometrists, Ms. Ada Dimaano and Ms. Rose Barro.



Gabay also took this opportunity to award the certificate of participation to Ms. Dimaano and Ms. Barro as they have completed the recent Online Primary Eye and Ear Care Training for CHWs conducted via Zoom last August 10-11, 2023.

Sorsogon Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office (SPDRRMO)



Lastly, the team went to SPDRRMO in response to their invitation for an interview through the former Sorsogon City Mayor, now DRRM Officer, Ms. Jocelyn Gallanosa in their local radio station, Disaster Preparedness & Response (DPR) Radio. Adjacent to the office, PDAO Coordinator and Gabay Focal Person, Mr. Salvador Carranza also met with Dr. Quijano.

August 15, 2023

Interview with SPDRRMO



The following day, the Gabay Team headed to the live radio guesting via DWDR 105.5 FM airing in Sorsogon, Masbate and Catanduanes. The 7am program was hosted by Mr. Manuel Matus aka “Mr. Redford” featuring the Gabay project. It aims to inform

and inspire listeners by showcasing people or organizations that make a meaningful difference in the lives of persons with special care. SPDRRMO is an active partner and one of the participants during the Gabay Disability Sensitivity Awareness Orientation for Local Government Officials as part of raising awareness, increasing attention and advocacy of persons with disabilities to the community.

Visit to Gabay Inclusive Learning Resource Center (Former IECRC) @ Sorsogon East Central School (SECS)



In the afternoon, USAID Tanzania, Project Management Specialist/Acting Deputy Director of Office of Education, Ms. Laura Kikuli arrived at SECS together with Agreement Officer Representative, Mr. Henry Grageda, USAID.



Welcomed warmly by the SECS Rondalla, Ms. Kikuli headed to the Principal’s Office for a short meeting and interaction to talk about the project, its results including challenges and good practices that could be learned in another country’s perspective. Sorsogon City East PSDS, Dr. Hapita gladly shared the impact of the project to schools and to the Division of Sorsogon City specifically the increase in enrollment:

Table. 26: Baseline Data on Learners with Disabilities in Sorsogon City Division

School Year	Sorsogon East CS	Bacon East CS	Sorsogon NHS	Total
2020-2021	92	36	24	152
2021-2022	89	44	38	171
2022-2023	116	48	40	204



Gabay Deaf Mentor, Mr. Omar Emata also joined the meeting and shared insights on disability inclusive interventions for deaf learners in Sorsogon.

This was followed by the tour in the IECRC inaugurated to house the Braille equipment, Brailers, Assistive Devices, Learning Resource Materials produced by RBI and those developed by teachers as outputs during Gabay Trainings. The center is designed to provide more accessible resources for Sorsogonon teachers, parents, and children in accordance with RA11650.



“The Training and Workshops conducted by Gabay enhanced the ability and capability of SPED Teachers, Receiving Teachers, School Heads and Parents to help the children with sensorial disabilities and even increased advocacy and collaboration with other agencies throughout the Divisions of Sorsogon Province and Sorsogon City. For teachers, they have set up several trainings and seminars to practice new methods and modules that can help enhance and improve the reading abilities of the learners, for which they have created different materials such as the Filipino Sign Language Dictionary, Prototype Lesson Plans and Activity Sheets. Some of the reading materials, brailled and printed such as test papers created by the teachers can be reproduced in the IECRC to be accessible for a specific blind child. Other assistive devices help learners with low vision in reading and enrich their skills and abilities on other different tasks” – Sorsogon East Central School



Teacher for the blind, Ms. Helen Jerus and Teacher for the deaf, Ms. April Camposano (who is Hard-of-Hearing) oriented Ms. Kikuli of the resource materials available and accessible in the IECRC.



Ms. Kikuli also witnessed Braille production using the donated equipment and interacted with blind and deaf students together with their teachers and parents.



SPED Teachers Ms. Yvette Estremera from Bacon East Central School and Ms. Josanne Godisan from Bulan South Central School were in the IECRC to utilize the Braille embosser, printer, and assistive devices.

The IECRC caters not only to learners and teachers from SECS but also those from other schools under the Sorsogon City and Sorsogon Province Divisions to produce learning materials and test papers in Braille format.

Visit to Gabay Hearing/Audiological Test Center @ Sorsogon City East District Health Office

Likewise, the H/ATC visit provided information to Ms. Kikuli on the hearing test process using the donated audiometer, hearing aids and a set of hearing equipment used in identifying hearing loss among children.

Ms. Kikuli interacted with the Gabay trained para-audiometrists and partner health officials on how the hearing test is also instrumental to refer children for enrolment.



Sorsogon City Health Officer, Dr. Rolanda Dealca warmly welcomed Ms. Kikuli to the center and observed the hearing test to a child from Sorsogon East Central School. From January to July 2023, more than 150 children were already screened from different municipalities of Sorsogon. Those unschooled children were then referred to the nearest school with SPED program which contributed to the increase in enrolment of Sorsogon children with disabilities.



Ms. Dimaano and Ms. Barro were capacitated by Gabay partner audiologist, Dr. Ronald Menor of Better Hearing Philippines Inc. in a series of trainings to determine degree of hearing loss: moderate, severe, or profound. In this way, children with hearing problems are identified for appropriate medical and educational interventions. The visit ended with a quick chat with the city health officers sharing experiences to learn from Tanzania and the Philippines.



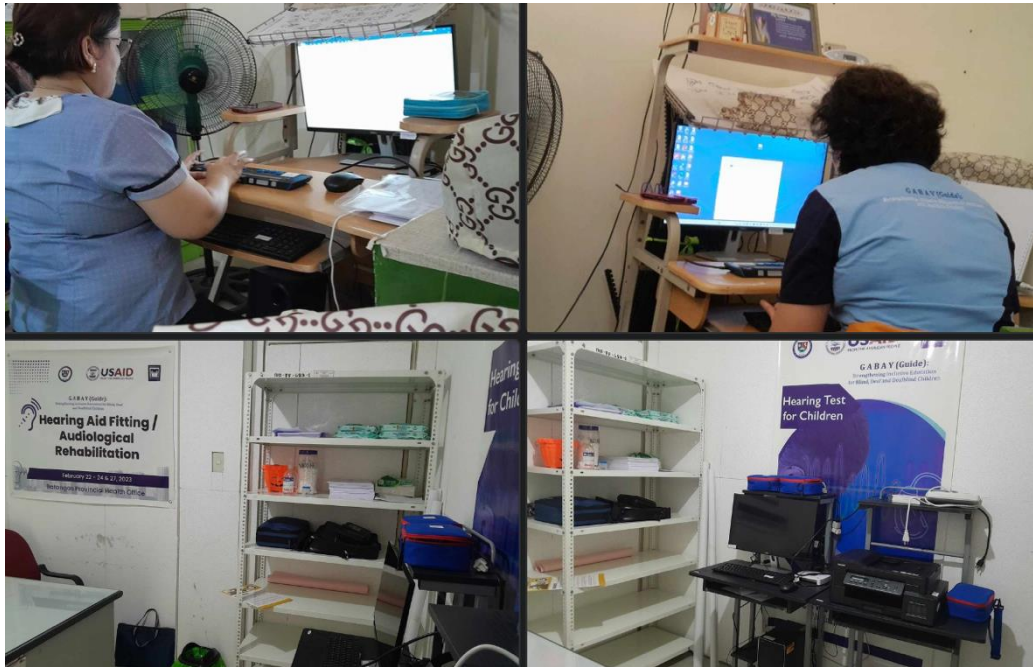
B. USAID Office of Education, Director Michelle Chen's Visit to Batangas IECRC and H/ATC
October 16, 2023
Batangas East Elementary School & Batangas Provincial Health Office

Objectives of the Visit

1. Heighten the visibility of the ILRC (in accordance with RA11650) and H/ATC among stakeholders to advocate the importance of access to learning resource materials and screening, identification, and referral for children with sensorial disabilities,
2. Brief and orient the new OEd Director, Ms. Michelle Chen on Gabay project's implementation in terms of medical and educational interventions in partnership with the Department of Education and Local Government Units, and
3. Discuss opportunities on sustainability on its 18-month extension and final year of implementation.

Preliminary Activities

In preparation for the upcoming visit, Gabay Field Coordinator for Batangas and Sorsogon went in advance on October 12-13, 2023 for prior coordination and set up. This was to make sure that everything was well prepared and coordinated with partners and officials from DepEd Division of Batangas City and the Provincial Government of Batangas.



Prior to Ms. Chen’s arrival, SPED teachers from Padre Imo Luna Elementary School (PILMES) went to the IECRC to utilize the Braille equipment and had their lessons printed in Braille format. IECRC Custodian and BCEES Teacher for the blind, Ms. Gaudelina “Laude” Eborra conducts tutorial from time to time to other SPED Teachers to maximize the resources in the IECRC. This Center not only caters to the learners in Batangas City but also gives access to those teachers from other schools in the municipalities of Batangas Province.



On October 16, 2023, USAID New Office of Education, Director Ms. Michelle Chen together with Agreement Officer Representative, Mr. Henry Grageda, visited two facilities.

Gabay Inclusive Education Community Resource Center @ Batangas City East Elementary School (BCEES)

At around 10:30 in the morning, Ms. Chen and Mr. Grageda arrived and were warmly welcomed by Division Supervisor-In-Charge of SPED, Dr. Rosalina Panganiban, BCEES Principal, Dr. Amparo Perez, Gabay Chief of Party, Dr. Yolanda Quijano, Deputy Chief of Party, Ms. Arminia Mojica together with the Deaf Mentors and deaf and low vision students. Folk dancing and playing the drum and lyre, students of BCEES greeted them with smiles while walking to the IECRC. BCEES elementary students presented a dance number to show their hospitality while they interacted with school staff and students with disabilities.



Dr. Panganiban gladly welcomed Ms. Chen in the IECRC and shared how USAID and the Gabay project have helped schools in Batangas City by providing accessible resources for teachers, parents, and learners with disabilities. She was shown the Braille equipment, Brailers, Assistive Devices and Learning Resource Materials produced by Gabay - RBI and those developed by teachers as outputs during Gabay Trainings.



Ms. Chen also witnessed Braille production through Teacher Laude. The story printed in Braille format was read by a Grade 2 blind student, Scarlett.



Scarlette started as Kindergarten with no knowledge of Braille when she enrolled in BCEES last 2021. She was included in the Gabay Braille Assessment last year and given the interventions for visually impaired learners. Now, she is able to read and has shown improvement in English and Filipino Braille reading. Ms. Chen was impressed that Scarlette can even understand the story when she tried asking some questions.

Another best practice shared by Dr. Panganiban was the involvement of parents in their SPED program. A blind mother with no education, Veronica Perez enrolled her low vision daughter, Angel in BCEES. Knowing the importance of parent support to CWDs, Teacher Laude had taught Mommy Veronica on how to read Braille for the first time. After a year, Mommy Veronica is now able to read and they are learning together with her daughter. During the visit, they tried reading Braille materials and large print textbooks using the assistive devices in the IECRC.





*“We have one hope. We have one dream. And with one voice, we sing.
Peace, prosperity and love for all mankind.”*

Singing wholeheartedly and signing happily, the blind and deaf children of BCEES rendered a special number entitled *“I am but a small voice”* to express their gratitude to the visitors. It was followed by a class observation of Teacher for the Deaf, Ms. Roseanne Macaraig to show interventions for the deaf learners. Deaf students actively participated in the class while using the Filipino Sign Language (FSL) for Stories presented in lessons.



Gabay Deaf Mentors for Batangas, Ron Daryl Quinio and Iñigo Asilo who were also the Deaf artists signing in the FSL Stories gladly assisted deaf students with additional disability in the class. Ron, a former BCEES alumnus is now a SPED Teacher and Iñigo is a businessman who owns two (2) 7/11 Convenience Stores in Batangas. Their continued presence gives motivation to learners and even parents that the deaf can succeed.

After their class, Mr. Grageda and Ms. Chen took the opportunity to talk with parents/guardians of the new deaf enrollees. Parents told their stories and voiced out their desires for their children to be able to learn and socialize just like any other children. Since enrolling in BCEES, one of the parents noticed that her child has been able to make friends now that her deaf daughter is being exposed to other deaf and typical children.

Hearing about their stories on a parent's point of view, Ms. Chen expressed USAID support through the Gabay project. *"We want to make sure that it is responsive to the needs of the students and their families. Your voice is very important to us. So, thank you so much for being here today despite the distance of your houses.*

I hope that one day, there will be more programs nearer your places." said Ms. Chen. Putting an emphasis on the importance of family support, she mentioned that the experiences of the parents are essential improvements of USAID future education programs.



Gabay Project Orientation and Lunch Meeting @ DepEd Batangas City Schools Division Office

Located beside BCEES, DepEd Batangas City Schools Division Office hosted a lunch meeting with guests, partners, and Gabay staff. Ms. Chen and Mr. Grageda, together with the Gabay staff met with DepEd Batangas City Schools Division Superintendent, Dr. Hermogenes Panganiban and asked about the project implementation in their division.



“There are 11 schools including Junior High School offering special education program. Being recognized as a SPED Center nationwide, Batangas City Division promotes Inclusive Education through the Mentoring of Teachers and Training of Receiving Teachers in inclusive setting. Inclusion is being highly encouraged.” – DepEd Division of Batangas City.

The following points were also discussed:

- Assessment of Children with Disabilities (ECCD Checklist, MFAT, Diagnosis and Referrals)
- Linkage with universities and organizations for services of specialists
- Teacher – Learner ratio (students with different disabilities)
- Deaf Mentorship for Teachers and Parents
- RA11650 Provision on ILRCs (Model of Modular ILRCs in Gabay Year 5 Implementation)
- Batangas Provincial Ordinance: “Gabay Act of 2021”
- Funds allocated by the Department of Education Central Office
- Dyslexia as a disability

Gabay also presented the project accomplishments over the past 4 years and Dr. Quijano gave an orientation on its Year 5 implementation with the following points discussed:

- Issues on Filipino Sign Language (FSL) with Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino (KWF) were discussed.
- FSL Taskforce requested by DepEd Central Office
- Deaf Mentorship for Parents and Teachers
- Local Government engagement for project sustainability and future funding

Gabay Hearing/Audiological Test Center (H/ATC) @ Batangas Provincial Health Office

Likewise, the H/ATC visit provided information to Ms. Chen on the hearing test process using the donated audiometer, hearing aids and a set of hearing equipment to identify hearing problems among children in Batangas.

Welcomed by Batangas Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Rosvilinda Ozaeta, Ms. Chen observed the hearing test and interacted with the Gabay trained para-audiometrist, Ms. Klarisse Evangelista on how this test is instrumental to refer children for enrolment.



interventions.

Ms. Evangelista is one of the Community Health Workers capacitated by Gabay partner audiologist, Dr. Ronald Menor of Better Hearing Philippines Inc. in a series of trainings to determine degree of hearing loss: moderate, severe, or profound. In this way, children with hearing problems are identified for appropriate medical and educational

After the hearing test, Ms. Chen and the Gabay Team were invited for a short meeting and presentation by the Provincial Health Office (PHO)

“Batangas is so lucky because of the hearing test equipment donated by USAID through the Gabay project in the H/ATC inaugurated by Governor Hermilando Mandanas last January 13, 2023.” –

Batangas PHO



As of October 6, 2023, 136 children were screened using the video otoscope, audiometer and the tympanometer from the 29 municipalities of Batangas. Those unschooled children were then referred to the nearest school with SPED program which contributed to the increase in enrolment of Batanguenio children with disabilities.

Age Group	Findings
Most of the patients range from 12 y/o – 14 y/o Youngest: 3y/o, Female Oldest: 19y/o, Female	- Most of the patients’ results are profound hearing loss since most are referred by SPED Teachers for the medical certification needed in the SPED program. Patients found with impacted cerumen are referred to the Ear Nose Throat Specialist in Batangas Medical Center.

Batangas PHO free Hearing Test is being conducted three times a week, Monday-Wednesday, and Friday. They also shared their initiative of bringing the hearing test equipment into the different municipalities of Batangas to conduct hearing test together with the Provincial Dentist during their Dental Missions. This is a good practice in giving access to hearing test/screening for those children living in far Barangays away from Batangas City. It also increases visibility among schools and gives awareness to DepEd and LGUs in other municipalities for possible funding support.

The visit ended with a meaningful discussion among the Provincial Health Officers sharing experiences as part of project sustainability.

C. USAID Office of Education, Director Michelle Chen’s Visit to Bacacay, Albay (Target ILRC)

November 29, 2023

Bacacay East Central School

Preliminary Activities

In preparation for the upcoming visit, Gabay Deputy Chief of Party, Communications Officer and Field Coordinator for Region V, travelled in advance on November 26, 2023 for prior coordination and set up. This was to make sure that the target room for ILRC shall be prepared in coordination with partners and officials from DepEd Division of Albay and the Municipal Government of Bacacay.

November 27, 2023 (Monday, Holiday)

LGU Bacacay has established a building as Evacuation Center in times of calamities and disaster located in BECS which has not been launched yet. While the LGU and BECS is planning for the establishment of ILRC with its own building, it was agreed that one room from the new building shall be utilized to house all the equipment, assistive devices, materials and learning resources for the meantime.

Upon checking, the room that was first set up was located on the 2nd floor of the building which is not ideal for persons with disabilities in terms of accessibility. Some rooms in the 2nd floor are with holes so the resources might not be safe since the wall is just made of hardiflex.

To see if it is possible, the team checked the 1st floor and a room was found to be feasible but needs to be cleaned. Since it is more secured and accessible for Persons with Disabilities, Gabay, coordinated with LGU Focal Person, Municipal Councilor (Committee on Education), Hon. Emmanuel Alparce, if the room underneath could be utilized instead.

Unfortunately, LGU Bacacay was busy with the interment of the late Municipal Mayor, Hon. Armando Romano on that day. Mayor Romano just died last November 17, 2023 due to brain aneurysm. To show support and sympathy, the team, together with BECS SPED Teacher dropped by at the church mass and wait for the go signal of the LGU. Before the day ends, the LGU informed that they will go to BECS the following day.

November 28, 2023 (Tuesday)

The following morning, Gabay team went for a courtesy visit to the Division of Albay and gave a short orientation about the upcoming USAID visit the following day. Unfortunately, Schools Division Superintendent (SDS), Dr. Nene Merioles and Assistant SDS, Dr. Lauro Millano were not around due to prior schedule of activities. The team was endorsed to the Curriculum and Instruction Division and met with Education Program Specialist, Dr. Jane Revilla. Dr. Revilla warmly expressed gratitude and support to the program on behalf of the Superintendent. She was aware of the Resources for the Blind, Inc. as DepEd partner and gladly confirmed attendance to represent DepEd Division Office of Albay.

On this day, Gabay was informed by ABC+ that the meeting with DepEd Region V Director, Dr. Gilbert Sadsad will not push through in the afternoon. So, the team went back to BECS for the final set up of the venue and met with school principal, Ms. Judith Bellen.

While waiting for the LGU’s decision, Ms. Bellen came up with two (2) options as alternative rooms for the ILRC equipment:

School Library	Home Economics (HE) Room
	

On the same day, the LGU gave the permission to temporarily use the 1st floor room for the visit. The whole building is still due for final repairs for the official launching. For the meantime, the ILRC room will be the first room to be utilized in this new building. With this, it is good to note that Gabay along with BECS teachers, staff, teacher-interns, and some students helped each other in cleaning and organizing the room and transferred all the materials from the 2nd floor despite the bad weather.



November 29, 2023 (Wednesday Morning)

The following morning was allotted for the final set up of the room as preparation for the USAID visit in the afternoon.

Both the ILRC and Gabaldon Hall were also prepared by the school as venues for the activities of the visit.



Blessed to have a favorable weather in the afternoon, USAID New Office of Education, Director Ms. Michelle Chen together with Agreement Officer Representative, Mr. Henry Grageda and officers from another USAID Education Project ABC+ arrived and were received by DepEd division, district and LGU officials, Disabled Persons Organizations and the whole BECS Community.

Visit to Bacacay East Central School (BECS)



At around 2:00pm, USAID and ABC+ were welcomed warmly by DepEd Division of Albay Curriculum and Instruction EPS, Dr. Jane Revilla, Bacacay Public School District Supervisor, Dr. Arlene Cabais, BECS Principal, Ms. Judith Bellen, Bacacay Municipal Councilor, Hon. Emmanuel Alparce and Gabay Deputy Chief of Party, Ms. Arminia Mojica together with blind and deaf students. Playing the drum and lyre, students of BECS greeted them with warm smiles while walking to the ILRC.

Ms. Chen gladly met with Persons with Disabilities in the ILRC while Ms. Mojica introduced her to the Bacacay officials/teachers and oriented them on the equipment, resources and materials in this modular ILRC which are all made possible by the generous support of the American people through USAID.



Just as with the Batangas ILRC, Ms. Chen received a warm hospitality from the Bacacayanos seeing a glimpse of what the future holds for the learners with disabilities in this municipality once the ILRC will be launched next year.



It was an exciting day for the stakeholders to witness the collaboration of DepEd and LGU to increase access to quality inclusive education through the ILRC in accordance with RA11650. ABC+ officers headed by Chief of Party, Ms. Ina Aquino went over the braille equipment and materials to see the resources that could be made accessible for learners with visual impairment.

As a project that focuses on reading of learners without disabilities operating on the same municipality, the ILRC is a huge opportunity to make reading interventions more inclusive.

After the ILRC tour, all stakeholders including BECS trained teachers and some parents proceeded to the Gabaldon Building to have a short forum and interaction with each other.



Facilitated by AOR, Mr. Grageda, a fruitful discussion was opened by appreciating the presence and efforts of everyone.

LGU Bacacay

It began with a message from Hon. Emmanuel Alparce sharing that this ILRC is a blessing for Bacacayano children residents and constituents with disabilities. Having a nephew who has dyslexia, Hon. Alparce mentioned that the disability sector is close to his heart.



“When we learned about the program, we were all one in thinking, we should not let them feel that we are not ready, and we are not welcoming the program. That is why we really attended the symposium workshop in Manila.”

Bacacay is a 2nd class municipality with 56 barangays of which 26 are in coastal areas and almost all schools are prone to typhoon. Hon. Alparce shared that when he learned about the ILRC for their municipality, he told the late mayor that they need a school building to house all the equipment intended for CWDs. The late mayor advised to use the Evacuation Center of MDRRMO temporarily.

Knowing this, Hon. Alparce tapped his good friend, Mr. Erwin Tulfo and sent a letter requesting for a 4-classroom school building for the ILRC which the ACT-CIS partylist committed to give. He also assured that the former Vice Mayor, now turned Mayor, Hon. Edsel Belleza is very much cooperative and supportive with this.

“All equipment will be secured until we find the funds. It will not be long. We will make sure that by next year, we will have the funds to establish the Bacacay ILRC for our beautiful children.”

Hon. Alparce also expressed gratitude on behalf of present Mayor Belleza and the late Mayor Romano for the benefits of this program to their CWDs.

“Life is short. We just saw it when our Mayor died at the age of 46. But just as what Gov. Edcel Lagman said in his eulogy, ‘Whether we die old or we die young, what matter is what did we do with the life God gave us?’ My dear teachers and stakeholders let us put our hands, our hearts, our minds together for this program. Thank you for the love you are giving to Bacacay.”



Persons with Disabilities



Head of Persons Disability Affairs Office, Ms. Emerlita Imperial shared that there are more than 1,500 PWDs of which about 45% are children.

“Kailangang bigyang pansin o atensiyon ang sektor. Dahil maraming PWD na gustong mag-aral. They want to be in school.” Ms. Imperial emphasized that the disability sector should be given attention in terms of education for children and in terms of livelihood for adults.

Blind Mentor, Ms. Myrla Copino who is a fresh graduate of education this year shared her experience and gave emphasis that blind learners need cane and assistive devices like computers with screen readers. She also highlighted the importance of access to Braille materials.



On the other hand, Deaf Mentor, Ms. Katherine Bilaro shared her story emphasizing the essence of sign language as medium of communication. She has a deaf husband and is also a mother of two (2) deaf daughters and one (1) hearing son. Based from experience, she mentioned that there is a huge need to train parents and teachers of deaf learners on basic to advance level of sign language to communicate well.



DepEd Bacacay District

Sharing from the DepEd perspective, Bacacay PSDS, Ms. Arlene Cabais conveyed her heartfelt appreciation to USAID and RBI considering this project as one of the miracles that happened to Bacacay. Ms. Cabais honestly shared that for so many years, they were not aware of the SPED. Even the teachers were not aware about learners with disabilities except for those schools with SPED centers which are mostly the central schools in the Division of Albay. Many of the LWDs are just staying at home because the parents lack understanding and are also not aware.



“Children with disabilities are given the chance to learn, a chance to be equipped with skill to be independent because they are educated – we don’t have that yet. But thank to this Gabay project, with a focus on RA11650 as their first move. It’s a very positive move from Gabay that all Bacacayano LWDs will be given chance to be educated no matter what disabilities they have.”

Ms. Cabais accentuated that these learners should be given the same access to education and with the Gabay project, they will be expecting more learners with disabilities coming to school to be independent just like any other people.


“Frankly speaking, in Bacacay District, we do not have classrooms. RA11650 is urging the LGUs and DepEd to have the ILRC to cater to the needs of these children. So, we are seeing a beautiful sunshine ahead of us because of the initiative of Gabay by including us Bacacay East District.”

She also thanked the LGU for lending BECS one classroom as a good start of their collaboration hoping that the promise of ACT-CIS will be possible in the years to come. In this way, they can cater more LWDs in their municipality because these children are part of it and should be given equal opportunities.

“We need the parents, the DepEd, we need the LGU to work together so that these LWDs will be given equal opportunities. Out of the 500 schools in the Division of Albay, Bacacay was chosen. We really appreciate this program. With the help of everyone, we will make the 1st ILRC in the Division of Albay possible even with small steps. Speaking on behalf of other PSDS, this center shall cater to LWDs from other districts of Bacacay. So, our hearts are full of gratitude and optimism that the future is brighter for these children.”

Teachers, School Head and Parents Trained

This brighter future gets clearer with the recently concluded Training for Teachers and Parents Training in BECS last November 17-19, 2023. Mr. Grageda asked for some insights from participants who attended the training:

<p>School Head Trained</p> 	<p><i>“In this training, I have learned so many things. Specifically, Filipino Sign Language. Through the Gabay, we were literally guided on how to handle children with disabilities so that no one should be left behind. Thank you to Mam Yolly Quijano and all the resource speakers. There were no boring topics. Gabay, indeed served as light to us and our teachers.”</i></p>
---	---

**GenEd Teacher
Trained**



“After the training, I realized that a teacher should not only teach academics. A teacher should have a heart for the learners. A teacher should not just focus on WHAT a child should learn but on HOW he/she could learn. We must love them equally. We must teach them equally. I realized that as a teacher, I must not only look at the things they HAVE but explore on the things they CAN. Thank you so much to Gabay and USAID.”

Mr. Grageda pointed out the support and involvement of Region V Director, Dr. Gilbert Sadsad and how SDO Albay heard of Gabay good practices from SDO Sorsogon and SDO Sorsogon City.

During the discussion, he asked for challenges experienced by Bacacay teachers and one concern was raised by PSDS Cabais about the assessment of LWDs for their right placement and the curriculum delivery for these learners. To give information about the current assessment of LWDs in their district, SPED Teachers responded.

**SPED Teacher
Trained**



“We use the ECCD Checklist (Pre, Mid and Post Assessment) for Kinder and for Grade 1, we use the Multi-Factored Assessment Tool (MFAT). The results of these tools reflect learner’s performance with or without manifestations of difficulty or disability. In terms of direct diagnosis, this comes from medical specialists.”

**SPED Teacher
Trained**



“Based from experience, we use Observational Checklist to assess the child depending on the manifestations (especially for GenEd teachers also). Medical diagnosis comes from Development Pediatrician which makes it easier for us to come up with interventions. In terms of educational interventions, these are just based on the teacher’s assessment on the learner’s behavior and difficulties.”

PSDS Arlene Cabais



“DepEd has a lot of assessment tools. What we observed is, those assessments do not assess the extent and the degree of the learning disabilities of the children. Children really need medical assessments. On our perspective, it is more observational. It is quite difficult for teachers to advise parents but it is also very important, because we can make interventions. We could not say no to those children who enroll. But with the ILRC and the recent training of parents and teachers, I think it’s a very good start.”

While on the topic of assessment, Mr. Henry shared of another USAID Education Project in Region V which focuses on Reading. ABC+ COP, Ms. Ina Aquino shared about their Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) for regular learners which most of the GenEd Teachers are already using.



“One way or manifestation is when a child does not progress, it could be a possible measure that this child has a problem. If a child could not even decode (ABC+ materials), you could already use the MFAT.”

Ms. Aquino emphasized that as educators, it is important to connect the dots using both resources (ABC+ and Gabay) for their learners’ advantage. *“Hindi dahil ABC+ lang ito, ito, Gabay. Pwede niyo pong pagsamahin ang dalawang project ng USAID. You can use our materials and produce it in Braille format for the learners with visual impairment. Pagtulungan po natin para sa mga batang ito.”*

Hon. Alparce also shared about his nephew with Dyslexia who is very hyperactive and never looks on a person’s eye. He is confused with letters, so there was a learning delay. They had to look for a school who will accept him until he was enrolled in a special education class. He grew up very loving and very fond of cars . He is now 27 yrs. old, a friend of the actor, Daniel Padilla and currently working in Mitsubishi Motors.

“Because of the love, the patience and understanding from his family and friends, he turned out to be so functional and independent. That is really what we want, that they become part of the society. They live a meaningful life. When you have a meaningful life, it’s a happy and a successful life.”



It is important to note the support of the family. With this, a mother of three (3) blind children was asked to share her experience. *“I really don’t know how to guide them until the time they enrolled. I was able to attend an RBI Training in Legazpi and I learned how to guide them properly. This recent training, I have learned more on how to handle them, so I am really grateful to Gabay and BECS.”* (Translated from Bicolano)

Likewise, it is equally important to acknowledge the role of teachers and their collaboration with parents. Mr. Grageda pointed out the importance of early detection for early intervention which the Gabay has been tirelessly doing. He shared about Sorsogon H/ATC and the ILRC which will be accessible to Albayanos. These was seconded by Gabay DCOP, Ms. Amy Mojica who shared about Gabay interventions and the Learning Resources/Assistance to be provided through the set-up of their Modular ILRC that includes the following:



- Identification of CWDs as early as possible by working with Bacacay Municipal Health Office through the trained Community Health Workers
- Learning Materials not only for blind and deaf learners, but also for children with other disabilities as well
- Instructional materials and learning packages for teachers and parents
- Training modules as well as awareness materials for PDAO and LGUs as advocates
- Assistive Devices for Blind Learners such as the Braille Embosser (BECS have 4 VI enrolled) so there is no need to go to Sorsogon ILRC to produce braille materials since SDO Albay can access the Braille Equipment in Bacacay
- Assessment tools for CWDs (MFAT)

- Reading Materials for Blind and Deaf (although Bacacay is not included in EGRA for Gabay Year 5 implementation) *“We wanted also to improve the reading performance of Blind and Deaf learners in Bacacay.”*

Thinking about the Bacacay MOA signed during the Workshop in September, PSDS Cabais asked a question on who will oversee the ILRC. She mentioned that there are no extra BECS SPED or GenEd teachers who will be manning the center. This was responded by Hon. Alparce on a positive note: *“I will request this to our Mayor. I’m sure the Mayor will not deny our request for 2 to 3 Job Order (JO) contractors from the LGU to man the ILRC.”*



Having said this, Office of the Mayor's Representative, Municipal Operations Officer, Ms. Nenita Villalon assured of the Mayor' support through this strong partnership. *“The hope of our nation relies on our youth and who will be the support mechanism to do these. It is the educators' group who are the strongest pillars to realize our goals for better education of Bacacayano children. Hindi po kayo nagkamali sa pagpili sa Bacacay. Makakagarantiya po tayo, hindi po tayo nag-iisa sa LGU. Rest assured that I will relay all this information to purse strengthening educational goals of the Municipality.”*

The discussion ended with the final message from USAID OEd Director, Ms. Michelle Chen who was very happy to visit one of the Gabay additional sites in Year 5:

“It's such a pleasure to be able to hear the stakeholders and the partners here in Bacacay. I know it is not easy to overcome many of the challenges that life throws us. But thank you so much that we can help each other find ways to remove those barriers, making sure that all children have right to education. The impact of Gabay is clear, the reputation that it carries even to its final year is very clear. And the fact that we have ABC+ who has been working for many years operating in the same location, both programs are equally amazing.”



“I'm very excited to see and hear the enthusiasm from this community. It confirms for us that we made the right choice. There is a huge advocacy on behalf of this region, by your government leadership, from DepEd all the way down to the local government unit to make sure that this program came here. And we will make sure that it is used with the best of its advantage for all families and children of this community.”

D. Visit of Ms. Paloma Adams-Allen (JD), USAID Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Administrator for Management and Resources to Batangas City East Elementary School ILRC on March 19, 2024

Ms. Paloma Adams-Allen, the second-highest official of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Washington D.C. serves as the Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Administrator for Management and Resources visited Batangas City East Elementary School ILRC (formerly IECRC) on March 19, 2024, from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm. Accompanying Ms. Adams-Allen were other officials from USAID, Mr. Hillary Schrenell, Senior Advisor; Bayly Winder, Special Assistant; Ed Meier, Associate Director for National Security, OMB/White House; Rob Barton, Director Office of East Asia and Pacific Affairs; Myra Emata-Stokes, Director, Office of Management and Services; Rebecca Eubanks, Deputy Mission Director of USAID Phil & Pacific Islands; Henry Grageda, Project Management Specialist and AOR for Gabay; and Ted Francisco, Deputy DOC/Comms Lead, USAID/Philippines.



The visit of Ms. Paloma Adams-Allen alongside other USAID officials to the Batangas City East Elementary School ILRC held significant importance, signifying USAID's commitment to supporting collaborative educational initiatives, promoting inclusive learning environments in the Philippines, and specifically fostering sustainable development in Batangas City and beyond. This visit served as an opportunity to showcase the impact of USAID's programs on local communities and to explore further avenues for partnership and growth in the education sector.

During the visit, the objectives were structured to have achieved the following objectives:

- Showcased the impact of USAID's educational initiatives and promote the importance of inclusive learning environments,
- Provided Ms. Paloma Adams-Allen with firsthand experience of the educational programs and facilities supported by USAID at Batangas City East Elementary School ILRC,
- Facilitated discussions between Ms. Adams-Allen and local education stakeholders, including school administrators, teachers, and students, to exchange ideas and best practices in promoting quality inclusive education,
- Highlighted successful outcomes achieved through USAID's investments in education, including improvements in student learning outcomes, teacher capacity building, and community engagement, and
- Explored opportunities for further collaboration and partnership between USAID and local educational institutions in Batangas City to sustain and expand the impact of educational development initiatives.

Gabay planned preparatory activities and engaged in consultations with the Division and School officials. This process involved briefing key figures such as EPS, Dr. Rosalina Panganiban, School Head, Dr. Amparo Perez, and Teachers of the Blind and Deaf. Additionally, Gabay facilitated coordination with SPED and GenEd teachers to gather learning resources for the prospective Reading Room and finalize arrangements for the Reading Along activity. These efforts were crucial in ensuring the smooth execution of the upcoming event. There was the concurrent occurrence of the Palarong Pambansa, which brought many players to the school premises and necessitated compressed class arrangements.

Notably, Gabay extended invitations to LGU Officials to welcome Ms. Paloma Adams, the LGU Officials from Batangas Province, including esteemed individuals such as Ms. Florita Lachica-PSWDO Head, Dr. Oscar Bejasa- PHO, Mr. Harold Padura- PDAO Focal Person, and Ms. Elvira Evangelista-PSWDO Admin. Similarly, representatives from Batangas City LGU, such as Ms. Hiyasmin Candava- newly assigned CHO, Mr. Welson Barte- PDAO Focal Person, Ms. Maria Lualhati-PIO Head, Ms. Liza Delos Reyes-PIO, and Mr. Aivan Barza-PIO, graced the event with their presence.

Moreover, the absence of Dr. Hermogenes Panganiban, Schools Division Superintendent, due to a prior engagement was adeptly managed by Dr. Catherine V. Maranan, Dr. Sacoro Comia, and Dr. Rosalina Panganiban, who represented him and the division office. The inclusion of Deaf Mentors, Mr. Ron Daryl Quinio, and Mr. Inigo Asilo, added depth to the welcoming committee.

Accompanying Gabay Management and staff were Mr. Gary Jamora, Chairperson of Resources for the Blind, Inc., and Ms. Amelia Torrente, Executive Director of RBI, lending further expertise and support to the activities.

The activity commenced at 1:00 PM, March 19, 2024 upon the arrival of Ms. Paloma. She was received by DepEd, LGU, and RBI officials and staff. Dr. Panganiban provided information about the school as well as USAID contributions. Ms. Paloma and officials visited the Grade 5 room with a deaf student and a student with autism. Mr. Grageda introduced the students and teacher. He also reported on the Gabay training provided to the General Education teachers in the school that resulted to the enhancement of the inclusion education practices. Ms. Paloma proceeded to visit the ILRC with Dr. Panganiban providing an orientation and report about the USAID-donated equipment and materials.

Teachers of the blind and deaf, parents, students were also present. Finally, the group went to the reading room where Ms. Adams-Allen actively participated in a special story reading session of the material entitled, "*The Adventures of Abel and Kiko*," a learning material that focuses on inclusivity and accessibility. The class has one blind child and three deaf children and read and learned together with their seeing and hearing classmates. The visit culminated with messages by officials that highlighted the essence of collaboration and shared commitment to educational advancement.



D.2 US DepEd-Gabay Study Visit on Disability Inclusive Education (Miami, Florida, USA on March 8 to 16, 2024)

About CIES. The Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) is the largest and oldest of the 47 Comparative and International Education Societies around the world. It has over 4,000 individual members – researchers, analysts, practitioners, and students who represent over 1,000 universities, research institutes, government departments, non-government organizations, and multicultural agencies across the globe.

From cross-disciplinary perspectives, CIES members explore a variety of educational issues, from early childhood and primary schooling to higher education and non-formal learning environments. The members also compare various topics, such as inequalities across gender, ethnicity, language, and socio-economic status, or the relationship between education and cultural processes, democratization, economic development, globalization, and political conflict.

Leadership of the Society comes from the Board of Directors, Committees, Special Interest Groups working with the Executive Director and the OED administrative staff.

The Society is organized exclusively for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes, as a non-profit institution to contribute to understanding of education through encouragement and promotion of comparative and international education and related areas of inquiry and activity.

The CIES charter guides and directs the members of the Society to:

- Promote teaching and research in comparative and international education in institutions of higher learning in both national and international contexts;
- Foster application of comparative theories and research in applied settings;
- Facilitate publication and dissemination of comparative, cross-cultural, interdisciplinary and international studies contributing to interpretation of developments in the field of education in the broad and interrelated political, economic, and social context;
- Encourage education and cultural exchanges; and
- Promote and foster understanding of how educational policies and programs can improve social and economic development.

Theme for the 68th CIES 2024 Conference: The Power of Protest. The power of protest in education lies in the fact that it is, by definition, a public act. Protest allows people facing injustice to generate power through collective action. For many, this kind of protest carries the hope and promise that, to use the slogan of the World Social Forum in 2001 “another world is possible”. It is a declaration that not all is well in the world and that the status quo must be challenged and changed.

Struggles of this kind often situate education as a human right and endeavor to bring about more just and inclusive educational future.

Gabay-RBI’s Participation in the CIES Conferences with DepEd and LHU Officials and a member of i-Sent (Innovation for Special Needs Education). Gabay-RBI Chief of Party, Dr. Yolanda S. Quijano and Deputy Chief of Party, Ms. Arminia O. Mojica first registered as CEIS members for the 2021 Conference specifically held from April 25 to May 2, 2021. Together with School-to-School International (STS), three papers for one presentation were submitted: 1) Filipino Sign Language (FSL) and FSL Curriculum by Dr. Quijano, 2) Assessing the Language and Literacy Skills of Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing by Ms. Cristina Solum, Technical Manager, STS, and 3) Capability Building by Ms. Mojica. These papers were accepted for presentation. So, Dr. Quijano, Ms. Solum and Ms. Mojica presented their papers on April 27, 2021 in the CEIS 2021 Online Conference.

For the CIES 2024 Conference, the same group submitted three papers again in one presentation in Sub-Theme 2: Curriculum and Protest. These papers are entitled: 1) Deaf Professionals in Inclusive Education by Ms. Mylessa Sibal, Technical Manager, STS 2) Local Communities Collaboration for Improvement in Inclusive Education, by Dr. Quijano, and 3) Special Education Policies and Programs by Ms. Mojica. These papers were accepted for In Person Panel Session. Advanced online registration was done by Dr. Quijano and Ms. Mojica.

Invitation to attend the CEIS 2024 Conference with financial assistance from USAID was extended to Dr. Gina Gonong, Undersecretary for Curriculum and Teaching, Dr. Leila Ariola, Director for Learning Delivery and one Superintendent from any of the six project sites through a letter addressed to the Secretary of Education. Dr. Gonong and Dr. Ariola declined the invitation due to important work engagement and recommended Supt. Genis Murallos of Maasin City to participate in the Conference.

DepEd District Supervisor of Tanauan II, Dr. Pamela Almanza and Municipal Councilor Jasmin Borja of Tanauan, Leyte were given approval by the Schools Division Superintendent and Municipal Mayor, respectively to attend this Conference on official time only. Luckily, they were issued visa from the US Embassy a week before their scheduled travel. Ms. Celia Garcia, president of Deafblind Support Philippines who was in Boston, Massachusetts wrote Gabay to join the group in this Conference which Gabay allowed.



Included in the itinerary of Dr. Quijano, Ms. Mojica and Supt. Murallos is to visit Lindamood-Bell Learning Center to learn about the program and services for children with dyslexia with USAID approval.

Sessions Attended. Gabay participants attended the following sessions:

- Liberating Students Through Locally Led Efforts to Improve Early Grade Reading-Lessons from Nigeria
- Assessment of the Existing ECD Practices to Sketch an Alternative Approach
- Breaking Norms, Accelerating Learning Recovery, and Building a Case for Equity in the Philippines
- Implementation of the Right to Education for Learners with Disabilities: Lessons Learned from USAI's Multi-Country Study on Inclusive Education
- Remedial Education: Promising Platforms and Technologies
- Unlocking the Potential of EdTech for Effective Learning by Engaging Communities
- Catalyzing Higher Education Institutions for Economic and Social Change: Global Innovations in Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Community Engagement
- Strengthening Inclusion in Pedagogy

School-to-School International and Gabay Presentation: A Voice for Deaf Children: The role of PTAs, DPOs and professionals with disabilities in inclusive education in the Philippines.

This panel presented the case of a program, USAID Gabay (Guide): Strengthening Inclusive Education for Blind/Deaf Children in the Philippines project, implemented by Resources for the Blind, Inc. (RBI) in three project sites. The USAID Gabay project seeks to improve education and literacy outcomes by improving access to quality education for learners with visual and hearing impairments to contribute to the attainment of the goals of USAID/Philippines' Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) and the Partnership for Growth with Equity (PFGE) framework and to promote broad-based and inclusive economic growth in the Philippines. The project is utilizing a composite strategy of technical and rights-based approaches to influence education policy at local levels in favor of children with disabilities.

Emergent roles of Deaf professionals in assessment, teaching, and learning materials production (presented by Ms. Mylessa Sibal, School-to-School International)

In aims to improve access to quality education for students with disabilities, the USAID Gabay project engaged Deaf education professions in various aspects of delivery and service—from the development of student assessment, teacher training, to production of learning materials.

The evaluation of the project examined research questions, particularly the influence of project components on beneficiaries and the types of support were most impactful.

Through key informant interviews, focus group discussions, assessments, and a qualitative learner participatory activity, engagement and contributions from Deaf education professionals were found to be a critical factor in the success of teacher training and development of resources utilized by teachers, parents, caregivers, and students. This presentation provided further insight into evaluation findings and how future programming could continue to benefit from expanded recruitment of Deaf professionals.

A resource person via zoom, Mr. Kevin Gamboa, a Deaf teacher of Batino Elementary School (a SPED teacher), Division of Quezon City, Philippines shared his experiences in taking the teacher license examination and passing it after seven takes.

He discussed the challenges he met as a Deaf teacher to Grades 1 and 2 deaf students. He made some recommendations to the DepEd to support Deaf teachers in schools.

Local Community Collaborations for Improvement of Inclusive Education (presented by Dr. Yolanda S. Quijano)

The presentation highlighted key collaborative efforts towards sustainability, specifically on the establishing of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) in Deaf education. The presentation also highlighted the relationship between Persons with Disabilities Federation and the Persons with Disabilities Affairs Office (PDAO), which resulted in the Local Government Unit (LGU) in Batangas Province issuing a Local Ordinance with an allocation of at least 1 million pesos (\$18,515) to be appropriated annually to education-related activities for learners with disabilities, building on Gabay programming.

Two resource persons, Mr. Ronnel del Rio, a self-advocate speaking from Australia via zoom and Mrs. Celia Garcia, president of Deafblind Support Philippines shared how their organizations worked with Gabay in supporting the education of children with sensorial disabilities in inclusive setting.

Special Needs Education policies and programs (presented by Ms. Arminia Odang Mojica)

The Gabay project has been in close collaboration with the Philippines Department of Education (DepEd). As a result of this collaboration, DepEd has integrated changes to policies and programs to further improve access to quality education for students with disabilities. This presentation examined how these relationships were established and what policies and programs have been implemented.

A resource person, Mr. Genis Murallos, City Schools Division Superintendent of Maasin City discussed the initiatives of the Division in matter of policies and programs responding to the needs of students with sensorial disabilities enrolled in inclusive schools.

Mr. Henry Grageda from USAID closed the session by highlighting Gabay's accomplishments in terms of principles on working for children with disabilities.



Recommendations. UNESCO indicates that there is too little progress since the international breakthrough for inclusion with the 1994 Salamanca Statement. Often inclusion research has been a disguise for traditional special needs research. The point of importance is to be explicit about what is meant by inclusion and the stand it has taken that inclusion involves all pupils and, in some instances at least, the creation of communities in schools and classrooms (Nilholm. 2020). Researches should become a basic component with this foundational concept in the implementation of the inclusion process as provided for in Republic Act 11650.

In the CEIS 2024 Conference, the issue on the promotion of inclusivity amidst special needs education has brought diverse ideas from educators. Field practitioners along with experts were saying that inclusive education is inherently complex, involving various factors beyond classroom placement. It focuses on practical aspects, such as where students are appropriately placed. It encompasses normative values, emphasizing equity, participation, and individual needs.

Since Gabay project has considered inclusivity in its interventions, division and school officials of the project sites shall necessarily conduct researches examining how inclusive education impacts learners with sensorial disabilities as well as those without disabilities.

Case-studies are particularly well-suited because they make it possible to combine different levels of analysis at the system- school and classroom levels. These are especially beneficial in determining how practices can become more inclusive. The case-study can be built on rich data base if possible, longitudinal including both qualitative and quantitative data. Such research can be either interventional or focuses on school and learning environments that are moving in an inclusive direction and in what ways these are amenable to change.

DepEd special education centers and regular schools that implement programs for learners with disabilities for several years can initiate researches that deal with various aspects of inclusive education, such as *perceptions of inclusive education, inclusion of specific groups of learners with disabilities, inclusion in specific subjects, and social aspects of inclusion*, among others.

Furthermore, DepEd officials at the national, regional and division levels pursuing inclusive education may conduct researches on how inclusive education addresses the needs of children with disabilities relevant to the following for policy development:

- *support system provided to learners with disabilities in schools,*
- *teachers training program approaches,*
- *pedagogical practices ensuring inclusive education, and*
- *barriers and challenges in inclusive education.*

Information Visit to Lindamood-Bell Learning Process. On March 15, 2024, Dr. Quijano, Ms. Mojica and Supt. Murallos had an Information Visit to Lindamood-Bell Learning Process at 806 S. Douglas Road, Suite 100, Coral Gables, FL 33134. They were received by Ms. Nicole Matchette, Executive Center Director.



She provided an orientation about Lindamood-Bell’s program for children with Dyslexia and started with the founder, Nanci Bell’s inspiring words:

“We believe, passionately, that all children and adults
can be taught to read and comprehend to their potential.”

Lindamood-Bell Academy, a unique K-12 accredited private school, is a complete school solution. It offers live-online and in-person classes to develop the sensory-cognitive foundations for success in all learning and all curriculum.

Ms. Matchette provided the group with the descriptions of test administered to their students which may include measures from the list below:

- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – V (PPVT-5)
- Detroit Test of Learning Attitude – 5 (DTLA-5)
- Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests – III (WRMT-III)
- Slosson Oral Reading Test – Revised 3 (SORT-R3)
- Wide Range Achievement Test – 5 (WRAT-5)
- Gray Oral Reading Test (GORT)
- Gray Oral Reading Test-Revised 4 (GORT-4)
- Lindamood Auditory Conceptualization Test – 3 (LAC-3)
- Informal Test of Writing
- Symbol Imagery Test Optional Tests
- Test of Mathematics Abilities – 3 (TOMA-3)
- Test of Written Language – 4 (TOWL-4)
- Preschool Language Assessment Instrument – 2 (PLAI-2)
- Test of Reading Comprehension - 4 (TORC-4)
- Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude (DTLA)
- Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude – 2 (DTLA-2)

Lindamood-Bell instruction focuses on 1) Sensory-Cognitive Functions; and 2) Imagery and Language Interplay for Cognition. Ms. Machette added that their institution also provides individual instruction for learners referred by public schools as well as online training for teachers.

Action Plan on Disability Inclusive Education. Supt. Genis Murallos of the Division of Maasin City prepared an Action Plan on Disability Inclusive Education as shown below.

**Action Plan for the Implementation of Inclusive Disability Education
May 2024 to December 2025**

Office: Division of Maasin City, Region VIII

Action/Activities	Targets	Responsibility	Time Frame	Possible Source of Funds	Outputs
1. Implementation of Child Find Policy	70 Barangays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Div. Supv. In-Charge of SNED School Heads of the Barangays & School nurses LGU with PDAO, Maasin City Barangay Health Workers 	June 2024 & June 2025 on the Early Registration Weeks for each school year	DepEd Division Office & LGU, Maasin City	New children with disabilities identified and enrolled in schools
2. Redeployment of teachers that have specialization in special education that are teaching in the general education classes to the field as itinerant teachers	6 teachers in GenEd classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Div. Supv. In-Charge of SNED School Heads HR-Personnel Office 	July 2-26, 2024	DepEd Division Office	6 teachers with SPED specialization deployed as Division Itinerant Teachers
3. Coordination with Local Government of Maasin City requesting: - to hire additional learner support aides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Learner Support Aides One City Resolution supporting the implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local School Board Supt.'s Office City Mayor & Councilors PDAO 	July 2024 – July 2025	Special Education Fund	4 Learner Support Aides One City Resolution

D.3 Provision of Technical Assistance on Good Practice Documentation in Batangas, Sorsogon and Southern Leyte

USAID-RBI Gabay project recognizes the importance of building the capacities of its partners in the field towards the delivery of services in strengthening inclusive education. After 4 years of implementation, Gabay intends to document good practices that worked well because of the project interventions on the ground. This entails capturing, sharing, and using the learning experiences of project stakeholders in the project sites as the project implementation comes to an end.

Some initiatives of partners in the form of stories, processes, methodologies, or activities emerged as Good Practices which means that these practices have provided breakthrough results, have shown effectiveness in addressing specific issues, or have greatly contributed to the project's overall goal.

The documentation of these Good Practices is the project’s strategy in providing learning opportunities for its staff as well as its stakeholders to reflect on what works and what unique approaches to adopt to constantly improve future service delivery and ensure organizational excellence. It provides practical models in policy making or program implementation to continuously uphold the vision, mission, and goals of Resources for the Blind, Inc. as part of the project sustainability.

To acquire knowledge on the basic concepts of Good Practices, the 1st phase was a Workshop on Documentation of Gabay’s Good Practices conducted last September 21-22, 2023 at the Sequoia Hotel, Manila Bay. For Batangas, it was participated by LGU and DepEd officials with a goal to gain skills in writing and producing experience-based Good Practice Documentation specifically with Gabay Act of 2021 (LGU Batangas) highlighting the support and partnership of LGU and Gabay Inclusive Education Community Resource Center (IECRC) in Batangas City East Elementary School (DepEd Batangas City) highlighting access to learning resources.

Objectives and Description

With its Resource Speaker and Documentation Consultant - International Multiplatform Journalist, **Mr. Stanley Gajete**, the 2nd phase was a 2-day Provision of Technical Assistance that involves actual documentation in the field.

<p>Day 1 <i>Community Engagement in Documenting Good Practices and Actual Documentation</i></p>
<p>Day 2 <i>Feedbacking and Workshop</i></p>

This Phase 2 – Documentation activity was conducted with the following objectives:

1. Provide the needed technical assistance as follow up to the first workshop on documentation,
2. Conduct Actual Documentation of Good Practices in the field through the focal persons of DepEd and LGU partners, and
3. Generate 1 Video and 1 Narrative Report as outputs on Documentation of Good Practices

2023 October 20 to 21, Batangas City

Day 1 – October 20, 2023

Held at Batangas Provincial Information Office, the Provision of Technical Assistance on Good Practice Documentation started with a brief background of the project, a review of the phase 1 workshop and outputs, and the setting of objectives facilitated by the Gabay Communications Officer, Ms. Shev Payo. The training was attended by the following:

LGU	DepEd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Admin Officers from the Provincial Information Office ● Social Worker & Focal Person from the Provincial Social Welfare & Development Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Public School District Supervisor & Division Supervisor-in-charge of SPED – Division of Batangas City ● SPED Teacher

The morning session began with the topic: **“Community Engagement in Documenting Good Practice”** with International Multiplatform Journalist and Communication Specialist, Mr. Stanley Gajete as Resource Speaker. Mr. Gajete defined community and engagement and how to properly engage in a people-centered approach. He also tackled about the gaps when reaching communities that includes non-inclusivity and lack of representation of some sectors giving emphasis on the importance of how we look at them as right holders and overcoming these barriers through proper engagement.

WHEN WE DOCUMENT THEM, WE WRITE NOT JUST TO REPORT, BUT WE WRITE THEIR LIFE STORIES AS IF THERE’S A HOPE THAT IS WAITING FOR THEM.

TOWARDS SOCIAL CHANGE...

<i>“Write Here, Write Now”</i> Participants’ Insights	
LGU	DepEd
Break the usual/typical norms/process of documenting Involve and empower the subject/interviewee Ask what they can provide to inspire and empower others as well Community Engagement = Innovative way of Documentation	Start conversation with subjects and let them share In writing narratives, we should package it by letting the LWD feel empowered that just the usual “recipient”. We let them tell their stories and describe themselves rather than us describing them from our perspective. Note that message must be understandable by at least elementary students Attempt, Trials, Learnings = Innovate

This topic was followed by a quick tutorial and tips on **Mobile Documentation** in preparation for the actual documentation in the afternoon. Participants were very interested on how to quickly edit using mobile applications such as *Kinemaster, YouCut, InShot* that are very useful in visual storytelling and when documenting in the field.

Focusing on the main outputs which are video documentation and narratives, the afternoon session was an actual documentation in their areas – DepEd Batangas City (Batangas City East Elementary School) and LGU Batangas (Provincial Social Welfare & Development)

The team went to Batangas City East Elementary School and observed mainstream classes with blind and low vision students. Participants applied their learnings in mobile documentation and started getting clips for their outputs. DepEd Batangas participants interviewed the School Principal and a SPED teacher to gather information highlighting the Batangas Inclusive Education Community Resource Center.

LGU Batangas participants also find this visit informative as input to the Gabay Act of 2021 in terms of educational interventions as partners in the community. It was followed by the visit to Batangas LGU, specifically the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office as partners involving Batangas Persons with Disabilities. As part of the proponents of the ordinance, PSWDO Officer, Ms. Elvira Evangelista was interviewed by the LGU Batangas participants for the output. Being in the PSWDO, it was a good opportunity that Mr. Ron Esquivas, RBI IT staff was with the team to check their braille embosser for troubleshooting. Resolution: PSWDO must submit an Incident Report – email to Duxbury Support (cc. RBI) The PSWDO also requested for another training on the use of their Braille Equipment since the person-in-charge before is not in their office anymore. They are also requesting for a Filipino Sign Language (FSL) Training for the LGU employees. The office was advised to write a letter to Gabay for this activity with the involvement of local Deaf Mentors for Batangas, Mr. Iñigo Asilo and Mr. Ron Donor.

Day 2 – October 21, 2023

Held at the PSWDO, the 2nd day focused on the Writing/Editing workshop where participants finished their video outputs and narratives to be presented. During the presentation, Mr. Gajete gave tips on how to improve their outputs and provided technical assistance for a better way of Good Practice Documentation.

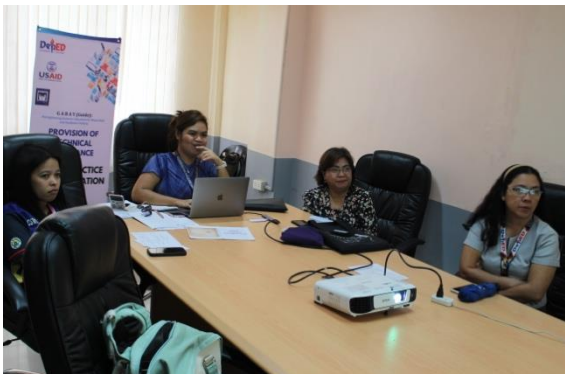
Below are the links for the Video Outputs:



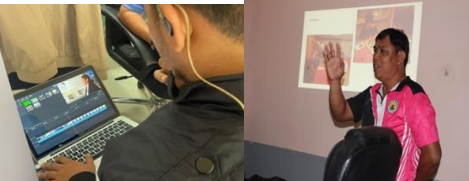
LGU Batangas	DepEd Batangas City
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZYI0BR7hYvRwwdRMpVYpBrHZNhUh/view?usp=sharing	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WjHZGH7k-bQn8AShY8HV-wiVI6cYh/view?usp=sharing


2024 January 25 to 26, Southern Leyte | 2024 February 22 to 23, Sorsogon

For Southern Leyte, it was participated by LGU and DepEd officials with a goal to gain skills in writing and producing experience-based Good Practice Documentation specifically with Gabay Advocacy to PWDs (LGU Maasin City Provision of Hearing Aids and Eyeglasses 2023) highlighting the Disabled People Organization’s involvement and Gabay increased enrolment in SDO Southern Leyte (DepEd Southern Leyte) highlighting the impact of Gabay Project interventions.

For Sorsogon, it was participated by LGU and DepEd officials specifically with Gabay Hearing/Audiological Test Center (LGU Sorsogon City East District Health Office) highlighting the teamwork of CHO, CSWDO and PDAO to refer children to schools and Gabay impact on teachers in SDO Sorsogon (DepEd Sorsogon) highlighting new schools with SPED Programs through the Gabay Project interventions.

Southern Leyte	Sorsogon
<p>Day 1 – January 25, 2024 Venue: Maasin City Hall</p>	<p>Day 1 – February 22, 2024 Venue: Sorsogon East District Health Office</p>
	<p>The Provision of Technical Assistance on Good Practice Documentation (GPD) started with a brief background of the project and the setting of objectives facilitated by the Gabay Communications Officer, Ms. Shev Payo.</p> <p>A review of the phase 1 workshop and outputs were also discussed since there are new participants who have not attended the workshop in September 2023.</p>

Southern Leyte	Sorsogon
<p>For Sorsogon, Resource Speaker, Mr. Stanley Gajete gave a lecture on the “What’s” of Good Practice Documentation and its “How is through the Techniques and Tools on Mobile Documentation.</p> <p>The activity was attended by DepEd and LGU officials listed below:</p>	
<p>DepEd Maasin City (Senior Education Program Specialists, Division SPED Supervisor) DepEd Southern Leyte (Program Development Officer, Education Program Specialists, Division SPED Supervisor) LGU Maasin City (PDAO Social Worker, Information Officer)</p>	<p>DepEd Sorsogon (Irosin) (SPED Teachers) DepEd Sorsogon City (Information Officer, Division SPED Supervisor, LGU Sorsogon (Bulusan) (OIC – Public School District Supervisor, Municipal Budget Officer, Municipal Councilor-in-charge of Education, SPED Teacher, Principal) LGU Sorsogon City (Health Officer/Para-Audiometrists, PDAO)</p>
<p>To end the first day, instructions were given for the second day as preparation for the Actual Documentation to apply the topics discussed on Day 1.</p>	
<p>Day 2 – January 26, 2024 Venue: Maasin City Hall</p>	<p>Day 2 – February 23, 2024 Venue: Sorsogon East District Health Office</p>
	<p>After knowing the “What’s” and “How’s” of documentation, the Day 2 began with the “Why is of GPD through the “Community Engagement in Documenting Good Practice”. This is the very heart of documentation as Mr. Gajete defined community and engagement and how to properly engage in a people-centered approach.</p> <p>He also tackled about the gaps when reaching communities that includes non-inclusivity and lack of representation of some sectors giving emphasis on the importance of how we look at them as right holders and overcoming these barriers through proper engagement.</p>
<p>For the actual documentation and writing workshop, participants were given time to shoot in their areas and be back in the afternoon for the presentation and feedbacking.</p> 	<p>Mr. Gajete instructed the participants to start documenting in their areas and be back at 11am for the lecture on Community Engagement.</p> <p>After which, participants were given another hour to finalize outputs and present it for Mr. Gajete’s feedbacking where Chief of Party, Dr. Yolanda Quijano also gave her comments.</p>

Southern Leyte	Sorsogon
<p>Although pressed with time, participants were able to draft, edit and present the outputs (narrative & video).</p> <p>Mr. Gajete gave his comments and feedbacks on how to further improve their outputs and provided technical assistance for a better way of Good Practice Documentation in their respective areas.</p>	
Outputs	
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1XgiPRjoi_XUSaXMIM4dMCl1Xt2NtbZyp?usp=sharing	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qAvkCt6liBaQEsntXP70d1_8hYpkrGVL?usp=sharing

For Sorsogon, a quick tutorial and tips on **Mobile Documentation** were also discussed since the participants were very interested in using mobile applications such as *Kinemaster*, *YouCut*, *InShot*, which are very useful in visual storytelling and when documenting in the field.



Sorsogon East CHO, Dr. Epifania Hallig was also present to express her support not just in making use of their facility as the venue for the workshop, but also for sustaining Gabay initiatives in H/ATC. Just in time, Gabay partner audiologist, Dr. Ronald Menor was also in the center for monitoring and was able to meet with the Gabay Team.

D.4 Documentation and Compilation of Good Practices of Gabay Project Partners

In its 5 years of implementation, the Gabay Project has documented and compiled several stories of good practices from its target areas. Each good practice encapsulates not only the expertise of project stakeholders, but also the spirit of relentless pursuit of inclusive education. Gabay has assembled insights gained through triumphs and trials, the lessons learned from challenges surmounted, and the innovations born from the crucible of necessity. Included in documenting good practice were the impact or results, lessons learned, and implications for replication.

The stories of good practices were gathered and documented by Gabay partners themselves from Batangas City, Batangas, Sorsogon City, Sorsogon, Maasin City, and Southern Leyte.

Batangas Province. In Batangas, a provincial ordinance was created and enacted – the **GABAY Act of 2021 or the Inclusive Education for Blind, Deaf, and Deafblind in Batangas Province**. It is the first Ordinance of its kind that has been initiated and implemented in the country. This is also known as the **Hindi Ikaw Maiiwan**, a banner program of GABAY Act of 2021, which contributed to raising the standard of education for people with disabilities, especially the deaf, blind, and deafblind. The contribution of Batangas Province to best practice is the creation and passing of a law to sustain the advocacy for inclusive education and communities. The Act also demonstrates the importance of having a strong local and provincial government support that is crucial in developing a working inclusive education system.

Batangas City. Gabay partners of Batangas City identified the following good practices: crafting of an Action Plan, creation of Committee, enhancement of Teacher and Parent Collaboration and data gathering on problems met by general education and SPED Teachers in teaching learners with sensorial disabilities. These were strengthened by the establishment of the Inclusive Education Community Resource Center (IECRC) Batangas City East Elementary School that was launched January 13, 2023. The IERC houses all the equipment and assistive devices, which are being utilized by teachers under SDO Batangas City and other Divisions giving access to SPED Teachers from SDOs Batangas and Sto. Tomas City as well.

Sorsogon City. The best practice identified was the enhancement of the hearing screening practices for better audiological care. To support the implementation of inclusive education in the province and city of Sorsogon, Gabay made it possible to put up a Hearing/Audiological Test Center (H/ATC) to increase access of services to the children with hearing impairment. This H/ATC played a pivotal role in assessing auditory function, developing audiological rehabilitation plans, and supporting inclusive education for children with hearing disabilities.

The establishment of the Hearing Screening Center helped increase community awareness about hearing loss and its impact on speech and language development among children and the utmost importance of early detection and intervention to be able to improve outcomes for children with hearing disabilities.

Sorsogon. Gabay facilitated the implementation of a community advocacy initiative “Project Child Find: No One Should Be Left Behind.” This initiative ensured that CWDs enroll are enrolled regardless of their economic status so that they are not deprived of their universal right to education. Child mapping was conducted to identify and understand the needs of children in different barangays, so that the Municipality of Bulusan LGU and DepEd Bulusan can determine and provide targeted support services to CWDs.

Bulusan Central School worked closely with community leaders, parents, and the Bulusan LGU to conduct surveys and interviews, and gather information from school records. With the data gathered, the school and LGU began were determine the appropriate interventions that led to a range of programs and initiatives for CWDs.

Southern Leyte. This best practice yielded a significant increase in CWD enrollment and a sustained individualized learning was coined Project “S.I.L.B.I”, from the Visayan word *silbi*, a term for service. **S.I.L.B.I.** is an acronym for Sustaining Individualized Learning Breakthrough Innovations. Project SILBI focused on sustaining school support initiatives through an individualized learning approach of instruction for CWDs. The DepEd Division Office enhanced it support to schools and teachers by providing technical assistance as well giving rewards and recognition. Through SILBI, the LGU also became fully aware of children’s needs and among the LGU actions was to provide financial support for the transportation of the CWD students to ensure that they remain in school.

As a result of SILBI initiatives, there was a more than a hundred percent increase of enrolment in the SPED Program and also an uptick of teachers and school heads that began accepting CWD enrollees. SILBI also proved once more that collaboration of government, private sectors and community is crucial to successful implementation of development projects.

Maasin City. Gabay strongly supports the principle that persons with disabilities should be involved in in planning and implementing programs aimed to help PWDs and LWDs – that they, too, are capable to help themselves and others. In Maasin City, Gabay facilitated the strengthening of the capabilities of the Persons with Disability Affairs Office (PDAO) and other PWD organizations. PDAO was actively involved in the project particularly in advocacy campaigns and rehabilitation activities.

Through their initial efforts, PWDs were able obtain help (i.e. provision of eyeglasses) and enrollment of LWDs increase.

By engaging with the public, PDAO strived to eliminate the stigma and demonstrated that PWDs are capable of actively participating in all aspects of society and be powerful voices for PWDs and LWDs. It also makes PWDs and the community aware that disability is not a hindrance to being advocates and champions of change.

E. PROCUREMENT

I.T. Equipment and supplies

- 20 units SAMSUNG TABLET GALAXY A9 SILVER LTE 4+64GB SM-X115 X115Gray - Processor : MTK MT8781 (G99) 8.7" inch"WXGA+ (800x1340, 179 PPI) 60Hz Refresh Rate"124.7 x 211.0 x 8.0 mm/ MEMORY: 4GB64GB up to 1TB with CAMERA :[Rear] 8 MP AF, F2.0[Front] 2 MP FF, F2./ BATTERY: 5100 mAh LTEAndroid 13Physical SIM (nano)Face Recognition, Dual SpeakersData Cable, Quick Start Guide
- 1unit charger Laptop ACER
- 1 units Hard Drive Seagate 1TB
- 5 units CPU with mouse/ keyboard
- 85 pcs USB
- 1 Google Storage renewal

Safety and Protection (Covid-19)

- 3 bottled alcohol
- 3 boxes facemask
- 1 box vinyl gloves
- 1 sets medicine kit

Various Equipment Office Supplies and Janitorial

- 295 pcs certificate case
- 1 unit electronic stove
- 1 unit coffee maker
- 100 pcs mini otoscope with penlight
- 3 stapler with sticky note pad
- 10 pcs correction tape
- 160 pcs titus gel ballpen
- 80 pcs briefcase folder tote bag storage for document file
- 30 pcs ID lace
- 8pcs led bulb 13 watts
- 2 sets door knob
- 73 pcs tissue interfold
- 42 packs roll tissue
- 5 bottled dishwashing liquid
- 3 pcs garbage bag large
- 15 pcs wooden clipboard A4
- 170 pcs eco bag
- 3 pcs energizer battery (AA)
- 1 pcs HP toner
- 1 set HP laser printer ink

- 300 set of training kits (pouch, pen, notepad, and ID case with lace)
- 10 pcs packing tape
- 3 boxes white board marker
- 6 boxes permanent marker
- 1 set Epson ink (4 colors)
- 2 sets of ink brother printer
- 24 reams bond paper A4 and letter size
- 2 pcs PVC IDs
- 2 pcs fluorescent light
- 140 pcs thick kraft paper notepad office 80s lines
- 10 packs shoelace
- 1 box hook

Equipment, Assistive Devices and Learning Materials for ILRC

- 3 units embosser
- 3 units Duxbury braille translator
- 3 units smart TV
- 3 units Epson printer eco tank L3210
- 6 sets PECS Training manual
- 6 sets PECS download windows
- 6 sets PECS kick starter kit
- 6 sets PECS schedule kit
- 30 units Samsung Tablet
- 3 set different sensory materials and manipulative
- 4 units Lenovo ideacentre CPU Model: 90SM001APH
- 3 units audio digital recorders
- 15 boxes braille paper with holes
- 2 sets big shapes
- 2 sets movable alphabet
- 2 sets colored beads chain
- 2 sets wooden clock
- 2 sets shape sorting
- 2 sets color wood lacing beads
- 2 sets alphabet sand paper
- 2 sets wooden learning materials
- 2 pcs vestibular ball
- 2 pcs jumbo numbers
- 2 sets assorted plastic balls
- 2 pcs chess board
- 2 pcs peg box
- 2 pcs jumbo nuts and bolts
- 1 pcs clip and ball

Printing Materials for Info Dissemination

- 100 copies Factsheet laser (front and back)
- 10 copies hearing/ audiological test center operational guidelines
- 30 copies Year 4 Annual Report
- 500 copies FSL Posters
- 50 copies instructional activities
- 90 braille shapes, lines, and numbers (front and back cover)
- 60 copies The Adventures of Abel and Kiko atorybook for peers

Repair and Maintenance and Services

- 2 units Kolin aircon floor standing general cleaning
- 3 units Media aircon split type general cleaning and 1 with check up
- 1 unit Epson L5190 Printer repair/ clean ADF and reset head

Accommodation Airfare and Van Rental Procured

- 90 days van rental travel 331 pax for various activities from July 2023 to June 2024
- 135 nights room accommodation of 406 pax for various activities from July 2023 to June 2024
- 114 pax Airfare Phillippine Airlines traveled from July 2023 to June 2024
- 133 pax Travel Insurance for various activities from July 2023 to June 2024
- 2 rental function hall from July 2023 to June 2024
- 525 pax of 4 catering services

F. HUMAN RESOURCE

As Gabay entered the first 12 months of the 18-month extension, the management and staff recognized that the project is approaching its closure in the next six months. In light of this, Gabay management implemented a flexible workforce strategy to maintain high performance, even as the staffing levels gradually decreased.

During the final two quarters of the extension, the management progressively reduced the Gabay team from 14 members to nine (9). Five (5) of the former full-time staff members have resigned for various reasons, including health issues and new job opportunities.

These individuals held critical roles within the project, such as Communication Officer, Procurement Officer, Field Coordinator, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, and Finance Officer.

To support the staff, particularly those experiencing health concerns, the management adjusted their work arrangements from traditional office settings to remote work, providing flexible hours and ultimately transitioning to an output-based service model. This adaptive approach in workforce management has ensured that Gabay continued to fulfill the project requirements while offering the necessary flexibility to respond effectively to changing demands.

There has also been considerable movement among staff across various positions within the team. As a result, the management has reassigned two of the field coordinators to take on the responsibilities of procurement and finance assistance, following a comprehensive transition process that facilitated a smooth handover from the departing employees. Additionally, former staff members with specialized skills have been tasked with output-based payment services, to avoid the cost and time associated with hiring and training new personnel for these critical roles.

Through the Learning Lab, a USAID-supported community space for exploring and sharing effective development practices, Gabay staff have participated in several online webinars to enhance their skills. These sessions included:

- Workshop on Communication for USAID Partner Point Contacts (POCs) – August 8, 2024
- Work with USAID Webinar – July 16-17, 2024
- Pathways to Re-engage Learners: Accelerated and Remedial Education – June 13, 2024
- Development Information Solution (DIS) Training – March 19 and 26, 2024 (support session)
- Environmental Management Compliance – March 1, 2024
- DIS Partner Portal Training for IPs – July 13, 2023

As part of Gabay's commitment to effective workforce transitions, one Gabay staff who resigned two months before the end of Year 5 was asked to complete transition tasks aligned with their specific functions and roles.

These completed tasks were submitted to the RBI Human Resource Department to serve as a model for managing transitions with future departing staff. This initiative represents a significant step in organizational development for Resources for the Blind, establishing a documented process for the transition tasks of staff members leaving the program.

In line with RBI’s commitment to the welfare of employees’ well-being, similar to last year, the Gabay Management secured Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) coverage for all staff members. This health insurance provides essential preventive, medical, and psychosocial care, contributing to the staff’s peace of mind and reinforcing their confidence on their health and well-being, regardless of where they are living and working. Given that many staff operate in the field, having access to HMO-accredited service centers in the target communities ensures that necessary support was provided to both the employees and their families. Below is Gabay’s organizational chart for Year 5.

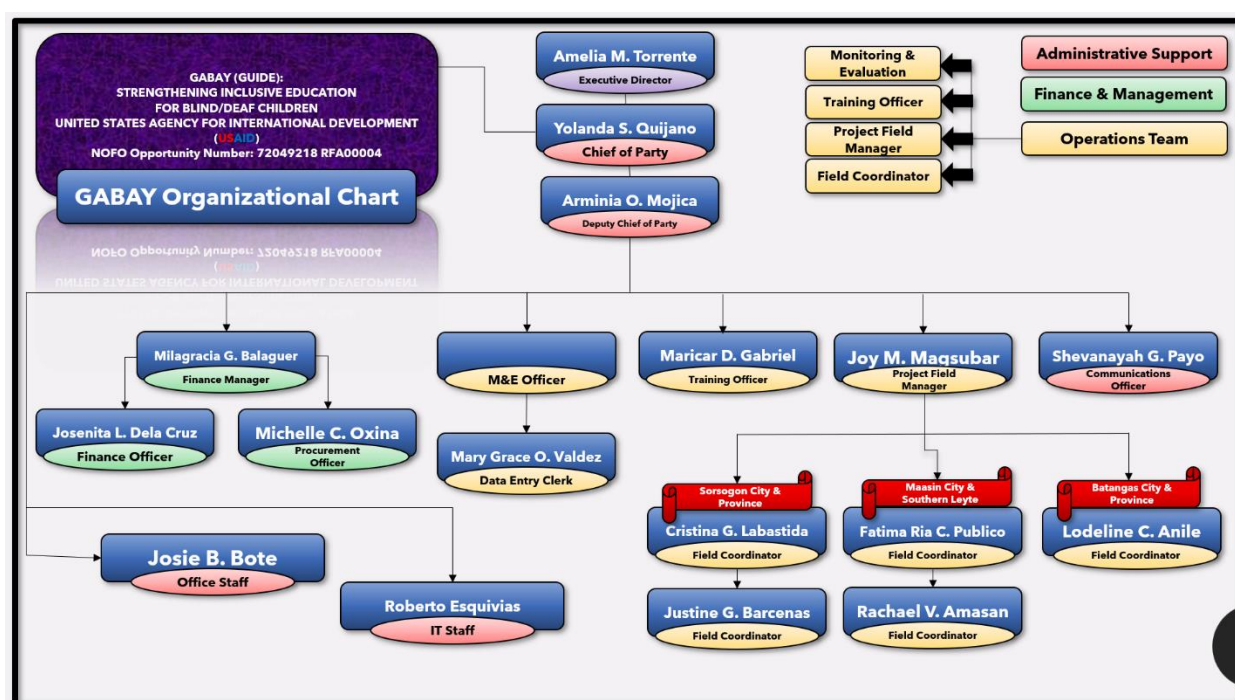


Figure 16. Gabay’s Organizational Chart for Year 5

IV. STATUS OF MILESTONE DELIVERED

Table 27. Milestone Accomplished for Year 5 (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024)

Milestone #	Milestone	Date Submitted to USAID	Date Fund is credited in Bank	Amount
Milestone 36	1. Capacity Building and Technical Assistance to Local School Board to Support Education of Children with Sensorial Disabilities 2. Technical Report in addressing the Additional Priorities of the two target schools in Follow up in the Implementation of Quality Indicators	June 27, 2023	July 26, 2023	2,253,737.00
Milestone 41	Harmonized DepEd-Gabay Inclusive Education Community Resource Center (IECRC) Operations Manual	July 12, 2023	August 02, 2023	2,573,546.00
Milestone 40	Year 5 Annual Workplan	August 11, 2023	August 30, 2023	4,000,000.00
Milestone 39	Year 4 Annual debriefing and evaluation of project implementation	September 28, 2023	October 26, 2023	4,073,546.00
Milestone 43	Symposium: Learning and Consultation Workshops on Disability-Inclusive Education, Best practices, and Recommendations (Phase 1)	September 28, 2023	October 26, 2023	2,333,551.00
Milestone 42	Roll out training of the Harmonized Inclusive Education Community Resource Center (IECRC) Operations Manual	November 29, 2023	December 20, 2023	2,500,000.00
Milestone 45	Training of teachers on the use of the adapted DepEd-Gabay Sign Language Curriculum (# 1)	December 01, 2023	December 27, 2023	2,833,551.00
Milestone 47	Training of teachers on the use of the adapted DepEd-Gabay Sign Language Curriculum (# 2)	December 05, 2023	December 28, 2023	2,533,551.00

Milestone 50	US DepEd-Gabay Study Visit on Disability-Inclusive Education	March 26, 2023	April 23, 2024	1,147,900.00
Milestone 44	Turnover of Learning Materials and Equipment to the Modular Inclusive Education Learning Center in 1 target site	March 27, 2023	April 29, 2024	2,500,000.00
Milestone 46	Turnover of Learning Materials and Equipment to the Modular Inclusive Education Learning Center in 2 target sites	May 15, 2023	June 6, 2024	2,000,000.00
Total Milestone amount received in Year 5				28,749,382.00

V. PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TRACKING TABLE

Table 28: Gabay Performance Indicator Tracking Table Year 5

The table below presents the performance of Gabay for its 5th year of implementation from July 2023 to June 2024

Intermediate Result	Indicator No.	Performance Indicator	Targets	Accomplishments						
			Year 5	USAID Fiscal Year / DIS Year 5				Overall Total Accomplishments for Year 5	Annual Performance Achieved for Year 5	On Target for Year 5
				Q17 (Jul - Sept 2023)	Q18 (Oct - Dec 2023)	Q19 (Jan - Mar 2024)	Q20 (Apr - Jun 2024)			
IR 1: Improved enrollment of blind, deaf and deaf-blind children	1	ES.1-56 Number of learners with improved access to education through USG- assisted programs (formerly Number of referred children enrolled at DepEd School)	40	3	41	42	0	86	215%	Y
	2	Percent increase in enrollment of children with sensorial disabilities	+133.33 % (270+45 new CSDs)		407.41%	377.78%	+308.89%	+308.89%	3.0889	Y

Intermediate Result	Indicator No.	Performance Indicator	Targets	Accomplishments						
			Year 5	USAID Fiscal Year / DIS Year 5				Overall Total Accomplishments for Year 5	Annual Performance Achieved for Year 5	On Target for Year 5
				Q17 (Jul - Sept 2023)	Q18 (Oct - Dec 2023)	Q19 (Jan - Mar 2024)	Q20 (Apr - Jun 2024)			
Outcome 1: Increased referrals of blind, deaf and deaf-blind children not in school to DepEd	3	Number of referred children for enrollment	40	22	41	42	11	116	290%	Y
Output 1: Increased capacity of health service providers to screen children	4	Number of Community Health Workers with improved scores	0	114	not applicable for this reporting period	0	0	114	114%	Y
Output 2: Increased number of children screened for visual and hearing impairments	5	Number of children screened	400	271	not applicable for this reporting period	88	128	487	121.75%	Y
IR 2: Improved reading performance among blind and deaf learners	6	Reading scores for EGRA - HI	0		not applicable for this reporting period	NA			-	

Intermediate Result	Indicator No.	Performance Indicator	Targets	Accomplishments						
			Year 5	USAID Fiscal Year / DIS Year 5				Overall Total Accomplishments for Year 5	Annual Performance Achieved for Year 5	On Target for Year 5
				Q17 (Jul - Sept 2023)	Q18 (Oct - Dec 2023)	Q19 (Jan - Mar 2024)	Q20 (Apr - Jun 2024)			
Outcome 1: Increased access of deaf and blind learners to learning materials	7	ES 1.8-1 Number of local basic education policies or deliberated with inputs from USAID supported analyses/databases (formerly Number of DepEd policies adopting Gabay modules and materials)	3		2	0	1	3	100%	Y
	8	Number of children with sensorial disabilities reached with USG assistance	0	271	112	53	2241	2677	2677%	Y
	9	ES.1-3 Number of learners in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings reached with USG assistance	417		361	1726	378	2465	591.13%%	Y

Intermediate Result	Indicator No.	Performance Indicator	Targets	Accomplishments						
			Year 5	USAID Fiscal Year / DIS Year 5				Overall Total Accomplishments for Year 5	Annual Performance Achieved for Year 5	On Target for Year 5
				Q17 (Jul - Sept 2023)	Q18 (Oct - Dec 2023)	Q19 (Jan - Mar 2024)	Q20 (Apr - Jun 2024)			
Outcome 2: Improved capacity of teachers to teach blind and deaf learners	10	Number of teachers developed new and appropriate teaching strategies / methods for blind and deaf learners	134		77	64	0	141	105.22%	Y
Outcome 3: Improved capacity of DepEd to develop reading interventions for blind and deaf learners	11	Number of reading interventions developed for blind and deaf learners	134	0	77	64	6	147	109.70%	Y
	12	Supp 7 Number of parents or community members trained to support children's education with USG assistance	100		84	36	0	120	120%	Y
Output 1: Increased availability of assistive technology for blind and deaf learners	13	Number of learners using assistive learning devices	0		64	32	260	356	356%	Y

Intermediate Result	Indicator No.	Performance Indicator	Targets	Accomplishments						
			Year 5	USAID Fiscal Year / DIS Year 5				Overall Total Accomplishments for Year 5	Annual Performance Achieved for Year 5	On Target for Year 5
				Q17 (Jul - Sept 2023)	Q18 (Oct - Dec 2023)	Q19 (Jan - Mar 2024)	Q20 (Apr - Jun 2024)			
Output 2: Increased capacity to develop learning materials for blind and deaf learners	14	ES.1-10 Number of primary or secondary textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) provided with USG assistance (formerly Number of primary or secondary textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLMs) that are inclusively representative provided with USG assistance)	75	222	371	161	6695	7449	9932%	Y
Output 3: Improved capacity of DepEd officials and teachers to conduct reading assessment to deaf learners	15	ES.1-6 Number of educators who complete professional development activities with USG assistance	134	0	139	130	23	292	217.91%	Y

Intermediate Result	Indicator No.	Performance Indicator	Targets	Accomplishments						
			Year 5	USAID Fiscal Year / DIS Year 5				Overall Total Accomplishments for Year 5	Annual Performance Achieved for Year 5	On Target for Year 5
				Q17 (Jul - Sept 2023)	Q18 (Oct - Dec 2023)	Q19 (Jan - Mar 2024)	Q20 (Apr - Jun 2024)			
	16	ES.1-12 Number of education administrators and officials who complete professional development activities with USG assistance	50		30	24	0	54	108%	Y
IR 3: Improved local government attention to the needs of children with sensorial disabilities	17	Number of inclusive-education policies created by LGUs			0	0	0	0	0%	Y
	18	Number of LGUs with resource allocations for children with disabilities			0	0	0	0	0%	Y
	19	Number of new resource centers	3		0	3	0	3	100%	Y
Outcome 1: Improved capacity of parents/ disabled people's orgs. (DPOs)/ civil society orgs. (CSOs)	20	Number of LGU engagement plans developed by parents/ DPOs/ CSOs/peers			5	3	0	8	800%	Y

Intermediate Result	Indicator No.	Performance Indicator	Targets	Accomplishments						
			Year 5	USAID Fiscal Year / DIS Year 5				Overall Total Accomplishments for Year 5	Annual Performance Achieved for Year 5	On Target for Year 5
				Q17 (Jul - Sept 2023)	Q18 (Oct - Dec 2023)	Q19 (Jan - Mar 2024)	Q20 (Apr - Jun 2024)			
to engage local governments	21	ES.1-13 Number of parent teacher associations (PTAs) or community-based school governance structures engaged in primary or secondary education supported with USG assistance	3		3	0	0	3	100%	Y
Output 1: Increased knowledge of parents/DPOs/CSOs on sensorial disabilities and children's rights	22	Number of individuals participating in trainings with increased knowledge of sensorial disabilities and children's rights	45		55	121	0	176	391.11%	Y
Output 2: Increased knowledge of parents/DPOs/CSOs on Local Government policies and services	23	Number of individuals participating in trainings with increased knowledge of LGU policies and services	45		55	121	0	176	39.11%	Y

VI. INTEGRATION OF CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND USAID FORWARD PRIORITIES

As Gabay continues to implement its planned activities for Year 5, it has identified several cross-cutting issues that are critical and influence various aspects of the project implementation. The topics below are integrated at every stage of the process, from planning and execution to evaluation and learning.

- 1. Promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities.** The importance of persons with disabilities' inclusion in the design and implementation of Gabay's programs is a fundamental principle. Gabay embraces the philosophy of "nothing about us without us," ensuring that representatives from the blind, deaf, deafblind, and other disability sectors are actively involved in the planning and execution of any initiatives for children with disabilities.

The meaningful participation of deaf and blind mentors in the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Braille Reading Assessment, alongside several training sessions with Parents Advocates for Visually Impaired Children (PAVIC), Deafblind Support Philippines and the Autism Society of the Philippines, Laguna chapter, exemplifies Gabay's commitment to this principle. Additionally, collaborating with the Philippine Federation of the Deaf in finalizing the Compilation of Filipino Sign Language (FSL) Vocabulary List showcases how Gabay effectively translates the principle of full participation of persons with disabilities into action. This collaborative approach significantly contributes to the advancement of inclusive education and the development of an inclusive society within the project sites.

- 2. Ensure safety and wellbeing of children with disabilities.** Ensuring the safety and well-being of children with disabilities is the cornerstone of Gabay's intervention, specifically designed to support those with blindness, deafness, deafblindness, and learning disabilities. Gabay is unwavering in its commitment to upholding the Child Protection Policy established by Resources for the Blind, Inc. This commitment includes obtaining signed parental consent for all activities involving children. In cases where parents or guardians are unavailable, Gabay staff strictly adhere to the two-adult policy

when assisting children, promoting accountability, and reducing isolation, thereby significantly minimizing the risk of abuse. In addition, the proactive measures—such as distributing posters that highlight USAID’s guidelines on safeguarding against exploitation, sexual abuse, child abuse, and child neglect, serve to advocate for the safety and well-being of all children, particularly those with disabilities. By embedding these practices into Gabay programs, a protective environment that prioritizes the rights and protection of every child is fostered.

In Gabay's training materials, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, Children’s Rights, and national laws were not only included but also thoroughly examined. Gabay focused on providing practical strategies, particularly for parents, to empower them in safeguarding and advocating for the rights of their children with disabilities.

Additionally, during the sessions for parents and teachers on Disaster Risk Reduction, practical strategies to equip children with the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure their safety during emergencies were emphasized. The adopted approach focuses on empowering children to understand and apply safety measures effectively when faced with potential disasters.

- 3. Use of Assistive technology to ensure students with disabilities have the same opportunity for education.** The integration of assistive technology is essential for children with disabilities to access the curriculum and perform at par with their non-disabled peers. Recognizing the critical role of assistive devices in enhancing, maintaining, or improving functional capabilities, Gabay actively supported the Department of Education's implementation of RA 11650, which establishes a comprehensive policy for inclusive education. This law facilitates the creation of Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRC) for learners with disabilities across all school districts, municipalities, and cities.

To further this initiative, Gabay has set up modular ILRCs at various project sites, including those in Batangas City, Sorsogon City, and Maasin City. During the recent 18-month extension, three additional modular ILRCs were established in Los Baños, Laguna; Bacacay,

Albay; and Tanauan, Leyte. These centers are equipped with both low- and high-tech devices that empower teachers to maximize the potential of students with disabilities.

Teachers were provided with ready-made learning materials in various formats, including Braille, large print, Filipino Sign Language, and audio, ensuring that all students can access the DepEd curriculum and perform alongside their non-disabled classmates. Training sessions on the use of this equipment and devices were conducted for the responsible teachers, which also cover essential troubleshooting techniques to ensure effective use.

Crucially, the Local Government Units (LGUs) play an essential role in the maintenance and sustainability of these modular ILRCs, ensuring that resources and support remain accessible to the community. The LGUs where the modular ILRCs were established have enacted ordinances designed to facilitate collaboration with the Department of Education (DepEd) in funding and providing the necessary materials, manpower, and facilities required to effectively maintain and sustain these centers. Their proactive involvement underscores the shared commitment to fostering an inclusive educational environment for all learners.

- 4. The role of Community Health Workers (CHWs)** in screening children with disabilities and facilitating access to disability services is invaluable. CHWs in the Gabay project sites have demonstrated their significance by effectively screening and connecting families of these children with schools and service providers. Positioned strategically within their communities, CHWs are well-equipped to deliver essential disability care services, including screening and referrals to various service providers.

Despite being volunteer community health workers with numerous responsibilities in their assigned areas, the CHWs collaborating with Gabay have actively participated in training sessions aimed at enhancing their knowledge and skills in vision and hearing screening. Additionally, Gabay provided them with a developed Primary Vision and Hearing Screening Manual, along with a screening kit that serve as both reference and assessment tool. Furthermore, CHWs are empowered to offer basic community health education and counseling related to disabilities, further enriching the support available to families in their communities.

5. Capacity building and raising local experts. Over the past five years, Gabay has had the privilege of connecting with numerous individuals and organizations dedicated to promoting disability-inclusive education in the project sites. This includes families of children with disabilities, disabled young professionals, teachers, and school leaders from various levels of the Department of Education, as well as other essential service providers. These partners have actively participated in a range of capacity-building initiatives that Gabay organized in the field.

By enhancing their capacities, these stakeholders were empowered to reduce their reliance on external experts for knowledge, resources, and solutions to local school and community challenges.

The initiatives encouraged them to take proactive measures to address local issues themselves. A notable example is Mr. Michael John Orais, an officer at the Persons with Disability Affairs Office (PDAO) in Maasin City, who spearheaded an advocacy campaign to secure additional funding from the Mayor's Office. This initiative resulted in valuable opportunities for children with hearing and vision impairments, allowing them to receive essential medical check-ups and providing access to hearing aids and eyeglasses.

Moreover, Gabay initiatives have significantly bolstered the confidence, skills, and knowledge of the deaf and blind mentors, enhancing their credibility as vital community partners. They are now better positioned to initiate and lead additional projects focused on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in their communities, driving sustainable change and fostering a more equitable society for all.

6. Scaling Up Disability Inclusion Programs. To effectively scale up disability inclusion programs in Gabay's project sites, it has been crucial from the onset of the project implementation to develop strategies that promote sustainability through local partnerships. Throughout its journey, the project has identified numerous environmental and attitudinal barriers that impede children with disabilities from accessing quality education. Furthermore, the deaf and blind mentors have encountered significant challenges, including the limited involvement of individuals with disabilities in meaningful

participation both in schools and within their communities. By addressing these barriers, Gabay strives to foster a more inclusive and supportive environment for all learners.

The establishment of Modular Inclusive Education Learning Resources, funded by USAID and with the support of the Department of Education and local government units, has created a nurturing environment for children with disabilities both at school and in their communities. Additionally, adults with disabilities have been empowered to access the resources available at the center. The teachers and leaders of the Modular Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRC), including PDAO officers, have tailored activities to meet the diverse needs of individuals and have actively encouraged greater participation from other persons with disabilities in various community events.

Key municipal officials have taken the initiative to engage parents and persons with disabilities as resource persons in the formulation of local laws and ordinances. A notable example is Hon. Paul Emmanuel R. Cinco, a Municipal Councilor of Tanauan, Leyte, and a parent of a child with autism.

He authored an ordinance entitled "Institutionalizing Inclusive Education and Establishing Inclusive Learning Resource Centers for Learners with Disabilities in the Municipality of Tanauan, Leyte, and Providing Funds Therefor." Following his participation in training and workshops organized by the Gabay Project, and through meaningful interactions with community leaders with disabilities, he was inspired to sponsor this ordinance, successfully raising awareness in his community about the importance of inclusive education.

A. Gender Equality and Female Empowerment

In Year 5, Gabay continues to adhere to gender equality and female empowerment. Gabay has not violated women's rights and not discriminated against any gender in all its interventions. Gabay recognized equality between men and women, boys, and girls.

In Gabay's effort to mainstream gender and development, Sex-Disaggregated Data (SDD) is continuously practice in its data analysis and other appropriate reports. Equal participation of men and women is always adhered by Gabay

Several activities of Gabay in Year 5 were joined by mostly women participants. The Primary Eye and Ear Care (PEEC) Training was participated by 3% males while 97% were females. Women have shown a high participation rate to capacity building activities for the enhancement of education support to children with disabilities. In the training on Educating Children with Sensorial Disabilities, a total of 333 educators have participated in the training. Of the total number of participants, 11.11% were males and 88.89% were females. During the Parents Training on Supporting Children with Sensorial Disabilities, 3.33% males and 96.67% females have participated. It can be observed that women played a very crucial role in developing capacities of children with sensorial disabilities. Data have shown that women are at the forefront of ensuring inclusive quality education is provided to their children and learners.

Gabay has conducted eye and ear screening to almost equal percentage of boys and girls. Of the 402 children screened, 54.48% were males and 45.52% were females. Current enrolment data for children with disabilities also shows almost the same results, of the total 771 enrollees, there were 439 or 56.94% males and 332 or 43.06.% females.

The Year 2024 workforce of Gabay is composed of 10 females (90.90%) and 1 male (9.10%). Gabay's two highest leadership positions are occupied by strong and empowered women.

B. Sustainability Mechanisms

Gabay is beginning to reap the fruits of its interventions and strong collaboration with its stakeholders and key players. Significant strides on sustainability mechanisms were results of the forged partnership and convergence with local partners.

This year, important milestones were achieved in terms of sustainability. Policies supporting inclusive education and rights of children with disabilities are being developed in some of the partner LGUs with corresponding budget allocation. The Local Government of Tanauan issued

an Ordinance "Institutionalizing Inclusive Education and Establishing Inclusive Learning Resource Centers for Learners with Disabilities in the Municipality of Tanauan, Leyte, and Providing Funds Therefor." The ordinance ensures that accessible and affordable inclusive education shall be available to all children in Tanauan. Moreover, a policy on the Utilization of RBI Project Gabay Modules and Advocacy Materials distributed to LGU offices and organizations was issued by the three additional municipalities of Los Baños-Laguna, Bacacay-Albay and Tanauan-Leyte.

The field monitoring visits conducted in the project sites generated valuable inputs to ensure participation of the stakeholders and sustainability of the project initiatives. The dialogue with LGUs, DepEd, DPOs, and Parents is valuable to ensure that previously developed engagement plans will be operationalized. Gabay has already started its efforts to ensure that policies on the utilization of the Gabay developed teaching and learning materials for teachers and learners with sensorial disabilities are in place.

The establishment of resource centers in the project sites and provision of capacity building activities to ensure functionality of equipment provided, Gabay is assured with the commitment of the partner LGUs to cater the needs of children with sensorial disabilities from vision and hearing screening, audiological assessments, production of learning materials, and other educational services interventions will be facilitated. The roll out training for the utilization of the Inclusive Learning Resource Center Manual of Operations were conducted in the three additional sites and copies for its June 2024 version were distributed to DepEd and LGU officials of all the Gabay project sites.

The policies, budgets, and other considerations made by Gabay's partners in developing their respective organization plans are strong indicators that the project is on the right track and that partners appreciate the initiatives that have started.

C. Environmental Compliance

Gabay Team is ensuring that no environmental laws are violated in the conduct of its activities. Environmental problems and disasters, both natural and man-made, have affected conditions

and learning activities of children with sensorial disabilities. Gabay has provided kits to support learners with sensorial disabilities and their schools to easily recover from the destruction brought by typhoon Odette. Gabay worked with schools and LGUs for the relief operations for children with sensorial disabilities.

D. Global Climate Change

Climate Change is one of the problems that affect the functioning of children. Gabay recognized that effects of climate change have impacts on the condition and welfare of children with sensorial disabilities around the country. Hence, topics on disaster management are still embedded in the training for all its stakeholders. A special topic on Disaster Risk Reduction Management for Children with Sensorial Disabilities was included in the trainings for CHWs, educators, parents and LGU officials.

Participants were given inputs on early warning systems appropriate to children with sensorial disabilities, provision of learning spaces in evacuation centers and teaching strategies to continue learning events during disasters. Learning materials developed by teachers have included topics on disaster management in their lesson plans and activity sheets.

E. Local Capacity Building

The overarching principles of Gabay towards developing capacities of local stakeholders are anchored on mutual respect and benefits. Gabay pays respect to the expressed needs of its stakeholders that will be focused on its capacity development interventions.

To increase capacity of partners in conducting screening and assessment, Vision and Hearing Screening Kit to CHWs were delivered in the three additional sites: Los Baños-Laguna, Bacacay-Albay and Tanauan-Leyte. Gabay's partner medical professionals also provided brief training in these sites.

Parents and teachers continued to receive the mentoring program from the Deaf mentors.

Gabay continued to provide learning and teaching materials to DepEd teachers in all project sites. These were distributed during Gabay's field visit activities.

Parents and teachers who participated in the follow on evaluation for the EGRA Deaf and/or Hard-of-Hearing Interventions and Braille Reading Assessment have shown a great deal of appreciation for their additional skills in reading assessment and providing educational support to their learners and children especially during this time of the pandemic. Ongoing efforts to increase capacities of teachers to improve their competencies in teaching and assessing reading competencies of Blind and DeafBlind learners are great additions to the skills set of teachers.

VII. STAKEHOLDERS PARTICIPATION

A. INTERNAL

The involvement of various stakeholders, both internal and external, was instrumental in driving the Gabay project forward and achieving its objectives in Year 5. This year marked the expansion of services to additional sites which are the municipalities of Tanauan- Leyte, Los Baños-Laguna, and Bacacay-Albay. The scope of services also broadened, extending beyond sensorial disabilities to address ADHD, ASD, LDs such as dyslexia, and physical disabilities through the establishment of modular Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRCs).

The addition of new partners and stakeholders in Year 5 was vital. Their ongoing support throughout the year significantly contributed to the project's success. Through their expertise, resources, and influence, these stakeholders had a profound impact on the target communities.

1. GABAY LEVEL

In its 5th year, Gabay operated with a team of 11 staff members. Despite facing challenges due to the resignation of three key personnel, the Communications Officer, M&E Officer, and Procurement Officer, the project continued smoothly. Two of these personnel are on output basis. Their support and assistance in planning activities before their departure ensured that all scheduled tasks were successfully executed and accomplished.

2. RBI LEVEL

RBI provided invaluable support to the Gabay project through technical assistance and resource mobilization. Their expertise in braille production, along with the utilization of equipment, technology, and assistive devices for children who are blind or have low vision, was crucial in successfully establishing ILRCs at the new sites: Los Baños Central Elementary School, Bacacay East Central School, and Tanauan II Central School. Additionally, RBI facilitated the training of teachers on using these technologies and sent Blind Professionals and Technical Support to lead the actual training sessions.

RBI further expanded their impact by connecting the Gabay project with their partner eye specialists, including Dr. Joy Lim-Eustaquio, Dr. Joan Felix, and Dr. Belle Ambrosio, an ophthalmologist and low vision clinician, among others.

These specialists played a key role in establishing referral networks through the training of community health workers, face-to-face mentoring, and practical screening in their respective communities.

The presence of RBI Executive Director, Ms. Amelia Torrente and Board of Trustees Chairperson, Mr. Gary Jamora were vital in sustaining partnerships and maintaining visibility during significant activities, such as large-scale training sessions for educators at the three sites and the launching and turnover of equipment, technology, and materials to the ILRCs. They were also present during site visits from USAID partners and higher officials from DepEd, further reinforcing the collaboration.

3. iSEND LEVEL

The collaboration with the Parents Advocate for Visually Impaired Children (PAVIC) and DeafBlind Support Philippines (DBP), both members of iSEND, significantly impacted the parents' training activities within the Gabay new sites. These organizations provided powerful testimonies and motivated parents to better understand and support their children with sensorial disabilities. Their efforts equipped parents with the necessary skills to advocate for their children and to become influencers among other parents.

Another iSEND member, Better Hearing Philippines, Inc. (BHPI) volunteer Audiologist continued to play a pivotal role in the community ear screening activities and continue mentoring para-audiologists in local government units- USAID-established hearing centers: Maasin City Health Center , Sorsogon East Health Center, and Batangas Provincial Health Center. BHPI audiologist particularly Ronald Menor, supported these health centers for the distribution of USAID hearing aids to children beneficiaries and ensured proper consultations for accurate interpretation of results.

Additionally, BHPI's Program Manager and Consultant, Mr. Hubert Ramos, referred us to their volunteer Audiologist in Albay to accompany Gabay during ear screening in Bacacay-Albay

enhancing community health workers skills to conduct primary ear screenings within their communities.

4. OTHER EDUCATION CONSULTANTS

Over the past five years, Gabay has greatly benefited from the expertise of numerous consultants, including retired DepEd officials and specialists in the education of children with disabilities, such as Dr. Mirla Olores, Dr. Annie Blanca, Ms. Adelaida Elamparo, and Ms. Rhoda Nocum.

These consultants were instrumental not only in the previous conceptualization and development of educational materials but also in monitoring and school visitation activities. They provided invaluable mentorship to both GenEd and SNEd teachers through a series of focused mentoring sessions.

Gabay also benefited from the expertise of renowned education experts, such as Dr. Brenda Corpuz and Dr. Ricardo Nolasco, who facilitated the output-based planning and workshops for the next steps at the additional sites last September 2023.

The close involvement of the Philippine Federation of the Deaf (PFD), led by their new President Mariah Agbay, along with other officials and members, was crucial in enhancing the FSL Dictionary and named into “Compilation of FSL Vocabularies”. Together with Gabay’s Deaf Field Coordinator, Mr. Justine Barcenas, successive meetings with PFD were held, during which all comments and inputs were carefully considered and incorporated.

Another key partner during this expansion was the Autism Society Philippines (ASP)- Laguna Chapter, which facilitated training for both GenEd and SNEd teachers on non-sensorial disabilities. They also served as resource persons at the Bacacay and Tanauan sites.

Moreover, Gabay renewed its contract with School-to-School International (STS), which played a vital role in leading the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) for the Deaf follow-up evaluation. STS was instrumental in training enumerators, overseeing field administration, and leading the data analysis and reports. Additionally, educators from Miriam College conducted follow-up research on braille reading assessments among Gabay’s blind learners.

5. OTHER MEDICAL CONSULTANTS

Philear Inc. and the Rotary Club of Laguna supported Gabay by providing audiological evaluations through their resident audiologists, who assisted with ear screenings at the Tanauan and Los Baños sites.

B. EXTERNAL

1. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The involvement of DepEd, from the Central Office down to the regional, division, district, and school levels, was instrumental in the success of the Gabay project. As the primary stakeholders, they directly served the beneficiaries, the learners with disabilities.

The support and visibility of DepEd officials, starting with the Central Office, were crucial. These officials approved the conduct of various activities and ensured participation from different departments, including the Bureau of Learning Delivery - Student Inclusion Division, which contributed as resource persons during teacher training, observers during school visits and monitoring, and participants in the development of learning resource materials and the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) tool.

Additionally, the DepEd Office of Finance, particularly Project Management Service (PMS) office played a key role by observing meetings, training sessions, and field activities, thereby witnessing the project's impact firsthand.

The support of Regional Directors and Schools Division Superintendents of the Divisions of Laguna, Albay, and Leyte was likewise vital. Their offices facilitated the conduct of activities by allowing the participation of key stakeholders and attending events such as the launch of Inclusive Learning Resource Centers (ILRCs), the turnover of equipment, technology, assistive devices, and learning resource materials. Division offices issued division-wide memoranda promoting the utilization of Gabay materials for programs and services catering to children with disabilities.

The involvement of District Supervisors of the new sites was also crucial. By including them, Gabay ensured that all offices were aware of and involved in the programs, thereby securing their support for the teachers. The approval from district, division, and regional heads ensured that schools complied with supporting the activities and sending out participants.

The engagement of school heads was equally important. Their participation alongside teachers not only equipped them with knowledge and skills to handle programs and services for learners with disabilities (LWDs) but also fostered a deeper understanding and involvement in the process. This involvement contributed to the correct implementation of inclusive education which sometimes can be misinterpreted. Their primary role is not only guiding both teachers and students but also initiating opportunities for educational support from the local officials and communities.

Teachers, being the primary deliverers or catalysts for instructional strategies and methods, were essential participants in all activities. Their involvement ensured that learners gained knowledge, improved their performance, and received the necessary interventions. Teachers went beyond their teaching roles, actively engaging in assessing students to provide better interventions. These assessments extended beyond performance and skills evaluations to include critical medical interventions, which are vital for maximizing students' abilities.

Gabay's existing DepEd division sites were also actively involved in the annual debriefing, symposium, and planning for the new sites by sharing their best practices. These sites documented their successful approaches as references for the new locations, and coordination between sites was strengthened, particularly in specialist referrals and audiological services at their hearing centers. Additional materials were provided to the existing sites, and mentoring specifically on Filipino Sign Language was conducted, including reading assessments for the learners at these locations.

2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS

LGUs played a crucial role in supporting the Gabay project through local governance and community engagements in the additional sites. The involvement of higher officials, such as Governors and Mayors, was evident during key activities, including the launching of ILRCs,

equipment turnover ceremonies, annual debriefing activities, and courtesy visits prior to major events. Gabay believes that collaboration with LGUs ensures that DepEd schools receive the necessary support and involvement, particularly in promoting the awareness and implementation of RA 11650.

LGU officials and personnel participated in the Gabay project's Disability Sensitivity Awareness Orientation activities and played an active role in promoting inclusive practices for people with disabilities. This was also achieved through the distribution of Gabay advocacy flyers, posters, and brochures to local communities.

Gabay also collaborated with specific LGU departments, such as Provincial, Municipal, and City Health Offices (P/M/CHOs), to conduct vision and hearing screenings, train CHWs, and facilitate referrals to eye and ear specialists and other service providers.

Additionally, Gabay worked closely with Provincial/City/Municipal Social Welfare Development Offices (P/C/MSWDOs), including Provincial Disability Affairs Offices (PDAOs) and Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) as well Health Offices/Centers in these areas. The partnerships with these offices heightened attention to programs for PWDs and LWDs in the additional sites. LGUs consistently contributed to discussions, meetings, and launching activities, particularly during visits from USAID officials. P/C/MSWDOs and Health Offices also assisted in the distribution of hearing aids, facilitated patient transportation for check-ups, and provided other necessary interventions. Some of these offices even submitted proposals to address the various needs of LWDs.

One of the most significant contributions from LGUs was the formulation of local ordinances for budget allocations, initiated by DPOs, to improve the lives of PWDs. These ordinances not only provided financial support and local resources but also advocated for community awareness and understanding of inclusion. The goal was to ensure that PWDs are included, entrusted with tasks and responsibilities, and not viewed as subjects of pity or charity. The focus was on advocating for their strengths as contributors to society, rather than merely as beneficiaries of assistance.

3. CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS / DISABLED PEOPLE ORGANIZATIONS

Through LGUs, Gabay also engaged with various Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs) in the community, providing them with materials and training to enhance their involvement. Gabay motivated these organizations by emphasizing that they have partners in supporting children with disabilities. For this 5th year, organizations included the Rotary Club in Batangas, and the Autism Society Philippines in Los Baños. These groups were also actively involved in Gabay activities, sharing their expertise, and collaborating toward the shared goal of improving the lives of these children.

4. PARENTS

As crucial stakeholders in the education and well-being of their children, Gabay actively engaged parents and guardians in the project by encouraging their participation in training sessions, gathering their feedback, and supporting their children's education at home. Parents collaborated with educators and other stakeholders to create a conducive learning environment. Gabay aimed to empower these parents to become influencers and advocates for other parents facing similar challenges. However, before they could take on this role, it was essential for them to first understand, support, and educate their own children with disabilities.

5. LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES

As the primary beneficiaries of this project, Gabay's focus was to ensure that all interventions directly benefit them and contribute to their well-being. With this goal in mind, the project emphasized interventions tailored to the learners' needs, such as identifying local Deaf mentors to interact with and support Deaf learners in expressing themselves. Each region involved in Gabay had Deaf professionals assisting teachers, parents, and students.

Additionally, Gabay developed materials specifically for these learners, including the story "Abel & Kiko," regional variations of Filipino Sign Language (FSL) dictionaries, and braille books for children who are blind. These learners also participated in reading assessments, which were carefully prepared through collaboration with various groups and individuals specializing in Deaf education to ensure the tools were appropriate and effective for them.

C. USAID/PHILIPPINES SUPPORT

The Gabay project's success would not have been possible without the generous support of USAID. Their initial trust, opportunity, and funding transformed what could have been merely ideas on paper into a reality. Their presence and support during various launching activities and programs were not only visible but also deeply felt. USAID remained a steadfast partner throughout the project's successes and challenges during its implementation.

In Gabay's 5th year, Deputy Administrator of USAID Washington D.C., Ms. Paloma Adams-Allen, visited the Batangas ILRC, while the new Director of the Office of Education at USAID Philippines, Ms. Michelle Chen, visited both the Bacacay ILRC and the Batangas City ILRC. Additionally, visitors from other USAID countries observed the impact of the Gabay sites, supported by the close coordination of Deputy Director, Ms. Yvette Malcolm and Gabay's Agreement Officer Representative (AOR), Mr. Henry Grageda.

VIII. LESSONS LEARNED

1. **Importance of Financial Management**

- Effective management of finances is crucial for sustaining project activities and overcoming budget-related challenges. Utilizing available funding sources and maintaining a prudent budget are essential practices.

2. **Value of Versatility and Training**

- Staff versatility and continuous training are critical for addressing manpower shortages and enhancing project execution. Expanding training programs and developing flexible staff roles contribute to overcoming workforce challenges.

3. **Adaptability to Unexpected Situations**

- Adapting to situations such as unpredictable weather conditions and funding constraints in the project sites requires flexibility and innovation. Shifting to virtual platforms and developing remote solutions are effective strategies for maintaining project momentum during crises.

4. **Need for Efficient Financial Processes**

- Prompt processing of financial requests and effective financial monitoring are necessary to prevent delays and manage cash flow effectively. This helps in avoiding disruptions caused by delayed budget reimbursements.

5. Proactive Equipment Management

- Coordinating with suppliers and having backup plans for equipment and assistive devices help mitigate issues related to delayed shipments. Ensuring timely procurement is vital for project success.

6. Sign Language Training Importance

- Comprehensive and continuous training in sign language is essential for improving communication and inclusivity. Expanding training programs and utilizing virtual resources can enhance proficiency among teachers.

7. Team Cohesion and Communication

- Regular meetings, clear role definitions, and team-building activities are important for maintaining a unified team effort. Effective communication and coordination within the team contribute to achieving project goals.

8. Effective Collaboration with Stakeholders

- Clear roles, responsibilities, and communication channels are key to successful collaboration with LGUs and DepEd. Addressing conflicting viewpoints through mediation helps in aligning efforts and achieving common objectives.

9. Specialist Involvement for Diverse Needs

- Engaging specialists and expanding partnerships with organizations experienced in various disabilities ensures that diverse needs are effectively addressed. This enhances the project's ability to cater to a wide range of disabilities.

10. Maintaining Political Neutrality

- Staying politically neutral in project execution and engaging with all political stakeholders can help mitigate conflicts and ensure smooth project implementation.

11. Bridging the Technology Gap

- Providing necessary technology and training to beneficiaries, and addressing digital divide issues, are essential for ensuring equitable access to resources and support.

12. Consistency in Rule Interpretation

- Regular training and discussions to align interpretations of rules help in minimizing inconsistencies and ensuring that all stakeholders adhere to the same guidelines.

13. Effective Communication Strategies

- Utilizing multiple communication channels and engaging with the community through workshops and campaigns enhance the dissemination of information and improve stakeholder engagement.

14. Importance of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

- Developing a robust M&E framework and conducting regular evaluations are crucial for tracking progress, addressing issues, and ensuring project effectiveness.

15. Support from School Leadership

- Engaging school heads through orientations and sensitization programs is important for garnering support and ensuring successful implementation of programs at the school level.

Challenges	How these challenges were addressed
Financial Constraints	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leveraged USAID funding and financial resources from LGUs. 2. Applied for supplementary funding as needed. 3. Managed budget prudently to avoid financial overruns.
Lack of Manpower	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff members took on multiple roles to cover gaps. 2. Focused on recruitment and training to enhance staff capabilities. 3. Improved efficiency through clear role definitions. 4. Engaged consultants in critical activities
Delayed Budget Reimbursements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advocated for prompt processing of financial requests. 2. Implemented stringent financial monitoring to manage cash flow effectively. 3. Sought RBIs assistance.
Delayed Shipments of Equipment and Assistive Devices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinated closely with suppliers to expedite shipments. 2. Established backup plans for equipment needs.
Inadequate Sign Language Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expanded training programs for both SNEd and GenEd teachers. 2. Provided continuous and rigorous training to improve FSL proficiency. 3. Developed virtual training materials to reach more participants.
Lack of Unified Team Effort	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conducted regular team meetings to ensure alignment and communication. 2. Promoted team-building activities to foster unity.
Challenges in Collaboration with LGUs and DepEd	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved communication and coordination between agencies. 2. Established clear roles and responsibilities for all parties. 3. Addressed conflicting viewpoints through mediation.
Difficulty in Adapting to New Disabilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engaged specialists and experts to address new disabilities. 2. Expanded partnerships with organizations experienced in various disabilities.
Conflicting Political Affiliations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintained political neutrality in project execution. 2. Ensured consistent engagement with all political stakeholders to mitigate conflicts.

Limited Access to Technology	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provided necessary technology and training to beneficiaries. 2. Addressed digital divide issues by utilizing both advanced and traditional technologies.
Inconsistent Interpretation of Rules	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarified rules and guidelines through regular training sessions. 2. Addressed discrepancies by holding discussions to align interpretations.
Challenges in Communication and Dissemination of Information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthened communication strategies and used multiple channels for dissemination. 2. Engaged community and stakeholders through workshops and campaigns.
Lack of M&E System	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developed and implemented a Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework. 2. Conducted regular evaluations to track progress and address issues.
Problems with School Head Support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conducted orientations and sensitization programs for school heads. 2. Engaged with supportive school heads to advocate for the program. 3. Involvement in class observations and feedbacking

Overall, 1) the project successfully achieved the desired results and consequently met the needs of the clients and beneficiaries; 2) Gabay had a strong positive impact on the access of LWDs to quality inclusive education as shown by the almost a quadruple increase in the enrollment of LWDs in the target areas.

While the project team recognized its internal strength and achievements, it also emphasizes the need for dedication and perseverance of all stakeholders. In conclusion, the experience of the Gabay team affirms what had been demonstrated in other similar projects that in sum is: The successful outcome of work of inclusive education project teams are anchored on self-awareness of all actors involved, their understanding of exclusionary and inclusionary process, their commitment to provide opportunities to transform society, and their collective and unswerving efforts to make these work until all unreached and excluded children are reached (*Save the Children, 2020*).

IX. FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The total amount received by Gabay project from USAID for Year 5 is shown in Table 29 and a comparative quarterly expense is presented in Table 30.

Table 29. Amount of Milestones Received from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024

Milestone #	Date Fund is credited in Bank	Amount
Milestone 36	July 26, 2023	2,253,737.00
Milestone 41	August 02, 2023	2,573,546.00
Milestone 40	August 30, 2023	4,000,000.00
Milestone 39	October 26, 2023	4,073,546.00
Milestone 43	October 26, 2023	2,333,551.00
Milestone 42	December 20, 2023	2,500,000.00
Milestone 45	December 27, 2023	2,833,551.00
Milestone 47	December 28, 2023	2,533,551.00
Milestone 50	April 23, 2024	1,147,900.00
Milestone 44	April 29, 2024	2,500,000.00
Milestone 46	June 6, 2024	2,000,000.00
		28,749,382.00

Table 30. Comparative Expenses Per Quarter and the Total Expenses from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024

	Line Item	17th Quarter July - Sept. 2023	18th Quarter Oct. - Dec. 2023	19th Quarter Jan. - March 2024	20th Quarter Apr. - June 2024	TOTAL
A.	Salaries & Wages	2,230,735.70	3,019,771.28	2,152,549.71	2,187,177.63	9,590,234.32
B.	Project Activities	2,679,654.29	2,696,096.87	3,459,919.42	2,460,396.89	11,296,067.47
C.	Transportation & Travel	496,349.84	485,872.06	1,279,731.86	253,406.32	2,515,360.08
D.	Equipment	0.00		0.00		0.00
E.	Organizational Development	0.00		30,273.74		30,273.74
F.	Sub-Awardee					
	School to School International (STS)	2,187,145.40		612,443.70		2,799,589.10
	Perkins International	1,330,024.00		0.00		1,330,024.00
	Synergeia	300,000.00	500,000.00	0.00	200,000.00	1,000,000.00
G.	Other Direct Costs	325,514.00	370,879.37	310,460.71	325,157.21	1,332,011.29
	TOTAL EXPENSES	9,549,423.23	7,072,619.58	7,845,379.14	5,426,138.05	29,893,560.00

The above table shows that the largest amount spent was in the 17th quarter

X. SNAPSHOTS / MEDIA RELEASES



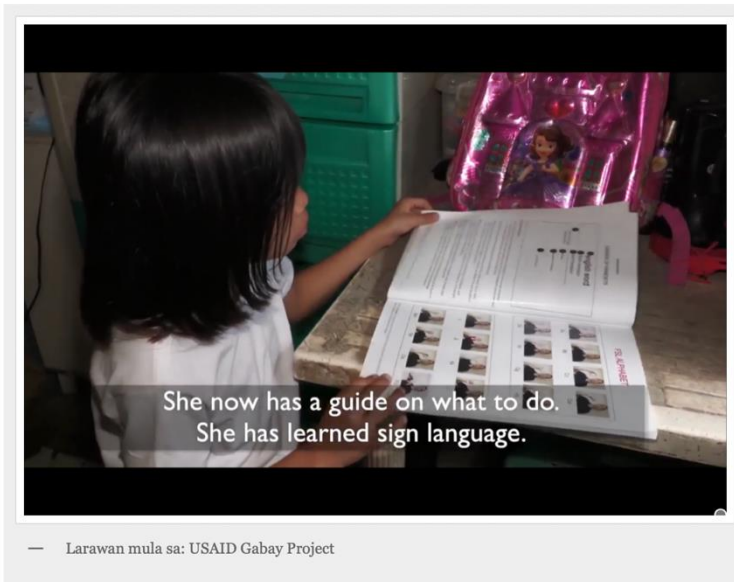
[Home](#) [Bantay Halalan 2023](#) [About us](#) [Print Edition](#) [Got a story?](#)

Posted on **August 10, 2023** by **Los Baños Times**

[← Previous](#) [Next →](#)

USAID Gabay Project, darating sa Los Baños para sa mga batang Deaf at Blind

Ulat ni: Christjinna Luofel Del Rosario



Mas mapapalapat na ang de-kalidad na edukasyon para sa mga batang may kapansanan sa paningin at pandinig sa Los Baños Laguna, matapos mapili ang bayan bilang *extension site* ng proyektong Gabay: Strengthening Inclusive Education for Blind/Deaf Children.

Ayon sa Resources for the Blind Inc., napili ang Los Baños bilang *extension site* ng proyekto dahil ang munisipalidad ay mayroong *enrolled children with disabilities* at mga guro na may pagsasanay sa Special Education (SPED). Bagamat may programa na para sa SPED, hangad ng Gabay Project na paigtingin ang kakayahan ng mga guro, magulang, at LGU na pangalagaan ang mga batang *Person With Disability* (PWD).

Sisimulan na ang pagpapalano ng Gabay Project na gagawin sa bayan ng Los Baños ngayong buwan ng Agosto.

Hinihikayat ni Dr. Yolanda Quijano, *Chief of Party* ng Gabay Project, ang mga magulang ng mga batang PWD na dalhin ang kanilang mga anak sa pinakamalapit na paaralan sa kanilang lugar upang mailapit ang tulong ng proyekto sa kanila. Sa ngayon, mayroong 13 na paaralan ang ini-rekomenda ng district supervisor mula sa DepEd na nakatalang mayroong *enrolled na children with disabilities*.



— Larawan mula sa: USAID Gabay Project

Ilan sa mga aktibidad na nakaplano ay ang *eye and ear screening, training* ng mga guro at magulang sa pag-intindi ng *children with disabilities*, at pagbibigay ng mga materyales para sa *inclusive learning* ng mga batang kailangan ng *Special Education (SPED)*.

Ang proyekto ay pinamumunuan ng Resources for the Blind Inc. kasama ang local government units (LGUs), Department of Education (DepEd), at United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Naka-schedule mula July 1 hanggang December 2024 ang proyekto bilang karugtong ng orihinal na 2019 hanggang June 2023.

Mungkahi ni Dr. Quijano sa mga magulang na kumuha ng PWD ID para sa kanilang mga anak upang makasali sila sa mga programang pang PWD at mabigyan ng tulong sa pagpapalaki ng kanilang mga anak.

Ayon sa World Health Organization, mahalaga ang *screening* upang masigurong nakakamit ng bata ang mga *developmental milestones* na angkop sa kanyang edad. Kapag hindi naagapan, ang mga kapansanan sa mata at pandinig ay maaaring maka-antala sa development ng isang bata dahil nalilimitahan nito ang kanilang interaksyon sa kanilang paligid.

Kahit may pag-aalinlangan o pag-aatubili man sa *screening* at pag-rehistro ng kapansanan, malaking tulong ang pagkakaroon ng gabay at suporta mula sa komunidad habang nagpapalaki ng bata.

The Gabay project is made possible by the generous support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development.

Mayor Ton Genuino receives new Inclusive Learning Resource Center from USAID

February 7, 2024



Los Baños students with disabilities will get to have new hope and a new beginning, according to Mayor Ton Genuino.

This is because Los Baños has a new Inclusive Learning Resource Center.

It was donated by the US Agency for International Development of USAID, in partnership with the local government, the Department of Education Los Baños, and Gabay.

Genuino and Laguna Rep. Ruth Hernandez thanked the USAID representatives who attended the inauguration of the facility.

The mayor said this would help and improve the lives of persons with disability in the town.

"Naniniwala ako sa potensyal ng proyektong ito, maging sa napakagandang epekto nito sa buhay ng ating PWD students, kaya naman suportahan ng ating administrasyon ang pamamalakad sa Learning Center na ito," he said.

He also said it was an honor for him to be part of partnership with USAID.

SOUTH LUZON Other Regions

Mayor Art Mercado says he won't stoop to level of critics, but advises public to be wary of disinformation

July 9, 2024

Mayor Vince Soriano says hiring of PUP Pakil campus staff, faculty to begin soon

July 9, 2024

Safe and decent houses are coming: Vice Mayor Gel Alonte signs MOU for housing project

July 8, 2024

Mayor Joy Salvame inaugurates solar water pumping system

July 8, 2024

Mayor Aries Aguirre assures Grade 1 students of free school supplies

July 8, 2024

Vice Mayor Raygan Dimapilis welcomes formal opening of AMIGA District Hospital

July 8, 2024

Rep. Dino Tanjuatco finds a new go-to restaurant

July 8, 2024

Gen Z in the house! Mayor Angelo Aguinaldo welcomes young stars to his city

July 8, 2024

Check out Mayor Cindy Carolino's power breakfast for her busy weekend



Anthony "Ton" Genuino

February 6 · 🌐

Ngayong taon, may bagong simula at pag-asa para sa Ka-LB students natin with disabilities. In partnership with our local government unit, Department of Education Los Baños at Gabay, nag-donate po ng bagong Inclusive Learning Resource Center ang USAID o US Agency for International Development sa ating bayan.

Bilang pasasalamat, sinamahan tayo ni Cong. Ruth Hernandez sa pagbibigay-pugay sa USAID representatives na dumalo sa pagbubukas ng nasabing imprastruktura. Naniniwala ako sa potensyal ng proyektong ito, maging sa napakagandang epekto nito sa buhay ng ating PWD students, kaya naman susuportahan ng ating administrasyon ang pamamalakad sa Learning Center na ito.

Isang karangalan po ang maging bahagi ng partnership na ito kasama ng ating mga kaibigan mula sa Amerika.

#BagongLosBanos
#TonGenuino



You and others

34 comments 49 shares

DepEd Tayo - Albay Province
May 7 · 🌐

Overview **Comments**

PANOORIN: USAID at Gabay Resources for the Blind Inc., Naglunsad ng Turn Over Ceremony para sa Dagdag na Kagamitan sa Bacacay East Central School
Lee Ann Baroma
Rocky Rabino
Louie Lobigan

Most relevant ▾

Nenette Juan
Congrats BECS Production Team 🥳🥳🥳🥳
8w Like Reply

Kevin Balbalosa
Apil Mylene Bellen gari si ep ito.
8w Like Reply

Write a comment...

Love Comment Share You and others · 4 comments · 3.7K Plays

ASP Laguna
January 24 · 🌐

Though far from their home, ASP Laguna team members led 1 Bansa, 1 Pangako during the GABAY (Guide): Strengthening Inclusive Education for Learners with Disabilities training of teachers, school heads, supervisors, parents and guardians on January 20 as part of the commemoration of the 28th National Autism Consciousness Week with the theme "Accessible Education and Economic Empowerment for Pinoys on the Autism Spectrum". Also present was Yolanda S. Quijano, Gabay's Chief of P... [See more](#)

XI. LAST 6 MONTHS' PLAN

**Table 31. Quarters 21-22: Six (6) Months Upcoming Activities After Year 5
(July - Dec. 2024)**

Planned Activities	Venue	Target Date	In-Charge
Intermediate Result 2			
Online presentation of the results of the 2024 EGRA for Deaf Learners and Braille Reading Assessment for Blind Learners: Non-Graded, Kinder to Grade 3 (final) to DepEd, USAID, iSEND & Gabay-RBI	DepEd Central Office	August 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Melyssa Sibal - Mr. & Mrs. Gatchitorena - Ms. Joy Magsubar - Ms. Maui Gabriel - Ms. Grace Balaguer Field Coordinators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Cristina Labastida - Mr. Justine Barcenas - Ms. Fatina Publico - Ms. Rachel Amasan
Research: Assessment of Teaching Competencies on Inclusion of Children with Sensorial Disabilities of SPED and GenEd teachers in Sorsogon and Albay Province	Bicol University Gubat Campus	July-Oct. 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr Yolanda Quijano - Ms. Amy Mojica - Ms. Joy Magsubar - Ms. Cristina Labastida
Consultation meetings with Philippine Dyslexia Foundation (PDF) Specialists & Experts	Gabay Office	June-July 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr. Yolanda Quijano - Ms. Amy Mojica - Ms. Joy Magsubar - Ms. Maui Gabriel
Meeting cum workshop with the DepEd officials of the Central and Regional Office V-Bicol with the Divisions of Sorsogon and Albay with USAID, ABC project, Gabay and PDF	Legaspi City	June 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr. Yolanda Quijano - Ms. Amy Mojica - Ms. Joy Magsubar - Ms. Maui Gabriel - Ms. Grace Balaguer - Ms. Cristina Labastida - Ms. Rachel Amasan
Accessing information for the CRLA assessment from Divisions, Schools & ABC +	Gabay Office	July 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr. Yolanda Quijano - Ms. Amy Mojica - Ms. Maui Gabriel - Ms. Cristina Labastida
eMFAT (Enhanced Multi-Factored Assessment Tool) Part 1			

Planned Activities	Venue	Target Date	In-Charge
Augmenting information on Basic Education Enrollment Form for each learner with the following: a) Vision and hearing screening result b) Lead testing result c) Health profile d) Interview questions for parents' reading performance	Gabay Office	July 2024	- Dr. Yolanda Quijano - Ms. Amy Mojica - Ms. Joy Magsubar - Ms. Maui Gabriel Field Coordinators: -Ms. Cristina Labastida -Mr. Justine Barcenas -Ms. Fatima Publico -Ms. Rachel Amasan
Conduct of vision and hearing screening by CHWs and lead testing to selected Grade 2 learners with reading problems or at risk of Dyslexia in Sorsogon East and Bacacay East Central Schools	Sorsogon City East Central School Bacacay East Central School	July-Aug. 2024	- Dr. Yolanda Quijano - Ms. Amy Mojica - Ms. Joy Magsubar - Ms. Maui Gabriel - Ms. Grace Balaguer Field Coordinators: -Ms. Cristina Labastida -Mr. Justine Barcenas -Ms. Fatima Publico -Ms. Rachel Amasan
Orientation to division and school officials and selected Grade 2 teachers and conduct of the eMFAT Part 1 to selected Grade 2 learners in 2 schools	Sorsogon City East Central School Bacacay East Central School	August 2024	Dr. Yolanda Quijano - Ms. Amy Mojica - Ms. Joy Magsubar - Ms. Maui Gabriel - Ms. Grace Balaguer Field Coordinators: -Ms. Cristina Labastida -Mr. Justine Barcenas -Ms. Fatima Publico -Ms. Rachel Amasan
Analysis of the eMFAT Part 1 results	Gabay Office	Sept. 2024	-do-
eMFAT (Enhanced Multi-Factored Assessment Tool) Part 2			
Development Phase: Contents of the eMFAT Part 2 a) Reading skills and test items (total 50 items) b) Language of testing: Filipino to be translated to Mother Tongues:	PDF Office	July-August 2024	-PDF Consultants & Reading Specialists

Planned Activities	Venue	Target Date	In-Charge
For Sorsogon East CS: 2 MTs: (Filipino & Northern Sorsoganon) For Bacacay East CS : 1 MT (Bicol) c)Manual for testing written in English			
Validation and revision of the test items and the Manual of Testing: 1 school in NCR 2 schools in Region V	Div. of Quezon City, NCR Divisions of Albay & Sorsogon, Region V	September 2024	-PDF Consultants & Reading Specialists -Selected Gabay staff
Orientation to division and school officials and selected Grade 2 teachers of Grade 2 teachers and conduct of eMFAT Part 2 to Grade 2 learners in 2 schools	Sorsogon City East Central School Bacacay East Central School	October 2024	-PDF Consultants & Reading Specialists -Gabay staff
Analysis of results of the eMFAT Part 2 conducted and presentation of results with recommendations to DepEd, USAID and Gabay	PDF Office DepEd Central Office	October 2024	- PDF Consultants & Reading Specialists
Training-Workshop for Teachers & School Administrators, and parents on Preparing IEP with Reading Interventions with other DepEd central, regional and division officials	Sorsogon City East Central School Bacacay East Central School	November 2024	-PDF Consultants & Reading Specialists - Gabay staff
Report Preparation and Presentation	PDF Office DepEd Central Office	November 2024	-PDF Consultants & Reading Specialists -Gabay staff

XIII. ANNEXES

[A. Early Grade Reading Assessment \(EGRA\) and Braille Reading Assessment \(BRA\) End line Report](#)

[B. School Monitoring Report](#)

[C. Year 4 and Year 5 Annual Debriefing and Symposium Report](#)

[D. Gaps and Recommendations/Actions on Disability-Inclusive Education in support to Sustainable Developmental Goal 4 \(SDG 4\) 2030](#)

[E. Sustainability Plans](#)

[F. Gabay Accomplishments from Year 1 to Year 5](#)

[G. “The Guide” Compendium of Gabay Good Practice Documentation](#)