

## ALS plays crucial role in achieving EFA 2015 goals

How can the goal of Education for All (EFA) 2015 be achieved?

Education entails strong collaboration among stakeholders. As they say, “it takes a village to educate a child”. Thus, all sectors, both public and private, should adopt innovative mechanisms to provide all individuals, regardless of age, economic status, race, and family background, with equal access to quality basic education.

Recognizing its crucial role, DepED Region VII has enforced the implementation of the two (2) major programs of ALS – the Basic Literacy Program (BLP) and the Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) Program. As a parallel learning system, ALS has gradually and effectively evolved in the 19 schools division of the Region.

In the 2010 National A&E Test, three (3) Schools Divisions of Region VII outranked other Divisions nationwide as to the **Most Number of Test Passers**. The Divisions of Bohol (Rank 2), Cebu Province (Rank 3), and Cebu City (Rank 5) came out on top. As to the **Highest Percentage of Passers**, Bogo City (67%) and Siquijor (63%) Divisions got Rank 9 and 10, respectively. On the **Most Number of Test Takers**, Cebu Province with 3,282 test takers ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Bohol Division with 1,863 test takers got the 6<sup>th</sup> rank.

The aforesaid Divisions were recognized as ALS Top Performing Implementers. Each Division was given a Plaque of Recognition through its Schools Division Superintendent (SDS), during the World Teachers’ Day Celebration held on October 5, 2011 at the Pavilion, DepED ECOTECH Center, Sudlon, Lahug, Cebu City.

A&E Test Takers comprised Out-of-School Children (OSCs), Out-of-School Youths (OSYs), and Out-of-School Adults (OSAs). They dropped-out from the elementary and secondary levels; thus, they were not able to access basic education in the formal school system due to various reasons.

The A&E National Ranking Committee explained that ALS implementers of Region VII have been successful in their efforts in pursuing ALS as a viable alternative to the formal education structure.

ALS encompasses both the formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills, such as those acquired at home, church, media, and environment, or even life itself. ALS has been implemented in the Region, operating in 222 Community Learning Centers (CLCs). Engaging the community to be fully involved in the ALS Programs will definitely empower them to function effectively.

ALS plays an important role in achieving the goal of Education for All (EFA) 2015, which is the “Universal Coverage of Out-of-School Youth and Adults in the provision of Basic Learning Needs”. With the stakeholders’ participation in this endeavour, ALS will certainly uplift the economic situation of the Filipino people.

Former Secretary Jesli A. Lapus dubbed ALS as the **lifeblood** of our EFA efforts. “Without it, we can *never* achieve our Education for All targets-at least not within the timeframe that we have set for ourselves. The limitations of our public school system, and the limited resources we have for our public schools, prevent us from really addressing the needs of many of our people”, he stressed.

Region VII has recognized the efforts of the different Schools Divisions in facilitating ALS programs and projects in their respective divisions. District ALS Coordinators (DALSCs), Mobile Teachers (MTs), and Instructional Facilitators (IMs) have been capacitated to conduct classes and review sessions for the clientele.

This year, the Regional Office has appointed 26 Mobile Teachers. To enhance their competencies in their ALS task, a National Basic Course in ALS was conducted by the Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS) on June 7-10, 2011 at DepED ECOTECH Center, Sudlon, Lahug, Cebu City.

For the 2011 A&E Test, Region VII has tallied 19,570 A&E registrants, who are qualified to take the test on November 13, 2011 at the different designated Division Testing Centers. The Division of Cebu Province has the most number of OSYs and OSAs with 5,366 registrants, while Bayawan City Division has registered the least number of test takers with only 167. The number of test registrants in each Division is indicated below:

Division	Total number of registrants
1. Bais	328
2. Bayawan	167
3. Bogu	620
4. Bohol	1,680
5. Cebu City	2,587
<b>6. Cebu Province</b>	<b>5,366</b>
7. Carcar	539
8. Danao	554
9. Dumaguete	497
10. Guihulngan	267
11. Lapulapu	1230
12. Mandaue	600
13. Naga	962
14. Negros Oriental	1793
15. Siquijor	352
16. Tagbilaran	921
17. Tanjay	473
18. Talisay	589
19. Toledo	605
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,130</b>

Successful A&E test takers will be granted equal rights as what graduates of formal education system will receive. Certificate of Completion signed by DepED Secretary, Bro. Armin A. Luistro, FSC, will be awarded to the passers from both elementary and secondary levels.