

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Alternative learning and livelihood for Muslims ok'd

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus approved recently a proposal that would open a window for alternative learning and livelihood training among Muslim out-of-school youth and adult migrants through the Department of Education's (DepEd) Alternative Learning System-cum-Madrasah Program.

According to Lapus, the program is expected to contribute to the peace process as there can be a serious peace and order problem if no social development interventions are made available in urban areas.

"We need to open a wider latitude for learning and skills training among our Muslim brothers to give them a chance to improve their lives," said Lapus. He added that "giving our Muslim youth a chance at education and livelihood training will significantly reduce the possibility of conflict.

Studies showed that the highest rate of school drop-outs is in Muslim areas. With massive migration in urban centers, Muslim migrants bring along their families, including out-of-school children.

The program components include: basic literacy, accreditation and equivalency, technical and vocational skills training, entrepreneurship development, and microfinance. Arabic Language and Islamic Values (ALIVE) will be incorporated in every program component.

The basic literacy, accreditation and equivalency as well as the Revised Basic Education Curriculum (RBEC) shall be administered by the DepEd's Bureau of Alternative Learning System.

Lapus explained that entrepreneurship development component includes sourcing of loan financing on microfinance of small and medium scale enterprises. The Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) is being considered as DepEd's partner in this undertaking.

DepEd is also currently sourcing out possible financial support from member-countries of the Organization of Islamic Conference.

According to DepEd Undersecretary for Muslim Affairs Manaros Boransing, "the department's efforts at alternative learning are open to all learners as our education initiatives are geared towards achieving our Education for All goals."

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