K to 12 PLUS Project

Tracer study
Final version

13 February 2019

Foreword

This tracer study was commissioned by Sequa gGmbH (hereafter also referred to as "Sequa") for its K to 12 PLUS Project, co-financed by BMZ with the support of AFOS Foundation for Entrepreneurial Development Cooperation, Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft (DEG), Deutsche Auslandshandelskammern (AHK), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Savings Banks Foundation for International Cooperation (SBFIC), Zentralverband des deutschen Handwerks (ZDH) and carried out by Mainlevel Consulting AG (Mainlevel). Mainlevel has been contracted by the Project, from 01.05.2017 until 31.03.2019, in order to:

1. Design the approach for the tracer study including identification of the target group and sampling, identification of synergies with similar studies part of different programmes, definition of the survey methodology, questionnaire formulation and templates development.

2. Pilot and implement tracer study including data collection, data analysis, quality assurance, reporting and presentation of the results.

This tracer study was made possible thanks to the time and support given by different stakeholders to the consultants' team. We would like to thank especially the K to 12 PLUS Project team in the Philippines for their smooth guidance throughout the field visits, their availability and openness, and their proactive support with the organisational aspects. A special thank you to Andreas Dernbach, Dr Alberto Fenix Jr. and Marlon Mina for their guidance and feedback.

Our sincere appreciation also goes to the people and organisations interviewed in person, via phone or Skype.

Developed through an independent process, this tracer study contains views and opinions which do not necessarily represent those of the contractor, of any donors or of key informants consulted.

Mainlevel Consulting AG provides expertise in digitalisation and monitoring & evaluation. We enable organisations in the public and private sector to increase the efficiency and impact of their interventions through targeted digital solutions and learning-oriented M&E. We help our clients to:

- manage complex programmes based on solid evidence;

- unlock the power of data and data management;

- improve collaboration with diverse stakeholders;

- efficiently collect and learn from robust data;

- manage knowledge and turn it into action.

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Acronyms

AHK	Deutsche Auslandshandelskammern German Chambers of Commerce Abroad
BPO	Business Process Outsourcing
Calabarzon	Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon Southern Tagalog region
CCCI	Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry
CHED	Commission on Higher Education
DEG	Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft
DepED	Department of Education
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit German International Cooperation
GPPCI	German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry
JHS	Junior High School
KFW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
PBEd	Philippine Business for Education
PCCI	Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry
SBFIC	Savings Banks Foundation for International Cooperation Sparkassenstiftung für Internationale Kooperation
SHS	Senior High School
SY	School Year
TechVoc	Technical Vocation
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TVI	Technical Vocational Institute
TVL	Technical Vocational Livelihood
ZDH	Zentralverband des deutschen Handwerks German Confederation of Skilled Crafts

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background information

1. In the Philippines, Republic Act No. 10533, was signed by President Benigno Aquino III on 25 May 2013[1]. Commonly known as the "Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013", the reform implies a significant change from the existing ten years basic education cycle to an enhanced basic education cycle (K to 12). This includes at least one year of kindergarten education, six years of elementary education, and six years of secondary education. The six years of secondary education include four years of Junior High School (JHS) and two years of Senior High School (SHS).

2. The two additional years of education imply on the one hand expected benefits for the Filipino youth and the economic market, and on the other hand some institutional challenges. The Philippine government put in place efforts to promote practical orientation and to further increase qualification of young trainees in the formal education sector by exposing the students both to the academic field and professional sector. In this context, the Philippine Department of Education (DepED), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) are tasked to formulate the appropriate strategies and mechanisms needed to ensure smooth transition to the new system. TESDA, in particular, has a significant part in the introduction of technical and vocational (TechVoc) education to all JHS and the provision of further qualification for employment by awarding National Certificates (NC I and NC II) to all students taking the TechVoc track. The award of such certificates will demonstrate that they have successfully passed assessment tests and acquired employment-relevant skills[2]. One of the foreseen challenges of this reform might be a potential disconnection between the vocational education and training and the labour market. Furthermore, a key factor of success relies on whether the school graduates are truly prepared to match the actual requirements of the market.

1.2 K to 12 PLUS Project

3. The K to 12 PLUS Project (hereafter also referred to as "Project") has been designed to address these challenges and support strengthening the role of the private sector in the Philippine vocational education and training system. The Project is a **large multi-stakeholder initiative aiming at increasing employment and income of Filipino youth and their families and matching the needs of companies for mid- to high level qualified employees**. It is a concerted effort to promote the comparative advantages of the respective partners by linking private sector and development
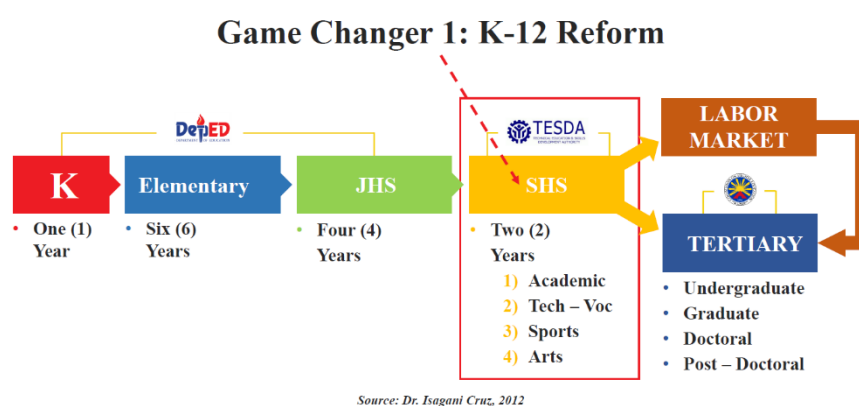
Figure 1 Philippine educational system

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[1] "An Act Enhancing the Philippine Basic Education System by Strengthening its Curriculum and Increasing the Number of Years for Basic Education, Appropriating Funds Therefor and For Other Purposes"
https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2013/05/15/republic-act-no-10533/

[2] TechVoc Policy Implications of the K to 12: Enhanced Basic Education,
https://www.tesda.gov.ph/uploads/File/policybrief2013/PB%20Kto12%20as%20of%20Sept.20,%202013.pdf

cooperation competencies and interests, to create added value for economic and social development in the Philippines.

4. With an overall budget of 4,8 million EUR, its first phase ran from 01/10/2013 to 30/09/2016, and its second phase from 01/10/2016 to 30/09/2019. The **German Project Partners of this Project** are the AFOS Foundation for Entrepreneurial Development Cooperation (founded by the members of the Federation of Catholic Entrepreneurs - BKU), DEG - Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft (member of KfW Group), the German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GPCCI - member of the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German International Cooperation - GIZ) the Sparkassenstiftung für internationale Kooperation (Savings Banks Foundation for International Cooperation - SBFIC), Sequa, and the Zentralverband des deutschen Handwerks (ZDH - German Confederation of Skilled Crafts).
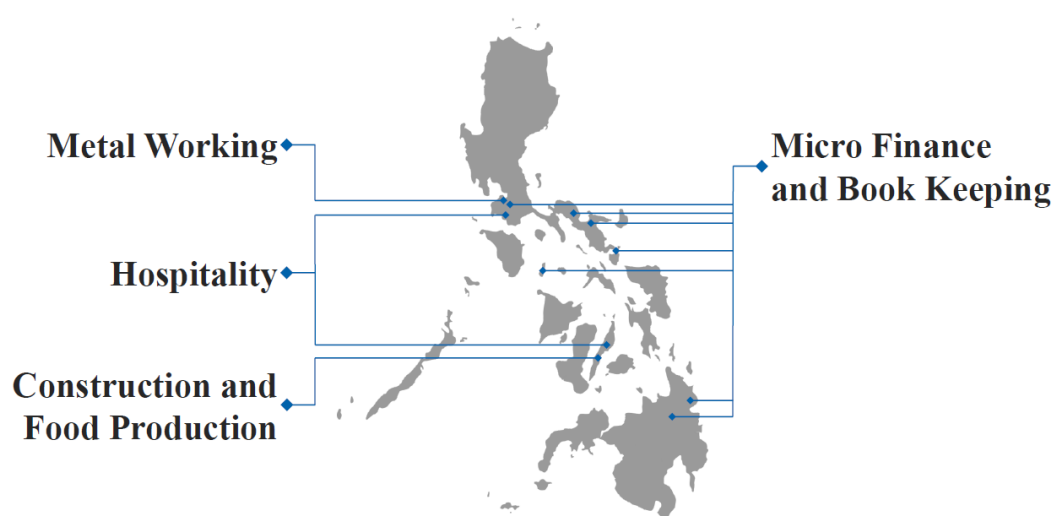

Figure 2 Pilot K to 12 Plus Project Clusters

5. Among the **distinctive aspects of the Project** in the context of the programmes currently implemented in the Philippines, the following can be highlighted: various pilot regions, diverse industries/sectors offered, ladderised vocational training education, longer immersion hours and new complementary didactical methods. Project Partners in the Philippines include, among others, the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), the Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI), Philippine Business for Education (PBEd), as well as industry associations and enterprises. The private sector, business chambers, associations and enterprises play crucial roles. Their involvement includes setting competency standards; providing training space for actual apprenticeships, and competency assessment and certification.

2 Motivation for implementing a tracer study for the K to 12 PLUS Project

6. A tracer study, or graduate survey, is a **standardised survey** of graduates or students from education institutions, which usually takes place at a specific time after the conclusion of a "learning intervention". Tracer studies are sometimes referred to as follow-up studies, precisely because they trace individuals after an event has taken place and follow up on what has happened in their lives since then. Tracer studies are first and foremost concerned with the **changes at the level of the former beneficiaries' lives**. They aim at documenting changes but also, to the extent possible, to determine the degree to which the intervention contributed to such changes. They also seek to influence decision-making through the provision of empirically-driven feedback.

7. Programmes and projects seeking reform of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), which try to improve skills match and the transition from school to work, can highly benefit from tracer studies: to measure their outcomes and impact, as well as to steer the implementation of further similar initiatives. In addition to more descriptive elements, tracer studies can also link several aspects that are connected to each other and to the outcomes of training interventions by causal links. For example: (1) individual preconditions of the students, such as gender and regional background, as well as motivations (e.g. is there a strong correlation between employment success and regional location?); (2) different learning methods and inputs (e.g. is there a strong correlation between number of on-the-job training hours and enhanced skills set?); (3) other work experiences precedent or parallel to the ones part of the TVET initiative (e.g. are students already having work experience more likely to find a job after the programme, leaving all other variables unaltered?), etc. To the extent possible, these aspects were considered for the design of the K to 12 PLUS Project tracer study.

8. In the context of the Project, the tracer study can be considered to be a part of the activities targeted towards the achievement of Result 1: "The existing clusters implement dual vocational education and training". In particular the implementation of the tracer study is part of activity 1.3.1: "formulate a system whereby the employability of the K to 12 PLUS Dual Training graduates is measured". This tracer study was commissioned by Sequa gGmbH, co-financed by BMZ with the support of AFOS, DEG, HIHK/AHK, GIZ, Sparkassenstiftung, ZDH and carried out by Mainlevel Consulting AG (hereafter also referred to as "Mainlevel").

2.1 Objectives of the tracer study

9. The objective of implementing the tracer study for the K to 12 PLUS Project is to provide answers to the following questions:

- Which impact did the Project have on the graduates after they finished their studies?
- How did the graduates perform in the job market?
- Have they found an employment and whether their current job match to the skills that they have learned from the Project?
- How did the graduates think of the K to 12 PLUS Project in relation to their current job?
- Do they have the necessary skills set and knowledge to fulfil their current job requirements?
- If they were already employed, did the participation to the Project help them with improving their employment conditions?
- What are the possible reasons of the graduates' unemployment?
- What are the graduates planning after graduation, especially in the year 2019?
- Among these K to 12 PLUS graduates, how many went to college after graduation? How many became employed? For those employed, how much time did pass from graduation until becoming employed?

10. The expected outcomes and benefits of the tracer studies include:

o **For the K to 12 PLUS Project itself and the Project partners**: gaining high-quality data on the outcomes and potential impact of the Project will allow the Project Partners to steer their decisions based on evidence, thus increasing the likelihood of success of their strategies. Evidence-based research will also help in the Project partners' advocacies related to dual training and TVET.

o **For the beneficiaries of the K to 12 PLUS Project**: for all categories of beneficiaries, the participation to the tracer studies will lead to an increased awareness about the Project's initiatives, likely to result in additional motivation and commitment. Furthermore, they would certainly benefit of any adjustment made to the Project thanks to new insights gained through the tracer study.

Finally, if possible and supported by the Project, the results of the tracer study could offer valuable input to the **Project's monitoring system**, by providing relevant data to measure its indicators.

2.2 Ethical principles and considerations

11. When carrying out research activities involving people, it is always crucial to observe certain ethical principles. In particular, all activities of this tracer study complied with the following:

- **Consent**

Conducting a tracer study requires acquiring information and data. Research subjects shall have the freedom to decide if they want to provide this information and, should they decide not to participate, their reasons should not be questioned. Informed consent is based on providing the necessary information in a language that can be well understood by the subject, clearly stating that the ultimate decision on whether to answer or not to all or some questions lies with them and with them only. The principle of informed consent is particularly important for studies involving younger participants, as it is the case for the graduates who participated in the K to 12 PLUS Project.

- **Anonymity**

A tracer study does not require names or distinguishable personal data to achieve valid findings. An important aspect of the ethical handling of a tracer study's participants is to disguise their identities in all results' analyses reports. The rationale of this principle is to protect them so that they cannot be identified at a later stage, for example to prevent that the information they provide could be used in negative manner. Equally important for the success of the tracer study is to make the application of this principle very clear to the participants, to allow them to answer openly and without any bias induced by the fear of potential consequences.

- **Confidentiality**

The personnel in charge of the tracer study will possess certain information on the participants, including their names and other personal data such as their email addresses. However, none of such data will appear as part of the study's results and findings. Also in this case, it shall be made clear in an easily-understandable manner to the participants that once the information is collected though an IT application the data is aggregated, and it will therefore impossible for anybody to trace the responses back to him/her.

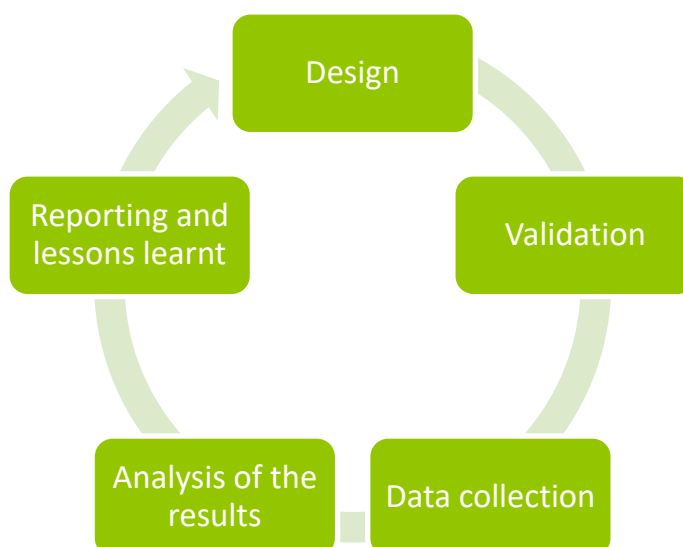# 3 Tracer study methodology and implementation

Figure 3 Tracer study methodology and implementation steps

12. This chapter presents the essential steps carried out by Mainlevel for the implementation of the tracer study. The figure above illustrates the sequence of such steps. A block cycle diagram has been chosen for this purpose, to emphasise that these steps represent a continuous sequence. In fact, results and lessons learnt from a first tracer study could represent valuable input for the realisation of further studies. These steps and their sequence have been presented to the K to 12 PLUS Project Coordinator and all partners, as part of bilateral meetings with Mainlevel.

3.1 Design

13. As part of the design of the tracer study, the following important aspects have been defined: (1) the target population (who will be invited to participate in the studies); (2) the methods of data collection (e.g. online or paper questionnaire); (3) the coverage of the survey (i.e. sample or census).

14. In October 2017, a survey has been implemented in order to reach current students/graduates, as well as teachers/trainers and company representatives participating in the Project's Immersion phase and/or that hired graduates/students from the K to 12 PLUS Project. The reason for this choice was that at the time identified by the Project to design the first tracer study (mid-2017) there were not enough graduates from all clusters/locations to constitute an adequate target group. The objective of the 2017 survey was to acquire an understanding of certain trends among students/graduates, measure their perception of the Project, and to the extent possible assess the expected impact of the Project (with the modality and limitations described in the 2017 survey report). Furthermore, it served as a test for the study's questions. Since targeting students that are still graduating would have not allowed determining the impact of the Project, also teachers/trainers and representatives of companies involved in the Project were targeted. This allowed acquiring insights into the potential impact of the Project, by assessing how the students participating in the K to 12 PLUS Project were currently performing at school, as part of the Immersion and at work if already employed.

15. Subsequently, a survey has been conducted in March 2018 to collect detailed information on the graduates of the March 2018 graduation session, to be able to trace them afterwards in November 2018. Finally, with the survey implemented in November 2018 the actual tracer study has been completed with the collection and analysis of information approximately eight months after graduation.

16. When it comes to the target population of the actual tracer study, the main group that were considered are all graduates who finished their studies in March 2018 as well as past graduates of the Project.

17. Considering that the K to 12 PLUS Project comprises several clusters and multiple locations, a pre-research phase consisting of bilateral meetings with the partners in charge of each cluster/location has been carried out. Such meetings allowed for Mainlevel to capture the most relevant particularities of each cluster/location and take them into due account while designing the methodology and the questionnaires for the tracer study. The latter are annexed to this report. Almost all questions are "closed questions", meaning that the respondent shall tick one (or more) boxes to answer (on the contrary of "open questions", where it is possible to articulate a free text).

18. The sections below summarise the most relevant aspects of this tracer study's methodology. A highly participatory approach has been followed throughout all steps. It is important to note that this report focuses mostly on descriptive statistics.

Summarising:

Target population

- All graduates of the K to 12 PLUS Project, specifically those who graduated in March-April 2018 as well as graduates from previous School Years (SYs). The March 2018 survey was conducted to collect detailed information on the graduates of the March 2018, to be able to trace them afterwards in November 2018. The November 2018 survey is the actual tracer study to collect information approximately eight months after graduation.

Pre-research meetings

- As part of the preparation of this tracer study, Mainlevel met with all Project Partners, as well as with the Project Coordinator, to acquire updated information about the project and particularities of each cluster/location.

Pre-piloting target population

- All questionnaires annexed to this report have been tested by Mainlevel with samples of students/graduates.

Timing

- The 1st online survey to collect data and contact details of all graduates of this graduate session has been launched from 15 March 2018 until 18 May 2018.

- The 2nd online survey with the objective to trace graduates few months after graduation and gain information to help assessing outcomes and potential impact of the Project has been launched from 9 November 2018 until 13 December 2018.

3.2 Validation

19. During the validation phase, **all deliverables resulting from the design phase were approved by the Project**. To facilitate this process, all deliverables were developed by Mainlevel using a **highly-participatory approach**, with a high degree of involvement of all Partners.

20. To make sure they will indeed be fit for their purpose, a key step has been **to pilot the tracer study's questionnaires**. This made possible to identify potential issues concerning the approach, the selection of questions, and to make sure that the language used was appropriate. To support this step, pilot qualitative interviews have also been carried out in all the Project's implementation sites. The input from the participants involved in this step led to changes in the way of presenting certain questions, their wording and sequence, as well as other important aspects of the tracer studies' design. Furthermore, to make sure that the questionnaire will be well understood by all participants, it has been decided to present all questions in both English and Tagalog. The translation of the final questions has been done by Mainlevel in coordination with the Project staff.

Summarising:

Participatory approach

- All deliverables have been developed with the involvement of the Project Coordinator and all Project Partners.

Validation

- The tracer study questionnaires have been developed with the involvement of, and validated by, the Project Coordinator and all Project Partners.

3.3 Data collection

21. When it comes to data collection, an important decision to be taken always concerns whether to use a paper questionnaire or an online-based one. For these tracer study, following Mainlevel's recommendation it has been decided to use of an online platform. The use of online surveys presents several advantages: (1) lower costs; (b) quick availability of the survey results; (c) no need for specialised personnel for the data collection; (d) the questionnaire can be tailored for different groups (with filters), and therefore be easier to complete and look shorter.

22. A critical pre-condition for proceeding with an online survey is that the target groups can access the Internet through a web browser. For most clusters/locations, the availability of email addresses of the target groups had been confirmed. In some other cases, not all graduates had email addresses or were not actively using their email accounts, but the questionnaire could be shared with them through the Clusters' Facebook groups established to share information on Project-related activities. Essential information about the target population, such as names, cluster, location, and email address were collected in March 2018 and updates regarding their employment were collected in November 2018.

23. There have been difficulties to reach the target group especially they have already graduated and are not closely link to their Clusters or even some do not live in the same region, one of the solutions implemented discussed with the Project Partners and Project staff to ensure adequate coverage has been to launch an event gathering graduates on 8 December 2018. This allowed the clusters to communicate to all graduates and to ensure that the right target groups were reached.

24. The tracer study questionnaire was loaded onto an online platform, where appropriate filters were programmed to guide the path of the questionnaires depending on the participant's answers (e.g., to direct him/her to the appropriate set of questions on the basis of the group he/she belongs to).

25. While the preparation was be done by Mainlevel's qualified Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) expert, the link to the online survey was distributed both by Mainlevel via email and through the Clusters' respective Facebook groups or Facebook messenger by the Project Partners, each one of them for its group of respondents (e.g. AFOS for Cebu, GIZ for Laiya, etc.). The reason for this is that participants will feel more comfortable to answer to a survey coming from persons they know.

26. To increase the response rate, at least two reminders were sent to the participants that did not yet respond. After the conclusion of the defined survey period, the online questionnaire was closed on 13 December 2018.

Summarising:

Participatory approach

- The study has been implemented with an online survey, tailored to fit all different groups of participants.

- The link to the online survey has been distributed via email to all participants by Mainlevel, with support from the Project Partners in encouraging the participants to respond (each one of them for its group of competence), to ensure a good response rate.

Setup of the questionnaire on the online platform

- The questionnaire was loaded onto the online platform by Mainlevel.

Launching the survey

- The link to the online survey was distributed via email to all participants by Mainlevel and via Facebook by the Project Partners (each one of them for its group of competence), to increase the likelihood of a good response rate.

- To tackle the challenge of reaching a wide target group, one of dedicated solutions to ensure adequate coverage discussed with the Project Partners and Project staff is to launch an event on 8 December 2018.

Duration of the survey

- The survey lasted for five weeks, and reminders have been done by Mainlevel and Project partners to their groups of competence.

Dissemination

- The Project will decide to which groups this report will be made available, as well as in which form (e.g. only electronically or in hard copy).

3.4 Analysis of the results

27. The data analysis is a crucial step for a tracer study. In fact, it is during this phase that the raw data obtained through the questionnaires were transformed into operational information to be presented in the final report.

28. The first step in the actual data analysis was to carry out simple frequency counts and aggregate statistics. This step already provides some useful information, considering that most of the questions in the recommended questionnaires are "closed questions". However, to be able to extract much more valuable information from the gathered data, further analysis shall be carried out, for example to capture correlation between different aspects covered by the study (e.g. employment and region, immersion company and actual employer, etc.).

29. A non-exhaustive list of this type of more advanced analyses includes: (1) for specific questions, further filtering of certain characteristics (e.g. gender, regional background, cluster, previous work experience, etc.); (2) consideration of the responses to some questions where specific points were not directly asked for, but resulted from the combination of individual answers given to other questions (e.g. relation between satisfaction and actual achievements). Such analyses are not possible by just comparing percentage values or means but need dedicated procedures (e.g. multivariate analysis).

30. Taking into account all the above, the entire data analysis phase has been carried out by a qualified M&E consultant with good knowledge in statistics.

Summarising:

Importance of data analysis

- The data analysis phase is crucial for the success of the tracer study, because it is during this phase that raw data coming from the online survey is translated into operational information.

First statistical analysis

- The first step for the data analysis consists of carrying out simple frequency counts and aggregate of all variables to be measured by the study.

Advanced analysis

- To be able to extract further relevant information from the results of the survey, advanced statistical techniques have been applied (e.g. to identify interesting correlations between different aspects of the results).

3.5 **Reporting and lessons learnt**

31. In addition to text sections, the main findings are also illustrated with the **use of tables and charts**, which can present in a clear manner much more information than what can be provided with just text, in addition to **enhancing the overall readability of the report.** By reviewing them, the reader is be able not only to better understand the results, but also to gather additional details about the questions and the correlations between them. This chapter also contains relevant **lessons learnt, and recommendations** to be considered for further studies.

32. A **brief and easy to understand summary** is annexed to this report and is recommended to be shared with all participants, especially for those who asked for it.

33. The following points have been considered as the limitation or potential constraints of the K to 12 PLUS Project tracer study:

Table 1 Limitations / potential constraints of the tracer study

Limitations / potential constraints	Short description
Mixed population	The main target population necessarily had to be quite heterogeneous, including graduates in 2018 and other past School Years.
Distribution of the target population of graduates across clusters	Graduates are not equally distributed across clusters (the hospitality and microfinance clusters combined represent approximately more than 70% of the total population of graduates.
Survey guidance by Project staff	Several graduates have been guided by Project staff while filling out the questionnaire, a fact that could to a certain extent have inevitably influenced some of the answers. Some clusters also used printed questionnaires and asked students to fill out directly on 8 December 2018. After which K to 12 PLUS Project staff, manually put all gathered data onto the online platform.

4 Findings of the tracer study

34. This chapter primarily focuses on the results of the November 2018 survey, with reference and comparisons with the March 2018 survey which collected detailed information on the graduates of the relevant graduation session. Some insights from the 2017 survey are also included in order to have a deeper analysis of the results.

35. The **total number of respondents is 318 in March 2018 and 171 respondents in November 2018**. Taking into account that at the time of the tracer study survey the graduates were not anymore directly involved in the Project's activities, the response rate of November 2018 should be considered as satisfactory, thanks to the Project Partners and Project Staff efforts.

4.1 Demographic data

36. This subchapter contains demographic data including information about gender, age, region and year of graduation of all respondents from the March and November 2018 surveys. The data can be seen as significant also in order to be further cross-analysed other results for the succeeding subchapters like "4.2 Cluster, institution, stage of the programme", "4.3 Satisfaction with the K to 12 PLUS Project", "4.4 Employment, salary and other benefits" and "4.5 Open comments/recommendations from respondents".

37. **More than 60% of the respondents from the March and November 2018 surveys are female graduates** have answered both surveys (see figure 4). By looking at the respondents age, 160 respondents from March 2018 were born in 1999 and 81 respondents were born in 2000. A few months after graduation, most of the respondents in the November 2018 survey were also born in the year 1999 and 2000. This indicates the normal age range targeted by the Project. However, it is also important to consider that there are **few respondents** who were born from 1986 to 1995 especially in the November 2018 survey. This means that there are graduates who continued and finished their education despite their old age in comparison to the current batch of graduates.
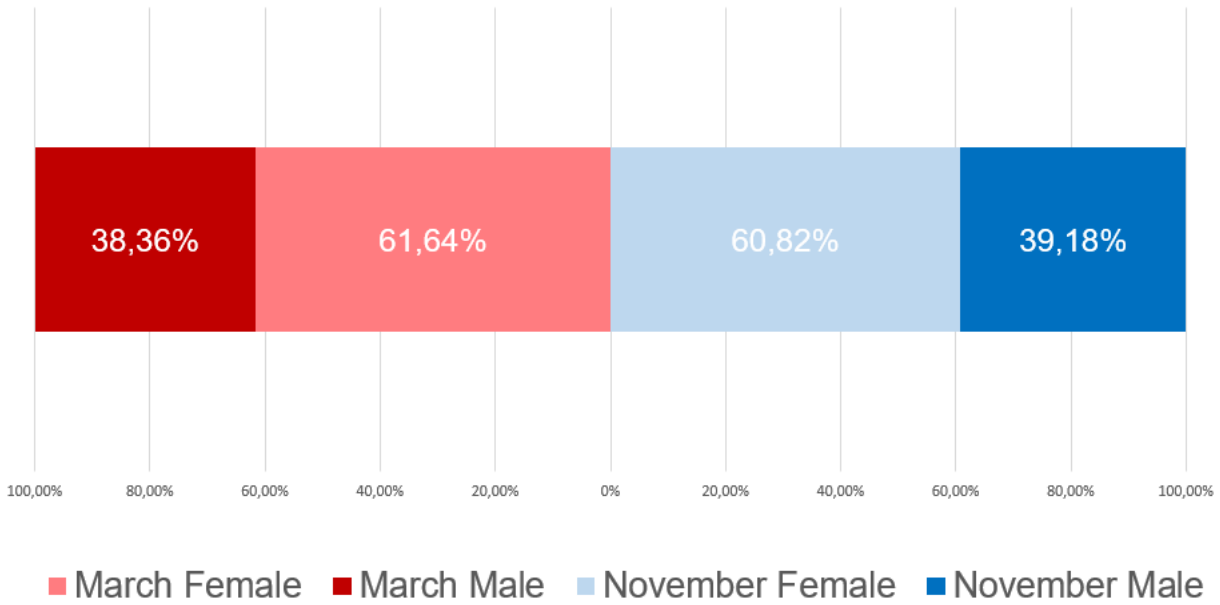
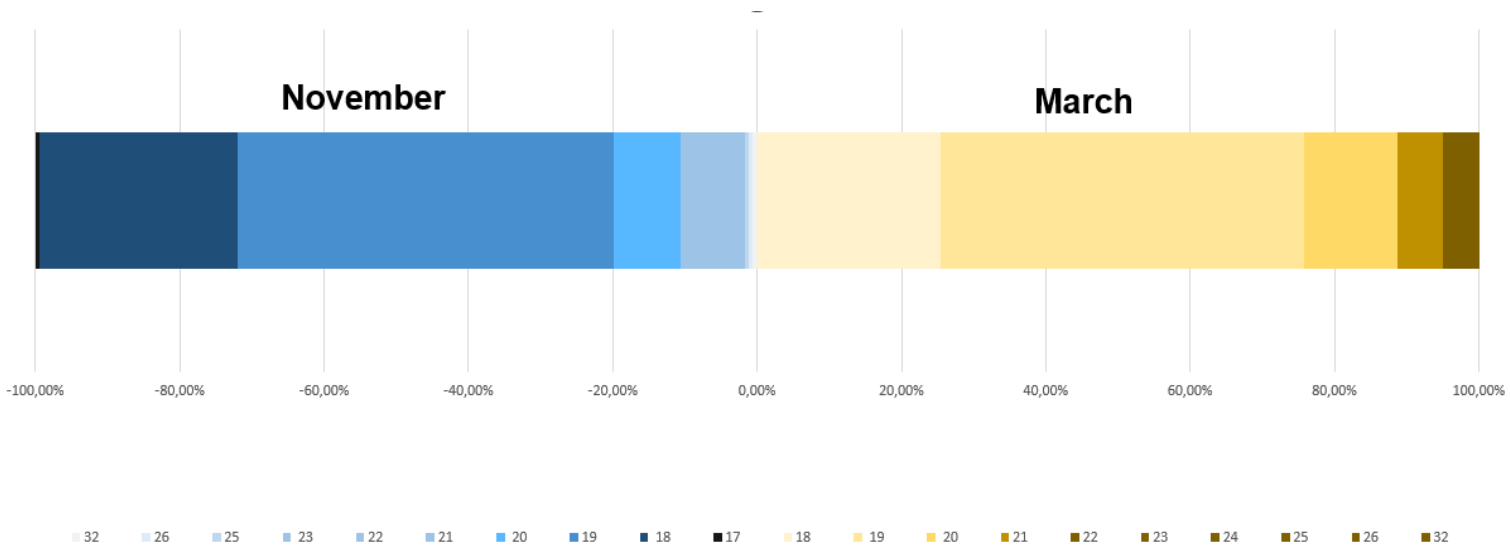**Figure 4 Respondents' Gender in March and November 2018 surveys**

Figure 5 Respondents' Age

38. In November 2018, the graduates were asked whether they are **single, married, widow/er or separated**. Although **100% of the respondents stated that they are single**, **4% claimed that they are single parent**, meaning that they already have child/ren to support, especially in terms of their financial needs. This question plays a significant role in understanding their motivation to be employed given there are other people dependent on them.

39. Given that the Finance and Hospitality clusters in Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon (CAL-ABARZON) have the greatest number of graduates from the March 2018 survey, more than half of the respondents are expectedly located in the Southern Tagalog region and Central Visayas region (Cebu) as shown from the figure below.
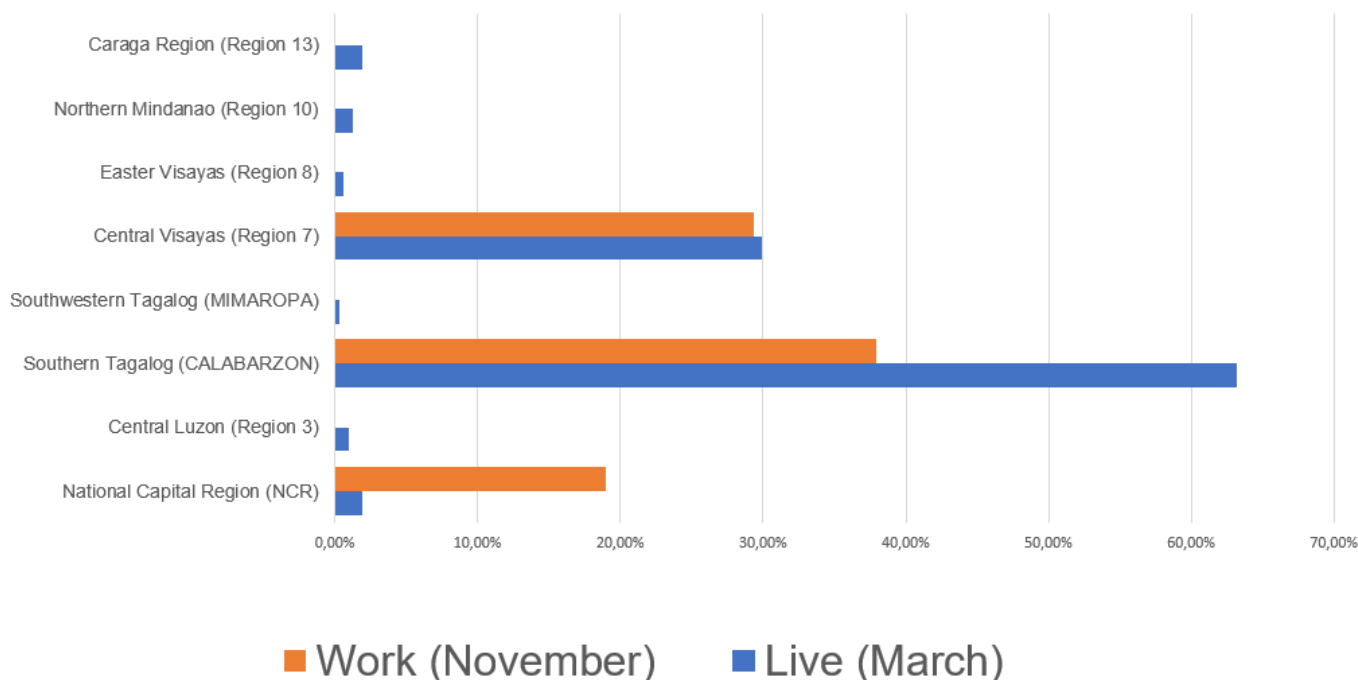

Figure 6 Regions where the respondents live (March 2018) and work (November 2018)

40. The March 2018 graph shows where the respondents were located right directly after their graduation, but it is interesting to note the trend on how the respondents moved from the provinces to bigger cities like Metro Manila. As the two bar graphs correlate, the **number of respondents has increased from 3 % to 19% as they relocate to the National Capital Region 8 months after graduation**. Although the majority of the graduates opted to stay at their home provinces/cities, there are still graduates who explored new opportunities by going to bigger metropolitan areas.

41. The majority of the respondents graduated in the year 2018. However, there are also respondents who finished their studies in SY 2017, 2016 and 2015. This **heterogeneity of graduates gives a representational overview on how the graduates of the K to 12 PLUS Project performed in the job market** during a longer period compared to the eight months covered by the tracer study.

4.2 Cluster, institution, stage of the programme

42. In November 2018 survey, Laiya National High School considerably gained most respondents (39%), followed by Primary Structures Educational Foundation (PSEFI-Skills) (23%) and CARD Senior High School (9%). The reason for this is that there were more graduates from these schools as part of the target population.
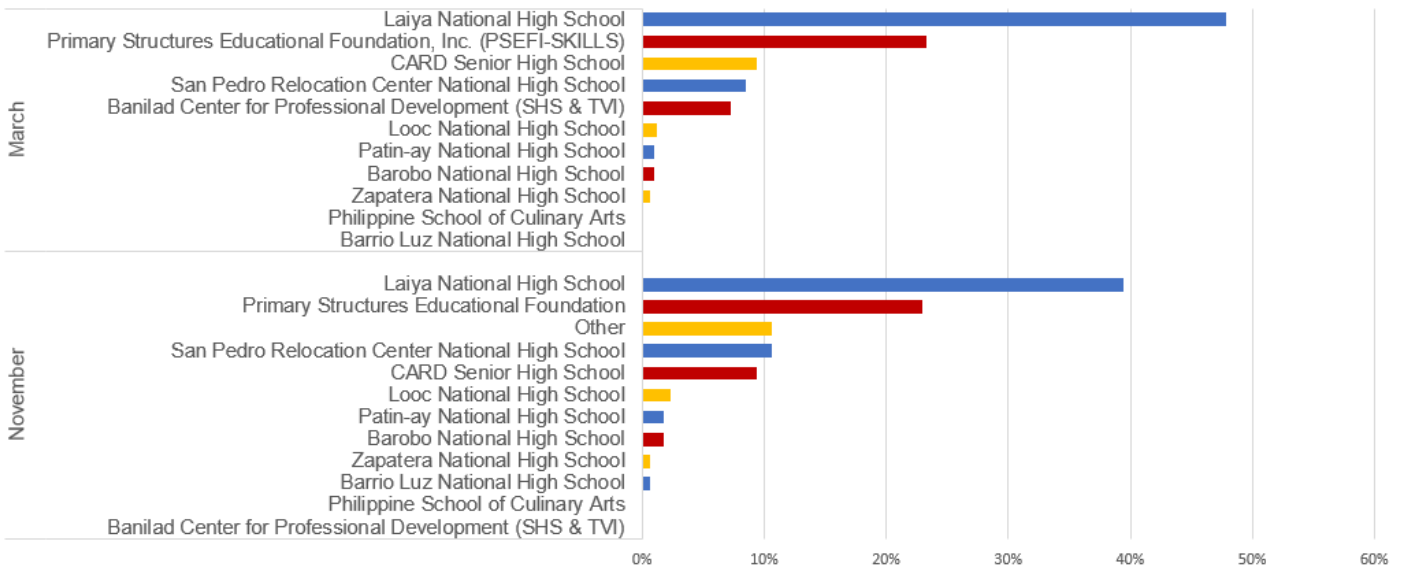
Figure 7 Name of high school

43. Graduates were asked: "For employed, is your current company the same employer where you have done the immersion?" Out of employed graduates in the November 2018 survey, 33% answered yes. This response is considerably low in comparison to the same question asked during the March 2018 survey, where 86% out of 98 employed respondents positively answered that the company that is ready to employ them is the same company of their immersion. There might be a few reasons of this turnover and it will be interesting to know the reasons why most company representatives do not absorb the graduates directly or in a much longer period.
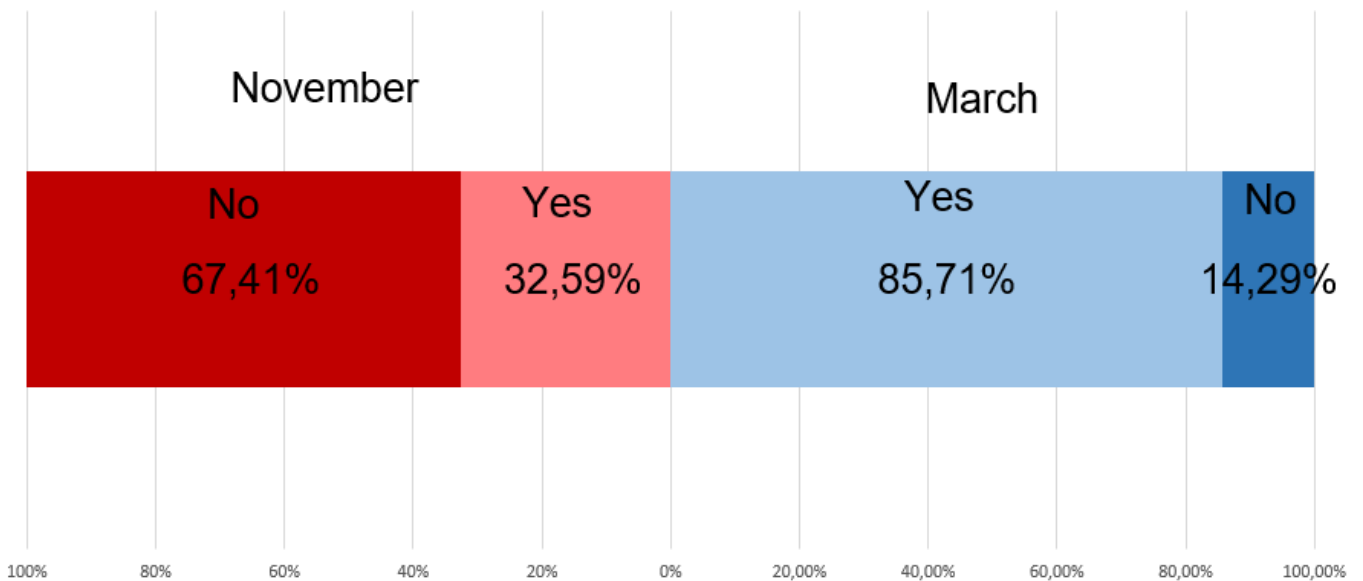

Figure 8 Is the company the same employer where you did your immersion?

44. **Primary Structures Corp is the company/current employer who absorbed the most number of graduates** (22%), followed by Cebu Grand Hotel and Estrella de Mendoza. This result shows that those graduates who stayed in their home provinces found gainful employment from the companies which participated in the immersion.
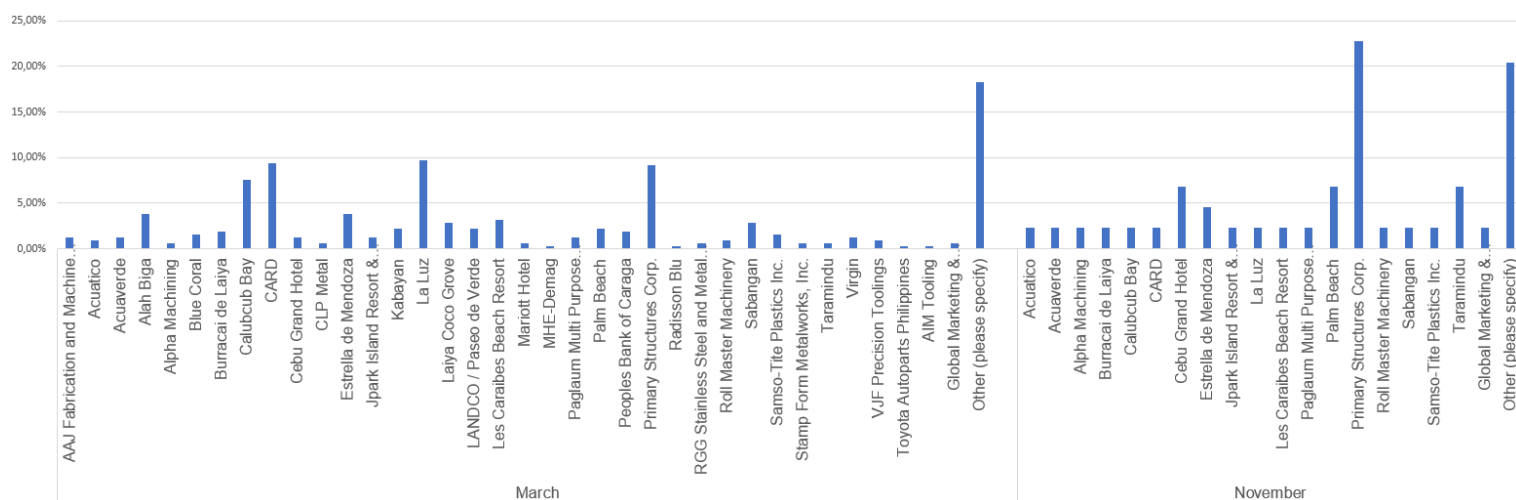

Figure 9 Immersion (March) and current employer (November)

45. Out of 58 respondents who answered the question: "In which economic sector are you employed?", **34% come from the Hospitality sector, followed by the Manufacturing sector at 25% and Construction sector 12%.** From these results, it is also relevant to notice that none of the respondents gained employment in the **Microfinance sector** and 28% of the respondents were employed in the following positions:

- Loader

- Endorser

- Sales representative

- Attendant

- Enterprise/ Sari-sari store

- Service Crew

- Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) / Communication (call centre)

46. This data clearly shows that the Hospitality and Manufacturing (Metalwork, Food Processing) clusters produced graduates who have easily been integrated to the given economic sector. Most importantly, the graduates who have been working on other sectors also provided valuable inputs regarding their other chosen options. Some responded that they helped their relatives who already have businesses or enterprise. Assisting their family members or relatives temporarily as a staff or crew, might be beneficial if they were still waiting for their next academic or career step. Others have been in the industry which might be close to the Hospitality cluster like endorser, sales and service crew as well as construction like loader. However, it might not be surprising that some of the Project graduates have been employed in the BPO industry due to high manpower demand and lenient application process.

47. When asked about the relevance of their TESDA National Certificates[3], which they acquired after they passed and paid for the assessment fees during the K to 12 PLUS Project, a significant number of respondents stated that their work is aligned with their TESDA National Certificates. This is a good indication that the National Certificate is perceived as beneficial especially in the graduates' line of work.

48. This result is also in line with the results from other questions regarding the Chamber/Industry Association certificate at the end of K12 Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL): In this case 67% confirmed that they received their certificates and 50% affirmed that this is very helpful to find good employment and only 2% found it not helpful at all.

49. When it comes to the plans that surveyed employed graduates have for their **future in the year 2019**, a particularly relevant data is represented by approximately 38% of respondents stating that they try to find more attractive employment. This is in our opinion a quite interesting data for the Project, as the intention of the graduates to pursue an early employment might have often led them towards professions not requiring the level of education they acquired from the K to 12 PLUS. 29% stated that they eventually planned to study. Some of the respondents claimed that in order to have a better job, they still need to pursue higher education at university.
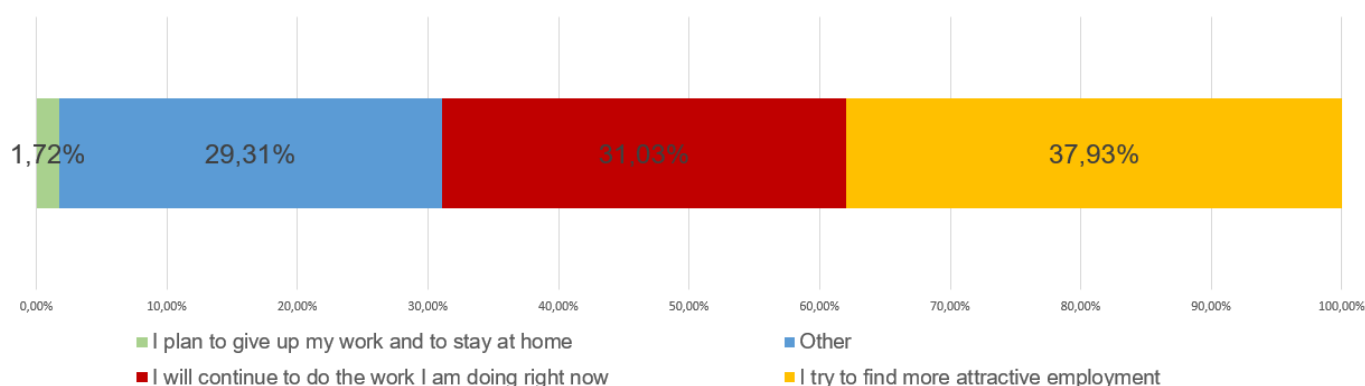

Figure 10 Plans in the year 2019

50. However, a suggestion on how this apparent contrast could in practice not have negative implications, there are respondents supporting their statement expressing the intention to look for a job while continuing to study. Other plans also include going abroad or applying to specialised training institute, like for example the National Police Training Institute.

4.3 Satisfaction with the K to 12 PLUS Project

51. This section focuses on the **overall satisfaction** of the graduates who participated in the Project and aimed at showing their perception on the **most important benefits** they acquired from it.

- 85% of the graduates from March 2018 and 81% of the November 2018 respondents expressed "complete agreement" with being satisfied with the K to 12 PLUS Project: a very positive result given the most have still the same perception upon graduation and even 8 months after they already graduated.

- To better understand which the features of the Project are **perceived as having most importance for students and graduates**, the participants were asked in 2017 about what they are currently doing as part of the K to 12 PLUS Project, they think they would not do without it - **learning new skills** was the first most

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[3] A National Certificate is issued by TESDA when a candidate has demonstrated competence in all units of competency that comprised a qualification.

chosen option (83% of the respondents), followed by the possibility to do more practical work (31% of the respondents). Earning an allowance was, surprisingly, ticked by only 10 respondents (2%).
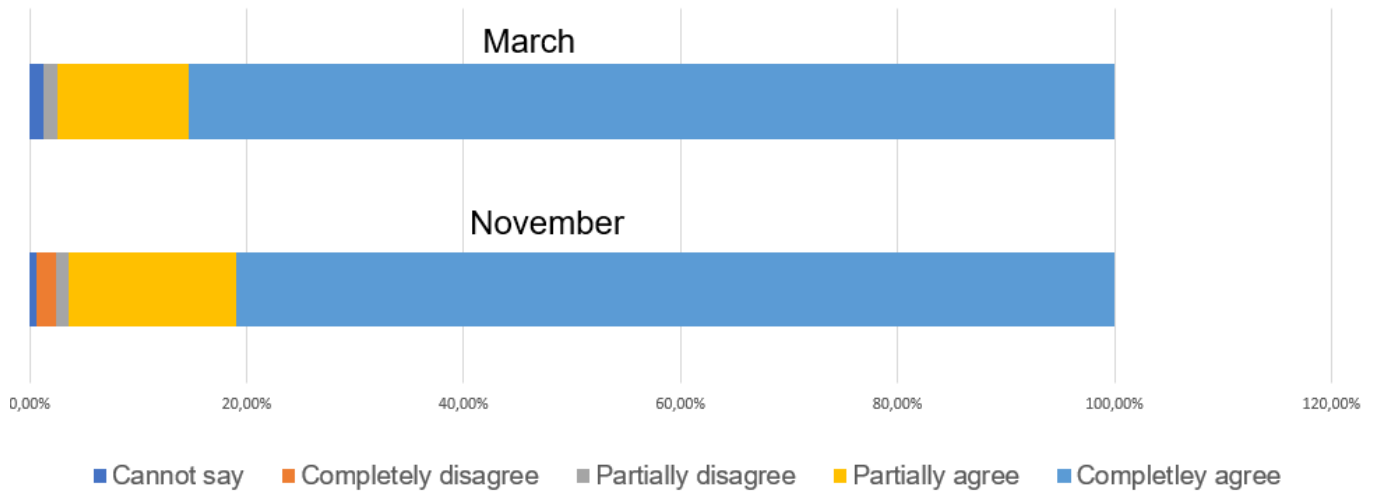

Figure 11 Overall satisfaction with the K to 12 PLUS Project

52. During the March 2018 survey, the majority of the graduates also completely agreed that they have learnt new skills through the immersion programme. Furthermore, in November 2018 survey 82% stated that their participation in the immersion programme under the K to 12 PLUS Project was beneficial to find gainful employment. These results can be considered an affirmative remark from the graduates.

4.4 Employment, salary and benefits

53. When asked if they are **currently employed**, the respondents divided themselves as follows: 37% answered yes, and 63% no. More than half of the respondents in the November 2018 survey are unemployed. This is an important result to consider given that the main aim of the initiative is to **increase employment and income of Filipino youth.**
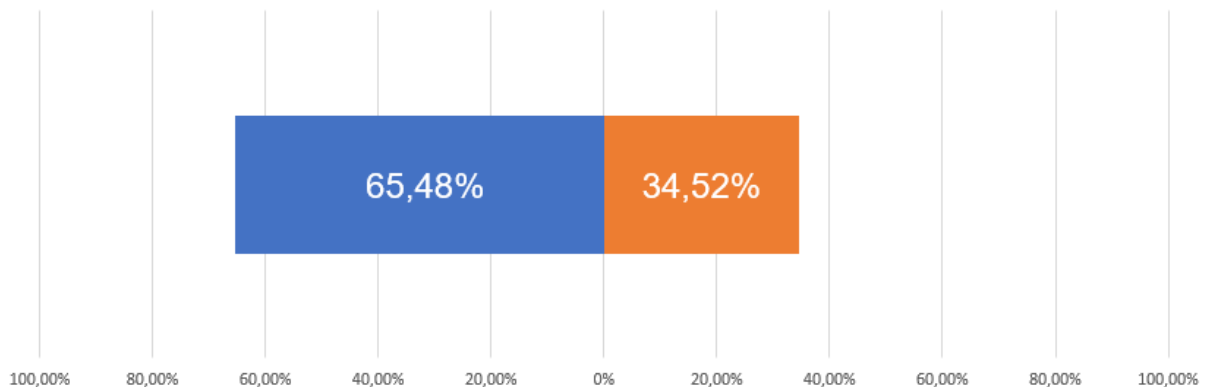

Figure 12 Are you presently employed?

54. Most of the unemployed respondents (76%) revealed that their main reason for unemployment is they wanted to pursue further study in the university; 9% had family concerns that inhibited them to find a job; 6% stated that they had no job opportunity.
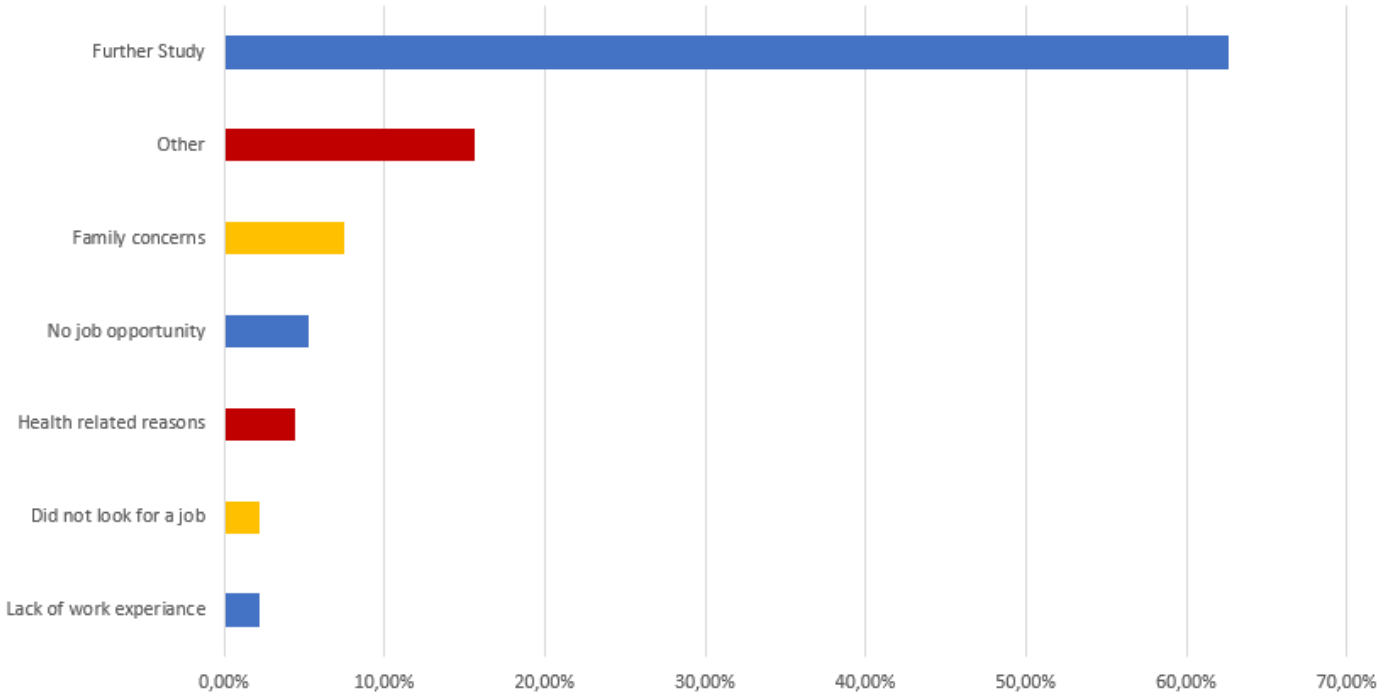

Figure 13 Reasons for unemployment

55. As some of the respondents answered in the November 2018 survey, they correlate success usually to a university degree. Normally, more international companies might choose candidates who gradu-ated from a university. However, 19% of the employed respondents stated that their current employer is an international company and 69% are absorbed by local companies. Thus, there should be an awareness both from the graduates' and companies' sides about the increasing benefits of the K to 12 PLUS project that graduates from this educational reform can equally compete in the labour market with the university graduates.
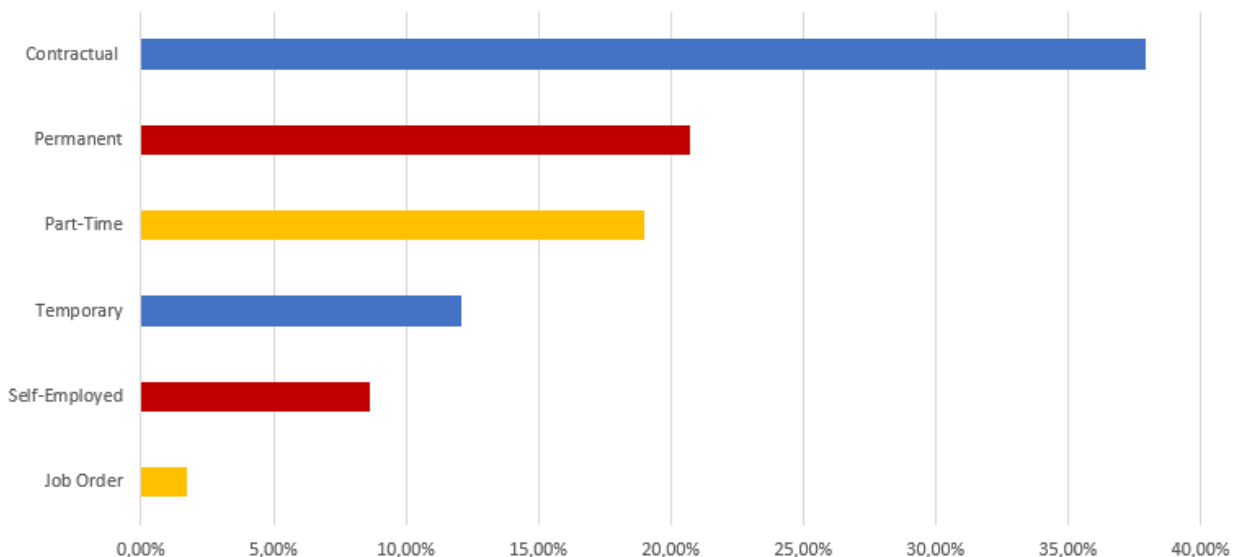

Figure 14 Status of employment

56. It is worth to mention that 38% of the currently employed respondents have contractual type of employment and 21% are permanent. These respondents who have contractual, part-time and temporary employment might not have job security even if some stated that they are receiving other benefits like (professional training, free transportation, food allowances, etc.) because they may be employed within a certain period, but they still need to look for another job after the end of contract.

57. Most respondents (33%) among the employed ones expressed that their current company was the same company where they did their immersion and 67% had another employer. The majority (76%) stated that their first salary is below 5.000 PHP while 16% have an income within the range of 6.000-10.999 PHP.
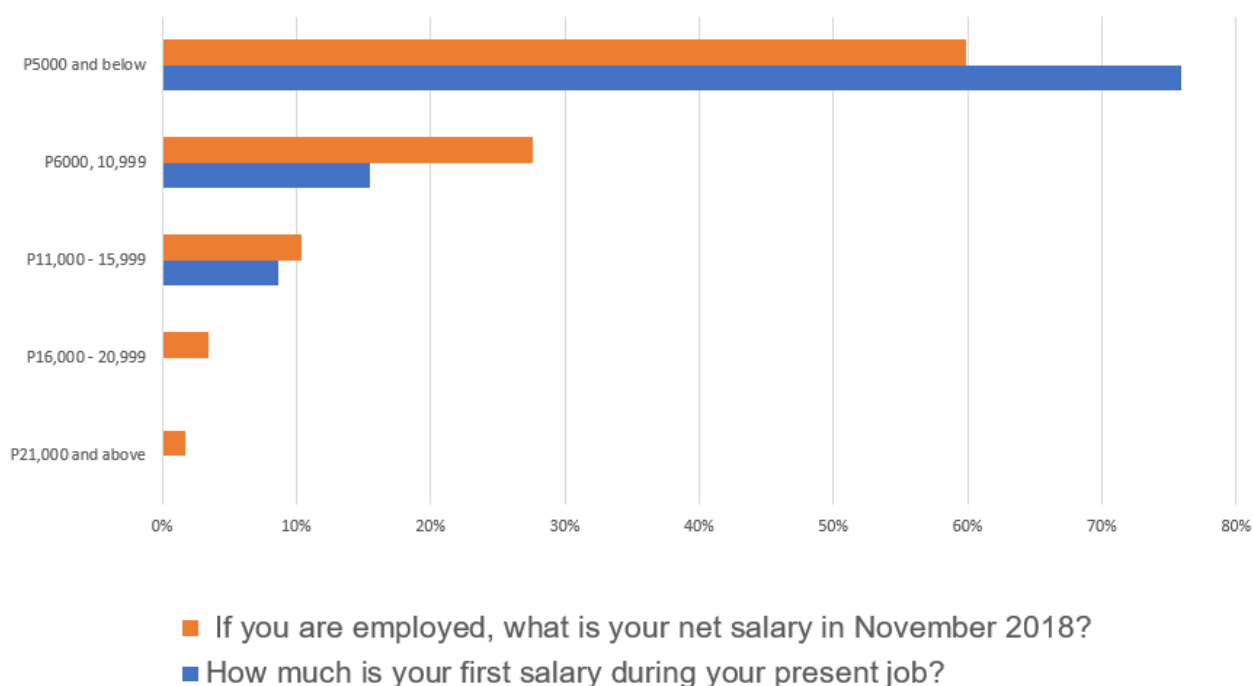

■ If you are employed, what is your net salary in November 2018?
■ How much is your first salary during your present job?

Figure 15 Salaries

58. As shown in Figure 15, more than half of the employed respondents (57%) indicated that their net salary in November is equal to or lower than 5.000 PHP, while 28% have a salary ranging from 6.000 to 10.999 PHP. Interestingly, one respondent has a salary of above 21.000 PHP and above.

59. In March 2018, 86% (84 respondents) indicated that the company who is ready to employ them is the same company where they have done their immersion, while 14% (14 respondents) claim otherwise. 47% (46 respondents) already signed a contract and 53% (52 respondents) stated they have not signed any. For those who have been offered with a contract, 92% (90 respondents) confirmed they already agreed with their future employer on a salary.

4.5 Open comments/recommendations from the respondents

60. Several respondents expressed **appreciation towards the project**, highlighting further aspects where the Project supported them. Most of the graduates claimed that the K to 12 PLUS Project has been effective and beneficial to their employment, work ethics as well as knowledge and skills enhancement, thanks to the clusters and Project staff for their valuable efforts and support. Considering

all the open comments from March and November 2018 surveys, we consider as particularly relevant to mention the following:

- The K to 12 PLUS Project provides relevant knowledge and skills especially in the economic sectors that the clusters are integrated to. Furthermore, it provides certificates which graduates can use either as further reference for their studies or in finding for a job.

- The K to 12 TechVoc Livelihood track helps graduates to be "job ready" given all the necessary materials and equipment are completely provided during the programme.

- The skills that the graduates learnt when at the immersion companies are perceived valuable for the respective industries.

61. Some of the respondents also highlighted areas considered as particularly important and presenting **room for further improvement**:

- The number of Immersion hours could be increased, to provide the students with more opportunities for practical learning;

- For some clusters, additional training materials might be provided or distributed, to allow the students to study in advance for the upcoming lessons;

- Room for improvement has been identified when it comes to the available school facilities, which could benefit of appliances like projectors;

- Despite allowances not having been selected as the most important benefit from the participation in the Project, a transportation allowance is mentioned as important for students needing to often reach distant location for their Immersion (e.g. students doing a significant number of Immersion hours in resorts in "remote" locations). This aspect has also been mentioned as a reason for some students to leave the Project by one of the clusters' focal point interviewed during the pre-piloting phase of this tracer study;

- The costs of the National Certificate assessment have also been addressed, with a suggestion of removing the fee and allow for the certification to be achieved free of charge.

- Some additional Tech Voc Track Skills (e.g. bar tending) have been mentioned as potentially relevant, to allow for the students to choose from a wider variety of possible skills or career paths;

- Additional participating companies or possible workplaces where in students can perform their OJTs because not all of the partners can accommodate them, due to limited slots they are offering.

5 Summary and overall recommendations

5.1 Summary:

- More than 60% of the respondents from the March and November 2018 surveys are female graduates have answered both surveys.

- More than half of the respondents are located in the Southern Tagalog and Central Visayas regions.

- The majority of the graduates opted to stay at their home provinces/cities, there are still graduates who explored new opportunities by going to bigger metropolitan areas.

- The heterogeneity of graduates from various school years gives a representational overview on how the graduates of the K to 12 PLUS Project performed in the job market.

- Laiya National High School considerably gained most respondents (39%), followed by Primary Structures Educational Foundation (PSEFI-Skills) (23%) and CARD Senior High School (9%).

- Out of employed graduates in the November 2018 survey, 33% answered that their current company is where they completed their immersion programme. This response is considerably low in comparison to the same question asked during the March 2018 survey, where 86% out of 98 employed respondents positively answered that the company that is ready to employ them is the same company of their immersion.

- Primary Structures Corp is the company/current employer who absorbed the most number of graduates.

- Out of 58 respondents who answered the question: "In which economic sector are you employed?", 34% come from the Hospitality sector, followed by the Manufacturing sector at 25% and Construction sector 12%.

- It might not be surprising that some of the Project graduates have been employed in the BPO industry due to high manpower demand and lenient application process.

- A significant number of respondents stated that their work is aligned with their TESDA National Certificates. This is a good indication that the National Certificate is perceived as beneficial especially in the graduates' line of work.

- 38% of respondents stated that they try to find more attractive employment - the intention of the graduates to pursue an early employment might have often led them towards professions not requiring the level of education they acquired from the K to 12 PLUS Project.

- 85% of the graduates from March 2018 and 81% of the November 2018 respondents expressed "complete agreement" with being satisfied with the K to 12 PLUS Project: a very positive result given the most have still the same perception upon graduation and even 8 months after they already graduated.

- More than half of the respondents in the November 2018 survey are unemployed. This is an important result to consider given that the main aim of the initiative is to **increase employment and income of Filipino youth.**

- Most of the unemployed respondents (76%) revealed that their main reason for unemployment is they wanted to pursue further study in the university.

- 19% of the employed respondents stated that their current employer is an international company and 69% are absorbed by local companies. Thus, there should be an awareness both from the graduates' and companies' sides about the increasing benefits of the K to 12 PLUS project that graduates from this educational reform can equally compete in the labour market with the university graduates.

- Employed respondents who have contractual, part-time and temporary status might not have job security because they may be employed within a certain period, but they still need to look for another job after the end of contract.

5.2 Overall recommendations

Set structures for more intrinsic leadership and identify champions and change makers

62. To support the institutionalisation of the Project, amplify its visibility and ultimately increase its impact it would be important to create a network of champions and game changers in the clusters, to make sure the success, local outreach, and visibility of the Project does not rely only on the primary stakeholders or solely on Sequa. Champions should be persons who understand the value of the K to 12 PLUS Project, share its vision and are willing to actively support. Sequa should guarantee adequate support to the individual capacities and to the identified champions.

63. The team would encourage a discussion with all Project Partners based on their experience on their own clusters, in order to map the "game changers" in each region, in order to identify and select those

who could also make joint-monitoring and training replication a reality in each region and build the capacity building activities around them.

64. Furthermore, it would be valuable to establish a common communication and networking platform bringing together champions from different districts and/or organisations, to foster knowledge sharing and keep momentum and motivation high. Such solution would also develop sustainability should any of the champions leave the Project, as well as supporting quick onboarding of new champions.

Promote knowledge management in the Project

65. Graduates and Project partners from the various clusters expressed interest in receiving updates on the progress of the tracer studies or the K to 12 PLUS Project in general. In addition, improved knowledge management might support future implementation in other school/partner institution contexts and facilitate on-boarding of new schools and partner institutions.

66. Knowledge management as well the development of respective mechanisms and instruments could, for instance, be delegated to the identified champions and game changes (see recommendation above).

67. Expanding the peer learning approach beyond the end of the Project cycle or the tracer study could support the creation of a national peer learning network for the K to 12 PLUS Project. This knowledge could also be shared within the whole clusters and might help increase visibility of the Project.

68. It is recommended stimulating knowledge management, e.g. by creating a "lessons learnt" template, or by collecting lessons learnt and results every three months and share it with other schools, partner institutions and possibly to all clusters and stakeholders.

69. It is also significant to improve and update the newly built website-embedded PCCI HRDF database which allows for multiple stakeholder to access and manage students', trainers' and other data relevant for the management of the Chamber certification system. This is a good platform to keep track and verify all the certifications and all actors involved in the Project. Other certifications like TESDA National Certificates can also be fully integrated in the system for transparency and proper documentation especially for students and trainers' records.

Establish a communication strategy

70. Strategic communication is crucial for learning, accountability, and visibility of any Project. The right communication at the right time to the right audience will not only help promote the K to 12 PLUS Project and inform about its usefulness, but it also opens possibilities to inform both its internal stakeholders and external stakeholders on what has been achieved and what is planned for the future.

71. Effective and efficient communication of results in the K to 12 PLUS Project is a crucial ingredient for the Project's learning capacity and its adaptability to change. Regular communication of M&E data both within the Project and with internal and external stakeholders are very effective means to promote cooperation and coordination as well as to ensure participation and transparency.

72. For example, private enterprises and associations, as well as chambers, are encouraged to take part in this communication process and collaborate closely with technical vocational institutions (TVIs) and senior high schools so that the curricula are much more closely aligned with the expectations of the industry. The importance of communicating what industry wants and needs to both the schools and to the student/trainees become paramount as these expectations evolve.

73. In combination with the right skills, knowledge and understanding of the importance of M&E and of communicating its findings, the K to 12 PLUS Project will increase its impact while its stakeholders will be in a better position to fulfil their mandates and bring about a positive change in the sector. Therefore, it is recommended developing and implementing a communication strategy to establish coherence between information needs and provision and commitment from all relevant internal and external stakeholders.

Develop a more comprehensive tracer study

74. Given the limitations of the current tracer study, it is recommended to trace more graduates after a longer period of time (ideally one year). This situation provides the graduates enough time to establish their career path and be stable on their chosen track whether it is right directly on the job market or in the university.

75. Additional target population (like company representatives, teachers, trainers etc.) can provide a much deeper analysis of the current findings. For example, it will be interesting to know the reasons why most company representatives do not absorb the graduates directly or in a much longer period after their immersion programme.

76. The findings on the professional success of the graduates per se may not be considered as a direct result of the K to 12 PLUS Project, so conclusions for improvements specifically for its curriculum or immersion programme may not be drawn from the findings without the discussion of relevant contextual factors like students/graduates individual abilities and motivation, labour market situation, trainings before and after, etc.