

Bridging the Distance: Challenges in Managing Far-Flung Schools in Donsol, Sorsogon

Harold G. Arcangel¹; Danilo E. Despi²

^{1,2}School of Graduate Studies, St. Louise de Marillac College of Sorsogon, Inc., Sorsogon City, Philippines

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Abstract: This research investigated the challenges and adaptive leadership practices of school heads managing remote and far-flung schools in the district of Donsol, Sorsogon. It identified the critical issues facing the schools in terms of financial resources, academic performance, human resource management, physical facilities, stakeholder participation, and peace and order situation. In addition, the study also determined the strategies used to surmount such challenges, describe how such strategies have been implemented, and propose a support system framework in order to help increase the management capacity of school heads in GIDA schools.

Data were gathered through surveys, interviews, and document analysis from school heads, teachers, and local stakeholders of chosen remote public schools using a qualitative-descriptive research design. The results showed that leaders in far-flung schools experience complex constraints pertaining to insufficient funding, delayed allocation of resources, teacher shortage, poor infrastructure, and limited community involvement. Despite such limitations, school heads were able to show resilience, resourcefulness, and context-responsive leadership by mobilizing resources at the community level, collaboration with stakeholders, and flexible approaches to instructional supervision. Localized planning, improvisation of learning materials, and partnerships with barangay officials and NGOs proved to be effective strategies to maintain school functionality and learner engagement.

The study finally concludes that school leadership in geographically isolated areas consists of far more than administrative management but is a matter of ethical stewardship, adaptive decision-making, and community empowerment. It then proposes a framework for a support system in terms of leadership mentoring, resource mobilization, professional development, and stakeholder engagement as a way of strengthening the managerial and instructional capacities of school heads. The institutionalization of such a framework through the Department of Education and local governments would contribute to inclusive, resilient, and context-driven education for learners in far-flung and underserved communities.

Keywords: School Management, Leadership Strategies, Geographically Isolated Schools, Educational Governance, Donsol Sorsogon, Support System Framework.

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I. INTRODUCTION

School management, at its core, involves the strategic coordination of human, financial, and material resources to foster effective teaching and learning environments. It encompasses leadership, planning, supervision, and evaluation processes that ensure schools operate efficiently and meet educational goals. Globally, school leadership has increasingly shifted toward decentralized governance, where decision-making authority is distributed closer to the school level to enhance responsiveness and contextual relevance (Grinshtain & Gibton, 2017). This approach empowers school heads, teachers, and community stakeholders to collaboratively shape policies and programs that reflect local needs and priorities.

In recent years, data-driven decision-making has become a cornerstone of effective school management. Leaders are expected to analyze performance indicators, monitor student outcomes, and align interventions with measurable targets. This shift promotes transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in school operations (Mhlanga, 2022). Moreover, inclusive governance models have gained traction, emphasizing participatory leadership that values input from parents, local government units, and civil society organizations. Such models foster a sense of ownership and shared responsibility for educational outcomes, particularly in underserved communities.

In the Philippine context, school management is guided by Republic Act No. 9155, also known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001. This legislation institutionalizes School-Based Management (SBM), which decentralizes authority to the school level and encourages collaborative planning through School Improvement Plans (DepEd, 2024). SBM aims to enhance school autonomy, promote stakeholder engagement, and improve resource utilization. However, implementation remains uneven, especially in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs), where infrastructure limitations, resource constraints, and low community participation pose significant challenges (Malaluan 2023; Janoras-Bane & Garcia, 2023).

In Donsol, Sorsogon, these challenges are actually happening. School heads managing far-flung schools contend with logistical barriers, such as difficult terrain and limited transportation, which hinder access to learners and the timely delivery of educational materials. Additionally, constrained budgets and minimal support staff complicate efforts to supervise instruction, maintain facilities, and engage stakeholders effectively (DepEd Sorsogon, 2025; Espela et al., 2025). Despite these obstacles, many school leaders in Donsol demonstrate resilience and ingenuity, adapting their management practices to local realities. Since the Municipality of Donsol was considered a first-class municipality with a vast amount of learners to be catered to, most especially in the far-flung area where learners encountered difficulties in terms of transportation because of inaccessibility due to bumpy roads, considering the distance of their homes from the school, and the possible risk for the learners' safety as they ventured their way from their home to school.

This study examined the experiences and challenges faced by school heads in managing remote schools in Donsol, providing insights that can inform policy and strengthen leadership capacity in similar contexts. Its significance lies in generating evidence-based perspectives on the operational realities of far-flung schools, which can guide policy development and strategic planning within DepEd. By documenting adaptive practices and coping mechanisms, the research contributes to the discourse on educational equity and leadership resilience (Benasa & Formanes, 2025; Fabrigas & Paglinawan, 2025). Furthermore, it underscored the critical role of community engagement, infrastructure investment, and contextualized curriculum implementation in overcoming barriers to quality education. The findings serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, educators, stakeholders, and development partners committed to supporting geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs).

II. OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of this study is to describe the challenges in managing far-flung schools in Donsol, Sorsogon. Specifically, it adopted the following objectives:

- To identify and analyze the specific challenges encountered by school leaders in managing remote and far-flung schools in terms of:
 - Financial Resources,
 - Academic Performance,
 - Human Resource Management,
 - Physical Facilities,
 - Stakeholder Participation,
- To determine the strategies employed by school heads to address and overcome these challenges in remote educational settings.
- To examine the implementation process of the identified strategies by school heads in the management of far-flung schools.
- To propose a support system framework designed to enhance the management capacity and leadership effectiveness of school heads in geographically isolated schools.

III. METHODS

A mixed-methods approach was used to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon by integrating both quantitative and qualitative data. This design allowed the study to capture measurable trends while also uncovering the lived experiences and contextual nuances of school leadership in geographically isolated settings.

The respondents of this study consisted of 15 school heads assigned to public elementary and secondary schools located in remote and far-flung areas within the municipality of Donsol, Sorsogon namely; Cabugao Elementary School, Cabugao National High School, Pawala Elementary School, Orange Elementary School, Tagbac Elementary School, Malapoc Elementary School, Lourdes Elementary School, Parina Elementary School, Pimanaan Elementary School, San Francisco Elementary School, Old Maguisa Elementary School, Juan Adre Elementary School, Suguian Elementary School, De Vera Elementary School, San Ramon Elementary School. These schools are classified by the Department of Education (DepEd) as part of Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDA)—a designation used to identify communities that are physically separated by difficult terrain, lack reliable transportation access, and are socioeconomically marginalized. Such schools often face compounded challenges, including limited infrastructure, poor connectivity, low enrollment, and restricted access to professional development and support services.

The primary instrument for data collection was semi-structured interviews with school heads. These interviews explored their experiences, challenges, and strategies in managing schools situated in GIDA contexts. Questions probed into leadership practices, resource management, stakeholder engagement, and values-driven decision-making. Where feasible, interviews were conducted face-to-face to foster rapport and allow for richer dialogue, while alternative methods such as phone calls or asynchronous platforms like SMS, Messenger, or email was used for more isolated

schools. All interviews were recorded with the participants' consent, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns and leadership approaches.

IV. RESULTS

➤ *The Challenges Encountered by School Leaders in Managing Far-Flung Schools in Donsol, Sorsogon*

• *Financial Resource Challenges*

✓ *Allocation for Basic Needs*

School heads consistently emphasized that their financial allocations are inadequate to sustain even the most basic operations. Participant 1 said that “Hindi sapat ang aming MOOE upang matugunan kahit ang mga pangunahing pangangailangan sa pagpapatakbo ng paaralan, lalo na kapag may biglaang gastusin.” (*Our MOOE is not enough to cover even basic operational needs, especially when unexpected expenses arise.*) Participant 4 echoed this, noting “limitado an samon na budget kaya limitado man an samon na mga programa” (“*there is little room for innovation since our budget only allows us to meet minimum requirements.*”) Similarly, Participant 7 explained that “An mga dapat na e repair dangan so mga minor construction hindi nadagos ta an pag alokar ning pondo kulang man” (“*repairs and minor construction are postponed because our financial allocation is insufficient,*” while Participant 10 added, “nadipisilan kami maitaw ang mga learning materials arog san mga libro ta saday man lang ang pondo” (“*we struggle to provide learning materials like books and modules due to budget constraints.*”) Participant 12 further emphasized the limits of funding, stating, “Hindi namin kayang kumuha ng karagdagang support staff dahil ang aming pondo ay sapat lamang para sa mga posisyon ng guro.” (“*We cannot hire additional support staff because our funds only cover teaching positions.*”) These insights reveal that financial insufficiency forces schools into survival mode, limiting innovation, maintenance, and instructional support.

✓ *Delayed and Unpredictable Fund Release*

Another recurring concern was the unpredictability of fund releases, which undermines planning. Participant 3 highlighted the issue of timing, saying, “delayed ang mga proyekto namon ta ang pag taw nin pondo ulay dangan hindi maisyan kun kinano maga abot” (“*We often delay projects because the release of funds is slow and unpredictable.*”) Participant 15 reinforced this concern, remarking, “*Our financial planning is reactive rather than strategic because allocations are too limited and uncertain.*” The delayed release of funds compels school heads to adopt reactive strategies, weakening long-term planning and sustainability.

✓ *High Logistical and Operational Costs*

Remote locations impose heavy logistical and operational expenses that drain limited budgets. Participant 2 shared that “An pondo mas dakula an pigagatos sa transportasyon ta arayo kaming maray sa mga suppliers dangan sa samon na district office.” (“*Transportation costs eat up a large portion of our funds because our school is far from suppliers and the district office.*”) Participant 13 added

that “*electricity and water bills consume a big share of our budget, leaving little for instructional needs.*” These accounts highlight how isolation magnifies costs, leaving little room for academic or developmental investments.

✓ *Limited Investment in Innovation and Capacity Building*

School heads also lamented the lack of resources for innovation and professional growth. Participant 5 lamented that “hindi namon na sustinir an pag integrar sa ICT ta kulang an pondo para sa devices, internet ngan pag mantinar” (“*we cannot sustain ICT integration because we lack funds for devices, internet, and maintenance.*”) Participant 6 added, “limitado an pag atindir training san mga maestra ta kulang pamasaha dangan budget para sa registration” (“*teacher training opportunities are limited because we cannot afford travel and registration fees for seminars.*”) Without adequate investment, schools remain stagnant, unable to modernize instruction or build teacher capacity.

✓ *Reliance on Community Support and Fundraising Limitations*

Many schools rely on community contributions, but these are constrained by poverty. Participant 8 explained “Talagang naga asa kami sa suporta san komunidad kaya lang limitado an kakayahan san mga gurang mag kontibuwer kwarta” (“*we rely heavily on community support, but parents here have limited capacity to contribute financially.*”) Participant 9 added Mapagal sa samon na barangay an fund raising ta kadaklan (“*fundraising is difficult in our barangay since most families prioritize daily survival over school donations.*”) Participant 14 even admitted “naga arambagan kami na gyalen sa bulsa namon para maitaw tulos an pangangaipo san school” (“*we often resort to personal contributions from teachers to meet urgent school needs.*”) Reliance on impoverished communities and teachers' personal funds underscores the fragility of financial sustainability in far-flung schools.

✓ *Emergency and Disaster-Related Expenses*

Disasters further strain already limited resources. Participant 11 underscored this vulnerability, stating, “Naubos an samon nan sadayot na financial resource pag yaun mga emergency na pigagastusan arog san mga nagkararaot pag may bagyo” (“*emergency expenses, such as typhoon damage, drain our already small financial resources.*”) Natural calamities compound financial challenges, forcing schools to divert scarce funds away from instructional priorities.

• *Academic Performance Challenges*

✓ *Attendance and Retention*

School heads often pointed out that attendance and retention are major concerns in far-flung schools. Participant 2 said “An pag para absent apektado an performance san mga akos ta ararayo an distansya san pag aragi pasiring sa eskwelan” (“*absenteeism is high since many children walk long distances to school, which affects their performance.*”) Participant 6 added “Pag panawn nin pag tanom naga alangkaw an rate san dropout ta mas pigatawan ninda pansin an pagkabuhay kesa sa pagklase” (“*dropout rates increase*”).

during planting and seasons when families prioritize livelihood over schooling.”) These accounts show how distance and livelihood demand directly affect learners’ ability to stay in school.

✓ *Limited Learning Resources*

The lack of learning materials was repeatedly emphasized. Participant 1 explained, “*Our learners’ test scores are consistently lower compared to urban schools because of limited access to learning materials.*” Participant 11 echoed this, saying, “Kulang kami access sa pag update san mga libro ngan mga contextualized na modules naka bawas sa pag engganyo sa lessons “ (*“We lack access to updated textbooks and contextualized modules, making lessons less engaging.”*). These insights highlight how resource scarcity undermines academic achievement.

✓ *Instructional Limitations*

Multi-grade teaching and staffing shortages were seen as barriers to quality instruction. Participant 9 shared, “Naka apektar sa matanos na pagturo pag iba-ibang level of multi-grade an pigaturuan “ (*“multi-grade teaching affects the depth of instruction, as one teacher handles several levels at once.”*) Participant 14 added “Hindi kami naka implimintar san mga specialized program arog san mga gifted ngan mga maluluyang estudyante ta konti man lang an na assigned na mga teachers “ (*“we cannot implement specialized programs for gifted or struggling learners because of staffing shortages.”*) These challenges reveal how instructional delivery is stretched thin in remote schools.

✓ *Language and Literacy Barriers*

Language and literacy gaps were also noted. Participant 4 said, “Kadaklan na mga estudyante manlain lain an mga usipon kaya nadipisilan mag sabot English asin tagalog” (*“Language barriers hinder comprehension, as many students speak local dialects and struggle with English or Filipino.”*) Participant 13 emphasized “An samon na mga estudyante nauryan sa learners’ reading proficiency pag abot sa national standard ta ukon sinda expose sa mga printed materials “ (*“our learners’ reading proficiency lags behind national standards due to limited exposure to print materials.”*) These voices show how language and literacy issues compound learning difficulties.

✓ *External Disruptions*

Natural disasters and limited parental support further disrupt learning. Participant 15 explained, “*Frequent class disruptions from typhoons and floods cause learning gaps that are hard to recover from.*” Participant 12 added, “*Monitoring academic progress is difficult since parents are not always available to support home learning.*” These realities underscore how external factors beyond the classroom affect performance.

• *Human Resource Management Challenges*

✓ *Recruitment and Retention*

School heads consistently raised concerns about staffing. Participant 1 said, “Naka ampong kami sa kakulangan sa mga kwalipikado na mga maestras asi

maestros ta arabo ma assign sa mga ararayong eskwelan” (*“We face a shortage of qualified teachers because many are reluctant to be assigned to remote schools.”*). Participant 2 added, “Dakol an mga nagarilipat na mga teachers ngan pag may experience na mo lipat na sa mga urban areas “ (*“Teacher turnover is high; once they gain experience, they often request transfers to urban areas.”*). These insights show the difficulty of sustaining a stable teaching workforce.

✓ *Supervision and Support*

Monitoring and mentoring were seen as inconsistent. Participant 3 explained, “An pag monitor san mga supervisors sa performance san mga teachers mapagal ta arayo ngan bukon matanos an dalan “ (*“Monitoring teacher performance is difficult since supervisors rarely visit due to distance and poor roads.”*) Participant 11 added, “An pag supervise ngan pag mentor sa mga bagong maestra mapagal ta mapagal talaga makuwa an logistic “ (*“Supervision and mentoring of new teachers are inconsistent due to logistical constraints.”*) These accounts highlight gaps in professional oversight.

✓ *Professional Growth*

Opportunities for training were limited. Participant 4 shared, “*Professional development opportunities are limited because training venues are far and travel costs are prohibitive.*” Participant 12 noted, “An mga maestra minsan kulang sa exposure sa mga inobasyon sa pagturo ngan strategy ta limitado an access sa mga training networks “ (*“teachers sometimes lack exposure to innovative teaching strategies because of limited access to training networks.”*) These voices reveal how isolation restricts professional growth.

✓ *Workload and Burnout*

Heavy workloads were a recurring theme. Participant 5 said, “An pag turo sa multi-grade naka pa gubat sa mga loads san teachers ngan naka wara gana asin nabawasan an pagiging epektibo “ (*“multi-grade teaching places heavy workloads on teachers, leading to burnout and reduced effectiveness.”*) Participant 14 added, “*Administrative tasks fall heavily on teachers since we lack non-teaching staff to share the workload.*” These challenges show how teachers stretched beyond their instructional roles.

✓ *Motivation and Morale*

Motivation and morale were also affected. Participant 9 explained, “Mapagal man talaga mag taw motibasyon sa mga maestra ta an recognition asin reward system sa araryong scholls konti lang “ (*“Motivating teachers is difficult since recognition and reward systems are minimal in far-flung schools.”*) Participant 15 added, “*Teacher morale suffers when they feel disconnected from the larger education community and policy discussions.*” These insights highlight the emotional toll of isolation.

• *Physical Facilities Challenges*

✓ *Safety and Durability*

School heads often described unsafe and fragile infrastructure. Participant 2 said, “Pag nagataragdo an

bubong pag mauranon piga suspende namon an klase or pipa adon namon an mga estudyante sa safe na area “ (*“The roofs of our buildings leak during heavy rains, forcing us to suspend classes or move students to safer areas.”*) Participant 7 added, “ An samon na mga classrooms vulnerable na sa mga bagyo ngan pag baha kaya kada tawn mas piga tawan namon oras an pag repair sa mga nagkararaot kesa sap ag klase “ (*“Our classrooms are vulnerable to typhoons and floods, and every year we spend time repairing damages instead of focusing on teaching.”*) These accounts show how fragile facilities disrupt learning continuity.

✓ Learning Resources and Spaces

The absence of specialized facilities was noted. Participant 6 explained, “ Wara kami library ngan science laboratory kaya na mis out san mga estudyante an hands-learning experience “ (*“We don’t have a library or science laboratory, so our students miss out hands-on learning experiences.”*) Participant 10 added, “ An samon na ICT equipment outdated ng maray ngan wara matanos na pasilidad kaya hanggang panagarap na lang an digital learning kesa sa realidad “ (*“Our ICT equipment is outdated, and without proper facilities, digital learning remains a dream rather than a reality.”*) These voices highlight the lack of modern learning spaces.

✓ Health and Sanitation

Sanitation and comfort were recurring concerns. Participant 3 said, “ Na mroblema kami sa poor –sanitation-an toilet namon kulang pati tubig kaya naka apekto sa sanidad ngan attendance “ (*“We struggle with poor sanitation—our toilets are inadequate, and water supply is unreliable, which affects both health and attendance.”*) Participant 12 added, “ Ventilation is poor in our classrooms, making it uncomfortable for learners to concentrate, especially during summer.” These insights show how health and comfort affect learning.

✓ Accessibility and Logistics

Logistical challenges were emphasized. Participant 5 explained, “ An pag transport san mga construction materials pasiring sa eskwelan namon magastos ta dipidil agihan an mga rough roads ngan diit lang an mga sakayan “ (*“Transporting construction materials to our school is very costly and difficult because of rough roads and limited vehicles.”*) Participant 15 added, “ Our school is far from suppliers, so even basic needs like chalkboards, paint, or cleaning materials are hard to procure.” These accounts highlight the burden of isolation on facility upkeep.

✓ Student Development and Recreation

The lack of recreational spaces was also noted. Participant 8 said, “ Kulang kami sa mga sports facilities ngan play grounds kaya limitado an opurtunidad para sa physical development and recreation “ (*“We lack sports facilities and playgrounds, so children have limited opportunities for physical development and recreation.”*) Participant 13 added, “ We have no covered court or multipurpose hall, so assemblies and activities are often disrupted by rain or heat.”)These voices show how facilities limit holistic student development.

• Stakeholders’ Participation Challenges

✓ Limited Capacity

School heads often pointed out that communities have limited capacity to contribute. Participant 8 explained, “ An mga gurang nagataw nin suporta moral pero hindi makatabang pag abot sa material or financial “ (*“Parents are supportive in spirit, but they cannot provide material or financial assistance.”*) Participant 9 added, “ Mapagal mag fund raising ta sa samon na barangay mas priority an uru aldaw nap ag ka buhay kesa sa pag donar sa school “ (*“Fundraising is difficult in our barangay since most families prioritize daily survival over school donations.”*) These insights highlight the economic constraints of stakeholders.

✓ Low Awareness and Engagement

Awareness and participation were seen as weak. Participant 6 said, “ Minsan an mga stakeholders kulang kaaraman sa mga programa san Deped kaya an engagement mababa “ (*“stakeholders sometimes lack awareness of DepEd programs, so engagement is low.”*) Participant 7 added, “ An pag atendir sa mga school consultations bukon maray kaya an mga desisyon piga solo san mga maestra “ (*“Attendance in school consultations is poor, and decisions are often left to teachers alone.”*) These accounts show how limited awareness reduces involvement.

✓ Cultural and Contextual Barriers

Cultural practices and livelihood demands were also barriers. Participant 1 explained “ An mga gurang hindi naka attend mga meetings ta mas piga tawan ninda priority an pagka buway arog san pag tanom “ (*“parents are often unable to attend meetings because their livelihood activities, like farming, take priority.”*) Participant 8 added “ cultural practices sometimes conflict with school initiatives, making collaboration challenging.” These voices reveal how context shapes participation.

✓ Weak Institutional Support

Institutional structures were described as inactive. Participant 3 said, “ Our School Governing Council is not consistently active, making it hard to sustain projects.” Participant 4 added, “ An mga NGO private partners bihira maka abot sa area namon kaya konti lang an external support “ (*“NGOs and private partners rarely reach our area, so external support is scarce.”*) These insights highlight weak institutional backing.

✓ Reactive vs. Sustained Participation

Participation was often described as inconsistent. Participant 12 explained, “ Seasonal man sana an involvement san mga stakeholder mas matanos pag enrolment pero bako marhay sa bilog na tawn “ (*“stakeholder involvement is seasonal—strong during enrollment, but weak throughout the school year.”*) Participant 15 added, “ stakeholders’ participation is often reactive, only increasing when problems or crises arise.” These accounts show how engagement is episodic rather than sustained.

➤ *Strategies Employed by School Heads to Overcome the Challenges*

• *Financial Discipline and Transparency*

School heads emphasized the importance of maximizing limited resources through careful prioritization and openness. Participant 1 shared, “Piga minimize namon an samon na limitadong MOOE sa pagtaw prioridad sa mga kaypwan na asin istiktong pag practice ning financial discipline.” (“*We maximize our limited MOOE by prioritizing urgent needs and practicing strict financial discipline.*”) Participant 15 added, “*We practice transparency in financial management to build trust and encourage stakeholder contributions.*” These strategies show how financial prudence and accountability help sustain operations despite scarcity.

• *Addressing Attendance and Retention*

To respond to absenteeism and dropout concerns, school heads devised localized solutions. Participant 2 explained “Para ma address an absenteeism ,nag organize kami community –based learning sessions na arani sa learners’ home (“*to address absenteeism, we organize community-based learning sessions closer to learners’ homes.*”) These efforts demonstrate how proximity and flexibility can reduce barriers to attendance.

• *Strengthening Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement*

Collaboration with external partners was seen as vital. Participant 3 said “Pig papakusog nyamo an partnership sa LGU ngan barangay officials para ma secure an dagdag suporta para sa mga school projects (“*we strengthen the partnerships with the LGU and barangay officials to secure additional support for school projects.*”) Participant 4 added “Piga mobilize namon an mga gurang sa paagi nin flexible schedules para masiguro an saindang partisipasyon maski ngani naga aranap buhay (“*we mobilize parents through flexible schedules for meetings, ensuring their participation despite livelihood demands.*”) Participant 8 further noted “Piga tap namon an mga alumni and local organizations para sa volunteerism ngan resource mobilization (“*we tap alumni and local organizations for volunteerism and resource mobilization.*”) These accounts highlight how partnerships broaden the resource base and sustain school initiatives.

• *Instructional Innovation and Contextualization*

Teachers were encouraged to adapt creatively to resource limitations. Participant 5 explained “Piga encourage an mga maestra na maka gibo nin mga lokal na available na mga materials para maging matanos an lessons ngan tipid sa gastos (“*teachers are encouraged to innovate with locally available materials to enrich lessons and reduce costs.*”) Participant 9 added “*we integrate contextualized modules that reflect local culture and livelihood, making lessons more relevant.*” These strategies show how innovation and contextualization make learning more engaging and meaningful.

• *Teacher Development and Peer Support*

Professional growth was sustained through internal mechanisms. Participant 6 shared “Piga implementar namon

an peer mentoring sa mga maestra para ma sustenir an professional growth maski wara maray external training (“*we implement peer mentoring among teachers to sustain professional growth even without frequent external training.*”) Participant 12 added “*we encourage teachers to pursue online training opportunities whenever internet access is available.*” These approaches highlight how peer support and digital opportunities help overcome isolation.

• *Managing Multi-Grade Teaching*

School heads also developed ways to handle multi-grade classrooms. Participant 7 explained “An pag turo sa multi-grade managed by creating structured lessons plas asin piga share an best practices sa pag -iriba (“*multi-grade teaching is managed by creating structured lesson plans and sharing best practices among colleagues.*”) This reflects how collaboration and planning mitigate instructional challenges.

• *Alternative Learning Spaces and Disaster Preparedness*

Flexibility in learning environments was another strategy. Participant 10 said “Pag naraot or overcrowded na ang mga classrooms pigagamit namon an barangay hall or simbahan (“*we use alternative learning spaces like barangay halls or churches when classrooms are damaged or overcrowded.*”) Participant 11 added “*we strengthen disaster preparedness plans to minimize learning disruptions during typhoons and floods.*” These measures show resilience and adaptability in the face of environmental challenges.

• *Communication and Student Leadership*

School heads also emphasized communication and learner empowerment. Participant 13 explained “*we build strong communication channels with parents through text brigades and messenger groups.*”) Participant 14 added “Pinanalago nyamo ang pamumuno san mga estudyante para mapakusog an motibasyon asin suporta kan mga pag iriba sa akademiya (“*we foster student leadership programs to boost motivation and peer support in academics.*”) These strategies highlight how effective communication and student involvement strengthen school communities.

➤ *Implementation of Strategies by School Heads*

• *Financial Discipline and Transparency*

School heads emphasized that managing limited funds requires discipline and openness. Participant 1 said “istriktong an pag monitor ko san MOOE sa paggasto sa paagi nin pag kriar nin bulan bulan na financial report asin piga prisinta sa mga stakeholders para sa transparency (“*I strictly monitor our MOOE spending by creating monthly financial reports and presenting them to stakeholders for transparency.*”) Participant 15 added “An mga financial updates piga post ko sa bulletin boards asin piga discuss pag may PTA meetings para magtiwala asin ma engganyo ang mga magurang sa contributions (“*I post financial updates on bulletin boards and discuss them in PTA meetings to build trust and encourage contributions.*”) Participant 3 explained “*I regularly meet with the LGU to align school projects with municipal development plans, ensuring additional support.*” These practices show that financial transparency builds trust and helps mobilize additional resources.

- *Attendance and Retention Initiatives*

Ensuring student attendance and retention was addressed through localized and flexible approaches. Participant 2 shared “Nakipag coordinate ako sa barangay official para magka yaun learning centers na hindi maga rayo sa learning homes” (“*I coordinate with barangay officials to set up community learning centers closer to learners’ homes.*”) Participant 4 said “*I schedule parent meetings after fishing hours or harvest season so families can attend without sacrificing livelihood.*” Participant 13 explained “*I maintain parent communication through text brigades and messenger groups, updating them on student progress and school activities.*” These actions demonstrate that proximity, flexibility, and communication reduce barriers to attendance.

- *Strengthening Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement*

Collaboration with stakeholders was seen as vital for sustaining school initiatives. Participant 8 noted “Piga tap ko an grupo kan alumni sa paagi nin pag –imbitar pag anibersaryo san school nganing ma engganyo mag donate o mag volunteer “ (“*I tap alumni networks by inviting them during school anniversaries and encouraging them to donate or volunteer.*”) Participant 3 emphasized “Pig papakusog ko an partnership sa LGU asin barangay official para madagdagan ang suporta para sa mga programa san school. “ (“*I strengthen partnerships with the LGU and barangay officials to secure additional support for school projects.*”) Participant 4 added “Piga mobilisar ko sa paagi nin flexible schedules para sa mga pa meeting sa mga magurang para masiguro an saindang partisipasyon maski ngani sinda naga aranap buhay “ (“*I mobilize parents through flexible schedules for meetings, ensuring their participation despite livelihood demands.*”) These strategies highlight that partnerships expand resources and strengthen community ownership of school programs.

- *Instructional Innovation and Contextualization*

School heads encouraged teachers and students to innovate with available resources. Participant 5 explained “Piga train ko an mga maestra na gamiton an mga inginous ngan recycled materials para sa teaching aids ngan ma integrate sa uro aldaw na lessons “ (“*I train teachers to use indigenous and recycled materials for teaching aids, which we integrate into daily lessons.*”) Participant 9 added “Piga develop ko nan contextualized modules sa paagi nin pag integrate sa mga local livelihood arog san pag tanom ngan pag sira sa math ngan science na lessons” (“*I develop contextualized modules by integrating local livelihood examples—like fishing and farming—into math and science lessons.*”) Participant 14 shared “An student council sakon na piga empower para mag lead sa peer tutoring ngan mag organize nin academic club para mapakusog an motibasyon “ (“*I empower student councils to lead peer tutoring and organize academic clubs to boost motivation.*”) These approaches show that innovation and contextualization make learning more relevant and engaging for learners.

- *Teacher Development and Peer Support*

Professional growth was sustained through peer mentoring and creative scheduling. Participant 6 said “Piga organize ko an per mentoring sessions kada biyernes na

kunnsaen ma experience san mga maestra an share strategies sa mga akos pa nap ag iriba “ (“*I organize peer mentoring sessions every Friday, where experienced teachers share strategies with younger colleagues.*”) Participant 12 added “An mga maestra piga engganyo ko mag enrol sa mga free online webinars ,ngan naga provide ako shared schedules kun may internet access “ (“*I encourage teachers to enroll in free online webinars, and I provide shared schedules when internet access is available.*”) Participant 7 explained “Piga manihar ko an multi-grade teaching sa paagi nin pag preparar nin iba-ibang lessons asin pag rotate nin focus group sa laog nin classroom “ (“*I manage multi-grade teaching by preparing differentiated lesson plans and rotating focus groups within the classroom.*”) These practices highlight that peer support and structured planning help teachers cope with isolation and heavy workloads.

- *Alternative Learning Spaces and Disaster Preparedness*

Flexibility and preparedness were key to ensuring continuity of learning. Participant 10 said “Kun over crowded o raot an mga rooms naki pag coordinate sa mga lider san barangay para para temporaryong magamit an barangay halls para magkayaun lugar sa pag–adal “ (“*I negotiate with barangay leaders to temporarily use barangay halls as learning spaces when classrooms are overcrowded or damaged.*”) Participant 11 added “Naga conduct ako disaster drills asin pag preparar emergency kits tanaganing makabalik tulos an pag klase paka bagyo “ (“*I conduct disaster drills and prepare emergency kits so classes can resume quickly after typhoons.*”) Participant 2 explained “Nakipag coordinate ako sa barangay official’s para mag kayaun community learning centers na arani sa learning homes “ (“*I coordinate with barangay officials to set up community learning centers closer to learners’ homes.*”) These strategies show that adaptability and disaster readiness minimize disruptions and sustain education in far-flung schools.

➤ *Support Systems for School Heads in Far-Flung Schools*

- *Financial Support Systems*

School heads emphasized the need for stronger financial mechanisms to sustain management capacity. Participant 1 said “*I need increased MOOE allocations with timely release so I can plan strategically instead of reacting to emergencies.*” Participant 15 added “Piga practice ko an transparency sa pag manihar nin pinansyal, pero naga benipesyo ako sa mga training sa financial management mara maka tabang ma maximixe an limitadong resources asin epektibong pag prioritize “ (“*I practice transparency in financial management, but I would benefit from training in financial management to help me maximize limited resources and prioritize effectively.*”) Participant 3 explained “*I hope for emergency funds dedicated to disaster response so our school can recover quickly after typhoons.*” These voices highlight that timely, sufficient, and well-managed financial support is critical for effective leadership in far-flung schools.

- *Academic and Instructional Support Systems.*

School heads also pointed to the importance of academic resources and instructional guidance. Participant 4 said “kaipuhan ko contextualized learning materials and

modules na mag reflect sa local culture and livelihood para maging relevant an lessons “(*“I need contextualized learning materials and modules that reflect our local culture and livelihood to make lessons relevant.”*)” Participant 5 added “Ma aprisar ko an mobile libraries ngan ICT na makaabot sa samon na school para ma suplimintar an limited resources.”(*“I would appreciate mobile libraries and ICT kits that can reach our school to supplement our limited resources.”*) Participant 6 explained “Gusto ko nin regular na academic monitoring asin coaching visits na gyalen sa didistrict officepara ma guide kami sa improvement san performance “(*“I want regular academic monitoring and coaching visits from the district office to guide us in improving performance.”*)” These accounts show that instructional support tailored to local contexts strengthens teaching and learning outcomes.

- *Human Resource Support Systems*

Concerns about staffing and professional growth were repeatedly raised. Participant 7 said “Kaipuhan namon hardship allowance ngan suorta sa housing para ma retain so mga maestara na abo magturo sa mga ararayong schools. (*“I need hardship allowances and housing support to retain teachers who are hesitant to stay in remote schools.”*)” Participant 8 added “Maga benipesyar kami sa rotational development sa specialized staff arog san guidance counsellors ngan ICT coordinators para masuportaran an samon na mga maestra “ (*“I would benefit from rotational deployment of specialized staff like guidance counselors and ICT coordinators to support our teachers.”*)” Participant 9 explained “*I hope for professional development programs tailored to far-flung contexts, not generic seminars that don’t fit our realities.*” These narratives underscore that human resource support must address retention, specialization, and context-specific training.

- *Physical Facilities and Infrastructure Support Systems*

School heads highlighted the urgent need for infrastructure improvements. Participant 10 said “kaipwan ko ma prioridad an infrastructure programs para sa classrooms, toilets, and water sanitation nanganing an samon na pasilidad ma meet an basic standards “(*“I need priority infrastructure programs for classrooms, toilets, and water systems so our facilities meet basic standards.”*)” Participant 11 added “*I would appreciate maintenance brigades organized at the district level to help us repair classrooms faster.*” Participant 12 explained “*I want ICT and energy solutions like solar panels and satellite internet to bridge our digital gaps.*” These insights reveal that adequate facilities and modern infrastructure are essential for effective school management.

- *Stakeholder Engagement and Community Support Systems*

Finally, school heads stressed the importance of strengthening community and stakeholder involvement. Participant 13 said, “kaipwan ko nin pa training para sa community engagement para ma mobilize ko an mga magurang asin local leaders na matanos na epektibo “(*“I need training in community engagement so I can mobilize parents and local leaders more effectively.”*)” Participant 14 added, “*I would benefit from strengthened School Governing Councils*

with clear roles and capacity-building support.” Participant 15 explained, “*I hope for communication platforms like SMS brigades and radio announcements to sustain stakeholder involvement even in remote sitios.*” These accounts show that empowering stakeholders through training, structures, and communication tools enhances school governance and shared responsibility.

➤ *Integrated Project Proposal*

School Management Capacity Enhancement Program for Far-Flung Schools

- *Project Title*

Building Resilient and Inclusive School Management Systems in Far-Flung Communities

- *Background and Rationale*

School heads in far-flung schools face interconnected challenges: limited financial resources, inadequate instructional materials, difficulty retaining teachers, poor infrastructure, and weak stakeholder participation. These issues compound one another, leaving school heads with constrained management capacity. Narratives from the field highlight the need for systemic, multi-dimensional support that goes beyond piecemeal interventions.

This integrated program consolidates five critical support systems—financial, academic, human resource, infrastructure, and stakeholder engagement—into a cohesive framework designed to empower school heads, strengthen governance, and improve learning outcomes in remote communities.

- *Program Objectives*

- ✓ To establish sustainable financial systems that ensure timely, transparent, and sufficient resource allocation.
- ✓ To enhance academic and instructional delivery through contextualized materials, ICT support, and resilient teaching strategies.
- ✓ To strengthen human resource systems for teacher recruitment, retention, supervision, and professional growth.
- ✓ To improve physical facilities and infrastructure for safe, inclusive, and digitally ready learning environments.
- ✓ To institutionalize stakeholder engagement and community support systems for shared governance and resource mobilization.

V. DISCUSSION

➤ *The Challenges Encountered by School Leaders in Managing Far-flung Schools in Donsol, Sorsogon*

The financial inadequacies faced by far-flung schools in Donsol mirror broader trends in rural education financing. As Recto et al. (2025) note in a study from Glan District, while per-student expenditure can reduce dropout rates, infrastructure deficiencies and inconsistent fund allocation significantly impair school efficacy, highlighting that financial inputs by themselves are insufficient. Recto et al.,

(2025). Similarly, SharEd's investigation into remote education in the Philippines revealed that decentralized budgeting during disruptions—such as the 2020–2021 pandemic—led to contextual variations in resource distribution, reflecting the unpredictable fund flows reported by your participants Randolph et al., (2022). This alignment underscored how unpredictability in MOOE releases breeds reactive management and hinders strategic planning.

Far-flung schools face persistent financial challenges that undermine their ability to deliver quality education. Limited allocations and delayed fund releases force school heads to operate reactively rather than strategically. These constraints restrict innovation, delay maintenance, and hinder the procurement of essential learning materials. High logistical costs due to remote locations further drain resources, leaving schools in survival mode and unable to invest in capacity-building or technology integration.

Academic and instructional issues compound these financial limitations. Learners struggle with absenteeism and dropout rates caused by long travel distances and livelihood demands. Scarcity of updated textbooks and contextualized modules reduces engagement and achievement, while multi-grade teaching and staffing shortages compromise instructional depth. Language barriers and frequent disruptions from disasters exacerbate learning gaps, making it difficult for schools to sustain performance and continuity.

Human resource and infrastructure challenges intensify the problem. Recruiting and retaining teachers in remote areas is difficult due to isolation, heavy workloads, and lack of incentives, leading to burnout and low morale. Physical facilities are often unsafe, poorly maintained, and lacking in libraries, laboratories, and ICT hubs, while sanitation and recreational spaces remain inadequate. Weak stakeholder participation and limited institutional support further constrain governance, making systemic interventions essential for equity and resilience in far-flung schools.

Teacher recruitment and retention remain persistent issues in remote contexts. Fabrigas and Paglinawan (2025) conducted qualitative research in Bukidnon and reported that scarcity of resources, professional isolation, and logistical challenges result in burnout and turnover, echoing your findings on staff shortages and low morale. Another study by Galut (2025) described similar experiences of teachers traversing challenging terrain and using personal funds to support instruction—mirroring the lived experiences of your participants' dedication and sacrifice Galut, (2025); Fabrigas & Paglinawan, (2025).

Far-flung schools face persistent financial constraints that severely limit their operational capacity. School heads often struggle with insufficient allocations and delayed fund releases, forcing them to adopt reactive rather than strategic management approaches. These financial gaps restrict innovation, delay essential maintenance, and hinder the procurement of learning materials. High logistical costs due to remote locations further drain resources, leaving schools in

survival mode and unable to invest in technology or capacity-building initiatives.

Academic challenges compound these financial limitations. Learners experience high absenteeism and dropout rates because of long travel distances and livelihood demands during planting or fishing seasons. Scarcity of updated textbooks and contextualized modules reduces engagement and achievement, while multi-grade teaching and staffing shortages compromise instructional depth. Language barriers and frequent disruptions from disasters exacerbate learning gaps, making it difficult for schools to sustain performance and continuity.

Human resource and infrastructure issues intensify these problems. Recruiting and retaining teachers in remote areas is difficult due to isolation, heavy workloads, and lack of incentives, leading to burnout and low morale. Physical facilities are often unsafe, poorly maintained, and lacking in libraries, laboratories, and ICT hubs, while sanitation and recreational spaces remain inadequate. Weak stakeholder participation and limited institutional support further constrain governance, highlighting the urgent need for systemic interventions to promote equity and resilience in far-flung schools.

Infrastructure deficits directly impact learning outcomes and resilience. Barrett et al. (2019) in their synthesis for the World Bank, safe, well-maintained facilities are essential for supporting student engagement and learning, particularly in disaster-prone settings. This supports your participants' reports of damaged classrooms, poor sanitation, and unsafe learning spaces undermining continuity of instruction Barrett et al.,(2019). OECD (2019) further emphasized that rural infrastructure disparities exacerbate inequities, reducing student performance and well-being. These insights confirmed the findings that fragile facilities disrupt academic delivery and impact attendance.

Infrastructure deficits in far-flung schools significantly affect learning outcomes and resilience. Safe and well-maintained facilities are essential for continuous instruction; yet many schools operate in unsafe environments with damaged classrooms and inadequate sanitation. These conditions disrupt classes during heavy rains or disasters, forcing schools to suspend learning or relocate students to temporary spaces. Such interruptions compromise instructional continuity and student engagement, making infrastructure a critical determinant of educational quality.

Beyond physical safety, inadequate facilities deepen educational inequities. Rural schools often lack libraries, laboratories, and ICT hubs, limiting opportunities for hands-on learning and digital integration. Poor sanitation and ventilation further affect health and attendance, while the absence of recreational spaces restricts holistic development. These gaps create a stark contrast between rural and urban schools, reinforcing disparities in performance and well-being. Addressing these deficits is not merely a matter of comfort but a prerequisite for equitable learning environments.

Stakeholder engagement is identified as a critical component for sustaining far-flung schools. In Southern Leyte, Arguelles and Sarsale (2020) found that although engagement practices were moderately implemented, schools must deepen collaborative efforts—e.g., engaging alumni and leveraging communication networks—to maximize impact on performance. Your findings on seasonal and reactive participation, weak institutional support, and poverty underscore the need for consistent, structured engagement approaches, such as PTAs and SMS-based communication systems advocated in the literature.

Stakeholder engagement emerges as another vital component for sustaining far-flung schools. While communities express willingness to support education, participation is often seasonal or reactive, increasing only during enrollment or crises. Weak institutional structures, poverty, and competing livelihood priorities hinder consistent involvement. Strengthening engagement through structured mechanisms—such as active parent-teacher associations, alumni networks, and communication platforms—can mobilize resources and foster shared responsibility. Sustained collaboration between schools and communities is essential for resilience and long-term improvement.

In sum, the study's results—spanning financial instability, teacher scarcity, infirm infrastructure, and fragile stakeholder involvement—resonate strongly with recent scholarly findings. They collectively point to the imperative for multi-dimensional and context-specific policy interventions: stabilize funding flows, incentivize remote teaching, prioritize infrastructure resilience, and formalize stakeholder engagement mechanisms. Integrating these systemic approaches offers the best chance of advancing educational equity and efficacy in far-flung Philippine schools.

➤ *Strategies Employed by School Heads to Overcome the Challenges*

School heads in far-flung schools employ adaptive strategies to overcome systemic challenges, reflecting broader trends in educational leadership under resource constraints. Financial discipline and transparency are critical for sustaining operations despite limited allocations. Studies confirm that transparent financial practices build trust and encourage community contributions, which are essential in marginalized contexts Recto, Maglantay, & Tuardon, (2025). Similarly, Randolph et al. (2022) emphasized that proactive financial management mitigates the negative effects of delayed fund releases, enabling school leaders to maintain continuity in learning despite unpredictable budgeting cycles.

Addressing attendance and retention through localized solutions, such as community-based learning sessions, aligns with evidence that proximity and flexible delivery reduce barriers to participation in rural schools. Research by Arguelles and Sarsale (2020) found that community engagement strategies significantly improve learner attendance and retention, particularly when schools adapt schedules to local livelihood patterns. These findings support

the notion that culturally responsive and context-sensitive approaches are vital for equity in education.

Strengthening partnerships and stakeholder engagement is another cornerstone of effective leadership in remote settings. Collaborative governance models, as highlighted by OECD (2019), enhanced resource mobilization and foster shared responsibility for school improvement. Your participants' emphasis on tapping alumni and local organizations resonates with distributed leadership theory, which posits that leadership capacity expands when communities co-own educational outcomes Barrett et al., (2019).

Instructional innovation and contextualization reflect constructivist principles, which argue that learning is most effective when connected to students' lived experiences. Integrating local culture and livelihood into modules, as your participants described, is consistent with findings by Fabrigas and Paglinawan (2025), who reported that contextualized instruction improves engagement and comprehension in rural classrooms. Similarly, Galut (2025) underscored the importance of teacher creativity in resource-scarce environments, noting that locally sourced materials can enrich lessons and reduce costs.

Teacher development and peer support strategies, such as mentoring and online training, address professional isolation—a recurring challenge in remote schools. Evidence suggests that peer mentoring fosters collaborative learning and resilience among teachers, while digital platforms expand access to professional development despite geographic barriers Fabrigas & Paglinawan, (2025). These approaches aligned with human capital theory, which emphasizes investment in teacher capacity as a driver of improved educational outcomes.

Finally, disaster preparedness and alternative learning spaces demonstrate resilience-oriented leadership. Barrett et al. (2019) argued that disaster-resilient strategies are essential for sustaining education in vulnerable regions, while OECD (2019) highlighted the role of adaptive governance in mitigating disruptions. By leveraging barangay halls and churches as temporary classrooms, school heads exemplify flexibility and community partnership—key components of resilience frameworks in education.

➤ *Implementation of Strategies by School Heads*

School heads in remote schools adopt adaptive strategies to cope with systemic constraints, reflecting broader trends in educational leadership under resource scarcity. Financial discipline and transparency are critical for sustaining operations despite limited allocations. Research confirms that transparent financial practices build trust and encourage community contributions, which are essential in marginalized contexts (Recto, Maglantay, & Tuardon, 2025). Similarly, Randolph et al. (2022) emphasized that proactive financial management mitigates the negative effects of delayed fund releases, enabling school leaders to maintain continuity in learning despite unpredictable budgeting cycles.

Localized solutions for attendance and retention, such as community-based learning centers and flexible meeting schedules, align with evidence that proximity and cultural responsiveness reduce barriers to participation in rural schools. Arguelles and Sarsale (2020) found that community engagement strategies significantly improve learner attendance and retention, particularly when schools adapt schedules to local livelihood patterns. These findings support the notion that context-sensitive approaches are vital for equity in education.

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➤ *Support Systems for School Heads in Far-Flung Schools*

School heads in remote schools consistently emphasize the need for systemic support to overcome structural inequities. Financial support systems are critical because unpredictable fund releases and insufficient allocations undermine strategic planning and force reactive management.

This finding aligned with Recto, Maglantay, and Tuardon (2025), who argued that stable and timely financial flows are essential for sustaining school operations and reducing dropout rates in rural contexts. Similarly, Randolph et al. (2022) reported that decentralized budgeting during crises, such as the pandemic, exacerbated resource gaps in remote schools, reinforcing the importance of contingency funds and transparent financial management.

Academic and instructional support systems are equally vital. The lack of contextualized learning materials and ICT resources in far-flung schools mirrors global patterns of resource disparity. Fabrigas and Paglinawan (2025) found that contextualized instruction significantly improves learner engagement and comprehension in rural classrooms, while OECD (2019) highlighted that digital resource integration reduces learning gaps in geographically isolated areas. These insights support the call for mobile libraries, ICT kits, and localized modules to make instruction relevant and resilient.

Human resource support systems address chronic teacher shortages and professional isolation. Hardship allowances, housing support, and rotational deployment of specialized staff are practical measures to retain teachers in remote schools. Galut (2025) documented the lived experiences of teachers in mountainous regions, noting that logistical challenges and lack of incentives drive turnover. Professional development tailored to multigrade teaching and local realities is also crucial, as generic seminars fail to meet the needs of educators in marginalized contexts Fabrigas & Paglinawan, (2025).

Infrastructure support systems remain a cornerstone of educational equity. Barrett et al. (2019) emphasized that safe, disaster-resilient facilities directly influence student attendance and learning continuity. Your participants' concerns about fragile classrooms, poor sanitation, and lack of ICT hubs echo OECD's (2019) findings that infrastructure disparities exacerbate rural-urban achievement gaps. Investments in solar-powered ICT hubs and sanitation facilities not only improve learning conditions but also promote health and digital readiness.

Finally, stakeholder engagement systems strengthen governance and sustainability. Arguelles and Sarsale (2020) found that participatory structures such as School Governing Councils and Parent-Teacher Associations enhance accountability and resource mobilization when properly trained and supported. Communication platforms like SMS brigades and community radio, as suggested by your participants, align with distributed leadership theory, which posits that shared governance fosters resilience and collective ownership of educational outcomes Barrett et al., (2019).

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings the researcher drew the following conclusions: School heads in far-flung schools face interconnected challenges in financial resources, academic performance, human resource management, physical facilities, and stakeholder participation that possibly

constrain their capacity to sustain effective school operations; School heads in far-flung schools demonstrate resilience and creativity by employing adaptive strategies—ranging from financial discipline and localized attendance initiatives to instructional innovation, teacher development, disaster preparedness, and stakeholder engagement—as a whole it can sustain education and strengthen school communities despite persistent challenges.; The implementation of strategies by school heads in far-flung schools reflects their strong commitment to resourcefulness, transparency, and collaboration, as they practice financial discipline, foster attendance through flexible and localized initiatives, strengthen partnerships, innovate instruction, sustain teacher development, and ensure adaptability and disaster preparedness to maintain continuity of education despite persistent challenges.; School heads in far-flung schools require integrated, multi-dimensional support systems—spanning financial, academic, human resource, infrastructure, and stakeholder engagement—to strengthen management capacity, and the proposed School Management Capacity Enhancement Program offers a cohesive framework with targeted interventions, phased implementation, and sustainability measures to ensure resilient, inclusive, and community-owned education in remote contexts.

The following recommendations are proposed: (1) Strengthen systemic support by addressing interconnected challenges in finance, academics, human resources, facilities, and stakeholder participation to enable sustainable school operations. (2) Institutionalize and scale adaptive strategies—such as financial discipline, localized attendance initiatives, instructional innovation, and stakeholder engagement—to reinforce resilience and sustain education in far-flung schools. (3) Provide structured capacity-building and monitoring mechanisms to support the effective implementation of school heads' strategies, ensuring transparency, collaboration, and continuity of education. (4) Adopt the proposed integrated School Management Capacity Enhancement Program to deliver multi-dimensional support systems that strengthen leadership capacity and foster inclusive, community-owned education in remote contexts.

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