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Philippines, Factor 17, Good Governance

### **Philippines: Ending a Corrupt Government**

The Philippines, an island country located in the southern part of Asia. It has come a long way after winning their independence from a 300-year rule under the Spaniards. Even though their battle was victorious, today, the Philippines is the second most corrupt in the business of World Economic Forums of 2013-2014 and the first to have inadequate infrastructure (Global Security). The Philippines government has caused their nation to endure extreme poverty due to bad governance and conflicts that have arose, thus leading to problems such as very poor employment options, poor agriculture, bad schools, and bad healthcare.

The large island of the Philippines was established as a Spanish colony from 3,000 B.C. to 2,000 B.C. Later on, the people of the Philippines rebelled and wanted to be independent from the Spaniards. However, the Spanish- American War of 1898 had defeated the Spaniards, and soon after the Philippines was declared independent by Emilio Aguinaldo. Another war also occurred during the 1920's. It was called the Filipino- American War, and soon another president, Manuel Roxas, was in office. This resulted in the Philippines finally declaring full independence on July 4, 1946. Later on, President Ferdinand Marcos will be known as the starting point of the country's corruption that had caused poverty as well as an economic crisis (Tim Lambert). Today, their economy has increased of a small six percent, but still in the high poverty rate. The Philippines have an enormous population of 103 million with the growth rate of 1.5% (Worldometers). The current 2017 president, Rodrigo Duterte, has been a controversial issue within his country, as well as with other parts of the world. This is due to the conflict that is happening between his citizens and himself. This conflict was caused due to problems with drug trafficking, drug users, and president Rodrigo's negative attitude on it. This conflict has resulted in war between the president and his citizens that is currently known as the "war on drugs."

This so-called war on drugs was put in place to kill people who are drug traffickers or drug users. Already about 3,000 people have died due to police and military violence because they have the right to kill without having to be accountable (Regencia). First, this war is costly, causing the Philippines to be more in debt. Secondly, there is no form of government that will establish constitutional rights for the citizens. Thirdly, lives are being taken away without giving those people a second chance at a new start. Many turn to drug trafficking due to the job employment in the Philippines being low. They can't afford to go overseas to seek a high paying job. In addition, drug users are not given an option for rehabilitation, especially the citizens in the rural areas. This is because the government has not invested in health care centers in which they could go to unless they head to the urbanized areas. Many husbands are killed in this battle and women have no way of supporting their families. Unfortunately, women have limited roles that pay little to none, such as marketing and family responsibilities (IFDA). The government is stripping their citizens of human rights and performing unlawful killings (IAC publishing). Their judicial system is corrupt and inefficient because administration has no say in regards to the drug war, and is run based on more of a dictatorship position of the President. President Rodrigo, without him conforming and passing laws within their system of government, is ignoring the fact that there is supposed to be a sufficient system in place. In addition,

An average family of six who may do farming in the Bicol region has an average income of 152,000 php, which roughly is about 3,064 U.S. dollars (Philippine Statistics Authority) while the average income for an average family in the U.S, especially if they do farming is about 31,000 dollars (USDA). Unemployment rates have been enormous in the Philippines, one reasoning being is there are too many people entering into the market that cannot meet the demand for jobs being created. About 28% of people are self-employed and cannot be guaranteed that they will earn any income, while 58% of people with formal and informal jobs are being paid, but wages are low. People have to earn money for their families and most often, their only option is to go abroad and work. One in every ten Filipino goes abroad to find employment. This hurts the Philippines economically due to little promotion of employment, causing little money to be produced. This is the leading cause of the lack of infrastructure, and leaves little possibility to build health care buildings or produce more jobs (Salvosa).

88 million Filipinos live in rural areas, which contributes to an astounding 80% of poverty being shown. Women are limited for job opportunities as stated above, and men who are not able to seek a job overseas must become farmers and fishermen. This will lead to fewer opportunities or skills they could pursue outside from fishing and farming. In addition, it affects indigenous people more due to their high illiteracy rates, which is affected by the new modern technologies and cultural rituals that have engulfed the indigenous practices as well as their norms (IFAD). That means the 80% of people living in poverty will receive little to no food each day. An Inquirer reporter named Deeja, states that “Roughly 12.18 million Filipinos are living in subsistence or extreme poverty, meaning their earnings are not enough for them to eat three square meals a day.” Even though the government has set up a program called the 4Ps, it will not be a long term solution to help the poverty rate decrease, but only provides a small amount of cash each month to the citizens making low income. With a large amount of the population in dire need of this, distributing money evenly to people each month is a struggle and will be costly. As the Republic of the Philippines states, they are “covering 79 provinces, 143 cities, and 1,484 municipalities.” It is also stated that 570,056 are made up of indigenous people. The program gives out 1,400php a month to a household that has up to three children. 1,400php is roughly 27,000 U.S dollars, but that is only limited to three and not the average family of six. These cash grants are distributed by the Land Bank of the Philippines (Gazette). This is a great way to help support the majority living in poverty, but citizens shouldn’t need to rely on the program as a long term solution. The government needs to set up a program that will help them find a sufficient job that will stabilize a good income flow and would be enough to support their families.

There are many government run programs such as education and health care, but many in the rural areas have little access to them. Health care has a major effect in the rural areas and due to little facilities being built in those needed areas, illnesses has increased drastically. The University Of Texas School Of Public Health study shows that there is little access to health care facilities, with only 15% showing up for checkups every year, while 63% are reported to have a familial chronic disease. Health care programs are necessary to help monitor those chronic diseases. A press release from the senate of the Philippines had Senator Edgardo J. Angara state the concerns about the lack of doctors and nurses in those poorer regions, as well as the rural areas. In 2005, Southeast Asian Nations Association recorded that there was only 69 doctors in the ARMM (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao), while the government hospitals near the urban areas had 658 doctors. Angara then goes on to say that, because of the lack of health care facilities, mortality rates for children has increased in most regions. CAR (Cordillera Administrative Region) experienced twenty deaths every 1,000 children while ARMM had 33 deaths every 1,000 children. Programs to help with the poor healthcare system are programs like Telemedicine. Telemedicine is a service that provides a doctor 24/7 virtually by mobile device (Avizia). This may help in the urban areas, but the rural areas still don’t have those modern

technologies as the other high class regions. They need an actual hospital to go to and preferably a doctor from that region that could make communication and trust easier between rural, as well as indigenous people. But, to accomplish this tactic, we need to find someone in that region that is well educated in the medical field. There is little to none in those rural regions; those people either dropped out at an early age to help support their family, or may have gone overseas to seek education abroad. The dropout rates start at an early age, from primary to secondary school. Schools that are in the poorer regions, such as Eastern Visayas, experience less than 30% of students who complete all the school academic levels. In addition, Philippines poor infrastructure has made it more difficult, especially in the rural regions, to provide adequate education buildings with running water, electricity, and materials such as books for the students. Because of this, being able to employ teachers is more difficult when they do not have the necessary materials to teach a classroom. In addition, families financially cannot afford for their children to go to school and as the WENR article implies, credits to pass secondary school have decreased, which alarms employees of the school. Employees want to be able to reverse that, but the Supreme Court has rejected and refused to listen to them, as of March of 2016. As for students who wish to go abroad for an exchange program, many students do not get help from the government, as they are self-funded (Clark). Many abroad students do pay some tuition fee, but mostly government run programs help fund the costs through scholarship programs. The lack of help and support from the government is giving students an unfair advantage to get a proper education, and to be successful in life.

Agriculture is important for the rural Filipinos because that is how they provide themselves with food or how they seek employment. Philippines' main crops are rice, corn, fruits, while their major export is in coconut oil and other fruits. However, to make room for agricultural land use, they must convert the forest into proper land for them to plant their crops. As a result, grazing the land leads to aggravating the soil, leading to crops being in poor condition. This hurts the Philippines because, if they rely on just two main crops to use for exporting and neither do well, they are losing money as well as land. Lands are rapidly shrinking due to many factors, such as soil erosion and the large demand for livestock as well as tourist attractions that is taking up a good portion of their land to meet for those demands. Around nine million of farming as well as forest land area has been effected by soil erosion because of the Philippines inadequate use of land. The government is urging the use of land for foreign attractions to make their income. There's many fertile land that can be used, but instead it's being used for non-agricultural uses (D. Briones). Many citizens who are employed in the agricultural areas are those who are the poorest. As social cost from agricultural business decrease the generations after that look for other options overseas to help with income (Kritz). With these factors, Philippines agriculture is shrinking quickly and is economically failing. The government needs to help organize with land use and how the majority of the land should be used for farming purposes.

Philippines' corrupt government has caused many problems, such as extreme poverty, waste of agricultural land, unemployment, poor education, and bad health care. Their system of government is inefficient and needs to improve for the betterment of their citizens. Solutions to help make an efficient government clear. First, create more jobs and places for opportunity for citizens to maintain a flow of steady income. This in return will help with the unemployment rate and not having to go seek jobs overseas. Secondly, the government needs to provide funding for necessary things, like children's education, instead of the drug war. Thirdly, the government needs to build more facilities for people who are in the rural regions so they might have access to them, as well as being able to afford the medical help. These solutions cost money, of course, but an option to help make these things happen could be to improve their diversity in crops, thus resulting in a greater amount of exports in exchange for money. In addition, half of the money earned can be distributed for necessities, such as building schools, and the other half can be the

wages earned by the farmers. With taxes collected by the government, there needs to be regulations put in place to evenly distribute funds for all categories.

Even though the government has set up a program to help with the extreme poverty, it should not be used as a long-term solution. This is wasting money and making the citizens dependent on the government for help instead of actually helping them seek proper jobs. Monthly payments can still be enforced to families in dire need, but we need organizations that can help step in and guide them until they have a stable income to meet the needs of their family so they will not have to rely on the 4P's program. By doing so, it will help make the relationship between the government and its citizens improve because it will show that the government is actually trying to help families in need.

Philippines are stuck in a situation in which the demand for jobs overshadows the creation of jobs. One solution could be to use the monetary policy of using low interest rates for already preexisting businesses, allowing them to borrow for little. This will provide them a capital in which they can hire employees to meet the rising demands. This could also help make people invest in their company if they have low rates. When we spend money on necessary things, it can help the economy regain lost money. As Kimberly Amado states, "One billion dollars spent creates 19,795 construction jobs. One billion spent hiring teachers creates 17,687 jobs." This can also help people who have been stuck only farming and fishing, as well as women being able to seek new jobs that allows them to learn different skills, but also easy enough for them to accomplish a task. For example, the 17,687 jobs in the education department can include a person who could clean the school, a cook that could provide meals for children, etc. (Amado). If the government puts these policies into action, this can be beneficial so people will not have to go overseas looking for employment.

Coconut is the major export in the Philippines, but relying on one source will hurt the economy. Instead, they need to have a diverse selection of crops they can grow. First, this will help in the market as demands for different crops will be different depending on the year or season. Secondly, if the weather is bad or there happens to be a natural disaster, different types of crops take half the time as their main crop. In return, can be readily exported making Philippines income to increase dramatically. In addition, having people run different farms with different crops will increase job opportunities, especially for the indigenous people who cannot seek other jobs besides farming. The government should help look over the production of exports and how much income the farmers receive in order to regulate what needs to be done for profitable sales. As for soil erosion, it is a big issue in the Philippines and can be hard to reverse. One solution is to carefully till the soil. Tilling breaks down the structure of soil, and can help preserve more top soil. Another is crop rotation that allows organic matter to form, making the soil healthy, and help with fertilization so the next batch of crops are ready to be planted. Lastly, if we educate farmers and even the government about soil erosion, this will be crucial in helping prevent more damage (CFF). The government does not need to tear down forests to make room for tourist attractions. They can build around the forests to make tourist attractions that display their beautiful forests and the different types of exotic species that live there. This helps with deforestation and even with soil erosion.

As for education, students should be able to have a right to an education. Education is essential for being successful, whether using the tool as a means to help others or using it to expand the workforce. The Filipino government needs to acknowledge that education is crucial in helping the economy for generations to come. With any money earned, the government should establish schools in urban areas, as well as rural areas. As more schools appear, more children will have the opportunity to get an education near them. The government should also help pay for necessary materials such as books. This will help create less stress in families that are worried about not

being able to afford to pay for their child. In the long run, this will help the economy by creating a future generation that will have skills they can use to help better themselves in the workforce. Along with schools being built, health care buildings also need to be built. Rural areas should also have more health care centers available for those that cannot travel to the urban areas. By doing so, this can help prevent family diseases, which in return, will help the child mortality rates in the rural areas decrease. Even though there is telemedicine, rural areas do not have the advanced technologies to communicate over mobile devices. Also, people in the rural areas will have more trust in their government if they know there is a place in which they can get medicine and have a person, such as a doctor or nurse, who also speaks in their native tongue rather than talking through a screen, asking for descriptions of their illnesses.

Implementing these solutions will help the Philippines politically, socially, and economically. The government of the Philippines are supposed to help serve the people, but currently, their government is becoming more corrupt each day. So, when the government need to begin meeting the demands of their people for things such as more job opportunities, health care, and education, both the government and citizens will benefit economically. It may be a slow process, but in the long run, it will help the country out of corruption. Philippines has a lot of potential, but just needs a more stable government and a strong leader to help guide the country to success.

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