

## A NEW WAR ON POVERTY: LEARNING POVERTY IN THE PHILIPPINES

*by:*

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Poverty has been a long-standing problem in the Philippines and a lot of government and non-government organizations have worked together to address this problem. Other than the economic problems that Filipinos face, there is another problem that is affecting the Filipino youth –learning poverty.

According to Chanco (2022), learning poverty is not being able to read and understand age-appropriate reading materials by age of 10. The World Bank (2022) says that children by age of 10, should be able to read. As a kid advances through school, reading opens doors to new knowledge; conversely, reading difficulties limit what the youngster may learn. Reading comprehension is also essential for laying the groundwork for study in other disciplines. By the conclusion of elementary school, more than half of students in poor and middle-income nations cannot read and comprehend a short tale. Threatening sustainable growth and poverty reduction, this learning crisis undermines nations' attempts to create human capital and fulfill sustainable development goals (SDGs).

In the Philippines, our learning poverty is 90.9% which is a disastrous situation (Philippine Star, August 10, 2022) in comparison to top ranking country Singapore at 2.8 percent, Vietnam at 18.1 percent, Thailand at 23.4 percent, Malaysia at 42 percent, and Indonesia at 52.8 percent. This means that a lot of Filipino children are extremely way behind their peers in Southeast Asia and the World. We should recognize that reading is a fundamental skill that matters in surviving the challenges of the modern world.

Comini (2022) of the UNICEF proposes solutions such as reaching and retaining every child in school, assessing learning levels, prioritizing teaching the fundamentals,

increasing catch-up learning and progress beyond what was lost, and developing psychosocial health and well-being, so every child is ready to learn. There are solutions and we can wage war against learning poverty!

## *References:*

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