

CREATING CONDUCTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AMID CLIMATE CHANGE

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Climate change has increasingly affected the daily operations of schools in the Philippines, challenging the ability to provide a conducive learning environment for students. Rising temperatures, stronger typhoons, and more frequent flooding disrupt classes, damage facilities, and strain resources. These conditions pose risks to learners' health and safety, making it essential for schools to adopt strategies that ensure education continues effectively, even amidst these environmental challenges.

The Department of Education (DepEd) has spearheaded initiatives to address these concerns, integrating climate-resilient strategies into school programs. Through the Brigada Eskwela program, schools engage communities in preparing facilities to withstand extreme weather conditions. Efforts include reinforcing classrooms, upgrading drainage systems, and creating green spaces to mitigate heat. Furthermore, DepEd's Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Service (DRRMS) ensures that schools are equipped with emergency plans and resources to handle climate-induced disruptions, promoting safety and readiness.

To support learning continuity, many schools have adopted flexible learning setups, such as modular and online learning, especially during extended class suspensions caused by severe weather. Teachers are trained to implement blended learning approaches, ensuring students remain engaged despite physical limitations. Additionally, schools conduct regular disaster preparedness drills, teaching students and staff how to respond effectively to emergencies. These proactive measures help maintain a stable learning environment, even under challenging circumstances.

Environmental education is another critical component of schools' efforts to combat climate change's effects. By incorporating topics on climate resilience and environmental stewardship into the curriculum, schools empower learners to become part of the solution. Tree-planting drives, recycling programs, and eco-friendly initiatives, such as reducing single-use plastics, foster a culture of sustainability within the school community. These programs instill awareness and responsibility among students, equipping them with the knowledge to contribute positively to climate action.

Despite these initiatives, more work is needed to address the long-term impacts of climate change on education. Schools must continue investing in resilient infrastructure and sustainable practices to adapt to evolving environmental challenges. Collaborative efforts between the government, private sector, and local communities are essential in scaling up resources and innovations. By prioritizing both immediate responses and long-term solutions, schools can ensure that students thrive in a safe, supportive, and climate-resilient learning environment.

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