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Poverty threaten Economic Growth: Analyzing the Public Administration-
Governance Performance Effectiveness in Addressing the
Alarming Poverty in the Philippines

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Poverty pertains to a condition in which the basic and essential needs of humankind are not being accumulated. This happened when people experienced a lack of necessary food, clothing, and shelter in order to survive. This can be recognized as relative poverty that has been known as the incapacity of a citizen to effectively engage and participate in economic phase in the society in where he or she lives. We cannot deny the fact that our country is one of the countries that has an alarming and increasing rate of poverty. Data shows that 16.6% of the population in our country or about 17.6 million people are under the poverty line and those who are residing in rural areas have a much greater chance of experiencing poverty. Some of the rural poor are living in different regions wherein they experienced scarcity. The agricultural potential is low and drought. They are also affected by floods and environmental degradation. The access to basic human needs such as quality education, potable water, health care services and sanitation is insufficient and unavailable. The huge inequality over income brackets, sectors, regions as well as uncontrolled population growth are considered as the key components hindrance the efforts in reducing poverty.

In an article entitled, “Poverty in the Philippines: Causes, Constraints and Opportunities” it stated that the poverty and inequality in the Philippines remains a threat that is hard to address. Four decades ago, the portion of households suffering under the line of official poverty has leisurely and unevenly decreased. Economic growth has gone off between boom and bust cycles wherein the process of economic expansion and contraction that occurs repeatedly was affected and has great impact on the poor. The article provides main causes of poverty such as low to modest economic growth in past forty years, deficiency in employment procreation and the quality of livelihood and works created, failure to enhance and fully develop the agricultural sector, high inflation in the midst of crisis periods, the rise levels of population growth, the rise and persistent levels of inequality in terms of incomes and assets which causes great impacts in economic

expansion and repeated disturbance and exposure to risks including conflicts, natural disasters, economic crises and environmental poverty. The article also added that economic growth did not interpret into poverty depletion in the recent years because poverty levels diverse hugely by regions, and its rate decrease which turn into a mostly rural circumstances in the urban areas, It is also strongly related to educational attainment wherein poor residents do not have the chance to educate themselves through family planning and normally a family with six or more members are under the poverty line and many Filipino households still defenseless to shocks and risks. The governance and institutional restrictions address poverty. However, the local government ability and capacity in implementing poverty reduction programs and policies are not sufficient because their way of targeting in various poverty programs can not covers the whole population of poor people. Thus, multidimensional responses reducing the people in the poverty line are needed as well as engaging in further research about chronic poverty must be prioritize. This report absolutely analyzes the causes and effects of poverty and recommends many ways to quicken poverty reduction and attain more inclusive growth.

In addition to that, the outbreak of COVID-19 virus worsens the situation of the poor people in our country. Years have passed but until now we can still taste the pain caused by the pandemic in our lives. It prevents our country from attaining economic growth. The poverty and the dilemmas brought by pandemic has been the alarming issue on Public Administration Governance and Development. Hence, in order to effectively address this issue they need to come up with proper programs and policies that will surely benefit the citizens who are experiencing poverty. These programs and policies must also be a way to achieve a prosperous economy. In this paper, you will come to know how the poverty threaten the economic growth of the Philippines. Also, what are these possible concrete solutions and how Public Administration Governance

performance such as implementing programs and policies helps to lessen the poverty rate in the Philippines. In the instantaneous and short term, it must enhance the government's poverty reduction strategy wherein this involves key sectors in order to execute a collective and coordinated response to the alarming issue. The government should continuously pursue the key economic reforms for sustainable and inclusive growth.

Honestly, the world's future is full of uncertainty. We do not have any idea what will happen in the next following years. We cannot tell if our economy will finally attain progress and stability. We cannot prevent issues from attacking the country and leisurely bug its system. We cannot tell if we could survive another huge attack of pandemic that will outbreak soon. We are not certain if our sacrifices, efforts, and time we invest in participating and molding the country through upholding human rights, promoting high quality education and good governance, empowering women, rooting out corruption, and preserving our culture to attain efficient development. We cannot see a little glimpse of our country's future. Just like what happened three years ago, in the year 2019, the unexpected burst out of coronavirus disease 2019 attacked our country. The COVID-19 pandemic killed the hope, dreams, and lives of many people. It also brought variant that really triggered rural development. It was a dilemma that wrecked the system of our economic growth and prevented our country from attaining efficient development. Most of all, it is the reason why the rate of alarming poverty in our country increases. Since the pandemic wiped out tons of opportunities, the unemployment rate worsens. Many have lost their jobs, so they are not able to feed their family properly. In terms of attending classes, modes of learning have changed and some children did not get the chance to continue their education because of the unavailability and stability of technology.

According to an article entitled “The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Low Income Households in the Philippines : Impending Human Capital Crisis”, the coronavirus 2019 pandemic awakens the dramatic disturbance in the conveyance of quality education and health care services in our country, the Philippines. The school closures and dilemmas in the implementation of distance learning, students learning deprivation are expected to be expansive. For the time being, the health care system is drawn under the challenge of management in coronavirus cases which likely the cause why delivery of essential health services is not sufficient. The pandemic affects all aspects in society wherein thousands of girls especially teenager because they are at the risk of adolescent pregnancy, violence and child marriage. Due to pandemic the teenage pregnancy rate in the Philippines have increase. This is because some teenagers do not go to school and often lock themselves in their house and own room. As the government says, the pandemic caused millions of people fell in poverty. According to the Manila Bulletin, there was about 2.3 million people in the Philippines experienced poverty between the 2018 and 2021 mainly because of the economic downturn. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the rate of people living in the line of poverty in the year 2021 increase to a total of almost 20 million or 18.1% of the population from 16.7% in the year 2018. It also brought about indisputable disadvantageous impacts to all sectors of the Philippine economy. According to the latest survey of Labor Force Survey (LFS), it was reported that there are currently 3.5 million unemployed Filipinos and estimating the unemployment rate at 7.4% in the year 2021. In the article entitled, “The Philippines Economy and the Impact of COVID-19” it says that in January 2020, wherein the country’s first COVID-19 case was recorded followed by the month of March in which our country had experienced the strict community quarantine, wherein it restrict the activities of commercial and mobility. These delayed actions and the spread of COVID-19 virus had huge negative results in terms of family

incomes, education, jobs, education, businesses and food security. The impact of pandemic on the on the Philippines GDP wherein it caused the economy to decline and form its lowest level which decrease by 9.5% in the year 2020. Relying on foreign investments and building hopes for entice foreign investors to invest in the Philippines through the legislative measures such as corporate tax cuts has been the way of government to boost the economy. However, in terms of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI), the economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic lower the foreign direct investment (FDI) from 24.6% to \$6.5 billion in 2020, down to \$8.7 billion in the year 2019. Moreover, due to the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, our country's national debt had increased from 26.7% to P9.7 trillion in the year 2020. As of the end of January 2021, this had risen to P10.3 trillion. The government take a decision to open a new bridge of loan from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas or the Philippine Central Bank) to address its financial obligations. The revenue also fell by 9% in 2020 due to increasing expenses. The Bureau of Internal Revenue's collections fell by 10.3%, and the Bureau of Customs' collections fell by 14.7%, resulting in a 11.4% reduction in tax revenues. The Philippine government faced a P1.37-trillion budget shortfall in 2020 because of the higher expenses and reduced revenue. The article entitled "Over 5.6 million Filipino families living in poverty – DSWD" written by Ryan Macasero, it was concluded in the DSWD's 'Listahanan 3' survey that there are about 30 million of Filipinos are belong in the poverty line. According to findings and results of the Listahanan 3 survey which released by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), as of in the year 2022 in the manila Philippines, there are over 5.6 million Filipino families who are suffering because of poverty. It shows how it increase from 5.2 million families who were recognized as poor during the Listahanan 2 survey, which was completed in the year 2015. In this third interaction of the survey, over 15,487,655 households were beingsurveyed by DSWD's enumerators. According to Mr. Andrew Ambubuyog,

the DSWD information technology director. He said on November 23, during a press conference that the increase in the rate of poor families was largely because of the job losses that triggered by the covid-19 pandemic. In individual terms, it means that two out of five Filipinos are in the poverty line, or at least 30 million Filipinos are considered as poor. The number is about 27% in the 111 million of total population on the Philippines. This considered as much elevated compared to the number of Filipino citizens who rated themselves as belong in the poverty line in the last Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey which conducted in October 2022. The DSWD informed the community that they used the proxy which means test to measure the poverty rate in the Philippines. The World Bank said that the proxy test means the uses “observable characteristics” of the households and its element to approximate their consumptions and incomes whether the other income data including salary slips or tax returns are unreliable and unavailable. This survey period started in the month of September 2019 and ended in the month of March 2022. DSWD’s poverty survey is conducted every four years. It took longer than usual because the enumerators could not reach out surveys because of many restrictions caused by pandemic. Ambubuyog said that Listahanan was affected because they were not able to survey their desired target. In addition to to the number of poor households, the survey they conducted able to found more than 1 million Filipino families who still have no deeper access to electricity. Majority of these families are located in Zamboanga Peninsula, BARMM and Mimaropa regions. Due to the help of Listahanan’s data, we are informed that five out of ten, or half of all indigenous peoples households are poor and this needs to address immediately. This Listahanan three report was launched last August and the DSWD has revealed its data in month of November which are to be shared with other government agencies including non-governmental organizations, local government units as well as the civil society organizations in order provide sufficient help and services and reach their

intended beneficiaries. Dilemmas in agricultural reform like deficiency in the total new productions and stocks, and rural development like restricted access to quality health care, insufficient or lack of health insurance coverage, geographic isolation, lack of public transportation, poor infrastructure, and low educational attainment are also the reason why our country experienced extreme poverty. Despite uncertainties, the government is trying its best to save and restore wellness of our country. Recently inaugurated President Ferdinand Marcos Jr who is recently inaugurated as the President of the Philippines, has aims to wipe out the poverty rate to 9% by the end of his single six year term in the year 2028 His target that still achievable despite of the soaring inflation said by the Economic Planning named Secretary Arsenio Balisacan. President Marcos stated that the government's strategy will focus on completely reopening the economy which includes investments in human capital and social protection, transforming the production sectors to create more quality jobs and competitive products. In addressing this current issue of alarming poverty, there is a new development plan in fighting the poverty and inequality among Filipinos according to NEDA. It was stated in the article entitled, "New PH Dev't Plan To Address Persisting Poverty, Inequality Among Filipinos — NEDA". The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) transform the government's commitment to crucially lessen the poverty and inequality in our country, the Philippines through the imminent Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028. Its keynote address at the start of the World Bank Philippines' report on conquering the poverty and inequality. Arsenio M. Balisacan, the NEDA Secretary stated that the upcoming PDP— harbored on the 8-Point Socioeconomic Agenda of the Marcos administration. It is designed to resolve the continuing multi-generational inequality and poverty among the Filipino families. "In particular, initiatives to boost health, improve education and lifelong learning, increase income-earning ability, ensure food security and proper nutrition,

and rationalize social protection will be among the main policy thrusts of the PDP,” Balisacan said. “We aim to sustain the socioeconomic gains in the past decade for at least two more decades, in the hope of attaining the AmBisyon Natin 2040, which states that all Filipinos will enjoy a firmly rooted, comfortable, and secure life by 2040,” He added. The Secretary expressed his opinion regarding the birthday of the COVID-19 pandemic that temporarily halted the progress because of aggravate existing issues which affects the vulnerable Filipinos and most especially in the line of learning losses. Balisacan also stated that these could compel future efforts in reducing inequality and poverty. The pandemic has quickened the shift in different types of jobs that could immensely affect the poor, specifically those who cannot ride in the wave of digitalization. He also said that the job polarization could have an impact on the overall productivity in the following years to come. To counter the World Bank Philippines, he toast their report and complements the current administration’s goal in resolving the lifetime and generational poverty and inequality as well as achieving a single-digit poverty level by 2028.

In the article, Balicasan said that “The report provides a sweeping picture of how inequality and poverty are entrenched over a person’s life cycle—from maternal health that impacts mother and child, to children’s access to education and health services, and to employment and income opportunities. Interventions, therefore, must encompass this whole life cycle,”. The reports featured the country’s relevant progress in decreasing poverty rate and owing it part to encouraged economic growth and structural transformation. It also shows how the enlargement of secondary education, social assistance programs like the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), as well as the mobility to better-paying jobs, serves as contributing factors in reducing the poverty in our country. The secretary of NEDA wanted to evoke the senses of government that the alarming

poverty must address urgently so that we do not relapse but instead support efforts to form a sustainable and inclusive economic development.

Analyzing the program and policies of the Philippine Government, there are several social welfare programs created for the underprivileged Filipino citizens. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is the main government agency which is required to implement, develop, and correlate social protection and poverty reduction. The passage of Republic Act No. 7160 known as the Local Government Code of 1991 concerned the decentralization of DSWD basic assistance to local government units. In the article entitled, “Social Welfare Programs in the Philippines”, they pointed out that our country has a strong egalitarian tradition which means that the government is prioritizing the welfare of society’s most inflexible members including the poor, vulnerable and disenfranchised, and to assure the tradition there are various government policies and programs that the government have been implemented. These are the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program, Kapit Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan – Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services, National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction, Sustainable Livelihood Program, Supplementary Feeding Program, Social Pension Program, Residential Care Facilities including Home for Girls, Regional Center for Women, Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth, Recovery and Reintegration Program for Trafficked Persons, Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth, Minors Traveling Abroad, Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation, and Adoption. The Pantawid Pamilya Program is a conditional cash transfer (CCT) program that gives money grants to poor households that have 0-14 years old child and/or pregnant mothers. A family must comply with the conditions set by the program to be validated. It has aim to address their immediate needs and reduce the short-term poverty alleviation as well as to break the intergenerational poverty cycle through investments in

human capital. However, there are issues in this program wherein some. Families who belong to 4p's are not experienced poverty while the ones who really needs help are not included. The government must recognize this issue to effectively execute this program for the poor people. Secondly, the KALAHY-CIDSS (Kapit Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan – Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services, is a mitigate initiative of the DSWD which utilizes an approach called community-driven development (CDD). It gives funds to poor rural municipalities for the use of public goods investment as well as promoting people's participation in governance. It permits a certain group through allowing them to identify their difficulties in life, giving them chance to recommend solutions and think some good implementation. Next is the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction or mostly known as Listahanan, it is information management system that recognize who and where the indigent people are in the whole Philippines. It developed and established a socio-economic database of indigent households. This kind of program by the government is a must because they have idea regarding the rate of indigent households who are suffering in poverty in the different regions of the Philippines so they can effectively reach out these families and help them properly. Its aim is to ensure that the limited resources of the many social protection agencies reach the hands of poorest individuals as well as to improve the coordination among social protection agencies that merge the criteria for the preference of the poorest population. The Sustainable Livelihood Program is a community-based program that furnishes capacity building in order to develop the program participants' socio-economic status. It evokes the participants to employment opportunities. This helps micro-enterprises to become administratively and economically workable. Next is the Supplementary Feeding Program which is the provision of food, and regular meals to the currently enrolled daycare center children. These can be hot nutritious meals which are recommended by Food and

Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI), that served during break of the day-care students. Its beneficiaries are three-year-old to four-year-old children that are not covered in the Department of Education Pre-school. The Social Pension Program is for indigent senior citizens and one of provisions clearly stated under Section 5 Republic Act 9994 known as the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010. Its purpose is to give additional government assistance which is the amount of Five Hundred Pesos as monthly stipend to increase the daily maintenance and medical needs of indigent senior citizens and must be a subject to a review every two years by the Congress through consultation with the DSWD.

Residential Care Facilities like Home for Girls are temporary residential spaces and a substitute for care provided 24-hours. Girls under 18 years old who have special needs and cannot be adequately met by their own households and relatives over a period of time are covered by this program. It gives a great chance for the citizens to be sufficiently cared in the short period of time under the controlled of therapeutic environment, the Regional Center for Women serves as a residential facility for abused women and their children. This was built through the cooperation of Congressional Spouses Foundation and Inc. which offers protective and reconstructive assistance as well as a guide in conducting skill training for its covered people in order to teach them basic livelihood skills. It is a good program because it focuses to disadvantaged women and children who are victims of physically abused, domestic violence, victims of involuntarily forced prostitution, illegal recruitment, illegal recruitment as well as those children who are victims of abandonment wherein, they have given a chance to change their lives for the better. The Regional Rehabilitation Center for Youth serves as a residential facility for children in conflict with the law from ages 15 years old and under 18. This program enables the youth offenders to reinstate their social functioning to live a normal life through reunification with their family and to become a

productive and good member of society and community. The Recovery and Reintegration Program for Trafficked Persons is a social protection to trafficked persons. It is implemented to widen the services and programs to provide a good interference to the trafficked persons in numerous ways. It is designed to boost the existing programs for trafficked victims, their families as well as to support the capacity-building activities for service providers. The Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situation is social safety net and stop-gap mechanism to help the recovery of families and individuals because of unexpected crises including death and illness of a family member. This program has a special unit in operating to provide immediate respond to severe cases of individuals and families in crisis situations. It provides consolidated assistance including immediate rescue, protection provision of direct financial, and provides material assistance in the midst of disaster, referrals for immediate medical, legal, as well as psycho-social services. The Minors Traveling Abroad is an initiative of DSWD to stop the cases of child abduction wherein a minor who has a permanent residency card of another country is no longer required to secure travel clearance from DSWD. Lastly the Adoption which is a project of the Department of Social Welfare and Development that is a socio-legal process of giving a permanent family to a child that has a parent who voluntarily or involuntarily give up parental authority over the child. It is a relevant program because it provides a clear and brighter future to a child who experienced abandonment. These programs and policies I mentioned above can be great way in monitoring the underprivileged Filipino citizens and addressing their problem that prevent them to attain stability. However, these current government initiatives are not sufficient to lessen families' vulnerability and to safeguard themselves against the risks and losses of their income. Policies and programs can lessen the poverty rate through supporting employment and workers, promoting inclusive rural development, improving education access and quality, addressing inequality of opportunity as well as

strengthening social protection mechanisms. A government must know that eliminating poverty is not a task nor act of charity but rather an act of justice. In relation to the theories and concept of governance, they must identify the power dependence that involves strengthening good relationships between the institutions and the collective action. This action must have a clearer and better goal which is to create a common objective that will benefit many, especially the poor ones and must build by the proper cooperation of different organizations in the government. They must share and exchange resources to negotiate and have shared understandings regarding ultimate program and policy goals. These ultimate program and policy goals must achieve properly. Furthermore, aside from the programs and agencies there are action plans of the current administration in resolving this issue, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday promised in his first State of the Nation Address before a joint session of Congress to determinedly rise the Philippines' economy in order wipe out the poverty rate and turns it into single digits. Before the joint session of Congress, he said that his administration has aim for a 6.5% to 8% annual gross domestic product growth from 2023 through 2028, predicting that the poverty rate will lessen in that period to 9% from the current 23.7%. It was written in the article entitled "Marcos sets out big economic goal of slashing Philippine poverty" wherein he also said in his speech that he is expecting growth of 6.5% to 7.5% this year. We all know that we are now in a crisis wherein we stumbled from higher commodity prices and have fears of food shortages. Marcos promised a stipend to farmers which is a network of farm-to-market roads that can be use as innovation and part of aspiring reforms for the agriculture sector. The agriculture chief said, President Marcos said that the government will strengthen the value chain from farmers to consumers. His aim is to achieve national unity and growth for an economy which was devastated by the pandemic including lockdowns and lower rice prices. In addition to that, the government plan to immediately

revive the job creation and poverty reduction by navigating the economy back to the high-growth track while addressing government debt and the sharply increasing prices of food and relevant commodities. Secretary Balisacan of the National Economic and Development Authority proudly said that the President Marcos and the economic team already agreed regarding the overall goal of the current administration which is focusing on job. Generation and poverty reduction. They aim for economic growth at least at commensurate with pre-pandemic levels through 2028. They wanted to raise the bar higher through making the growth more resilient and inclusive. To put it simply, the growth must be pro-poor and can fight global events including pandemics, geopolitical and technological disruptions, and calamities due to climate change. In order to achieve these targets, the NEDA would pursue the necessary measures to increase the country's economic performance. They have certain goals that despite all the huge waves and economic downturn that might face by the administration in the near future, the government will do even better compared to the country's previous performance which brings closer to its long-term development anchor. The NEDA would magnify its proactive engagement with the stakeholders, including the President and policymakers in Congress regarding policy advising, monitoring, and planning. They will strive to be in the front rather than behind the loop of critical policy affairs involving local and national development such as policy and program integration. These proactive engagements needed the coordination of national and local policies in order to build concrete plans and programs, especially in terms of public investments, properly reflect on local development priorities. The secretary of NEDA said that "We shall also work closely with Congress for the speedy enactment of priority bills and structural reforms that can address binding constraints to market access for essential goods and services. We will ramp up the implementation of the National ID System and coordinate with agencies to digitalize government transactions so that we

can rapidly and efficiently provide targeted support to the poor and vulnerable groups,” He also added that NEDA would advocate the culture of transparency, professionalism, and openness, which concerns in the direction of national economic plans, and programs and policies. They will also pushed the swift implementation and completion in imposing rules and regulations of the newly-enacted CREATE Law and key economic liberalization reforms based on the amendments to the Foreign Investments Act, Public Service Act, and Retail Trade Liberalization Act. He concluded that the government will ensure that opinions regarding the revised IRR and amended BOT Law for PPPs are clearly heard and carefully considered. They seen much that the private sector plays potential role in upgrading the country’s infrastructure, merging businesses and workforce into global value chains, increasing productivity in agriculture and manufacturing, preparing systems and organizations for climate change and industrialization disturbance.

We all know that there is no perfect governance. We can observe that the Philippine government performance in addressing poverty reduction is insufficient and the citizens especially those people belong in the line of poverty can not feel its effectiveness. We cannot deny the fact that almost all government institutions are very weak, vulnerable, and very imperfect. Its the public organizations are destitute of resources, usually badly administered, and those who are working in government are generally defectively motivated and trained. Governance is the institutions and traditions by which an authority in a country is exercised. Despite the authority imposed in the citizens, they still learn to voice out their opinions regarding the management of the administration. In exercising the political, economic, and administrative authority in order to administer a country's resources for development, there must have institutionalization of a system through which the citizens, organizations, institutions, and certain groups who are belong in a society express their interests and responsibly exercise their rights, freedom and moderate their differences in pursuing

of the collective good. Furthermore, the governance dilemmas concern the ability of government to build an effective, efficient and accountable public management process that is widely accessible to its constituents. In “Good Enough Governance: Poverty Reduction and Reform in Developing Countries” written by Merilee S. Grindle and Edward S. Mason, implies that in order to achieve a good governance, it must have good improvement that covers all aspects of the public sector institutions and organizations that formulate rules in the game for economic and political interaction, to organizations which handles administrative systems and provides goods and services to its constituents, as well as to human resources that workforce government bureaucracies in order to link the officials and citizens in political and governmental arenas. Furthermore, it has to embrace changes in political organization, representation of interests, as well as the processes for public debate and policy decision-making. So far, the government in the Philippines have high hopes for their goals and this hope must be associated with great, clear and concrete efforts and actions in creating, developing and enhancing more programs and policies as well as the existing programs and policies in order to meet the needs of its constituents as well as to improve the economy and achieve the poverty reduction plan.

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