The lack of enough school materials and facilities hound the Department of Education (DepEd) for the past years. Despite the implementation of shifting schedules in schools covered by towns that have huge student population, the situation remains the same – more than 40 students have to occupy one small room and a teacher is challenged to help all of them learn. The average teacher to student ratio is one teacher for every 36 elementary students and one to every 35 secondary students. The Manila Bulletin, citing a United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report, stated that classes in the Philippines had 43.9 students on average. This is nearly three times what is regarded as the ideal class size.

Now that the DepEd is already in full blast in the implementation of the K to 12 program, the government faces new problems in providing enough school facilities.

Studies of analyst in 2015, as published in media outlets including the Philippine Daily Inquirer, noted that the introduction of K to 12 would require 28,000 additional classrooms for each additional year-level; 40,000 to 56,000 classrooms for the two years of Senior High School. The DepEd, on the other hand, closed the gap of 66,800 classroom shortage in 2010 and has built 86,478 classrooms between 2010 to 2014. An additional 27,499 classrooms were also built in 2016. The educational body has yet to release new reports in 2017 regarding the number of Senior High School completely constructed and classrooms built for the new year-levels.

While the government is taking actions to provide enough school facilities, the overcrowded classroom challenge is now faced by teachers. The poor condition of classrooms affect the performance of teachers and students, according to the study of the National Institute of
Building Sciences of the United States. In this case, the teachers are always pressured to make sure that all their students will have equal opportunities in learning, hearing and understanding the lessons. Despite the lack of enough funds to provide educational materials and facilities, teachers use innovative ways to reach out to the students. The overcrowded school facilities is a number game that can also be resolved through comprehensive teaching strategies, including new and modern methods. To get the attention of students, teachers often use multi-media and extend class’ events to the social media.

The situation of the Philippine Education has a long way to go. But the Filipino educators, the teachers, can say with pride that they can serve as the foundation of quality education while helping the government resolve the issue in school facilities.

References: