



Social protection programs in tune with climate change urged

Baguio Midland Courier, April 8, 2018

<http://baguio.midlandcourier.com.ph/environment.asp?mode=archives/2018/april/4-8-2018/env4-Social-protection-programs.txt>

The government should make social protection programs adaptive to climate change and disasters.

According to a study published by state think tank Philippine Institute for Development Studies, there is a need to unify the country's social protection, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction efforts.

This, according to authors Connie Bayudan-Dacuycuy and Lora Kryz Baje, PIDS senior research fellow and research analyst, respectively, is because climate change and natural disasters can undermine the social protection programs of the government.

The authors said that "without adequate social protection in place, households may adopt adverse coping mechanisms in the face of slow-onset climatic shifts, such as changing eating patterns that may result in poor nutrition, pulling children out of school, or engaging them into child labor."

They added that climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction alone are insufficient in addressing the said vulnerabilities.

At present, the Department of Social Welfare and Development plays a big role in providing social protection programs to the poor, vulnerable, and disadvantaged, as well as protective services during crisis situations. However, the study urged the Climate Change Commission, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, and the Office of Civil Defense to work together to "build the resilience of the poor and the vulnerable."

To do this, the government should first review its existing social protection programs and identify those that can be integrated with climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

Specifically, the authors mentioned DSWD's flagship antipoverty program, the *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino* Program, as a good starting point that can include "environmental protection in its scope, such as reforestation, prevention of illegal logging, solid waste management, and soil conservation or backyard gardening."

On the part of the CCC, the authors said it should ensure that proposals to be evaluated for the People's Survival Fund include social protection components.