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## State programs must consider climate change

by Mayvelin U. Caraballo – April 5, 2018

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The government should take climate change into account in implementing social protection programs, the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) said.

In its “Toward An Adaptive Social Protection in the Philippines” study, the state think tank said the country’s social protection, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction efforts need to be united, because climate change and natural disasters can undermine those programs.

“Without adequate social protection in place, households may adopt adverse coping mechanisms in the face of slow-onset climatic shifts,” said PIDS senior research fellow Connie Bayudan-Dacuycuy and research analyst Lora Kryz Baje, who wrote the September 2017 study.

These shifts include “changing eating patterns that may result in poor nutrition, pulling children out of school, or” forcing them to work, they added.

Adapting to these changes and risks are not enough to address their vulnerabilities, according to the study.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) plays a big role in providing the programs to the disadvantaged, and related services during crises, the authors said, and urged the Climate Change Commission (CCC) National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), and Office of Civil Defense (OCD) to “build the resilience of the poor and vulnerable.”

They suggested that the government review its programs and identify those that can be integrated with their climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction efforts.

They cited the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), which can include “environmental protection in its scope, such as reforestation, prevention of illegal logging, solid waste management, and soil conservation or backyard gardening.”

CCC should ensure that proposals to be evaluated for the People’s Survival Fund (PSF) include social protection components, the study said.

It recommended the integration of initiatives that include cash-for-work incentives and food-for-work programs in environmental initiatives.

These include the Department of Environment and Natural Resources’ (DENR) Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation strategy, which has poverty alleviation as a goal.

The study also emphasized the importance of documenting good practices in other countries to learn more about their impact and effectiveness.