

Toward an adaptive social protection in the Philippines

*Connie Bayudan-Dacuycuy
and Lora Kryz C. Baje*

Adaptive social protection (ASP) explores the intersection of social protection (SP), climate change adaptation (CCA), and disaster risk reduction (DRR) in addressing poverty and vulnerability. Exploring the said intersection is essential given the potential adverse effects of frequent extreme weather events and shifting weather patterns on the success of SP and poverty reduction efforts in the Philippines.

This *Policy Note* investigates the concept of ASP. It also recommends applicable measures to make the existing SP programs in the Philippines become more adaptive.

What is adaptive social protection?

Climate change and disasters shape vulnerabilities to poverty through the destruction of livelihoods and loss of physical, financial, and social assets. Shifts in weather

patterns, such as in temperature and rainfall, may also create new pockets of poverty, which can be transient or chronic depending on the ability of households to smooth consumption and on the SP in place (Bayudan-Dacuycuy and Baje 2017). Even modest changes in seasonality of rainfall, temperature, and wind patterns can push transient poor and marginalized people into chronic poverty should they lack access to credit, climate forecasts, insurance, government support, and effective response options, such as asset diversification (Olsson et al. 2014). They can also make SP goals harder to achieve and change the types of risks that poor people face (Kuriakose et al. 2012).

Amid these issues, a policy narrative that involves the cohesion of SP, CCA, and DRR

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The authors are senior research fellow and research analyst, respectively, at PIDS. The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the PIDS or any of the study's sponsors.

is emerging. All three approaches seek to mitigate the risks that poor people face through building resilience against shocks and stresses on livelihoods (Davies et al. 2009a). In a sense, this commonality is the foundation of the ASP.

Developed by the Institute of Development Studies in the United Kingdom, the ASP is an integrated conceptual approach that unifies SP, CCA, and DRR (Figure 1). It likewise advances the idea that climate change and natural disasters can undermine the progress achieved by SP programs.

Without adequate SP in place, households may adopt adverse coping mechanisms in the face of slow-onset climatic shifts, such as changing eating patterns that may result to poor nutrition, pulling children out of school, or engaging them into child labor. Similarly, CCA and DRR alone cannot address some vulnerabilities arising from climate change and disasters. As such, the SP, CCA, and DRR must work together and go beyond addressing the adverse effects of transitory shocks to build the resilience of the poor and the vulnerable.

SP has four roles, which are provision, preventive, promotive, and transformative measures. Following the 3As framework developed by the Building Resilience and Adaptation and Resilience to Climate Extremes and Disasters, these roles can be mapped to build the absorptive, anticipatory, and adaptive capacities of social systems, such as households (Bahadur et al. 2015).

Instruments for preventive SP, like social transfers, livelihood diversification, and weather-indexed crop insurance, can prevent households from adopting adverse coping strategies. On the other hand, instruments for promotive SP, like social transfers, access to credit, and public work programs, can promote resilience by improving their livelihood opportunities resilient to vagaries of weather and climate. Meanwhile, instruments for transformative SP aim to address social and economic structures that result to poverty and vulnerability (Table 1).

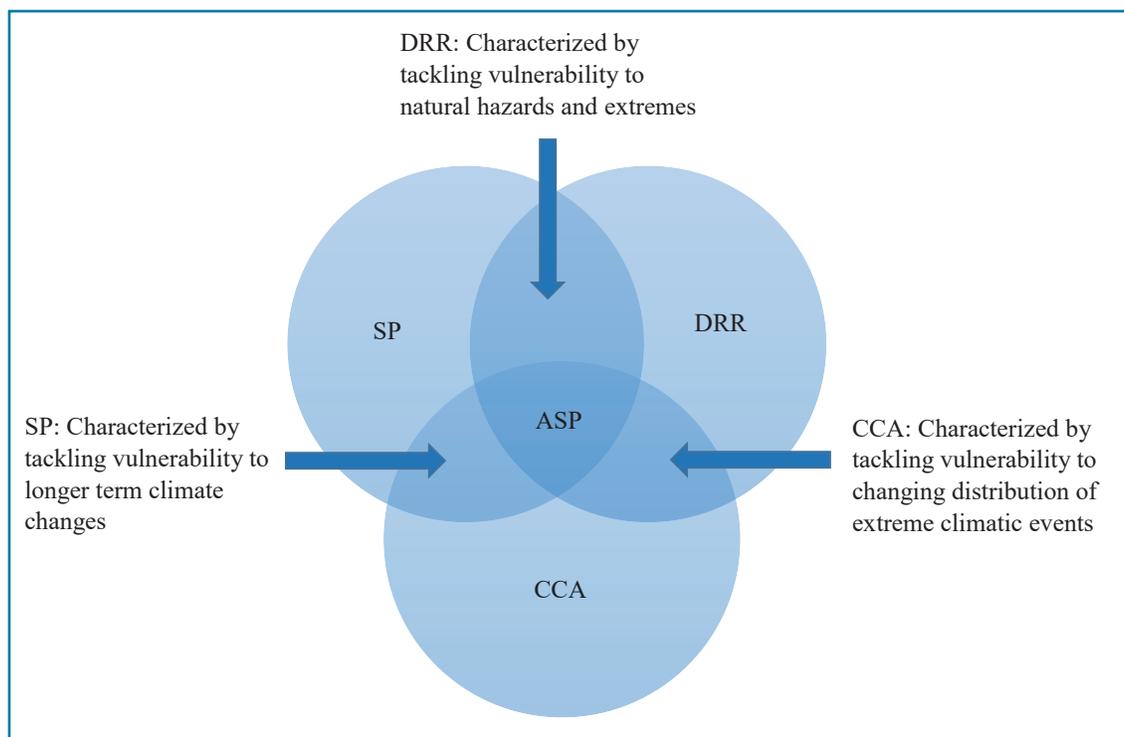
ASP in the Philippines

Due to its geographic location, the Philippines is vulnerable to disasters such as tropical cyclones and storm surges. It has also experienced extreme shifts in weather patterns and slow-onset extreme climate shifts, such as El Niño and La Niña. In fact, the Philippines had been the fifth most risk-prone country in the world from 1994 to 2013, according to the Climate Risk Index (ADB 2017). It has also been one of the top 10 countries most affected by extreme weather events in terms of fatalities and economic losses (Kreft et al. 2016).

Similar to other countries, three different national agencies in the country manage the SP, CCA, and DRR.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is the lead agency providing SP to the poor, vulnerable, and disadvantaged sectors and protective services

Figure 1. Adaptive social protection as intersection of social protection, disaster risk reduction, and climate change adaptation



SP = social protection; DRR = disaster risk reduction; CCA = climate change adaptation; ASP = adaptive social protection
Source: Davies et al. (2009b)

to individuals, families, and communities in crisis situations. It has a long history dating as far back as 1915, but it became into being in 1976 through Presidential Decree 994. Its promotive programs provide investments to human capital through conditional cash transfer (*Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program* or 4Ps), community-driven development (*Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan – Comprehensive Integrated Delivery of Social Service* or KALAHI-CIDSS), and sustainable livelihood programs (SLP).

On the other hand, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council

(NDRRMC), established through Republic Act 10121 in 2010, is a council of stakeholders responsible for managing DRR in the country. The Office of Civil Defense (OCD) is the implementing arm of the NDRMMC responsible for administering a comprehensive national civil defense and disaster risk reduction and management program. The OCD leads the continuous development of strategic and systematic approaches and measures to reduce the vulnerabilities and risks to hazards and manage the consequences of disasters.

Meanwhile, the Climate Change Commission (CCC), established in 2009, is the sole

Table 1. Promoting adaptation through social protection

Roles of SP	SP Instruments	CCA and DRR Benefits
Provision (coping strategy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - social service provision - basic social transfers (food/cash) - pension schemes - public works programs 	- protection of those most vulnerable to climate risks, with low levels of adaptive capacity
Preventive (coping strategy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - social transfers - livelihood diversification - weather-indexed crop insurance 	- prevents damaging coping strategies as a result of risks to weather-dependent livelihoods
Promotive (building adaptive capacity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - social transfers - access to credit - asset transfers/protection - starter packs (drought/flood resistant) - access to common property resources - public works programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promotes resilience through livelihood diversification and security to withstand climate-related shocks - promotes opportunities arising from climate change
Transformative (building adaptive capacity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promotion of minority rights - antidiscrimination campaigns - social funds 	- transforms social relations to combat discrimination underlying social and political vulnerability

SP = social protection; CCA = climate change adaptation; DRR = disaster risk reduction
 Source: Adapted from Davies et al. (2009a)

policymaking body of the government tasked to coordinate, monitor, and evaluate the programs and action plans relating to CCA.

risk transfer and social protection mechanisms for agriculture and fishery as instruments to integrate SP into CCA.

National plans, such as the Philippine Development Plan (PDP), the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP), and the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) recognize the need for the cohesion of SP, CCA, and DRR. The PDP outlines broad plans to enhance SP for vulnerable communities where CCA and DRR can collaborate on. As efforts are directed from humanitarian relief to long-term and more proactive responses, the NDRRMP identifies means for disaster risk financing and insurance and empowerment of affected informal families through cash for work, food for work, and Self-Employment Assistance-Kaunlaran program. The NCCAP also recognizes the SP and identifies

Although DSWD's role is mainly in disaster response, some of its SP programs have the potential to become adaptive, such as the 4Ps which has the flexibility for scale-up. In fact, the department can scale up its SP in response to a shock by increasing the benefit value or duration of its existing program (vertical expansion) and/or by enrolling new beneficiaries (horizontal expansion) (Oxford Policy Management 2015). For instance, the delivery of emergency cash grants to beneficiaries after the hit of Typhoon Yolanda was quick owing to the 4Ps in place (Ulrich 2016).

Innovative insurance, such as the weather-indexed crop insurance (WICI) administered

by the Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC), is an adaptive SP instrument currently in place in the country. According to Reyes et al. (2015), WICI is advantageous given its low administrative costs, fast claims settlements, and improved transparency. However, it only covers natural risks like drought and low/excessive rainfall.

Ways forward

Review the existing SP programs and identify which among these can be sensibly integrated with CCA and DRR

A cursory look reveals that among the programs of the DSWD, the 4Ps can be a good starting point where CCA and DRR can be integrated. From a short-run perspective, the department can enhance the program by including environmental protection in its scope, such as reforestation, prevention of illegal logging, solid waste management, and soil conservation or backyard gardening. Currently, DSWD discusses environmental protection through the Family Development Sessions. Through such activity, the beneficiaries can be agents of change. As such, their role in environmental protection and conservation needs to be defined within the program.

From a medium- to long-run perspective, DSWD can make the livelihoods implemented under the SLP adaptive as well. Program development officers should consider integrating insurance into the development of livestock projects.

KALAHI-CIDSS is also in a position to be adaptive given its projects for environmental protection. However, the *2014 Annual Poverty Indicators Survey* shows that households that received KALAHI-CIDSS projects related to environment were around 7 percent only.

Review the existing CCA initiatives/ programs in the country and see how SP can be integrated into them

The People's Survival Fund (PSF) is an adaptation grant for local government units (LGUs) that the CCC manages. Programs and projects that the PSF finances include forecasting and early warning systems, monitoring/controlling/preventing of diseases triggered by climate change, institutional development for LGUs, and establishment/strengthening of regional centers and information networks that support adaptation efforts.

To ensure that projects adhere to an ASP, SP components should be essential points in evaluation of proposals submitted for PSF funding. The 3As framework (anticipatory/ absorptive/adaptive) mapped against the PPP-T framework (provision/ promotive/protective-transformative) can be used to judge the SP components of the PSF proposals. As such, the DSWD should be part of the technical evaluation committee of CCC as well. Given that PSF also serves as a guarantee for farmers' risk insurance needs, the government can explore the intersection of CCA and SP to link SLP projects with the PSF.



Due to its geographic location, the Philippines is vulnerable to disasters such as tropical cyclones and storm surges. As such, this study promotes the adoption of adaptive social protection, which intersects social protection (SP), climate change adaptation (CCA), and disaster risk reduction (DRR) in addressing poverty and vulnerability. To sensibly integrate SP with CCA and DRR, for instance, it recommends the integration of insurance into the livelihood projects of the sustainable livelihood programs of the Department of Social Welfare and Development. (Photo by AusAID 2009)

The Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources aims to mitigate greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions. While the country has minimal contribution to GHG emissions, REDD+ is relevant given that deforestation and forest degradation affect livelihoods in rural areas. Poverty alleviation is one of the visions of REDD+. However, the Philippine National REDD Plus Strategy discusses the contribution of REDD+ to poverty alleviation

only through its contribution to attain Sustainable Development Goals 15.

While reforestation is aimed at mitigating GHG emissions, it also presents opportunities for adaptation. Integrating some SP programs or SP instruments, such as cash for work or food for work programs, into REDD+ initiatives can help address poverty and vulnerability to poverty. The government can likewise explore the link between 4Ps and the REDD+ reforestation initiatives.

Consider maladaptation in the design of ASP initiatives

Maladaptation refers to actions or inaction that may lead to increased risk of adverse climate-related outcomes, increased vulnerability to climate change, or diminished welfare, at present or in the future (Noble et al. 2014). It has five dimensions, including actions, that relative to alternatives (1) increase emissions of GHGs, (2) disproportionately burden the most vulnerable, (3) have high opportunity costs, (4) reduce incentives and capacity to adapt, and (5) set paths that limit future choices (Barnett and O'Neill 2010).

Maladaptation includes adaption of specific livelihoods that leave little or no room for diversification and taking inappropriate actions due to the presence of insurance/safety net. Input transfer programs such as seed transfers can undermine crop diversity and can have market-related consequences. Insurance can encourage risky projects that can hamper the development of incremental knowledge and skills.

Improve 4Ps data management system to accommodate vertical scale-up

Emergency cash transfer is an SP instrument that can address food insecurity during disasters. It can also alleviate the adverse effects of slow-onset extreme weather events. 4Ps have demonstrated that its existing data management and payment systems have accommodated emergency cash transfer when Yolanda struck.

While 4Ps has demonstrated its ability to accommodate horizontal scale-up, or increasing the grants received by existing 4Ps beneficiaries during disasters, DSWD can improve its data management to accommodate vertical scale-up, or expansion through enrolling new beneficiaries. Disasters and extreme weather events are experienced not just by specific households but by the whole community. This makes vertical scale-up important and 4Ps data management system in this area can be improved. 4Ps does not cover all poor people, either due to exclusion errors, lack of documentation, or because households do not meet the 4Ps conditions, among other things.

Vertical scale-up entails maintaining data on nonbeneficiaries and can be challenging given the limited resources. To maximize resources, 4Ps can identify areas vulnerable to extreme shifts in weather patterns, typhoons, and similar disasters and maintain monitoring initiatives for nonbeneficiaries but vulnerable population.

Strengthen knowledge base through the conduct of research that analyzes the impact of ASP

ASP is a relatively new concept and very few studies have thus far documented its effectiveness in reducing vulnerabilities arising from climate change and disasters. Documentation of good practices in other countries can be a starting point of learning. To further understand what ASP initiatives can work in the country, the government should conduct an impact evaluation of the WICI scheme of the PCIC. 📄

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For further information, please contact

The Research Information Department
 Philippine Institute for Development Studies
 18th Floor, Three Cyberpod Centris – North Tower
 EDSA corner Quezon Avenue, Quezon City
 Telephone Numbers: (63-2) 372-1291 to 92
 E-mail: cdacuycuy@mail.pids.gov.ph; publications@mail.pids.gov.ph

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