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**Working Paper**

## Advocacy Plan for MIMAP Project, Phase III

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Philippine Institute for Development Studies

## Advocacy Plan for the MIMAP Project, Phase III

*Jennifer P.T. Liguton*

DISCUSSION PAPER SERIES NO. 94-08

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Philippine Institute for Development Studies

**Advocacy Plan for the MIMAP Project,  
Phase III**

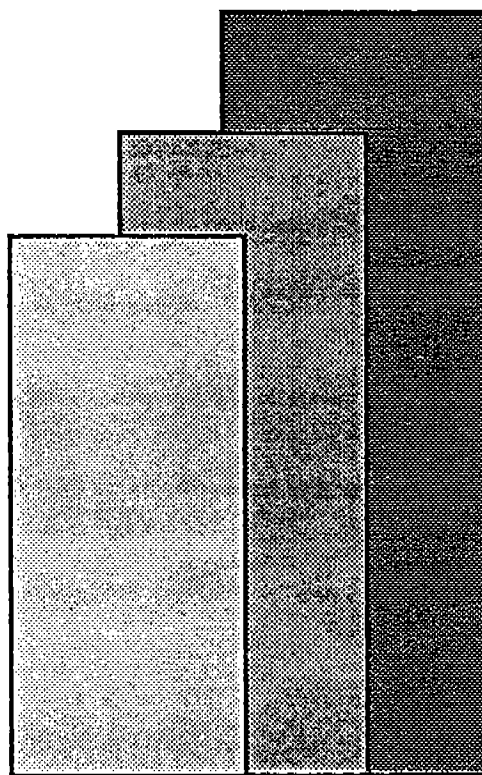
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## PROPOSED ADVOCACY PLAN FOR THE MIMAP PROJECT, PHASE III\*

*Jennifer P.T. Liguton\*\**

### I. RATIONALE

Advocacy calls for promoting a cause. For the MIMAP Project, it means relaying to policymakers a good information base on the possible effects of macro adjustment policies on households and firms which could serve as their basis for (1) anticipating the nature and extent of social adjustment costs on certain sectors; (2) adopting adjustment policies that would have the least unfavorable impact on the vulnerable groups of society; and (3) designing the safety nets needed.

For an advocacy plan to succeed, the Project needs to include three types of activities: (a) those aimed at creating awareness and increasing knowledge; (b) those aimed at influencing and effecting changes in decisionmaking/practice; and (c) those aimed at coming up with a plan of action to effect the implementation of the key findings and recommendations of the Project.

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This short paper outlines a proposed advocacy plan for the Project. The plan is divided into 4 stages and designed to help achieve the objectives of the MIMAP Phase III Project.

## **II. UNDERLYING PREMISES AND PRINCIPLES**

Before outlining the plan, certain premises based on general communication principles must be laid down to appreciate the kind of activities to be implemented.

*One*, since policymakers need to understand better the beneficiaries' problems and reactions to their decisions and actions, it is important to set up activities and mechanisms that will provide regular feedback and interaction between policymakers and their intended beneficiaries.

*Two*, information resulting from the Project's component studies should be explained and discussed in relation to the overall objective and thrusts of the Project so that they may be better appreciated. It is therefore important to point out that the result of any exercise related to the MIMAP Project represents a certain step in the Project and is part and parcel of the effort to reach the Project's objective.

*Three*, for purposes of creating awareness and increasing knowledge, the use of mass media, whether in print or broadcast, is viewed as a very effective means. For purposes of effecting changes in practice, behavior or attitude, meanwhile, group communication and face-to-face interaction are better means.

*Four*, local and community-based information channels and existing networks of information should be fully tapped to help in advocating the objectives and results of the Project.

*Five*, the results/findings of the Project should be explained to policymakers and the general audience in the simplest way possible for them to easily understand and appreciate the implications.

*Six*, advocacy is a continuing process, commencing at the very beginning of the Project and continuing till after the Project's conclusion.

And *finally*, the broader the audience reach of the Project's results is, the better are the prospects for having enlightened discussions and intelligent debates on the subject. This leads to a better assessment---and eventually refinements---of policies being considered. Thus, it is important to note here that besides the feedback and interaction between policymakers and their intended beneficiaries as mentioned earlier, activities that would elicit feedback and interaction at various levels like between researchers and policymakers; between and among researchers; and between researchers and intended beneficiaries are also needed.

### III. THE AUDIENCE

The Project is aimed at reaching 3 types of audience, namely:

- 1) Policymakers
  - a) national level--both the legislative and executive branches
  - b) local level
- 2) Specific publics/audiences
  - a) Disadvantaged groups and vulnerable sectors and communities with large pockets of such groups

- b) NGOs, POs or community associations, and other civic organizations
  - c) extension workers, community opinion leaders
- 3) General public

A. *Policymakers*

They are responsible for translating the results and findings generated by the Project into more appropriate adjustment policies/measures that would inflict less social costs and ensure an equitable distribution of adjustment costs. Policymakers constitute one of the major audiences of the Project. Hence, activities that would regularly inform them of and involve them in the progress of the Project will be necessary.

The policymakers refer to those at the national level---both executive and legislative branches---and at the local level.

B. *Specific Publics/Audiences*

Another major audience for the Project's advocacy plan are the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups/sectors, focusing on communities with large pockets of such groups; community leaders, extension workers, civic groups and the organized ones like community associations or people's organizations (POs) and other NGOs.

A distinguishing feature of the MIMAP Project is in its effort to see what is really happening to *Mang Pandoy*<sup>1</sup> as a result of policies adopted by the policymakers. As such, the Project should provide for outlets like dialogues and community site visits by the researchers and

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<sup>1</sup>Symbol/representative of the *common tao* especially the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.



project management staff as well as by representatives of certain government agencies during which *Mang Pandoy* can voice out his perceptions on certain adjustment programs and how they actually affect him. This feedback mechanism should serve as input to both the Project's studies and the next round of responses/decisions on the macro level. Such feedback may go back to *Mang Pandoy* in the form of the safety nets calculated to cushion the impact of such adjustment policies. This feedback mechanism therefore serves to speed up the reverse flow (bottom-up) of information on the impacts on the micro groups to the "top" so that action may take place faster.

### C. *General Public*

In addition to the specific audiences already mentioned, it is equally important to disseminate to a bigger audience---the public-at-large---the objectives and results of the Project in order to raise their level of understanding, and generate more informed debates and participation in the device and sustenance of the monitoring schemes. At the same time, getting more people to appreciate the thrust and results of the Project builds a stronger constituency for its cause.

The role of the Project participants must also be noted. Ideally, all those involved in the Project, i.e., members of the policy and the research councils, researchers, members of the project management office (PMO), consultants and donor institutions should be advocates in their own way for the Project's objectives. As such, they must be informed on the activities and progress of work and results of the component studies/programs. Thus, even if the advocacy plan does not specifically mention them in the targeted audience, part of the plan nonetheless caters to activities addressed to keep them informed and involved.

#### IV. THE PLAN

The proposed Advocacy Plan is made up of 4 stages, namely: (1) stage 1 or the orientation stage; (2) stage 2 or networking stage; (3) stage 3 or the utilization enhancement stage; and (4) stage 4 or plan of action for the strategies and steps in implementing the findings and recommendations of the Project. Understandably, there will be some overlaps in certain stages especially between stages 1 and 2 when surveys and some component studies are already being implemented even while orientation activities for some sectors are still ongoing.

##### A. *Orientation Stage*

The orientation stage, which is meant to introduce and familiarize the policymakers and other intended audience to the MIMAP Project, covers approximately six to eight months. It is meant to start as soon as the organizational aspects of the Project are completed.

This stage will consist mostly of activities meant to create awareness and knowledge of the Project like the dissemination of a Project information brochure, press write-ups, meetings and briefings for selected policymakers at the national and local levels, tie-ups with different NGOs and LGUs and the release of a MIMAP newsletter.

Members of the Policy Advisory Council and the Research Advisory Council (the composition of which is strategic insofar as linkages with various sectors are concerned) shall be tapped to actively participate in this stage.

### Stage I: Orientation Activities<sup>1</sup>

ACTIVITY(IES)	AUDIENCE	OBJECTIVE(S)	MEDIUM	TIMETABLE
1. Disseminate information to orient audiences	- Policymakers, NGOs, POs, vulnerable groups, community leaders, general public (media, academe and business groups, etc.)	- To introduce the rationale, objectives and activities of the MIMAP Project	- Primer - Brochure	1 - 2 months
2. Write press releases and magazine features	-do-	-do-	- Various newspapers and magazines	3 months
3. Invite target audiences and Project implementors	-do-	- To introduce the Project and report on activities of the Project; to present selected indicators on human welfare	- MIMAP newsletter (quarterly)	First issue to appear in April 1994; meant to be a quarterly newsletter
4. Brief policymakers and liaise with their technical staffs/committees	- Executive and legislative representatives; technical staffs	- To explain the objectives of MIMAP and the process by which the Project will proceed	- Group briefings for selected members of Cabinet and of Congress; Cabinet Cluster meetings, selected House and Senate committee meetings; inclusion in agenda of LEDAC meetings. Members of the MIMAP Councils to be tapped as advocates/liaisons	3-4 months
5. Link-up with NGOs, POs and LGUs	- Selected NGOs, POs and LGUs	- To introduce the Project and assess the existing monitoring systems and indicators used by these groups on human welfare	- Meetings and consultations; members of MIMAP Councils to be tapped as liaisons	Six months; to start on 2nd month of Project set-up

### Stage 1: Orientation Activities

ACTIVITY(IES)	AUDIENCE	OBJECTIVE(S)	MEDIUM	TIMETABLE
6. Schedule meetings/briefings with the statistical system representatives	- Representatives of statistical system and researchers	- To acquaint statistical system representatives on requirements of MIMAP database and monitoring system	- Meetings, briefings and consultations	- To continue on a regular basis until the next stages
7. Visit community sites (where NGOs and POs maintain monitoring systems on human welfare)	- Community leaders and opinion leaders, PO/community associations, selected household heads	- To acquaint community folks on the Project objectives; to familiarize Project representatives on community's monitoring systems as well as on the community itself	- Interviews and group meetings	- Towards the end of the first stage; to continue until the next stages

### B. *Networking Stage*

This stage is crucial since this is where tie-ups and linkages with prospective advocates may be established. The networking stage is meant to strengthen link-ups with various groups which can serve as advocates in disseminating and promoting the objectives and results of the Project's activities. It serves to continue some of the initial tie-ups established in Stage 1 and is expected to last until the final year of the Project. Various activities like dialogues, briefings, symposia and write-ups on initial results of the Project will constitute this stage. The MIMAP PMO, together with some of the researchers and members of the Councils, are expected to play an active role in the networking and liaisons activities in this stage.

## Stage 2: Networking Activities

ACTIVITY(IES)	AUDIENCE	OBJECTIVE(S)	MEDIUM	TIMETABLE
1. Regular meetings/briefings for policy-makers on initial results of Project studies and other activities	- Members of the Executive and Legislative branches	- To inform the policymakers on the initial findings of the studies and other activities; to influence their decisions through a better understanding of effects of policies on individuals, households and firms	- Arranged briefings for key members of the executive departments and of congressional committees - Agenda items in regular meetings of concerned Cabinet Clusters and Congressional committees - Agenda items in joint executive-legislative fora like the LEDAC	- As need arises  - Semestral  - Semestral
2. Community visits and dialogues with disadvantaged and vulnerable groups	- Members of selected communities, e.g., opinion leaders, household heads, NGOs, POs	- To have an interaction between the different actors in the selected communities and certain policymakers - To assess the people's response/feedback on effects of policies on them	- Dialogues and group discussions; facilitators or community organizers may be invited; members of the Policy and Research Councils are invited to join. Arrangements with communities and LGUs thru office of President of Provincial League of Governors (Gov. Pagdunganan) - Process documentation reports are to be prepared to reflect both verbal and nonverbal reactions of people to issues	- Semestral; may be more frequent in the second and middle part of the Project period as people's feedback are inputted to studies and monitoring schemes
3. Regular meetings with technical staffs of policymakers	- Technical staffs of key policymakers at the executive and legislative branches	- To update technical staffs of key policymakers on progress of MIMAP's studies and activities esp. as they may affect or provide inputs to policy decisions	- Meetings and small-group discussions	- Quarterly or as the need arises

## Stage 2: Networking Activities

ACTIVITY(IES)	AUDIENCE	OBJECTIVE(S)	MEDIUM	TIMETABLE
4. Preparation of executive memos or policy briefs on key findings/ results of Project	- Policymakers (national and local)	- To provide immediate inputs to decisions on certain adjustment policy issues	- Policy briefs and/or executive memos or research alerts	- As the need arises
5. Dissemination of MIMAP Newsletter which chronicles the activities of the Project, reports on initial research results, provides selected indicators on human welfare, and allows an outlet for researchers to write down their field experience with the people	- Policymakers	- To keep policymakers regularly informed on progress of Project and to provide a human dimension report on actual interaction of the Project's researchers and consultants with the people	- Newsletter	- Quarterly
6. Strengthening of tie-ups with NGOs, POs and LGUs	- NGOs, POs, LGUs and communities	- To keep them informed on activities; to get feedback from them as they deal directly with the communities; to exchange info on the monitoring data and system	- Exchange of information and materials  - Meetings and consultations	- Continuous throughout project period - As needed
7. Link-up with existing research and advocacy networks on health, nutrition, etc.	- Policymakers, vulnerable groups, communities, NGOs, POs, extension workers, researchers	- To exchange materials, news and info	- Various newsletters and fora of the different networks	- To continue on a regular basis until end of project period
8. Use of existing fora like Phil. Econ. Society, Phil. Statistical Ass'n., etc. for presenting results of studies and other MIMAP activities	- Policymakers, academe, researchers and professionals	- To broaden the reach to other concerned professionals to solicit their support of the Project's objectives and results	- Regular conferences and annual meetings of said associations	- Annually or, in certain cases, semestral during the associations' other meetings
9. Media briefings	- Policymakers and general public (thru editors, publishers and beat reporters)	- To solicit support and attention of key people in the media	- Newspaper columns, news features and interviews	- As frequent as needed

### C. *Utilization Enhancement Stage*

This is the stage where the results of the studies are to be presented to and discussed with different publics. Many of the activities in Stage 2 would logically spill over through this stage. Certain activities too, are to be held continuously to enhance the possible use and inclusion of the Project's outputs in the policymakers' package of future adjustment programs.

In addition, a number of other activities are to be conducted. The first is a series of policy symposia in selected regions around the country. This is meant to present the final findings and recommendations of the Project to a multi-sectoral group in various regions. Coordination for the conduct of these fora will be done with selected NGOs and with the various Regional Development Councils and the Office of the League of Provincial Governors.

To further enhance dissemination efforts, the LGUs will be tapped to help popularize the study results and encourage feedback. Their use of local dialects will ensure greater understanding and the LGU's vast network can serve as a potent mechanism where spontaneous feedback from the people can be generated.

The series of symposia will be capped by a national policy symposium to be held in Metro Manila.

Also, results of the component studies may be published and distributed separately as research papers, monographs, and journal articles or as a book.

To encourage a wider exposure and discussion of the results and related issues, media coverage through press briefings, interviews and news releases will be held.

#### Stage 3: Utilization Enhancement

ACTIVITY(IES)	AUDIENCE	OBJECTIVE(S)	MEDIUM	TIMETABLE
1. Series of regional policy symposia	- Local policy-makers, business groups, academe, NGOs, local media, cause-oriented groups, etc.	- To present results of Project and solicit comments and feedback to recommendations	- Various symposia	- 4x spaced a month apart in the final year
2. National policy symposium	- National policy-makers, business sector, academe, NGOs, cause-oriented groups, media, etc.	- To present results and recommendations of Project and solicit feedback on them	- Symposium	- Third month of last quarter of final Project year
3. Media coverage	- General public	- To provide for wider dissemination of Project results and recommendations and encourage informed public debate/discussion on them	- News releases, features, column write-ups and analysis, press-radio-TV interviews	- Towards the end of the Project year, exposure should be almost every week or everyday if possible
4. Publication into book, research papers, journal articles, etc.	- Policymakers, academe and researchers, NGOs, business & cause-oriented groups, general public	- To publish and document for wider dissemination of the results	- Books, research papers, journal articles, etc.	- At the end of Project

#### D. *Plan of Action Stage*

As mentioned earlier, the advocacy process is a continuing process and does not end with the project. In fact, for many projects, advocacy begins at their completion when the final results and recommendations are presented to the project's intended audience. For the MIMAP Project,



though, it is important that advocacy starts at the very beginning of the Project and continues even after the conclusion of the Project.

Thus, to ensure that the findings and recommendations of the Project are built-in in the mainstream of the policymaking process, a Plan of Action spelling out the strategies and steps for the implementation and institutionalization of the recommendations of the Project may be drawn up by a committee or task force composed of representatives from the various sectors and institutions, including the government, involved in the networking stage. And since the drawing up of the Plan is done in consultation with various groups, including those representing the target beneficiaries, a sense of co-ownership by all of the Plan of Action wherein the MIMAP Project's findings and recommendations like the institutionalization of a monitoring system on welfare indicators are to be implemented, is established. In this regard, the chances for having the results of the Project really utilized for the benefit of the poor and disadvantaged groups become higher.

## V. CONCLUSION

In summary, the proposed Advocacy Plan puts a high premium on the feedback mechanism at different levels. Thus, a number of activities which provide for interaction not only at the level between policymakers and the targeted beneficiaries but also, at the outset, between the researchers, consultants and the PMO members, on the one hand, and the people, on the other, are being proposed. The objective is to allow the different actors involved in the Project to appreciate early in the Project stage the need to come up with studies and models that truly reflect people's points of view and reference.

Also, the plan takes into consideration the timing of the different stages in the research and survey components of the Project in order for the advocacy activities to be held almost at the same time. This allows for a better understanding of what each research activity is meant to achieve since the objectives and thrusts of the entire Project are simultaneously being presented and explained.

Finally, the plan proposes to take advantage of existing research and advocacy networks and other fora as outlets for advocacy on the objectives of the Project. This ensures a more cost-effective means of promoting the Project's results and recommendations.

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