

MAINSTREAMING DISASTER RESILIENCE IN VIETNAM

Engaging with communities to build resilience

AT A GLANCE

Country Vietnam

Risks Climate change exacerbating extreme weather events

Area of Engagement Enabling resilient recovery

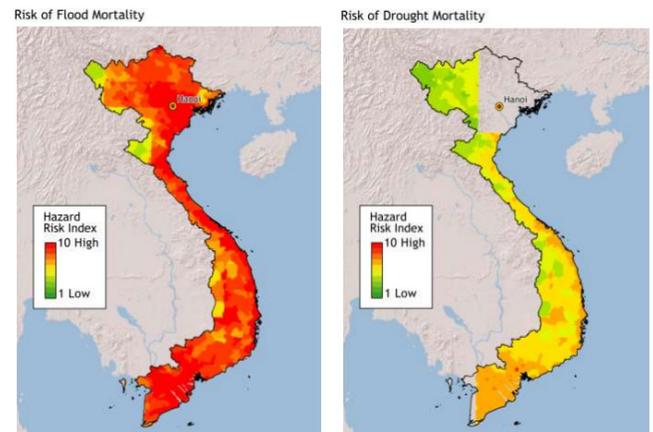
The government of Vietnam has implemented a comprehensive approach to disaster risk management which prioritizes engagement with local communities.

THE CONSTANT THREAT OF NATURAL HAZARDS

Vietnam is one of the most hazard-prone countries in the Asia-Pacific region, with floods and storms often isolating communities and disrupting trade flows. Over the past two decades, extreme weather events have caused more than 13,000 deaths and property damage in excess of \$6.4 billion in the country. More than 70% of its population is at risk from natural hazards, particularly the rural and urban poor.

The Vietnamese government, with support from the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and the World Bank, has made important strides in building resilience against risk from natural disasters and climate change. A combination of GFDRR's technical assistance and World Bank lending is helping the Vietnamese government mainstream disaster resilience in the Southeast Asian country with large scale impacts across a variety of sectors including transportation, urban and rural development, hydrological and meteorological monitoring services (hydromet), and water resource management.

Exposure to climate-related hazards across Vietnam



Source: Columbia University Center for Hazards and Risk Research (CHRR) and Columbia University Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN)

A COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH TO DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

Recognizing the need to integrate disaster and climate resilience into development, the government of Vietnam has established a policy framework for disaster risk management (DRM) and climate change through a number of laws, strategies, action plans, and programs across governing levels and sectors. In line with this framework, the government of Vietnam has successfully shifted from a reactive, post-disaster response approach to a more comprehensive, community-based disaster risk reduction strategy oriented around risk-informed planning and resilient infrastructure. Key elements of this approach include:

- ▶ Engagement with numerous ministries and provincial officials, as well as technical experts involved in integrated flood risk management, community-based disaster risk management, agricultural production, and climate-proofing transport networks.
- ▶ Provincial agencies and communities now have the

capability to plan for and respond to disasters more effectively. Early warning evacuation systems and community scale mitigation measures will benefit nearly 1.1 million villagers across 130 communities.

- ▶ Communities have been trained to develop their own preparedness strategies and to integrate DRM into their local socio-economic development plans. The Vietnamese government has invested \$500 million to roll out community-based DRM projects across more than 6,000 disaster-vulnerable communities, engaging civil society groups such as the Quang Binh Women's Association.
- ▶ The Vietnamese government, with the support of GFDRR, is moving forward with the implementation of Vietnam's new DRM law, including the development of a government-led platform to coordinate the financing and implementation of DRM investments. This requires the strengthening of policy and institutional frameworks and will be complemented by targeted activities to improve the resilience of specific sectors such as energy, transport, urban development, and agriculture.

LESSONS LEARNED

Engineering measures alone are not sufficient to tackle disaster risks.

While infrastructure investments, such as dikes, are critical, they must be paired with community engagement, training, strong design standards, material specifications, quality control, early warning, spatial planning, maintenance management, and green solutions. For example, community DRM training manuals and resilient standards for small-scale public infrastructure have been rolled out in more than 6,000 disaster-vulnerable communes across the country. These have proven to be key elements of the government's community-based disaster risk management program.

Integrated spatial planning is needed to counter trends that are driving urban flood risk.

Even as Vietnam has bolstered its flood control efforts, these are often hindered by uncontrolled and haphazard development in flood prone areas. Accordingly, the optimization of upstream reservoir operation, land subsidence control, and prevention of tidal flooding and rainfall inundation in the context of climate change also need to be integrated into spatial development planning, particularly in the country's rapidly growing cities.



3 MILLION PEOPLE

benefited from community-based projects

LIVES PROTECTED

Community-based DRM projects, which include climate resilient maintenance on 4,700 km of rural roads and the renovation of irrigation facilities, have benefited over 3 million Vietnamese and employed tens of thousands of people.

FIRST-EVER LAW ON NATURAL DISASTER PREVENTION AND CONTROL

GFDRR advised on the National Assembly's passage of the first-ever law on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control, which has been in effect since May 2014. It also supported the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment with a comprehensive diagnostic review of Vietnam's hydromet sector, which informed the development of the 2015 national hydromet law.

DISASTER MAINSTREAMING CAPACITY INCREASED

The Vietnamese government, with support from GFDRR, has provided training on mainstreaming disaster and climate resilience to officials from line ministries, as well as local governments from over 30 provinces.

"If disaster happens, the Women's Association now has a disaster risk management plan to reduce our loss. We cooperate with the authorities to relocate people from high risk areas in order to minimize the loss of property and life."

-- Nguyen Thi Le Hang, Chairwoman,
Women's Association, Quang Binh Provinces