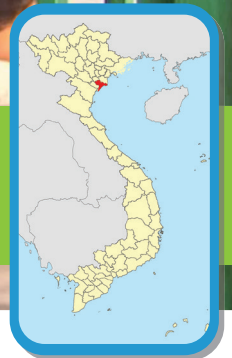




Increasing access to information about climate change



Introduction

Vietnam is one of the most vulnerable countries to the effects of climate change. The densely populated coastal areas are exposed to tropical storms and saltwater intrusion, while increasing temperatures and worsening droughts and floods threaten food security and livelihoods. Although general awareness about climate change is growing, access to detailed and up-to-date information on the impact, scope and direction of climate change has largely been restricted to professional groups.

The USAID-funded Vietnam Forests and Deltas Program collaborated with the provincial government of Nam Dinh to develop an online information platform on climate change. This initiative aims to make climate data easily accessible to the wider community, in order to enhance public awareness and support people to anticipate climatic events and develop adequate responses.

The impacts of climate change in Nam Dinh

Nam Dinh is a low-lying coastal province in the northeast of Vietnam. A majority of the province's inhabitants rely on fishing, aquaculture or agriculture for their food and income security. Changing climatic conditions and extreme weather events risk to severely destabilise their livelihoods. Providing these communities with relevant and accurate climate information can help to enhance their coping capacity and support informed decision-making to minimize risks.



An online climate change information platform

Access to information technology is widespread throughout Vietnam. With the number of smartphone and computer users growing rapidly, the internet is becoming an increasingly effective means to reach large numbers of people. Building on previous climate change adaptation activities in Nam Dinh, the USAID-funded Vietnam Forests and Deltas Program collaborated with the provincial Department of Information and Communication to design and set up an online information platform about climate change.

The Climate Change Information Center (CCIC) is easily accessible through the portal of the Nam Dinh Provincial People's Committee (PPC). It can be used to support awareness raising activities for local managers, technical officials and residents and serve as a means to systematically gather and record climate change documents and data.

At present, the platform stores more than 1,000 reports, studies, stories, factsheets, leaflets, pictures and video from reputable international organizations and for different target groups. These materials are classified based on their purpose, content and topic to facilitate document searches. Information can be found on the following topics:

- (i) Awareness raising about climate change through training courses and workshops;
- (ii) Long-term climate change adaption solutions for socio-economic areas, including Government, private sector and informal sectors;
- (iii) Integrating climate change into planning at district and provincial levels;
- (iv) Alternative energy;
- (v) Strategies to cope with climate change in agriculture and daily life.



For each publication, detailed information is available on the author, year, summary/abstract, sources, publisher and key words. The website not only provides up-to-date and accurate information on climate change, but also allows users to connect with other networks and portals to exchange information and boosts interaction within and between the different target groups. A document library provides a secure place to store files where people can find them easily, work on them together, and access them from any device at any time. This model helps to enhance online learning opportunities. The use of open educational resources and other technologies can increase educational productivity by accelerating the rate of learning, reducing costs associated with instructional materials or program delivery, and better utilizing users' time.

The Climate Change Information Center (CCIC) of Nam Dinh

can be accessed here

<http://ccic.namdinh.gov.vn/>

or you can access it by

<http://www.namdinh.gov.vn/>

(this is official website of whole province)

Replicating the model

Within the first three months of operations, the website received approximately 220,000 visitors. In the future, this channel will be used to introduce Nam Dinh's program on climate change, environment and sustainable development. In the coming months, the USAID Vietnam Forests and Deltas Program will work with the Long An PPC and other authorities to replicate the model in the south of Vietnam. These efforts will support knowledge sharing around climate change issues for Long An's community in particular and the Mekong River Delta in general.

Ms. Cao Thi Nga – Vice-director of Aquaculture division in Nam Dinh shared her appreciation for the model: "Nowadays, accurate climate change information plays an important role in the development of Nam Dinh province. I also keep some documents on fisheries in the context of climate change. I have been wanting to share information for some time, but it was hard to find a common channel. The establishment of the website for collecting materials on climate change in Nam Dinh is new, useful and suitable for modern life. Anywhere and anytime, we can look up information and learn. The website saves costs and is easy to manage"