



German Red Cross 

 Australian Red Cross
THE POWER OF HUMANITY

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION 2013

PRESS RELEASE

A call for disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation

Long Xuyen, An Giang, 29th October 2013 – *Disability organizations, the Viet Nam Red Cross, Viet Nam Women’s Union and international development organizations CARE, Australian Red Cross and German Red Cross together join hands today to position people with disabilities at the heart of disaster management as Viet Nam joins the world in celebration of the International Day for Disaster Reduction.*

According to CBM International, for every 1 person killed in a disaster, another 3 are injured or left with a permanent disability.¹ Persons living with disabilities are often twice as vulnerable to disasters and climate change; because of their disability and because they are more likely to be poor with limited access to education, health care, shelter, food and work before and after a crisis strikes. Mrs. Nguyen Thi Sinh from Van Tra hamlet, An Giang, takes care full time for her baby boy and her 15-year old son with a disability. She is rarely able to leave home to work in the fields; *“I have to stay home to take care of my two sons. When it floods my husband also can’t go to the fields, and we need to borrow money to buy food.”*

Fortunately, the inclusion of disability in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation programming is gaining much importance, also in Viet Nam. Amanda Benson, Australian Red Cross Country Coordinator for Viet Nam, *“In recent years the Red Cross has stepped up its efforts internationally to ensure disability inclusion in all its disaster risk reduction work. We are collaborating more closely with disabled peoples’ organisations in An Giang and Kien Giang, so that their voices can be heard and they can fully participate in preparing and responding to climate change and disasters.”*

CARE also works closely with the Viet Nam Women’s Union in An Giang and Soc Trang to include the voice of people living with disabilities in government planning and decision-making. *“As a person with disability, we were seldom invited to these meetings. I’m so glad to have been given the opportunity to participate,”* said Mr. Lam Van Duoc from Vat Lai village in An Giang.

¹ <http://www.cbm.org/i/inclusive-emergency-response-245472.php>

“Participating in the climate change adaptation village planning exercises helps me to understand more about the changing weather and climate, how it impacts my daily life and what I can do about it, together with my community. I had so much fun!”

Today, a large number of people have gathered in An Giang to raise awareness of the strengths of people with disabilities and to advocate for better inclusion of their needs in disaster and climate change programming. In addition to the speeches of keynote speakers like the An Giang People’s Committee, a talk show will be also hosted by An Giang Television with participation of the An Giang Disabilities’ Association and their members, the An Giang Red Cross, Women’s Union and Committee for Flood and Storm Control.

A disaster and climate resilient community means everyone must be part of the solution. *“Jointly with the Government of Viet Nam and the Red Cross, CARE continues to strive for inclusive development and lasting change where everyone’s contribution to society is equally valued and nurtured,”* states Claudia Futterknecht, Country Director CARE International in Viet Nam. *“We recognize that people with disabilities have multiple talents, capacities and contributions to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, beyond our imagination!”*

Local celebrations for the International Day for Disaster Reduction will be held in the Dong Xuyen Hotel, Long Xuyen, from 8am to 11am on Tuesday, October 29.

CARE International in Viet Nam

In order to support vulnerable communities in the Mekong Delta adapt to the negative impacts of climate change and improve their resilience to hazards and shocks, CARE Viet Nam with funding from Australian Aid is implementing the **Integrated Community-based Adaptation in the Mekong** (ICAM) Project. From August 2012 to December 2014 this project will support five communes of An Phu district, An Giang, and Vinh Chau district, Soc Trang through disaster risk reduction and livelihood activities, awareness raising and capacity building support. The project is specifically targeting 5,000 of the poorest and most vulnerable members of the community, particularly the landless and land poor, with a focus on women, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities.

Vietnam Red Cross, Australian Red Cross, German Red Cross

The Vietnam, German and Australian Red Cross Societies team, backed by AusAID's Community-based Climate Change Action Grants Program, equips communities in An Giang and Kien Giang with strategies to prepare for disasters and reduce their vulnerability to changing climatic conditions.

Vietnam Red Cross' successful community based disaster risk reduction model is being utilised throughout the project, including training in communities, schools and for emergency response teams, the development of early warning systems, and the provision of community resources and equipment. Climate change adaptation is also integrated, drawing on the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement's experience and expertise in Vietnam and the region in water and sanitation, health and livelihoods.

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