



TERMS OF REFERENCE
For CONSULTANCY SERVICE

Title:	A research on climate variability, farming systems and indigenous/local knowledge of ethnic minorities to adapt with climate change impacts in Ha Giang Province, Vietnam	
Account line	PO: 3921	Time: February 2014

1. Background Information

Plan Vietnam

Plan is an international humanitarian, child centred community development organization without religious, political or governmental affiliation.

In Vietnam, Plan Vietnam Country Office was established in 1993. Its strategies and programs aim at helping children realise their rights and lift them out of poverty. In order to achieve its goals, Plan Vietnam is working in partnership with local people; organizations and government bodies to enable children in Vietnam meet their basic needs as well as expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.

The ground of consultancy

One of Plan's thematic programs in Vietnam is Child-centred disaster risk management and climate change adaptation. This program focuses on promoting the rights to protection and assistance in emergencies and building the resilience of children, families and communities to better cope with the impact of disasters and climate change.

Following that direction, Plan Vietnam is implementing an AusAID Funded *Building Local Resilience to Climate Change and Climate Related Disaster Management in Ha Giang Province* project to enhance climate change awareness and resilience of poor and vulnerable communities in the northern mountainous region of Vietnam.

Vietnam is ranked among top five countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and its consequence. Climate variability and extremes already have significant impacts on the

lives and livelihoods of girls, boys, women and men in poor disadvantaged areas across the country. While there is a high level of confidence in the general trend of climate change in Vietnam, relatively little is known about the magnitude and timing of impacts in specific locations, especially in marginalised communities.

Ha Giang, the third poorest provinces in Vietnam, is located in the northern mountainous area, where 85% of total natural land area is hills and mountains, and 79% of the population is ethnic minorities. Poverty, coupled with natural hazards threatens not only the livelihoods of the people, but also security of their assets such as housing, land, public works, as well as limiting their access to basic services. Although there is common perception among key informants that natural disaster associated to changing climate trends, such as flash flood, landslides, are already becoming a greater problem than before, the understanding of major inhabitants in the region on the increasing frequency of such hazards is still modest.

At the same time, it was noted in a recent study on climate change adaptation ⁽¹⁾ that the key aspect of building adaptive capacity within society is an effective communication of risk. However, there are still deficiencies in communication arise at all levels, which can be highlighted by the lack of clear understanding of hazards and risks at grassroots level. For example, local people, who are at high risk of hazards, need better knowledge of flash-floods and particularly how soon after heavy rains they are likely to appear. As a result, it is recommended that there should be a good combination of scientific knowledge and local indigenous knowledge on hazards to shape an effective knowledge sharing and communication strategy to improve climate change understanding as well as utilise traditional knowledge among ethnic minority groups in northern mountainous areas in Vietnam.

The *Building Local Resilience to Climate Change and Climate Related Disaster Management in Ha Giang Province* project will endeavour to fulfill the above challenge with its specific objective: demonstrating a model of climate change awareness and resilience planning and community adaptation in Ha Giang Province with an expectation of possible replication in other the northern mountainous region of Vietnam.

¹ Dang Thu Phuong, Roger Few, To Thi Giang, Hoang Minh Hien, Cao Phan Viet , Bui Le Inh and Le Duc Chinh (2009) 'Climate change adaptation: priorities and integration in Ha Giang'. Research report. Centre for Sustainable Development in Mountainous Areas in cooperation with Ha Giang People's Committee, Vietnam

The following outcomes are expected to be achieved during the project implementation:

1. Capacity of provincial, district and commune government officials, communities and young people to address the impact of climate change in the development context of Ha Giang is increased
2. A participatory SEDP process in Ha Giang is demonstrated with integration of Climate Change adaptation and Disaster Risks Reduction
3. A successful model for climate change adaptation in Ha Giang is documented and policy and practice recommendations are promoted in the northern mountainous provinces and at central government level.

Within the scope of this project, Plan Vietnam is implementing the action in two targeted districts: Xin Man and Quan Ba, in partnership with the Centre for Mountain Community Development (CMD), a newly established NGO in Ha Giang. Plan in Vietnam also entered strong collaboration with the communities and local authorities, the Ha Giang District People's Committee (DPC), and Provincial Department of Natural Resources and Environment to bring the benefit of this project to 97,581 people, including 40 young leaders from Youth Union and colleges and 1,000 secondary schools, and over 150 provincial, district and commune department staff and 50 representatives of mass organizations in the province.

2. Consultancy Objective

The principal objective of this consultancy is to conduct an in-depth sectorial research on climate change within the framework of the *Building Local Resilience to Climate Change and Climate Related Disaster Management in Ha Giang Province* project in order to:

1. Examine and have a better scientific knowledge on irregular and extreme weather patterns, and present recommendation on appropriate adaptive solutions for responding to and mitigating the negative impacts caused by environmental changes;
2. Investigate the existing local farming and cultivation systems, including farming techniques and practices, to explore and provide possible adaptive ways of integrating socio-economic plans of the region into future climate change adaptation and disaster management programming in the region; and

3. Study local indigenous knowledge on climate-related change and the prospect of utilisation of such knowledge in development of plan for climate change adaptation and extreme weather responses for ethnic minority groups in Ha Giang province

Given the above expected objectives, the study will seek to find the answers for, but not limited to, the following questions:

- What are the hazards and vulnerability in the targeted districts and province?
- Where are the critical areas and safer areas for evacuation in the targeted districts?
- What are the possible situations of weather patterns and extremes in the two targeted project districts and in Ha Giang Province in general?
- What are the current practices and techniques of farming scheme in the districts and province (if possible)?
- What is the traditional ecological knowledge or their indigenous observation of climate change existing in local communities? And how they can be use to help populations in the region better cope with and adapt to the change of the climate?
- What possible warning system methods in the province that can be improved to provide timely information to local populations to enhance disaster preparedness and mitigate the impacts of climate change?

3. METHODOLOGY

The consultant will undertake research in two targeted districts (Xin Man and Quan Ba) within the scope of the *Building Local Resilience to Climate Change and Climate Related Disaster Management in Ha Giang Province* project. Discussions should also be held with key stakeholders at the provincial and central level to gain an understanding of support available to provinces from the government. Plan Vietnam will facilitate the consultant's access to provincial government officials and meeting with key stakeholders.

The application of Geographic Information System (GIS) to overlay the locations of the narratives with data, and with weather patterns/climate-related changes would be a desired expectation in the mapping exercises. The consultant may undertake a review of available spatial data or appropriate resources to fulfill the outputs of this consultancy.

The consultant(s) will develop in detail the most appropriate methodology for the study in consultation with Plan in Vietnam's staff. The methodology, tools and scheduling used must be child, gender and target group sensitive.

4. Outputs

Based on the objectives of the research, the following deliverables should be produced upon completion of this consultancy:

- A report (in both English and Vietnamese) on research results detailing outputs of the investigation, addressing the key questions and providing recommendations as per the objectives of this study.

The following outputs can be included in the report, or can be separated as single deliverables:

- Mapping of hazards, mapping of human vulnerability in the province.
- Community mapping of critical areas and safer areas for evacuation, and resettlement.
- Possible scenario(s) of weather patterns and extremes in the province or mapping of combined locations of physical and statistically significant trends of environmental changes, e.g. temperature change, or frequency of extreme weather.
- Details of existing crop varieties, farming and cultivation systems and potential of alternative subsistence crops that can be integrated in socio-economic plans of the province for better climate change adaptation.
- Narratives of local indigenous knowledge on ecological alteration and climate change adaption that can be utilised to better help local people in managing environmental change in their areas.
- Recommendation for improvement of warning system methods that can be applied in the province or region to help local people better prepare for and respond to hazards caused by changing climate.

- A presentation (in English and Vietnamese) of the research results in a Shared Learning Dialogue organised by Plan in Vietnam (date of presentation will be specified by Plan Vietnam)

5. Timeframe

- Recruitment of the consultant (s) – by early March 2014
- Development of methodology and detailed study plan (by consultant) – by mid-March 2014
- Research implementation and field study – March - April 2014
- Draft report – by end of April 2014
- Final report (including other outputs)– by first week of May 2014

6. Management

The research will be carried out by a consultant or group of consultants. Plan in Vietnam will be responsible for the overall management of this consultancy. Designated staff from Plan Vietnam will be in charge of reviewing the drafts and provide researchers with advice and assistance if required. Consultants will closely work with the designated Plan staff for the agreed plan, but the time frame should be as stated above.

7. Child protection

Level of Contact with Children: Medium level

Few direct interaction with children in consultations in the project sites. The consultant must comply with Plan's child protection policy. A copy of Child protection policy will be sent to the consultant(s) for reading and acknowledgement of compliance to the policy.

8. Consultant specifications

- At least five year experience in socio-ecological research, preferably in relation to climate change adaptation and/or disaster risk reduction.
- Higher degree and/or proven expertise in climate change adaptation, development planning, and institutional capacity assessments.
- Experience in the collection of primary and secondary data, proven expertise in quantitative and qualitative research.

- Experience in application of spatial data and Geographic Information System in research is an advantage
- Fluent in Vietnamese and English both spoken and written.

9. Submission of Proposal

Interested consultant(s) should send proposal with the following information:

- Outline of the study approach, methodology and work plan to undertake the assignments
- Profiles consultant(s) and sample of similar work done in similar field to Plan Vietnam
- Detailed quotation for the study, showing days and cost

Please send the proposal to email: nghia.trinhtrong@plan-international.org, long.vuthanh@plan-international.org and cc to nhue.nguyencong@plan-international.org.

Closing date to apply for this consultancy service: 4 March 2014. The short-listed consultant(s) will be contacted for interviews. Please no telephone contact after submitting the research proposals.