



## RETHINKING RESILIENCE

SOCIAL PROTECTION IN THE CONTEXT OF  
CLIMATE CHANGE IN VIETNAM



# CLIMATE CHANGE, DISASTERS AND SOCIAL PROTECTIONS IN VIETNAM

The people of Vietnam are already experiencing climate change. Severe weather events such as storms and floods are increasing in intensity. Long-term changes to ‘normal’ conditions, such as rising sea levels, shifting rainfall seasons, altered crop patterns and long dry periods are gradually undermining livelihoods<sup>1</sup>. Numerous researches in Vietnam have highlighted that people living in poverty are more at risk to the impacts of climate change<sup>2</sup>.

In recent years the importance of social protection, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction have risen in prominence both internationally and in Vietnam. The common goal of these three disciplines is to **support resilience against shocks and stresses amongst vulnerable people**. Integrating social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in policy, planning and programming presents huge opportunities for multiplying resilience, but it is only recently that development practitioners have begun to conceptually link these approaches.

**Adaptation to climate change requires thinking and acting beyond immediate needs to address tomorrow’s challenges; but for Vietnam’s poorest communities, forward planning and long-term livelihood adaptation is often a luxury that they cannot afford.**

The Government of Vietnam and its development partners already have policies and programs with some degree of integration. There is also a growing body of global experience to learn from and to help guide integrated approaches to both policy and programming. This Learning Series offers an outline of the concept of climate responsive social protection and presents the rationale and recommendations for further development of this approach in Vietnam. This rationale is supported by case studies and examples from Vietnam and around the world.

**For Vietnam, a nation where development is jeopardised by climate change and disasters, and where inequality prevents households most at risk from climate change from accessing resources for adaptation, the question is whether resilience can be fostered at all without an integrated approach.**

## KEY POINTS

- Evidence shows that the more projects integrate social protection, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, the more likely they are to improve the livelihoods of poor people.
- Globally, social protection mechanisms are progressively being identified as important modalities for achieving and scaling up disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.
- In Vietnam, synergies between climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction have been increasingly recognised, as the shocks and stresses people face are becoming more and more intertwined. The importance of considering how social protection can support goals related to climate change has been noted.
- There is already a degree of integration in Vietnam’s social protection and climate change strategies and policies. Further integrating the approaches will require a long-term vision of resilience, yet immediate measures can be taken to strengthen existing social protection modalities for long term resilience.





## ENHANCING RESILIENCE: THE CLIMATE RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION MODEL

Social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction all seek to mitigate risks faced by the poor and provide support so that individuals, communities, institutions and ultimately societies can better manage shocks and stresses in both the short and long term.

Providing immediate social protection provides 'space' for poorer households to address the longer term impacts of climate change. At the same time the longer term focus of integrated approaches means that there is less chance that gains from social protection will be eroded by extreme events or slower changes that impact livelihoods. There are also practical arguments of improved cost-effectiveness and efficiency for integrating social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction approaches.

The integration of social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction is known as adaptive or **climate responsive social protection**. Climate responsive social protection is an integrated approach for reducing the socio-economic vulnerability of poor people, and enhancing overall resilience amongst at-risk populations. It requires understanding of the interlinked nature of the shocks and stresses that poor people face and the potential synergies to be gained from bringing disciplines together. Below is the Institute of Development Studies model for climate responsive social protection, including examples of integrated programming:<sup>4</sup>

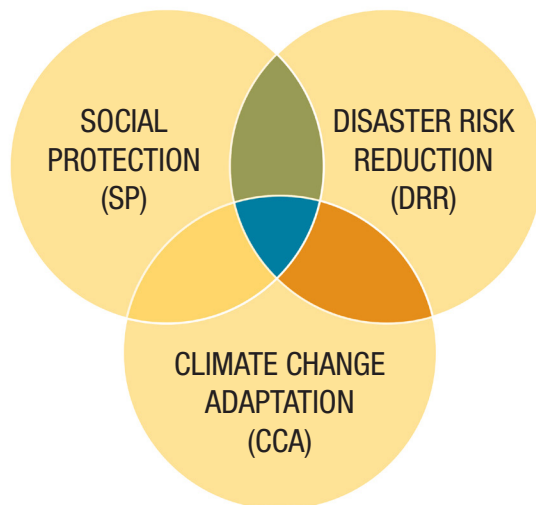
**SOCIAL PROTECTION (SP)**  
Safeguarding against livelihood risks while improving long-term social status and rights of poor and marginalised groups.

**CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION (CCA)**  
Reducing vulnerability to specific shocks or stresses caused, or exacerbated, by climate change.

**DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (DRR)**  
Fostering resilience against natural hazards including extreme events.

**Climate Responsive Social Protection**  
Integrates **all three approaches**, e.g. *pro-poor weather-based agricultural insurance scheme*

**CCA/SP**  
Characterised by tackling vulnerability to **longer-term climate changes**, e.g. *cash transfer for resilient livelihood training program*



**DRR/SP**  
Characterised by tackling vulnerability to **natural hazards and extremes**, e.g. *public works programs that develop disaster-proof infrastructure*

**CCA/DRR**  
Characterised by tackling vulnerability to **changing distribution of extreme weather events**, e.g. *a drought resistant irrigation system*

Globally, social protection is being recognised as essential in attempts to scale up disaster risk reduction<sup>5</sup>, and a number of countries around the world are acknowledging the importance of integrating the three approaches; some at a national planning level, some through implementing individual programs. International organisations and multilateral and bilateral donors such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, World Bank, and the UK Department for International Development, have also released policies, strategies or position papers encouraging integration of the concepts.

**An analysis of 124 agriculture projects across five South Asian countries showed that the more projects integrated social protection, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, the more likely they were to improve the livelihoods of poor people; they focused less on short-term reactive relief and more on the underlying causes of poverty and vulnerability.<sup>3</sup>**





## EXAMPLES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

The following examples were drawn from the scoping study “Climate Responsive Social Protection in Vietnam; opportunities and challenges for building resilience amongst the people most vulnerable to climate change”, requested by CARE in Vietnam. Other notable examples from the study include:

- Cash transfers for building resilient homes in the Philippines
- Public work programs in India
- Community-level revolving grants in Myanmar
- Seed vouchers and trade fairs in Kenya

### GREEN TECHNOLOGY BUSINESSES FOR WOMEN IN EAST AFRICA

The **CARE wPOWER project** began in Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda in 2012, to integrate women into small-scale clean energy value chains. It enables women to purchase clean energy lighting and improved cooking equipment, and also to become sales agents of these technologies. Many of them were engaged in farming and selling goods at the market; the green technology business was seen as a way to supplement income by diversifying into non-climate sensitive areas. The project built on existing Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) structures, as a mechanism for project engagement, training, a source for working capital and as a platform for selling the products.

#### RESULTS

- By May 2014, over 325 sales agents were enrolled in the project in Kenya and Tanzania. An evaluation study with a representative sample of these agents indicated that 72 percent experienced an increase in income.<sup>6</sup>
- An estimate of 54,000 people gained access to clean energy products and services within 6 months as a result of clean cookstoves and solar lamp sales by wPOWER sales agents.<sup>7</sup>

#### LESSONS LEARNED

- Determining factors of success include commitment to the business, family and peer-to-peer support, sales, marketing and business skills, and the number of VSLAs (as a market base) that the agent has access to.
- Research showed that a credit line, in addition to the VSLA, is needed to engage the poorest and enable them to purchase initial stock.
- Regulation of suppliers and prices, alongside high transportation costs to travel to different sales sites, was highlighted as a barrier to successful business.

## SCALING UP WEATHER INDEX-BASED INSURANCE FOR SMALL HOLDER FARMERS IN INDIA

India now administers the world’s largest weather index-based insurance market, reaching tens of millions of farmers each year. The **National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS)** is India’s major nation-wide insurance program which is supported through a premium subsidy. Premium subsidies vary by insurance program and by state, but in general the farmer pays between 25 and 40 percent of the premium and the government provides a subsidy for the remaining 60 to 75 percent.<sup>8</sup>

In states or union territories that choose to participate in NAIS, insurance for food crops, oil seeds and selected commercial crops is compulsory for all farmers that take Seasonal Agricultural Operations (SAO) credit from financial institutions, and is voluntary for non-borrowing farmers. If regional crop yield measurements fall below a pre-specified threshold, the participating farmers in that region become eligible for a payout. The state-sponsored Agriculture Insurance Company of India covers the claim up to the premium, then the local and national governments contribute equally to cover the remainder. For commercial crops, the premium rates are based on risk calculations, and the government does not subsidise claims.

#### RESULTS

- Reaches approximately 24 percent of farm households nationwide<sup>9</sup>, and both poor and middle income farmers buy insurance.<sup>10</sup>
- Insurance supports adaptation through allowing farmers to be more innovative: a randomised control experiment in Andhra Pradesh, India, showed that weather index-based insurance prompted a shift toward more profitable, higher risk farm production systems.<sup>11</sup>

#### LESSONS LEARNED

- Timely processing of claims is key to ongoing participation; difficulties in the administration and financing of NAIS led to systemic delays in the settlement of claims (up to 9-12 months or more) and poor risk classification, resulting in adverse selection and inequity between farmers in nearby insurance units.<sup>12</sup> In 2010, the Government of India introduced a better accounting system in 50 districts to address this challenge. Up-front subsidies were introduced to reduce farmers’ financial liability, reducing the insurance unit size to village level to increase accuracy, threshold yields were adjusted, and coverage based on weather indices for failed planting, prevented sowing and post-harvest risks was introduced.<sup>13</sup>
- A private sector partnership to implement a weather-based crop insurance scheme helped expand the insurance platform. Around 40 crops are insured under the category and the project now covers over 13 million farmers.



THE RATIONALE FOR ADAPTIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION IN VIETNAM

In Vietnam, synergies between climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction have been increasingly recognised, as most disasters in the country have their origins in weather and climate. It is estimated that 70 percent of the Vietnamese population are exposed to risks from such hazards.<sup>14</sup> Many social protection instruments are also already being delivered on a large scale, meaning that systems or mechanisms are already in place and can be modified to take account of climate risks.

SOCIAL PROTECTION	According to the <a href="#">Social Protection Strategy of Vietnam 2011-2020</a> , social protection aims to target vulnerable groups including the poor and those affected by natural calamities, including climate hazards. Social protection in Vietnam already includes some activities that support disaster risk reduction, such as access to health services, support during disasters and an agricultural insurance pilot.
CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION	In Vietnam the main frameworks for medium-term responses to climate change are the <a href="#">National Climate Change Strategy</a> , the <a href="#">National Target Program to Respond to Climate Change</a> and the <a href="#">Action Plan Framework for Adaptation to Climate Change in the Agriculture and Rural Development Sector 2008-2020</a> . These acknowledge the need to mainstream climate change issues into the socioeconomic sectors and local development planning - creating clear links with social protection policies and programs.
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION	Vietnam’s <a href="#">National Strategy for Disaster Mitigation and Management to 2020</a> articulates that ‘measures for disaster mitigation and management must be compatible with measures for poverty reduction and natural resource protection, so that development can be equitable and sustained’. By introducing a national <a href="#">Community Based Disaster Risk Management Program</a> in 2009, the Government also recognises the importance of awareness raising, risk assessment and planning, capacity development and small-scale mitigation for the most at-risk communities.

Opposite you can see examples of how different social protection modalities could be used to address some of Vietnam’s most pressing climate change impacts.<sup>15</sup> These impacts are interacting with non-climate pressures such as environmental degradation, deforestation, industrialisation and modernisation of agriculture, population growth, and urbanisation. For particular vulnerable groups, the impacts of climate change are also linked to underlying inequalities related to factors such as gender, discrimination, illiteracy, language, and governance.

MAIN CLIMATE HAZARDS AND STRESSORS IN VIETNAM

- More intense precipitation and shifting rainfall seasons; unseasonal rain, leading to more irregular floods, landslides and drought
- Extreme events; change in intensity, seasonality and geography: drought, floods, typhoons, wildfires
- Sea level rise leading to inundation, erosion and salt water intrusion
- Increased temperature, increased hot days, higher levels of humidity
- Increase in frequency and length of heatwaves

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

- For climate sensitive crops, livestock and aquaculture: loss, reduced yield and quality, market disruption, heath stress, increased and new animal/plant pests and diseases, invasive species
- Disruption of non-farming livelihoods that depend on agriculture: construction, handicraft, small business, commodity trading, seasonal labour, food processing, garment making, etc.
- Reduced income, loan and debt repayment
- Damage or loss to livelihood and non-livelihood assets
- Reduced mobility, potential displacement or need for resettlement
- Temporary or long term water, food, electricity, telecommunication shortages or disruptions
- Degradation and depletion of natural resources and ecosystems: water, land/soil, biodiversity, forest, and air
- Weakened ecosystem services (pollination, water purification, soil formation, carbon storage, biodiversity)
- Increased mortality and diseases, psycho-social and other health-related stress, decreased labour productivity
- Malnutrition (protein decrease in crops) and food security (food access, utilisation and price stability)
- Disruption to health (including family planning), education and social protection services

POSSIBLE CLIMATE RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION RESPONSES

- Weather index based **insurance systems** for crops and livestock
- **Vocational training** that supports livelihood diversification
- **Conditional loans** for shift to non climate sensitive livelihoods
- **Public works** that promote resilience, e.g. for water supply and sustainable irrigation, mangrove restoration and tree planning, or landslide prevention measures
- Minimum **income assurance** for seasonal laborers during flood season
- **Vouchers/cash** for training in pest and disease recognition and management
- **Public works** for mosquito-breeding site controls
- Alleviate the impact of managed resettlement, through **vouchers for training and education**
- **Payment for Ecosystem Services**, monetary incentives for natural resources management





## CASE STUDIES FROM VIETNAM: CASH AND MICROFINANCE PROGRAMMING

Various programs in Vietnam supported by development partners are already using an integrated approach to supporting resilience and reducing vulnerability to shocks, and show potential for replication and scale-up. The following case studies provide some interesting examples on how cash transfer programming has been applied for livelihood diversification and as part of disaster recovery, and an example of an integrated climate change adaptation microfinance scheme run by CARE International in Vietnam.

### CASH TRANSFER FOR LIVELIHOOD DIVERSIFICATION

OXFAM GB implemented a cash transfer program in mid-2006 in An Loc commune, Binh Phuoc province, to improve and diversify income generating activities. This cash transfer pilot supported climate change adaptation by reducing poverty, diversifying livelihoods and by increasing overall resilience. Four hundred and twenty six poor households received a one off 6.5 million VND payment (325 US\$), and 128 near poor households received a 3 million VND (150 US\$) payment. Beneficiaries received training to complete a Household Receipt and Expenditure Register which enabled monitoring over three years. The poverty rate in the commune decreased from 65 percent in 2006 to 40 percent in 2008<sup>16</sup>.

### CASH TRANSFERS AS PART OF DISASTER RESPONSE

In 2009, in the aftermath of typhoon Ketsana, which tolled 286 deaths and affected 4 million people, several cash transfer programs by various organisations<sup>17</sup> were implemented in Vietnam as response to the emergency. From four projects, over 18,000 households received cash transfers ranging between 300,000 - 1.5 million VND (15-75 US\$).<sup>18</sup> In the following years, further cash transfer projects were also implemented (including by CARE) for livelihood recovery following disasters. Evaluations show that the cash transfer prevented affected households from selling productive assets, and helped to generate income. However, evaluations on long term impact of these cash transfers have not yet been undertaken.

### MICROFINANCE FOR LIVELIHOOD DIVERSIFICATION

To holistically build household and community resilience based on community action planning, CARE in Vietnam's **Integrated Community Based Adaptation in the Mekong (ICAM)** project, funded by the Australian Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade, has provided in-kind and credit support to Khmer and Cham land-less and land-poor in the An Giang and Soc Trang provinces. The aim of the project was to support diversification into non-weather or natural resource-dependent livelihood options such as small businesses (shops, mobile food carts, home-sewing, etc.), and to improve income and livelihood security.

Existing climate resilient agricultural practices were promoted while farmers were supported to trial new ones, to test and showcase their value and benefit before microfinance support was offered. These new techniques included indoor organic mushroom growing, bio-bedding for pigs and chickens, and onion waste-based bio fertiliser. Microfinance groups, 15 in An Giang and 17 in Soc Trang received mentoring and training from the Women's Union and the local Department for Agriculture and Rural Development on techniques, prices, saving, etc., and for peer-to-peer learning.

### RESULTS

- In-kind and credit support for livelihood diversification has been provided to 1,238 Khmer and Cham land-less and land-poor households in An Giang and Soc Trang provinces.
- To date, 341 people (335 women and 6 men) have received microfinance loans for livelihood diversification.
- By April 2015, 48% of the loans had been repaid on time.
- The project has made a clear effort to integrate social protection, CCA and DRR at a household level, while increasing CCA and DRR at a community level for both women and men through improved gender-responsive analysis and planning for climate change adaptation.

### LESSONS LEARNED

- Linking training to microfinance initiatives appears to improve access by the poor and the outcomes of those who take up credit.
- Ensuring that training materials are prepared in varying ethnic languages is key to improving access amongst the poorest households to microfinance.
- In order to help people in the most climate vulnerable areas fully adapt their livelihoods broad livelihood options will be required –including skills that will be useful to those who migrate to city areas.

*A project evaluation in December 2015 will examine the impact of climate smart livelihood diversification models on the income and resilience of households who have adopted them.*



## MICROFINANCE FOR CLIMATE-RESILIENT LIVELIHOODS INCREASES INCOME SECURITY

Ms. Son Thi So Da is a Khmer woman, living in Soc Trang province with her husband, and their three-year-old son. She has inherited land from her parents, and was using it to plant onions and chilli. Increases in hot weather and unpredictable heavy rain in recent years has decreased the reliability and yield of her crops, making her income less secure. It was becoming difficult for the young family to survive; she sometimes had to seek help in providing for her son from her mother.

So Da heard about the climate-resilient livelihood packages being supported by CARE's **Integrated Community Based Adaptation in the Mekong (ICAM)** project, through the Vietnam Women's Union, and decided to participate in order to diversify her income sources. She received 5 million Vietnam Dong (approx. US\$250), and added her own 1.5 million dong (approx. US\$75) to begin raising pigs using a climate-resilient bio-bedding method.\*

After two rounds of pig raising, So Da and her husband made 4.5 million Dong profit (approx US\$225). The profits also enabled them to invest in their onion business, boosting the profits from this to 3 million Dong (approx. US\$150). In the coming season, So Da plans to invest in growing more chilli and farming shrimp, as well as expanding her pig-raising business.

**"I am very happy because I have my own house now. Though it is small and simple, my mother does not have to support us anymore, and she doesn't have to worry about us so much!"**

**"I hope to use the profits to enlarge the pigpen to be able to accommodate 4-6 pigs on the bio-bedding."**

The assistance package from the Vietnam Women's Union and CARE in Vietnam enabled So Da and her husband to diversify their sources of income so that they can become more resilient to the increasingly changeable conditions in the Mekong Delta. As a result, they have been able to build their own house, and they are looking forward to a brighter and more secure future.

The bio-bedding is composed of rice husk or saw dust mixed with a special enzyme, locally available, that breaks down the pig manure and therefore reduces environmental pollution and CO2 emissions. After one cycle, it can also be used as compost to fertilize crops.

**The bio-bedding uses 50-70% less water than traditional methods, making it resilient in the face of drought and hot periods.**

The day to day work of raising pigs on bio-bedding is much quicker and easier than traditional husbandry, and due to the cage size it doesn't require a lot of space to do. In addition, the pigs themselves grow two times faster and due to limited water use, the animals are less susceptible to diseases caused by polluted water.



# OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR CLIMATE RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION IN VIETNAM

In order to determine how Vietnam can better support long term resilience in the context of climate change, CARE in Vietnam has conducted an analysis of key Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges for integrating social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

As outlined opposite, some existing government and non-government social protection programs are already supporting climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction goals. Specific opportunities and challenges for how two key existing social protection schemes could be adapted to better support climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction goals are provided below.

## OPPORTUNITY ONE: AGRICULTURAL INSURANCE

- **ADVANTAGES:** Provides pay out when major shocks occur and can encourage farmers to invest in agricultural production as it reduces risk. Developing weather-based indexes will also increase overall knowledge and understanding of the risks of major weather related shocks in Vietnam.
- **CHALLENGES:** Improving access amongst the most vulnerable groups exposed to weather based livelihood shocks is important. The pay-out process also needs to be streamlined to prevent households from taking up negative coping strategies while they are waiting for payment. The program needs to become financially sustainable for insurers and the Government.

## OPPORTUNITY TWO: PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMS THROUGH GEOGRAPHICALLY TARGETED POVERTY REDUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS (PROGRAMS 135 AND 30A)

- **ADVANTAGES:** Public Works Programs can provide guaranteed income during lean work periods as a social protection mechanism. Schemes can then be scaled up following emergencies and scaled back down afterwards to prevent negative coping strategies to support DRR. By linking existing Public Works Programs to DRR and CCA objectives, infrastructure to support community resilience can be built (such as irrigation canals, mangroves or sea walls), and training undertaken to build more resilient livelihoods.
- **CHALLENGES:** Public Works Programs need to support cash transfers, rather than food or in kind transfers, to better promote adaptation goals. This needs to be reliable and set at a level high enough to support adaptation goals. All infrastructure needs to be resilient to climate change, and a broader definition of ‘work’ is required to incorporate training and other community assets that could support adaptation.

# Analysis for integrating social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in Vietnam:

<b>STRENGTHS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Social protection, CCA and DRR already have strong Government buy in and receive good levels of funding (compared to other countries in the region).</li><li>■ A number of development partners are already implementing integrated programs.</li><li>■ National policy for each of the three disciplines already have some level of integrated language and objectives. An array of existing national social protection mechanisms already have elements of CCA and DRR incorporated.</li><li>■ The people and Government of Vietnam are generally well aware about the need to address climate change which should help improve acceptance for programs that incorporate social protection, CCA and DRR.</li></ul>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ There is limited awareness in country about the benefits of integrated social protection, CCA and DRR approaches.</li><li>■ Local level governments require better understanding of how to integrate CCA and DRR at a local level.</li><li>■ Important coverage gaps exist for women, and people from ethnic minorities to accessing existing social protection and climate change adaptation schemes and services.</li><li>■ Training gaps exist in terms of linking people to fast-changing labour needs which could help people adapt away from climate sensitive livelihoods in climate vulnerable areas.</li></ul>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Improving access amongst women, people from ethnic minority communities and people living in climate vulnerable areas to existing social protection mechanisms will have immediate returns in terms of improving resilience.</li><li>■ Cost efficiencies can be achieved by integrating CCA and DRR into existing social protection initiatives.</li><li>■ Lessons have been learnt from public works schemes, cash programming and agricultural insurance in Vietnam that could be used to develop larger scale and better initiatives.</li><li>■ Linking differing programmatic approaches could significantly improve resilience, for example: climate resilient livelihood techniques training could be linked to existing microfinance schemes to improve access amongst the poor and to enhance outcomes.</li></ul>	<b>CHALLENGES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Reorienting social protection towards improving resilience amongst the poor will require a reprioritisation of social protection funding.</li><li>■ Coordinating the disparate ministries that oversee the varying aspects of social protection, CCA and DRR at a national and local level will be required.</li><li>■ The cost of social protection, CCA and DRR are all likely to increase as the impacts of climate change take hold.</li><li>■ Providing integrated programming will be hard in the northern mountain region where social protection services are already difficult to implement.</li><li>■ Incorporating the three approaches will require skilled policy and program staff who understand each approach and can identify opportunities for integration.</li></ul>



## RECOMMENDATIONS: THE WAY FORWARD

Integrated approaches to social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction programming are becoming essential for supporting resilience to climate change. In Vietnam, where there are already strong social protection mechanisms in place that can be adjusted to meet the objectives of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, there are also economic efficiencies to be realised through integration. Integrating the approaches will require a long-term vision of resilience, embedded into national policy, budgets and programs. Yet even at a local level, efforts can be made now to integrate approaches and enhance longer term resilience amongst communities at risk from the impacts of climate change.

### NATIONAL PRIORITISATION TO ENHANCE ADAPTIVE CAPACITY ACROSS THE VIETNAMESE SOCIETY

The increasing impacts of climate change and the interlinked nature of shocks and stresses to livelihoods amongst the poor will require more formal, forward-looking and systematic forms of protection at the local, regional, and national levels to support climate vulnerable people. This will require an overarching multi-stakeholder commitment to invest more resources in populations that are poor and with low capacity to manage climate hazards and livelihood stresses. It will also require senior level buy in and prioritisation of resilience initiatives.

### INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING AND COORDINATION

Currently there is limited integration and coordination in terms of planning and programming between the ministries in Vietnam responsible for social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. A harmonised approach to planning and programming will require investment at a national and local level so that policy experts and practitioners in government become more versed across all three fields. Effort will be required to facilitate co-operation and joint planning processes and to design harmonised approaches.

### CLIMATE INFORMED SOCIAL PROTECTION PLANNING

Social protection policymakers and practitioners need to integrate planning for climate change impacts and plan for a higher frequency and severity of disasters. Social protection mechanisms should consider built-in feedback loops with early warning systems to determine how climate change will impact existing schemes through direct and indirect impacts like food price volatility, food insecurity and migration. Assets developed through social protection schemes like public works need to be 'climate smart' and built for increased resilience.

### SOCIAL PROTECTION BECOMES A TOOL OF CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

At a national and local level, policymakers and practitioners working to support climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction will need to consider how existing or new social protection initiatives can facilitate their goals. This will require an expanded perspective of risk and understanding that current vulnerability reduction can build adaptive capacity to be called upon in times of future risk.

### SCALABLE AND FLEXIBLE PROGRAMS

Across all three fields, policy makers and practitioners in Vietnam should consider how social protection programs can be designed to allow coverage to be rapidly expanded and retracted during and after disasters and shocks. Achieving scalability requires targeting, registry, and payment systems that can identify, enroll, and make transfers to additional eligible participants as well as funding arrangements that can mobilise adequate resources on short notice.

### A LIVELIHOOD-ORIENTED APPROACH IN ALL THREE FIELDS WILL SUPPORT ENHANCED RESILIENCE

Improving the resilience of vulnerable populations in Vietnam will require a greater focus on livelihoods across social protection, disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation planning and program implementation. The bulk of existing social protection funds are not spent on livelihood supporting mechanisms whereas disaster risk reduction spending has also been heavily geared towards infrastructure spending and awareness raising. Providing livelihood training programs to the poor and climate vulnerable will be particularly important.

### A RENEWED FOCUS ON SUPPORTING POOR AND AT RISK POPULATIONS WITH A PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON WOMEN

This will require a detailed mapping of how geographical climate impacts overlay on existing mapping of poverty and inequality patterns. Integrated programming to support resilience will require an understanding of (i) how climate change is likely to affect a geographic area; (ii) which physical, natural, or institutional assets and livelihoods need to be strengthened; and (iii) how programs and processes can be designed to best empower the most vulnerable to participate and gain benefit. Their needs to be a particular focus on how to better include vulnerable women and people from ethnic minorities in program design and implementation as they are presently the most at-risk groups to both poverty and climate change.

### MONITORING AND MEASURING IMPACT, WITH AN AIM OF REDUCING DEPENDENCY ON SOCIAL PROTECTION THROUGH IMPROVING RESILIENCE

Globally there is limited empirical research related to integrated programming approaches. To ensure that initiatives are working, robust monitoring and evaluation should be built into programming design. Most importantly, integrating programming that seeks to support resiliency will need a clear definition of resiliency with clear objectives built into every initiative. Tracking improvements in resilience capacity is important to ensure that individuals, household and communities are ultimately being supported to a point where they no longer require support.



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*CARE International is a leading humanitarian organisation working for global poverty reduction and social justice by empowering women and girls. Since 1989, CARE in Vietnam has worked in almost all of Vietnam's 64 provinces, on over 200 projects. Today, CARE International in Vietnam primarily focuses on ensuring long-term positive change for marginalised groups, especially women, by tackling the underlying causes of poverty, vulnerability, and social injustice.*

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