

Communication  
campaign "raising  
people's awareness  
of climate change" in  
vietnam



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

## **Background**

Climate change, particularly global warming and sea level rise, is one of the biggest challenges human beings are facing in the 21st century. Located in the Southeast of Asia, Vietnam has a total land area of 329, 569 square kilometre and an estimated population of over 92 million. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Vietnam has been ranked among the countries severely affected by climate change and sea level rise. Over the past 50 years, the average temperature in Viet Nam has increased by approximately 0. 5°C and the sea level has risen by about 20cm (IPPC, 2018). Extreme climate events have increased in terms of both frequency and intensity, especially typhoons, floods, droughts, saltwater intrusion and landslides. The residents in rural areas are highly vulnerable to climate change because they must depend on natural resources to maintain their lives (e. g.: crops, fish, raw materials, forest, etc.). It is estimated that 80-90% of Vietnam's population are affected by storms; many people in deep-lying and remote areas and ethnic minority groups are being suffered from natural disasters like hail, droughts and floods (MONRE, 2016). The impacts of climate change are unpredictable; however, it is certain that the climate change is a serious risk to poverty reduction and the achievement of the millennium development goals and sustainable development in Vietnam.

### Rationale for the communication campaign

Although climate change is of global concern, developing countries such as Vietnam are often more vulnerable to the impacts due to poverty, illiteracy,

and low public awareness (Thaker, J., Zhao, X. & Leiserowitz, A., 2017, p. 356).

In recognition of the potential impacts of climate change, the Government of Vietnam also launched the National Target Program to Respond to Climate Change in 2015. However, it is a fact that creating national climate policy is challenging (Tompkins, E. L. and Adger, W. N., 2005, p. 562) and its successful implementation requires strong involvement of stakeholders, communities and businesses. But if the public lacks complete information, neither concern nor action is likely to be taken (Norgaard, K., M., 2010, p. 12). It has been claimed that the public admits being confused over ozone hole and global climate change, between weather and climate and regarding causes of climate change, which stems from how climate change science is communicated (Andrea, L., 2009, p. 2). Obviously, climate change is a complex issue which takes a lot of time and real knowledge to translate public concern into action as it is still abstract and distant from daily lives and accords with conflicts between economic benefits and political benefits and conflicts among countries (Norgaard, K., M., 2010, p. 24). After nearly 3 years of implementation, target groups with higher literacy such as government agencies at central and provincial levels, public and private enterprises, socio-political organizations and mass organizations have better understanding of climate change and its concepts. In contrast, grassroot levels and rural populations have a limited access to information; therefore, their role is not yet clear. Even, the Program has successfully developed a number of pilot models in reducing greenhouse gas emissions such as diversification of annual crops, integration of crop and livestock systems, and

utilization of diseases-resistant seed varieties, the Earth Hour movements, use of solar power and so on. Nevertheless, these models have only been piloted in some provinces and not yet brought about spillover effects across the country. Therefore, to ensure the success of the Program, it is essential to build trust and create individuals' cognitive and behavioral change, accordingly accepting and accompanying in implementing the government's policies. Moreover, awareness leads to action when it needs to be built on the clear and trustworthy sources of information (Andrea, L., 2009, p. 3). As a result, they will gradually believe that global warming is happening and human-caused, and then they will support for policies to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts (Edenhofer, O. *et al*, 2014, p. 186). In this regard, the use of communication campaigns, by which a series of messages are designed, will be the best way to inform and educate the public about the issues as complex as climate change (Crawford, E. C. and Okigbo, C. C., 2014, p. 11). In addition, the communication campaign will play a vital role in networking the government with the communities, especially rural residents.

### Objectives of the Communication Campaign

The overall objective of the Communication Campaign is to raise awareness and encourage a change in people's behavior, then influence policy to respond better to climate change.

Specific objectives are defined as follows:

Objective 1: 80% of governments and organizations at district and commune levels in 63 provinces and cities of Vietnam are raised their

awareness about climate change and mitigation measures by December 2019.

Objective 2: 60% of rural population throughout the country are provided with information and raised their awareness about climate change and mitigation measures by December 2019.

Objective 3: 30% of people will have a positive attitude towards environmental friendly technologies and commit to reduce energy use by December 2019.

Objective 4: At least 10 demonstration models about climate change mitigation are piloted and replicated by December 2019.

Target audience

Target audiences include local communities for awareness raising; government and organizations at grassroots level for local decision-making.

Communication methods

Awareness raising and behavioral change of target groups is a long process that requires a set of combined methods and channels of communication. Furthermore, main target groups of the campaign are governments and organizations at grassroots level (district and commune levels) and rural populations (accounting for more than 65% of nation's population), so the complementary use of mass media and personal influence will increase campaign effectiveness (Crawford, E. C. and Okigbo, C. C., 2014, p. 15).

Personal influence (or direct communication): This method is conducted on person-to-person basis, targeting a person or a group of people. For example, live talks about environment and climate change are delivered through village meetings, meetings of women's unions, farmers' unions, youth's unions or at schools. The involvement of opinion leaders will play an important role in coordinating and facilitating such activities because they understand the residents and current situation of their localities. Moreover, a number of activities such as demonstration models, group discussions, household visits, clubs, art performances, movements and contests will be organized to encourage the participation of local governments and the public. Through direct communications, communicators can understand levels of knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of the audience. However, the disadvantages of this method are that communicators only access to limited number of people or groups and even there is a lack of human resource to cover all the population. The effectiveness of communications in this way often depend much on communicators.

Mass media (or indirect communication): communications activities will be undertaken via traditional media like TV, radio, loudspeakers, newsletters, posters, leaflets, handbooks, brochures, and new media (Facebook, YouTube, blogs). Advantages of the new media are that contents of the communications can be broadcast repeatedly and easily accessed by many target groups at the same time.

Television is a useful channel in providing information to mass audience. TV is very popular in Vietnam, from rural areas to urban areas. Some TV programs

can have high effects on awareness and behaviors of the audience, e. g.: dialogues, interviews or game shows.

Radio is also quite prevalent in Vietnam with low costs and can be turned on at any time and anywhere. Especially, radio can be used in the event of power failure.

Newspapers, journals and newsletters are delivered to the audience with higher literacy such as governments and organizations at district and commune levels.

Art performance is preferred by communities, particularly in rural areas. The contents and messages of communication will be mainstreamed into songs, dancing, drama. During the art performance, posters, leaflets and brochures about climate change can be also displayed.

Movements like the Earth Hour, running for the Earth and contests about climate change should be organized among community groups to encourage their participation.

Demonstration models should take place in rural areas, where the community are encouraged to get involved in sharing and learning practices in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and saving energy.

Internet such as Facebook, YouTube, blogs are more widely used by young people to share messages about climate change among members. These channels are totally free to use and easy to access.

Education at schools is applied mainly for pupils and students, e. g.: games, cartoons, clubs, contests.

### Communication Campaign Action Plan

The Communication Campaign Action Plan will be implemented within one year from January 2019 to December 2019.

No.	Main actions	Jan	Feb	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Se p	Oct
I	Direct communication									
1	Live talks									
2	Village meetings/meetings of women's unions, farmers' union, youth's union									
3	Household visits									
4	Demonstration models									
5	Art performance									
6	Special events (Earth Hour Movement, Environmental Day)									
7	Education at school									
8	Contests/competition									



## II Mass media

### 9 Television

### 10 Radio

### 11 Print (newspapers, newsletters, handbooks)

### 12 Internet (Facebook, YouTube, Blog)

### 13 Posters, brochures, leaflets

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation will be conducted throughout the implementation of the Communication Campaign Action Plan to ensure that the actions are in progress and interventions are promptly provided to achieve the set objectives.

Monitoring and evaluation will be based on the indicators set for each objective. Specifically:

1. Number of local government staff at district and commune level have access to information about climate change and mitigation measures.
2. Number of rural population have access to information about climate change and mitigation measures.

3. Number of people have a positive attitude toward mitigation measures.

4. Number of demonstration models are implemented and replicated.

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