



NEWSLETTER

FAO IN VIET NAM

LOOKING THROUGH A CLOSER LENS TO THE DROUGHT-AFFECTED FARMERS



One of the beneficiaries with her new born baby
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In 2016, Central and Southern Viet Nam experienced the worst drought and salt intrusion in 90 years, with 18 provinces declaring state of emergency at its most severe time. From this event, one million people were in need of food assistance and 1.75 million people lost incomes due to damaged or lost livelihoods. The Government of Viet Nam has also estimated economic loss of USD 674 million. Farmer Dinh Van Tuong, the eldest son-in-law of the Dinh family from An Thanh Commune, Gia Lai Province, was no exception.

“Last year, we lost 60% of our crop production.” said Mr. Dinh Van Tuong. “As a family of 11 members, we used to produce 100 bags of maize annually that would feed the whole family.

But after losing a huge portion of our crop, we couldn’t pay back the debt at the local store with our harvest and we really didn’t know what to do. We were really out of options. That is when we heard of the cash distribution for households affected by drought.”

With the financial assistance from the EU Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Viet Nam and ActionAid Viet Nam (AAV) distributed unconditional cash and vouchers for agricultural inputs to the poor households that were affected from the deadly drought.

“We received 2.2 million Vietnamese Dong (96 US Dollar) for the emergency response. My family spent 2 million VND to buy rice for the whole family and medicine for our sick mother-in-law. With the 200 000 VND that is left, we are planning to buy salt or spices and save it for emergencies.” said Mr. Dinh Van Tuong with a bit of relief on his face.



Mr. Ding Van Thuong (in blue shirt) with his wife and in-law family during the interview ©FAO

From this ECHO-funded emergency response project, 3 077 households in Gia Lai, Dak Lak and Dak Nong Provinces received 2 unconditional cash transfers (2 disbursements of 1 100 000 VND each – 49 USD) during the lean season (In November and March). On top of that, 2 392 households were supported with agricultural input vouchers worth 2 500 000 VND (112 USD). The vouchers were divided into 1 yellow coupon worth 1 000 000 VND and 2 blue coupons worth 750 000 VND each.



Agricultural input vouchers that were distributed to 2 392 households. ©FAO

“Seeing a field of dead crops from drought is every farmer’s nightmare. However this was my reality.” said a voucher beneficiary Ms. Dinh Thi Cam, from Yang Bac Commune, Gia Lai Province. “My family’s chilli farming completely went bad from the drought and lack of agricultural water in the village. However, the vouchers for agricultural inputs that my family received helped us enormously in restoring our farming from the disaster. Now we are fully equipped with farming seeds and materials for the next agricultural season without the need of getting additional loans from the local store.” added Ms. Dinh Thi Cam.



Ms. Dinh Thi Cam and her daughter ©FAO

“Distributing cash and agricultural vouchers to farmers for immediate drought response supports families to restart their livelihoods and avoid negative coping mechanisms such as incurring debt, selling assets, and reducing the amount and portions of meals per days. From the recent monitoring trip, we have found out that the food security and nutrition of the households that we are assisting has improved and the cash/ voucher modality is adapted to their needs. We now need to ensure that these communities increase their resilience to climate related disasters in the long term” Said Roberta Tranquilli, the Emergency Operations Coordinator of FAO Viet Nam.

FAO AND MARD COLLABORATE TO SAFEGUARD LIVELIHOODS FROM INFLUENZA A(H7N9) VIRUS

FAO and partners are working to maintain vigilance against influenza A(H7N9) in Viet Nam as Chinese officials report 400 human cases north of the border during the past three months. While the virus has not been detected in Viet Nam, FAO and the Department of Animal Health (DAH) are mobilizing extra resources for early detection along the northern border. Live bird markets remain the main venue for this virus to spread among poultry and to humans. As influenza A(H7N9) does not cause clinical diseases in chickens, infected chickens appear healthy and cause extra challenges in disease detection.

To heighten vigilance, MARD organized a workshop titled ‘Implementation of measures to prevent A/H7N9 virus and other avian influenza viruses that are transmittable across the border’, at northern Lang Son in collaboration with the province people’s committee. MARD Vice Minister Vu Van Tam and vice chairman of Lang Son people’s committee Ly Vinh Quang jointly hosted this workshop to provide updates for possible intrusion of the influenza A (H7N9) virus and mobilize political commitment to combat it. This workshop was attended by representatives FAO, central Government, ministries, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Sub-Department of Animal Health (Sub-DAH) and departments of Livestock Production from 25 northern provinces, international organizations and news agencies.

To prevent the introduction or spread of influenza A(H7N9), FAO is supporting DAH with H7N9 simulation exercises to strengthen multi-sectoral preparedness and response in border provinces. Additionally, FAO is piloting pen-side PCR that enables on-site diagnosis to shorten diagnostic time and increase sampling frequency which will ultimately increase the sensitivity of the surveillance for H7N9 virus along the border provinces. FAO regional H7N9 risk communication materials were also provided and localized into Vietnamese context to offer effective and accurate communication with stakeholders and the public in case of an outbreak.



NCVD laboratory staff conducting pen-side PCR to quickly detect viruses ©FAO



New FAO Country Programme Framework takes step forward



FAO's important work in Viet Nam during the next five years is taking shape with a second consultation workshop to help develop the FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) 2017-2020.

The Ha Noi workshop, held in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), welcomed participants from FAO's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAORAP), FAO Viet Nam and representatives from MARD and the Ministry of Health.

Chu Van Chuong, deputy director of MARD's International Cooperation Department, highly appreciated FAO's technical assistance as it supported the implementation of Viet Nam's Socio-Economic Development Plan, National Target Programme on New Rural Development and especially the restructuring of the agricultural and rural development sector.

The FAO CPF provides a strategic picture of FAO's country programme over a five-year period to strengthen the focus, effectiveness and impact of FAO work in support of Viet Nam's development goals. "We will ensure that the new CPF will be a practical framework to support the development of Viet Nam. Through the formulation and implementation of the new CPF for 2017-2021, we hope collaboration between FAO and the Government of Viet Nam will become even more stronger and effective," said Daniel Shallon, regional CPF coordinator from FAORAP.

CAPACITY BUILDING ON DEA METHOD OF LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION



A FAO project is helping authorities to better manage the livestock sub-sector in Viet Nam. The FAO-funded "Development of a livestock policy

analysis and monitoring system in Viet Nam" project is being implemented by MARD to build capacities for relevant agencies within and outside MARD to design, implement and upscale effective livestock policy analysis and monitoring systems to achieve improved policy choices based on thorough assessments of socio-economic, health and environmental implications of alternative policy choices, programmes and projects.

One of key features of the project is to strengthen skills and capacity at MARD and relevant agencies in collection and analysis of relevant information to better enable the Government of Viet Nam to

Fresh vegetable production project in the spotlight

Encouraging progress made by an FAO-led UN joint programme to enhance Viet Nam's vegetable sector was in the spotlight recently.

A mission to a UNJP/VIE/052/UNJ project site in Son La province's Van Ho district conducted technical monitoring and communication activities to support interventions on safe vegetable production models. The project supports quality, safety and market access opportunities for fresh vegetable production and enhances the sector's sanitary and phytosanitary capacities to help Viet Nam capture domestic and international market opportunities.

During this visit, FAO and the Fruit and Vegetable Research Institute (FAVRI) – the project counterpart, met with district and commune leaders to review work completed and interviewed project beneficiaries to understand their challenges and develop a video clip.



balance multiple goals and aspirations within the context of smallholder livestock production systems. To support this endeavour, FAO in collaboration with the Institute of Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development (IPSARD) and MARD's Department of Livestock Production conducted a four-day training course at the Green One UN House in Ha Noi on data envelopment analysis (DEA), with a focus on analyzing the economic efficiency of livestock production at household/farm level.

Training course participants included government officials, researchers and lecturers from research institutes and universities such as the Viet Nam

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Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Department of Livestock Production, General Statistics Office, Centre for Informatics and Statistics, IPSARD, National Institute of Animal Science, Viet Nam National University of Forestry and Thai Nguyen University of Agriculture and Forestry.

As a result of the training course, participants can now master the DEA method for efficient assessments of production units and evaluations of livestock-breeding bases (households, farms) for various types of livestock (pigs, poultry, cattle).



FAO's animal health intervention in a nutshell

FAO's Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) Viet Nam launched a fun and easy animated film to explain animal health intervention in preventing zoonotic diseases to safeguard livelihoods and ultimately a human health threats.

Link for video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R9aIDSEZGPU>

OPEN AND DISTANT LEARNING

to enhance new rural development in Quang Nam province

FAO, as leader of a joint UN programme, is taking another step towards its goal of enhancing rural development in Viet Nam. As part of the National Target Programme on New Rural Development (NTP-NRD), Quang Nam has been selected as a pilot province for implementation of an Open and Distant Learning (ODL) project targeting government authorities at central, provincial, district and commune levels to enhance their knowledge and capacity.

Local participants will have access to international and national expertise through a modern methodology to participate in a specific distance-learning programme. Through direct advice and inputs, all models, policy studies and NRD concepts as well as cultural aspects will be supported through contributions from international and national experts.

The Quang Nam Programme Coordination Office for NTP-NRD, in collaboration with FAO, has already organized numerous ODL training courses for nearly 700 trainees at district and commune levels to pave the way for the project. After the training, participants from district and commune levels will be familiarized with this new way of learning to complete the course through accessing the website daotao.nongthonmoi.gov.vn and apply lessons to new rural development-focused work in their localities.

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FAO specialist facilitating the training course in Quang Nam Province

The FAO-led, five-year project "UN Support to the National Target Programme on the New Rural Development" implemented by five UN agencies, aims to improve rural people's livelihoods and living standards in an inclusive, equitable and sustainable manner through enhancing rural knowledge, designing policies and mechanisms, building capacity and developing a monitoring and evaluation mechanism. Already 1,526 communes and 15 districts have been recognized as successful models for new rural development in line with the government's set of criteria as part of MARD's first phase implementation of the NTP-NRD during 2010-2015. Participating UN agencies have committed to continue supporting the NTP-NRD in the next phase during 2016-2020.

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