

INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL TRANSITION-INTERNATIONAL
CLIMATE RESILIENCE CASE STUDY

Can Tho, Vietnam

CLIMATE CHANGE COORDINATION OFFICE

2011–2014 | Partners: Can Tho People's Committee, Can Tho Climate Change Steering Committee, ISET-Vietnam, NISTPASS, CtC



Can Tho CCCO's independence from any single government department enables it to coordinate effectively between different departments and stakeholder groups.



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CONTRIBUTIONS TO URBAN CLIMATE RESILIENCE

AGENTS

The CCCO is helping to raise the level of knowledge and awareness of climate change within the city government; working to increase capacity of technical staff who serve on the interdepartmental Climate Change Working Group; and is using ongoing Shared Learning Dialogues to facilitate learning and exchange between city stakeholders.

INSTITUTIONS

The quality, access, and application of information is improved through CCCO coordination of detailed, focused studies among government departments, establishment of a database, and guidance for integrating climate change into planning. Planning and decision-making are made more transparent and accountable through participatory planning with communities in vulnerable wards.

For more information about our conceptual framework, The Climate Resilience Framework, please visit: www.i-s-e-t.org/CRF

Summary

During initial development of their Climate Resilience Action Plans, all three Vietnamese ACCCRN cities—Da Nang, Can Tho, and Quy Nhon—arrived at similar conclusions about institutional vulnerability in their cities. The lack of effective mechanisms for coordination and harmonization of efforts across government departments, scales of government, and non-governmental actors presented a major barrier to building resilience. This responds to a major theme from resilience thinking: the need for social learning and working together between stakeholders in the same system. Local partners identified an ongoing need for local government to undertake informed, climate responsive planning and decision-making, and to implement the National Target Program on climate change (NTP).

With support from ACCCRN and the Can Tho People's Committee, a Climate Change Coordination Office (CCCO) was established in 2011 (with similar offices established in Quy Nhon and Da Nang). The CCCO is now fully operational and responsible

for developing and coordinating all climate change adaptation and mitigation projects in the city in collaboration with external agencies and local stakeholders. Under the authority of the city's Climate Change Steering Committee (CCSC), the office plays a variety of roles and uses a variety of mechanisms for promoting better coordination, collaboration, planning and investment for Climate Change.

Under its mandate from CCSC and grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, the CCCO is authorized to develop official climate change action plans under the central government's National Program to Respond to Climate Change; oversee implementation of ACCCRN City Resilience Action Plan; coordinate climate change resilience analysis for relevant city/provincial departments; develop a database to facilitate relevant data access across city agencies; provide guidance to Socio-Economic Development Planning and urban master planning at the city level; strengthen capacities and participation of vulnerable communities in climate resilience planning and decision-making; build awareness of climate challenges

and responses among city government and enhance capacity of key departmental staff; engage relevant local departments in assessing climate vulnerabilities and responses through targeted studies; develop indicators in collaboration with relevant departments and agencies to monitor city resilience; and promote ongoing dialogue among city stakeholders through shared learning dialogues.

Our Approach

Since its inception, the Can Tho CCCO has coordinated:

- development of a short term (2010–2015) Action Plan to Respond to Climate Change, which is now being used to guide implementation with support from ACCCRN and city budget, and ongoing development of a long-term action plan in collaboration with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment;
- development of a climate change information database, including population, climatic, and socioeconomic data, for access by government agencies in Can Tho;
- support for Department of Health, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, and Department for Natural Resources and Environment to use climate data in their climate-related activities;
- oversight for implementation of the short-term action plan, including support for development of ACCCRN projects: salinity monitoring in Can Tho City, participatory research on dengue fever, and community-based flood and river management in Ninh Kieu district;
- facilitating data access for research on climate change in Can Tho and the Mekong Delta by external researchers, such as World Bank, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Office, and university graduate students;
- support for the Department of Construction to develop a climate change action plan and to Ninh Kieu District to mainstream climate change into its socio-economic development plan;
- in partnership with Challenge to Change, engaging local officials and community members in participatory planning in An Binh ward and Thoi An Dong ward. In An Binh, participatory planning activities gave local officials and local residents the idea to initiate a community-based management scheme to restore the riverside and manage flooding. This project is now being supported with funding from ACCCRN;

- enhancing general knowledge of climate change and national climate policies and integrating these into the planning of Can Tho for 700 city, district, and ward level staff in 9 districts, representatives of Can Tho, and members of the local media;
- training and mentorship for the Department of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs, Department of Health, and local water supply companies to develop and track “resilience indicators” for resettlement, public health, and water supply. Teams have agreed on indicators, collected baseline data, and consulted with additional departments to share and elicit feedback on their findings; and
- support for the Can Tho Institute for Socio-Economic Development to undertake an assessment of poverty and vulnerability in Can Tho.

Lessons and Learning

- **In Can Tho, the CCCO envisions becoming a regional hub for information, learning, and action on climate change in the Mekong Delta.** Leaders hope to establish an Information Centre and climate change dialogue forum for the Mekong delta based in Can Tho.
- **Can Tho CCCO’s independence from any single government department enables it to coordinate effectively between different departments and stakeholder groups.** In Vietnam, as in many countries, existing institutional structures and incentives often encourage agencies to work, plan, and control resources independently. In Can Tho, the full-time director of the CCCO, Mr. Ky Quang Vinh, reports to the CCSC, rather than a departmental leader.
- **Soft skills are needed for climate resilience practice.** Experience suggests that “soft skills” like facilitation, networking, and partnership building are even more important than technical skills, particularly for institutions charged with coordinating across multiple sectors. The CCCO in Can Tho has employed a flexible staffing system that helps to engage individuals with diverse skills sets, by pulling them in from other departments or academic institutions on a part-time basis.
- **For participatory planning to be effective, it demands an attention to “access rights” as stated in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992).** These rights have been adopted in Vietnamese national law but are often poorly applied in practice. The Can Tho CCCO is actively working to incorporate these rights in office projects via participatory planning approaches.

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