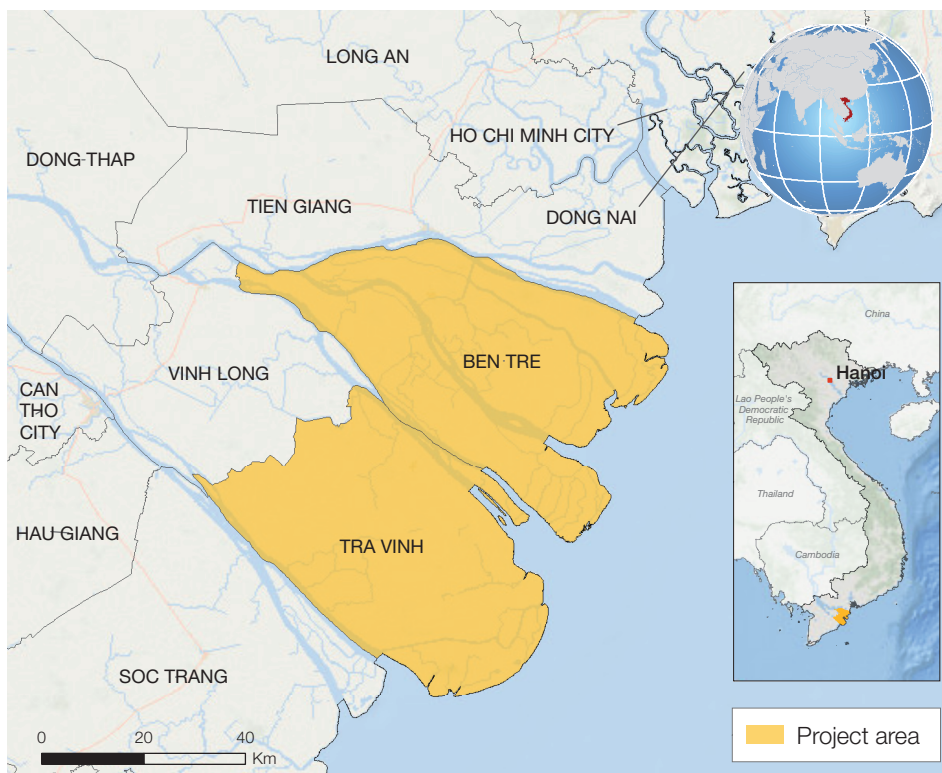


VIET NAM

Project for Adaptation to Climate Change in the Mekong Delta (AMD) in Ben Tre and Tra Vinh Provinces



The designations employed and the presentation of the material in the map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IFAD concerning the delimitation of the frontiers or boundaries, or the authorities thereof.

ISSUES

Viet Nam is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world and among the countries hardest hit by climate change. Rising sea levels (between 75 and 100 centimetres by the end of this century) are expected to affect 20-50 per cent of the low-lying Mekong Delta. Changes in rainfall and temperatures are increasing the risk of floods, typhoons and droughts.

Climate change has serious implications for Viet Nam's socio-economic development, especially in the densely populated and productive Mekong Delta. The Delta is the source of much of the country's rice exports and 60 per cent of national fishery production. Almost 18 per cent of the population live in the rural areas of the Mekong Delta, and depend on the agriculture sector for their livelihoods. The area is facing increasing salinity intrusion, over-extraction of water, excessive use of chemical inputs, reduced soil fertility, mangrove deforestation and disruption of ecosystems through inappropriate infrastructure construction. The combination between climatic and human-made pressures is disrupting the supply of drinking water to thousands of households and increasing soil salinity, which constrains agricultural production for smallholder farmers. As a result, land under rice cultivation has been decreasing.

Communities in the provinces of Ben Tre and Tra Vinh, in the north-east of the Mekong Delta, are especially affected by increasing salinity. Reduced river flow due to upstream water consumption combined with sea level rise and storm surges are leading to salinity reaching deeply inland. This is resulting in losses in aquaculture, perennial crops and livestock production. These effects are forecast to become more severe in a changing climate, constraining the livelihood options of Mekong Delta communities even further.



Investing in rural people

Adaptation for
Smallholder
Agriculture
Programme

ASAP

Launched in 2012, the Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP) channels climate and environmental finance to enable smallholder farmers who participate in IFAD projects to increase their resilience. Through ASAP, IFAD is systematically integrating climate resilience into the overall IFAD portfolio.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Total cost: US\$49.3 million

Approved IFAD loan:
US\$22.0 million

ASAP grant: US\$12.0 million

Other contributions:
Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
US\$7.6 million; beneficiaries
US\$7.8 million

Project period:
6 years (2014-2020)

Executing agency:
Provincial People's
Committees of Ben Tre and
Tra Vinh provinces

ASAP beneficiaries: 124,800

Project objective:
To strengthen the adaptive
capacity of target communities
and institutions to better
contend with climate change.

ACTIONS

The project will build the capacity of smallholder farmers, communities and local institutions to cope with the impacts of climate change and expand into sustainable, profitable enterprises.

AMD will target poor communities, specifically women-headed and ethnic minority households. Thirty communes located along a salinity gradient have been selected in each province to test alternative livelihood models, based on their poverty ranking and vulnerability to climate change.

Specifically, AMD will support the development of climate-resilient agricultural systems, salinity-tolerant fish varieties and off-farm livelihood opportunities. It will support climate-sensitive planning to promote relevant provincial budget allocations and provide financing for resilient small-scale community infrastructure. For example, salinity barriers will be built to safeguard farmers' fields and aquaculture ponds. In addition, the project will promote salinity monitoring and forecasting to help farmers access reliable information on the salinity content of their waterways, and promote improved soil and water management practices to protect shrimp larvae and crops from adverse conditions.

With water stress being a critical challenge in the Mekong Delta, AMD will provide financing to upgrade canal systems, improve water storage, promote rainwater collection and adopt water-saving irrigation techniques.

The ASAP-supported activities of AMD comprise two related components:

- **Building adaptive capacity.** The project will address knowledge gaps in smallholder households and local institutions which currently prevent them from developing viable livelihood options in the face of increasing salinity, temperature and water stress. At the provincial level, it will help to make climate-related issues explicit in planning and resource allocation processes. Smallholder capacity will be enhanced by investments in salinity monitoring and forecasting to prevent crop losses. In particular, AMD will finance up to 30 automated salinity monitoring sensors to calculate salinity concentrations at given points along the river system. This will enable farmers to understand how salinity in soils and groundwater evolves over time. Investments will also be made in community-based adaptation research to develop a

strain of saline-tolerant catfish and scale up sustainable aquaculture farming models. Research will be undertaken on saline-tolerant rice varieties and other saline-tolerant crops which have good market value and are suitable for cultivation.

- **Investing in sustainable livelihoods.** Under AMD, ASAP funding will be provided to finance pro-poor adaptation investments that diversify the economic livelihoods base of poor households. Communities will be supported as they scale up adaptation techniques such as shifting from rice cultivation to shrimp farming, vegetable, coconut and salt production, and sustainable livestock production. The project will also support the design and construction of mostly small-scale public infrastructure, which will be planned and implemented with commercial potential in mind. Investment areas will include rainwater collection and treatment of brackish water, salinity barriers and water management structures, and the improvement of irrigation canal systems.

EXPECTED IMPACTS

AMD will strengthen communities and institutions to effectively respond to the impacts of climate change. It will provide increased and more inclusive financing for market-oriented climate-smart agriculture and agribusiness investments, and help communities to diversify into economically viable and climate-resilient farming, aquaculture and other livelihood options.

- At least 124,800 poor rural people in 30,000 households benefit from the project, receiving a combination of capacity-building, climate-informed planning, technology transfer and access to credit, supported by upgraded community infrastructure and cofinancing of investment in their farming operations.
- About 6,000 people benefit from new employment opportunities generated by on- and off-farm investments.
- At least 4,000 people receive vocational training.
- Over 1.5 million rural people in both provinces indirectly receive flow-on benefits from better access to salinity data and forecasts, technology development and promotion, access to credit and institutional strengthening.

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