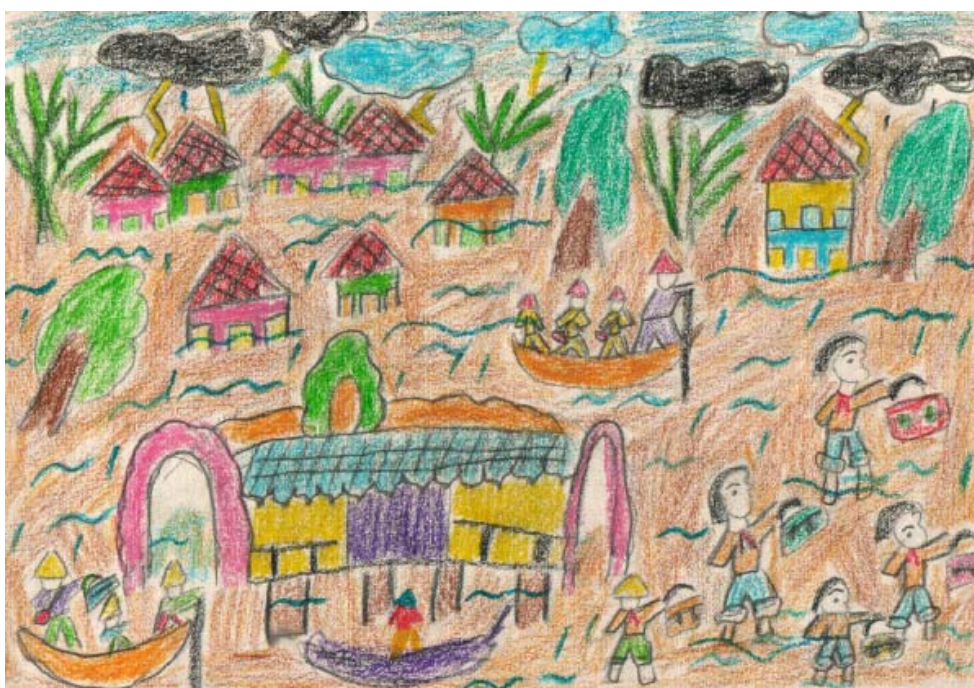


International Day for Disaster Reduction 8th October 2003



Committee for Flood and Storm Control / Thua Thien Hue Province / Viet Nam
Development Workshop / France

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Cover page / Banners DWF/ Drawing: despite flooding, the children continue to go to school in Thuy Thanh



Provincial meeting in Hue 8th October 2003



Activities in Thuy Thanh Commune 8th October 2003

Development Workshop France (DWF) is implementing with the Thua Thien Hue Province a programme "Prevent typhoon damage to housing, central Viet Nam" (See presentation in Annexe), funded in 2003-2004 by ECHO (European Commission Humanitarian Office / DIPECHO programme).

In 2002, Thua Thien Hue Province organised, with the support of the central Government, a Training day on Disaster Preparedness and Rescue. The Province requested the participation of DWF to organise demonstration on preventive housing protection and reinforcement.

In 2003, in order to celebrate the International Day on Disaster Reduction, DWF prepares and organises different events:

1. A training day on cyclone and flood prevention, with the City of Hué, on the 6th October ¹
2. Meeting at provincial level, and demonstrations on the 8th October, with the Committee for Flood and Storm Control of Thua Thien Hue Province.

It was the occasion to associate the provincial level with the celebration of the International Day, to diffuse more deeply the principles of storm prevention, to present some results of the DWF project, and to mobilise the 6 Communes ² partners of DWF project.

Organisation of the International Day in Hue and in the communes / 8 October 2003

1. Before the 8th October

Competitions for drawing in the schools and the writing of songs and poems have been organised in the 6 Communes.

In each commune, drawings, songs and poems have then been selected by the local Damage Prevention Committee, Education and Cultural Services and DW.

2. Day 8th October

Participants from Communes travelled to Hue by motorbike or car, with banners and flags about the campaign of Disaster Reduction, and gathered to the meeting place (the "Cercle"), together with officials from Danang, Thua Thien Hue Province, City of Hue and the districts of the Province.

The morning provincial meeting was organised in two parts (See detailed programme in Annexe), and included various speeches and presentations (with about 100 participants). Awards for competition in the communes were given to the winners. A DWF film (song, poem and theatre play) was presented.

In the afternoon, all participants went to Thuy Thanh Commune, and contributed to various activities:

- Drawing competition for pupils of Thuy Thanh (theme: the covered bridge - Cau Ngoi Thanh Toan and storm / flood);
- Construction competition with builders of each commune (roof reinforcement with concrete ribs, and metal brackets);
- General competition about cyclone prevention for cadres and families from commune (see Annexe);
- Visit to some reinforced houses and public buildings;
- Parade of children on disaster prevention
- Discussion about DWF project activities.

The official statement of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development was read to participants (see Annexe). The prizes for the different competitions were given to laureates.

¹ With 120 participants, from all communes and wards of Hue City and all services involved in disaster preparedness.

² Phu Da, Vinh Hai, Quang Tho, Thuy Thanh, Thuy Xuan and Thuy An.

The commemoration of the International Day for Disaster Reduction in Hue on the 8th October 2003 could be considered as a great success, due to the importance given to the event by the Provincial authorities, the presence – and speech - of the Director of the Regional Committee for Flood and Storm Control, the coverage by local press (TV, radio and newspapers), and the enthusiastic reactions after presentations and films.

At the same time, during this day, all DWF project partners at Commune and Province level have discussed the main issues of the project (animation, selection of beneficiaries families, credit, reinforcement works...), and have developed the network of disaster prevention in the Province.

This celebration also illustrated the excellent relations between the People's Committee of Thua Thien Hue Province, the Provincial Committee for Flood and Storm Control and DWF, which have been reinforced by the organisation of this important celebration.

Annexes

- **Programme of the celebration**
- **Speech of Mr John Norton, President of Development Workshop France**
- **Statement of Mr Le Huy Ngo, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Chief of Central Committee for Flood and Storm Control**

Programme of the celebration

International Day for Disaster Reduction Wednesday 8th October 2003

On the occasion of the International Day for Disaster Reduction, Development Workshop France in cooperation with the Thua Thien Hué Provincial Committee for Flood and Storm Control is organising a provincial level Workshop and Competition about disaster prevention with activities in Hué and in one of the six DWF partner communes.



Themes

Living with risk - turning the tide on disasters towards sustainable development.

Reducing the impact of water-related hazards. Disaster reduction is in everybody's hands.

Participants

Representatives from Thua Thien Hué Province, Hué Municipality and Districts of Thua Thien Hué Province Provincial Committee for Flood and Storm Control and delegates from DW's six partner communes.

Invited organisations: European Union Delegation, British Embassy, CECI, CARE, CRS, OXFAM, Red Cross, and SCA.

Programme

Before 08/10/2003: Drawing competition for children in secondary schools in DW's 6 partner communes
Theme: "Living with risk". Poem and song competition for cadres and people.

Wednesday 8 October 2003

- 06:30 - 08:00 **Delegations from 6 communes travelling to Hue** (motorbikes with banners and flags)
- 08:15 - 09:15 **Official meeting in Hue**
- Speech from Mr. Phan Thanh Hung - Provincial Committee for Flood and Storm Control
 - Disaster prevention in Vietnam - Speech from Mr. Van Phu Chinh, Director of Central Region Committee for Flood and Storm Control, Representative from National Committee for Flood and Storm Control
 - Speech from Mr. Nguyen Van Sau - Vice-Director of Provincial Committee for Flood and Storm Control
 - Speech from Mr. John Norton - President of DW
 - Speech from Mr. Nguyen Truong An - Chairman of Vinh Hai Commune
 - Song and poem about Disaster Prevention
- 09:15 - 09:30 Coffee break
- 09:30 - 11:30 **Working session in Hue**
- Natural disaster and prevention - Mr. Nguyen Viet, Director of Provincial Weather Station
 - Vaccine your home! - Mr. Nguyen Si Vien, Technique Adviser / DW
 - Vulnerability of housing / preventive reinforcement - Mr. Le Toan Thang, Architect / DW
 - DWF project achievements after 3 years - Mr. Le Van Dau, Chief of Animation / DW
 - Prizes for competitions
 - Theatre Play
- 11:30 *Lunch in Hue.*
- 13:30 - 17:00 **Project activities in one of the Communes (Thuy Thanh)**
- Transport to the commune with banners and flags
 - Competition about Disaster Prevention / Cadres, families, builders, pupils
 - Demonstration of housing reinforcement (houses, public facility)
 - Parade with school children
- 17:30 *Dinner in Thuy Thanh*

Speech of Mr John Norton, President of Development Workshop France

Ladies and Gentleman

On the occasion of the International Day of Disaster Reduction, on behalf of Development Workshop France I would like to welcome you to the provincial workshop that we have organised with the Thua Thien Hué Provincial Committee for Flood and Storm Control, on the subject of disaster prevention and the DWF project activities that have been undertaken in Hué and in the six partner communes.

The International Day of Disaster Reduction has been declared by the United Nations in order to make people round the world aware of the loss and damage caused by natural disasters, and the measures that can be taken to reduce them.

The risk of disasters is increasing, and people and communities are becoming more vulnerable as a result of population growth and increased density, environmental degradation, climate change and increased poverty. As well, as investment increases, there is more to lose, and this is particularly the case in Viet Nam.

In this context, post disaster response and relief are certainly important, but disaster reduction is equally important and needs to be developed much more: this means strengthening the measures that society takes to protect itself from the effects of natural hazards such as storms and floods.



The United Nations describes disaster reduction as preparedness, mitigation, and prevention.

Disaster preparedness means taking measures in advance that prepare society for an oncoming disaster, such as early warning systems, evacuation facilities such as boats or two storey public buildings.

Disaster mitigation means taking measures that reduce the effect of a disaster, for example by strengthening buildings to withstand a disaster.

Disaster prevention means taking measures to avoid a disaster through advance planning, such as avoiding building in disaster prone areas.

Viet Nam and particularly Thua Thien Hué province are hit every year by natural disasters, including floods, storms and drought. There are signs that these are getting worse.

The negative consequences of these events for all levels of society are important, in terms of loss of life, loss of possessions, loss of homes and infrastructure and lost means of production. Disasters effectively slow down and even reverse the potential for families and the community to develop and improve their situation. This is unacceptable and requires action.

Building on experience gained in 1989 – 1990 in Hué, since 2000 Development Workshop France has implemented a project with Thua Thien Hué Province to raise awareness of the need for disaster reduction and to demonstrate how such disaster reduction can be achieved, at family, village and commune level.

The main focus is on disaster mitigation - encouraging and implementing the preventive strengthening of existing homes and public buildings, including schools and markets. The DWF project also uses various communication ideas to encourage people to recognise that preventive strengthening is doable, that it is cheaper than post disaster rebuilding, and that it is important and affordable to protect homes and belongings.

The Project has worked to develop the capacity of the People's Committees of each partner commune to undertake these activities, and throughout, these committees have become vital partners in the actions of the DWF project, whether it is training, helping with credit for strengthening, or organising popular events. Together, we have already come a long way in the past four years, to first demonstrating, and then convincing that disaster reduction in the communes and with families is a doable reality.

The purpose of the events today, through the presentations this morning, and through the visits that will take place this afternoon to one of the project communes, is to help you see and appreciate what you too can do in your own situation to avoid and reduce damage to the community and its possessions. Taking the decision to invest in disaster mitigation is also a decision to invest in a safer, less vulnerable future for all. We believe that this is fundamentally important for the healthy development of the Province and its inhabitants.

To finish, I would like to share with you a recent event:

Two months ago, DWF, with the Association of Cities of Viet Nam, organised a demonstration and training event for the Association's city members, in the city of Tam Ky. As part of this, in Tam Tanh Commune, there were two public buildings side by side - one a kindergarten, and the other a cultural hall. It was decided that the Project would rebuild and reinforce the cultural hall. Work was completed in August 2003.

On the 10th September, a sudden storm and heavy rains hit the area of Tam Tanh Commune. The roof of the un-strengthened kindergarten was blown off and totally destroyed; next door, the strengthened cultural hall on the other hand suffered no damage at all. Now Tam Tanh Commune has requested our assistance to help rebuild the kindergarten. Preventive strengthening would have made this unnecessary.

I hope that you will find the events of today informative and I thank you for your attention.

John Norton, DWF President, 8th October 2003

Statement of Mr Le Huy Ngo, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Chief of Central Committee for Flood and Storm Control

Distinguished guests!
Ladies and Gentlemen!

International Day for Disaster Reduction was initiated by the United Nations in 1990. This year, the Day is celebrated with the theme: “*Living with risk – turning the tide on disasters towards sustainable development*” in the context when disasters occur in many places all over the world that makes significant changes in the awareness of people on disasters and risks. It is acknowledged by all nations that the road to a prosperous and civilised society should be developed in the environment of harmonised relationship between human and nature. Government and people of Vietnam understand that disaster is putting us forward many unavoidable risks. Actively living with risks will play an important role in mitigating disaster’s impacts.

Up to October 2003, Vietnam directly suffered 3 storms and a tropical depression; there were some floods reaching warning level 3 in Red River and in some rivers and streams in the Central Vietnam. Northern Delta provinces have just coped with large rainfalls of high frequency. Rains concentrated in a short period of time with large amount of rainfall, which was unprecedented, causing inundation in most cultivation areas of Thai Binh Province, and in a large area in Ninh Binh and Nam Dinh provinces. Besides, some other provinces were also affected. The damages caused by these rainfalls were high. Total paddy field inundated of the 3 provinces was more than 120,000 hectares, particularly in Thai Binh province there was a half of paddy field inundated, and more than 30,000 hectares of ready-to-harvest areas were lost.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

In the past years, the people of Vietnam together with many scientists, local authorities of all levels, ministries, ministerial agencies, mass agencies, associations and many experts have made tremendous efforts to achieve the success of flood and storm control and disaster mitigation works. ***Living with risk – turning the tide on disasters towards sustainable development*** has become a key principal of local authorities of all levels as well as people in disaster prone areas.

It is identified that living with floods and stability of life during big floods is the principle ***in Mekong River Delta Provinces***.

Up to August 2003, Mekong River delta provinces commenced heightening of 574 residential cluster foundations and 48 residential cluster dykes. Localities have selected more than 35,000 households to be targeted groups in the clusters. During the last 5 years (1996-2000), more than 30,000 households (about 1.744 million people) in the Mekong River Delta were provided loans for heightening foundation, building house-on stilts, with a total budget of about VND 1,300 billion; 25 million square meters of foundation and floor areas have been built (average 80m²/household).

In the Central Provinces: The Government issued Decision No 668/TTg on 22 August 1997 on the guidelines and measures to mitigate disaster and key programmes to develop socio-economic condition in central coasts of Vietnam. The content of this decision also stated to help Central Provinces gradually adapt, avoid and live with disasters.

Central provinces are now focusing on implementing big programmes such as: 5 million hectares forestry programme in the whole country; Crop shifting programme to avoid disasters; Programme on new transportation infrastructure networks to ensure flood discharge and through transportation in flood seasons, in which Ho Chi Minh National Road and other subsidiary roads are to link with the Highway No. 1 with Ho Chi Minh National Road; Programme to build reservoirs to make use of upstream water resources in main rivers like reservoirs Bang (Quang Binh), Rao Quan (Quang Tri), Ta Trach (Thua

Thien Hue), A Vuong (Quang Nam), Dinh Binh (Quang Ngai), etc.; Programme to develop critical constructions to protect riverbanks; Programme to relocate residents living in disaster prone areas, in coastal lines or in serious eroded places to safer areas; Programme for infrastructures such as strengthening schools, health clinics, offices to resist floods and storms. These constructions will support local people to actively prepare and mitigate disasters and stabilize production activities.

After the historic flood in 1999, the Government decided to develop Natural Disaster Mitigation Partnership for the Central of Vietnam with the support of UNDP, the Royal Netherlands Embassy and Luxembourg. The objective of the programme is to create and provide a forum for donors and Government of Vietnam to identify priority projects for natural disaster mitigation in Central Vietnam, support provinces to have better opportunity to secure funds from the Government, Donors and INGOs, and gradually reduce the risks of disasters. The preparatory phase of the NDM-Partnership is now coming to a close. During this phase a number of priority projects have been developed by the Partnership and plans for the next phase up to 2005 have been developed. I take this opportunity to appeal for donor support to the NDM-Partnership.

In Northern Uplands, provinces are step by step carrying out the programmes to make uncultivated lands and bare hills green; construct small and medium reservoirs to distribute upstream floods. On the other hand, they construct projects to prevent flash floods, relocate residents in flash flood prone areas to actively prepare and avoid disasters.

The Northern provinces in Red River Delta and Thai Binh River Delta are protected by thousands of kilometres of different dykes, a system of reservoirs to distribute floods, flood discharge and flood retarding constructions and other irrigation structures.

In the early 2003, President Tran Duc Luong promoted a campaign on “Bamboo planting to protect dykes against waves” in Nam Dinh province as a usual custom of “*Planting Tet*” initiated by Uncle Ho. In promoting the movement, 19 provinces and big cities, having dyke system, launched task forces to plant bamboo to protect dykes against waves during the Tet event, as well as target to make bamboo planting as an objective for flood and storm control works. According to the guidance of Prime Minister Phan Van Khai, the bamboo planting programme against waves will be implemented from 2003 and completed in 2005 for the whole dyke systems in Northern Delta and in Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Ha Tinh provinces. To carry out the guidance, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development provided guidance to provinces to prioritise the activity of bamboo planting to the first category of dyke investment and reparation portfolio in 2003. In the year 2003, provinces and cities having dyke system have completed to make rows in 148,691 km² of land for growing 19,613 bamboo bushes, with the total length of more than 30 kilometres.

The detailed programme for 2004 will focus on ensuring the safety of dyke’s surfaces by concreting measures; planting Vetiver grass to protect riverbanks and riversides that usually being eroded instead of constructing stone and concrete revetments, which are costly and not harmonized with the environment. Concreting dyke’s surface is a very effective measure, on one hand, it helps protecting the dyke from erosion while flood overtops the designed standards, protecting dykes from sudden breaches and on the other hand those dykes could become internal roads for rural transportation and help to increase the value of goods in remote areas as well as being the access for emergency relief whenever there is such as need in the flood season. Planting Vetiver will effectively help protecting bank erosion, save money and create green and nice environment.

Disaster is an objective element, and in many cases this is a force majeure and non-exclusive. All measures have been implemented in a synchronised manner, with large investment of the Government of Vietnam and great efforts of people, and will be developed in harmony with disaster toward sustainable development.

Distinguished guests!

Ladies and Gentlemen!

On this occasion, on behalf of CCFSC of Ministry for Agriculture and Rural Development of Vietnam, I would like to appreciate the efforts of all ministries, ministerial agencies, mass organisations, local authorities and individuals working in Disaster preparedness and mitigation. I thank the cooperation of United Nations agencies, other countries, INGOs and individuals all over the world for enthusiastically helping the people of Vietnam in disaster preparedness and mitigation works as well as in disaster recovery in the past years. I do hope the cooperation will be continued effectively in the future.

Thank you and I wish you all good health.