



## ADDING VALUE, CHANGING LIVES



When low income farmers in forestry areas cannot afford to wait for long growing periods of trees and fruits, they usually prefer to burn trees and land, and to plant cash crops (potatoes, cassava, vegetables in general), which they can easily and immediately harvest and either sell, or consume. Poverty is indeed one of the main factors behind deforestation.

In order to address the two interrelated problems of deforestation and poverty in the Province of Quang Nam, FAO in partnership with the Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), designed and implemented the "Market-oriented Agro-forestry to Reduce Poverty" project which was made possible thanks to the funding of the Italian Development Cooperation.

The approach of the project was gradual: in a first phase, it focused on reforestation, mainly through the re-introduction of high value planting and growing practices among local farmers. More than 10,000 farmers received assistance and support for improving or developing both home gardens, or forest gardens. FAO procured high value seedlings of fruits, spices and bamboo for the home gardens, and timber seedlings for forest gardens, such as Khaya, Acacia and Eucalyptus. The income generated by the trade of trees, such as Acacia wood, improved the living conditions

of many of the farmers. It gave them the opportunity to send children to school, renovate and enlarge houses and have access to more diversified and higher nutritional meals.

On its second phase, the project focused on enabling farmers to commercialize home gardens products, especially spices. Indeed, farmers were facing several problems when selling such products. They did not apply any post-harvest practice (like refining, grading, slicing, cleaning), so they just sold raw products at very low prices. And they did so on an individual basis, trading very low volumes. The result was obvious: they sold at very low prices, with a very weak bargaining power. And this turned into a paradox, especially for black pepper and cinnamon, whose varieties grown in the Province are among the best ones. In fact, the black pepper of Thien Phuoc was already mentioned in books in the 16th century for his high density value and his very strong taste.

But how to give value to such produces, when people in the local markets prefer to buy lower value spices, at very low and competitive prices? The project decided to help farmers on one side in improving the quality of the products, and on the other side on gathering into farmers groups and targeting a different market: the tourist market of Hoi An, a UNESCO heritage very close to the project intervention area. With a potential market of more than 2 million foreign tourists per year, the farmers could then sell their spices to customers interested in a well looking gift package, to buy as a souvenir to bring back to their home country. Cinnamon incenses and barks, pepper grains, ginger tea, and many other products are now being sold along with a label explaining the social value behind the product. The launch in the market has just began, but these products could potentially bring an increase to the income of the farmers, and, hopefully, improve their lives.

The project has finally come to an end, but the potential for its impact to be sustainable in time is, apparently, very high.

## GCP/VIE/035/ITA PROJECT FACTSHEET

Between 2009 - 2013, the Italian Cooperation Agency, in partnership with FAO and Quang Nam province, has provided funding for US \$ 1.7 million to help communities shift their home and forest gardens towards market-orientation. Since 2009, under the "Market-Oriented Agro-forestry Project in Quang Nam Province - Phase II" (GCP/VIE/035/ITA), six communes have been supported to improve home and forest gardens, representing local agro-forestry systems, with a new market orientation. The project has offered

technical advisory, trainings and cross visits, piloting of decentralized participatory planning and implementation, provided start up inputs and materials, strengthened local extension channels, introduced savings-oriented microfinance, supported the establishment of farmers groups, micro-enterprises and processing centers, and facilitated market linkages for the creation of agro-forestry value chains. The local agro-forestry products, especially spices, have been improved in terms of post-harvest processing and product development, and will be sold in the tourist market of Hoi An and Da Nang, bringing a significant income increase for all the actors along the chain.

## CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE PROJECT



Within the course of the Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) Project, workshop meetings on Carbon Sequestration Coefficient and Capacity Building Scenario planning were held in Rome at FAO Headquarters from 21 to 24 May 2013. Participants were from three country partners: Zambia, Viet Nam, and Malawi.

The workshop focused on the analysis of soil carbon sequestration coefficients under different farming practices. Experts from the University of Aberdeen (Italy) provided training on measuring carbon sequestration and the use of model designed by the university. The model was introduced to the representatives from country partners for future application to their carbon mitigation plans. The two tools introduced to Measure the Carbon mitigation potential in each of the three partner countries were the Cool Farm Tool and the Ex-Act Tool. Future workshop will

be held in country partners at later dates. Workshop on South-East Asian socio-economic scenarios for climate change and food security was launched on 5 November 2013 at Ha Long Bay by the FAO CSA project, in co-operation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and in partnership with the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP).

The meeting in Ha Long is the first of two workshops and will provide an innovative platform for policy makers, researchers and practitioners to develop possible scenarios on the linkages between food security and climate change not only for the country of Viet Nam but also for the South-East Asian region, including Cambodia and Laos. Scenarios, as pointed out by CCAFS facilitators are fundamental to "provide the means to consider today's policies, plans and decision-making processes in light of potential future developments".



## THE LAUNCHING EVENT OF FAO COUNTRY PROGRAMMING FRAMEWORK (CPF) FOR THE PERIOD 2012 - 2016



FAO is the UN specialized agency mandated to work in agriculture and rural development. With the aim of increasing the impact and effectiveness of FAO's support to Viet Nam, the CPF for the period 2012 – 2016 has been developed. The CPF takes a results-based approach that builds on FAO's comparative strengths and partnerships at national and

international levels. The CPF's objective is to define the expected results under the priority areas, which are: 1) effective policies and legal framework on rural livelihood, food and nutrition security and food safety; 2) climate change adaptation and mitigation; 3) improving the provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner; 4) enabling inclusive and efficient agricultural and food system for the rural vulnerable groups. These priorities were selected based on Viet Nam's Socio-Economic Development Strategy (2011-20), strategic development plans of agriculture, forestry and fishery and the strengths and experience of FAO Viet Nam. The launching event of FAO CPF was held on 14th October 2013 at Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), chaired by Madam Nguyen Thi Xuan Thu, Vice Minister of MARD and Mr. JongHa Bae, FAO Representative in Vietnam.

## WORLD FOOD DAY 2013 CELEBRATION

Each year on 16 October, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) celebrates World Food Day in commemoration of its founding on that day in 1945. Keeping with the core beliefs of FAO, the theme for this year was "Sustainable Food Systems for Food Security and Nutrition". World Food Day is an opportunity to help increase understanding of problems and solutions in the global effort to eradicate hunger.

This year, FAO Viet Nam celebrated World Food Day together with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and Thai Binh Provincial People's Committee on 11 October 2013 in Thanh Tan Commune, Kien Xuong District, Thai Binh Province.

On this occasion, the Award of FAO Photo Contest on "Sustainable Food Systems for Better Life of Vietnamese People" was announced. Many other activities such as local vocal performances, FAO documentary film on Viet Nam VAC (garden-pond-livestock pen) system viewing and many traditional games were organized during the ceremony.



Mr. JongHa Bae - FAO Representative in Viet Nam, Madam Nguyen Thi Xuan Thu - Vice Minister of MARD, Leaders of Thai Binh Province, government partners, farmers and mass media joined together to celebrate this event.



# JOINING HANDS ACROSS THE SHARED BORDER

## CHINA AND VIET NAM SIT ACROSS A TABLE FOR THE FIRST TIME TO OFFICIALLY DISCUSS CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

A bilateral meeting between Viet Nam and China on Collaboration to Address Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADs) and Diseases of Public Health Concern was organized in Ha Long City, Quang Ninh Province from 22-24 August this year.

The meeting convened 58 participants including senior government officials from the Viet Nam's Department of Animal Health (DAH) and the Veterinary Bureau of China, senior officials from Provinces along the border, representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and the Ministry of Health (MOH) in Viet Nam, FAO Emergency Center for Trans-boundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD), plus observers from international organizations and donors.

In his opening remarks at this first ever official bilateral meeting between the DAH in Viet Nam and the Veterinary Bureau of China, Dr. Pham Van Dong, Director General of the DAH highlighted the main objective of the meeting, namely the sharing of experiences relating to the control of TADs, and to develop and evaluate risk reduction measures and strategies at the border.

Dr. Huang Weizhong, Deputy Director General of China's Veterinary Bureau encouraged international agencies such as FAO and USAID to support this cross-border initiative so the bilateral cooperation between China and Viet Nam on TADs control could become a global model.

The USAID Infectious Diseases Advisor, Dr. Kim Thuy Oanh reaffirmed USAID support "to assure safe, responsible and transparent management and control of animal diseases and diseases of public health concern".



Specific recommendations were developed for each theme, and both governments also agreed to have a bilateral meeting every six months to build upon synergies and strengthen joint animal disease control measures in the epi-zone.

Both sides expressed their willingness to develop joint projects for the Viet Nam – Southern China epi-zone with consideration being given to real-time information exchange mechanisms; a corridor approach for poultry and poultry products; and safe pathways for the movement of species susceptible to foot-mouth diseases. Both governments also agreed to identify and appoint focal points to implement all recommendations on schedule.

These efforts were reinforced with technical support from FAO to "improve the understanding of pathways and movements of livestock, animal products, people, and the pathogens they may harbour" to prevent diseases and mitigate disease impacts, according to Mr. JongHa Bae, FAO Representative in Viet Nam.



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