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# Vietnam



## Fast Facts

Population:	89 million
Life expectancy:	74.9 years
Under 5 mortality rate:	14/1,000 live births
Maternal mortality rate:	150/100,000 live births
Adult literacy rate:	90.3%
HIV prevalence:	0.4%*
Access to improved water:	99% (urban) 92% (rural)**

Source: International Human Development Indicators, United Nations Development Programme, 2010.

\*HIV and AIDS Estimate, UNAIDS, 2009

\*\*Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, WHO/UNICEF, 2008

## Program Overview

CARE has worked in Vietnam since 1989 and has completed over 150 projects in 23 provinces in collaboration with local partners. CARE employs around 110 local staff who are supported by up to six expatriate staff. As Vietnam becomes a middle-income country CARE will focus on supporting rights and sustainable development among the most vulnerable groups in Vietnam, for example remote ethnic minorities, poor women and girls, and people vulnerable to climate change.

### Water and sanitation

CARE supports government partners to provide community based water and sanitation systems. CARE also works with local partners to raise awareness about hygiene and sanitation behaviours that will protect and improve their health.

### HIV/AIDS

CARE was one of the first non-government organisations to respond to Vietnam's HIV epidemic with assistance in prevention, care and support. CARE has long-established partnerships with community organisations which enable staff to work at a grassroots level with individuals vulnerable to HIV. CARE supports people to change risk behaviours and adopt protective behaviours. Across all projects, CARE ensures that HIV and protection methods are understood by stakeholders, including staff and addresses stigma and discrimination of people living with HIV.

### Sexual and reproductive health

CARE works with women and girls to inform them of their sexual and reproductive health rights and advocates for access to culturally appropriate and responsive health services and other social programs. Projects with the Khmer people in the Mekong Delta and ethnic minority youth in the north of Vietnam support participants to understand, document, and act upon their experiences.

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### Emerging Infectious Diseases, including Avian Influenza

Avian Influenza (AI) is endemic in Vietnam. CARE addresses human and animal health issues to improve awareness of and response to suspected AI outbreaks. CARE strengthens the capacity of local communities and authorities through training, supporting local preparedness and response plans, and simulation exercises. CARE has been requested to strengthen community surveillance of swine flu based on its AI experience.

### Community Development

Rural ethnic minority groups are being left behind in Vietnam's economic growth. CARE's rural development programs seek sustainable improvements in livelihood security for poor and vulnerable rural people whose lives depend primarily on natural resources. Through working in partnership with local organisations, CARE is addressing rural poverty directly and at the same time, strengthening society to facilitate participatory community development and provide relevant services.

A project in the Mekong Delta is responding to the needs of poor, mainly Khmer, women by facilitating Women's Development Groups. Through these groups, women gain access to credit and business support; clean water and improved sanitation; health; and clean

and efficient energy services. At a district level, the project is strengthening the capacity of communities, local authorities and local organisations to participate in community development planning. A Community Development Network is then developed to exchange these experiences in poverty reduction across the country.

### Sustainable natural resource management

Environmental degradation and limited access to land are major constraints to livelihood security. CARE addresses this through facilitating community based natural resource management in which community groups develop a vision and plan for land use, and are trained in sustainable agriculture and natural resource management techniques, as well as systems which increase productivity.

CARE works to improve local economic development through community group and cooperative development. Projects focus on improving incomes from agriculture products, non-timber forest products and sustainable forest farm systems using a value chain approach. These projects also develop the capacity of women's groups to organise and access improved market-led business opportunities.



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## Climate change

Rural poor communities in Vietnam face increasing challenges from climate variability including severe and prolonged cold, intense floods, unpredictable rainfall as well as high food prices, inflation and most recently, the impact of the global financial crisis.

CARE is integrating climate change adaptation into selected projects in Vietnam. We have also co-established and now lead the NGO Climate Change Working Group with several inputs to national policy formulation, development of a climate change capacity building program for NGO staff and support for mainstreaming adaptation. CARE has worked with coastal communities in Thanh Hoa province to plant and maintain mangroves, thereby protecting these villages from tidal waves and providing an alternative income source.

## Responding to emergencies

The combined impacts of floods, storms, storm surges, drought and salinity in Vietnam hinder development and maintain high rates of poverty. Over the past five years, CARE has responded to six typhoons in Vietnam with the provision of food, safe water, shelter, essential items and livelihood recovery, followed by community based disaster risk reduction activities and strengthening capacity to respond to disasters. CARE works to build the capacity of government staff in planning, applying a participatory approach, and in mainstreaming disaster preparedness into development plans. In October 2009, CARE responded to the devastation caused by Typhoon Ketsana with a particular focus on the most vulnerable and affected populations in central Vietnam.

## Major donors

CARE International members currently supporting CARE Vietnam include CARE Australia, and CARE Denmark. Other CI members are also funding specific projects. Major donors include the Australian Aid Agency (AusAID), the Commission of the European Communities (EC), ECHO, the Danish Development Agency (Danida), German MoFA, USAID, CDC, Abbott, Barclays, JICA, DEC, and foundations including Ford, Precision, GAP, Gates and Simmons Foundation.



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