



PRESS RELEASE

Launch of the Project MekongElevate “Ethnic Communities Leading Inclusive Climate Action”

DAK LAK, March 4, 2026 – CARE in Vietnam, in collaboration with the Community Development Center (CDC), has officially launched the project **MekongElevate “Ethnic Communities Leading Inclusive Climate Action”**.

Implemented from now until March 2029 in Ea Drong and Tam Giang communes, Dak Lak province, the project will provide upland communities – specifically ethnic minority women, youth, and people with disability – with solutions to enhance climate resilience, thereby contributing to the overall stability and prosperity of the Mekong subregion.

MekongElevate is funded by the Australian Government through the **Mekong-Australia Partnership (MAP)** and is implemented by CARE and local partners.

“Our Mekong-Australia Partnership supports local responses to shared regional challenges. Australia is proud to partner with Vietnam to support a more inclusive and resilient Mekong subregion. The MekongElevate project addresses our shared priorities of climate resilience, gender equality and inclusion. It will invest in people – particularly women, people with disability, and marginalised groups – providing them with skills and opportunities to lead and shape their own paths in the green transition” said Australia’s Ambassador to Vietnam, H.E. Gillian Bird.

Throughout the implementation period, the project will focus on supporting ethnic minorities, women, youth, and people with disability within the coffee industry. Key activities include increasing the adoption of climate-smart agriculture practices and other innovations to strengthen climate-resilient livelihoods.

Furthermore, the second pillar of the project will focus on boosting access to safety nets and recovery mechanisms. These efforts aim to help ethnic minority communities recover from unavoidable loss and damage caused by natural disasters or extreme weather events. The project also prioritises activities that promote the participation and leadership of youth, people with disability, and ethnic minority women in climate-related decision-making processes.

“The coffee industry is an economic pillar, yet it is one of the sectors hardest hit by climate change. As a local implementation partner, we are dedicated to bringing technical solutions and support mechanisms directly to the people, helping ethnic minority

communities not only 'survive' but 'thrive' on their own land," said **Mr. Bach Thanh Tuan, Director of CDC.**

“At CARE, we believe that lasting solutions to the climate crisis depend on who is able to participate in them. Too often, women, youth, and people with disabilities face barriers that limit their access to economic opportunities and disaster preparedness. Through MekongElevate, we work alongside communities to help reduce these barriers, strengthen practical skills, and improve access to resources, so the green transition is more inclusive and no one is left behind.” shared **Ms. Le Kim Dung, Country Director of CARE in Vietnam,** during the event.

Representing the group of women and farmers participating in the project, **Ms. H Yui Nie** shared:

“We hope the solutions introduced by the project will directly support smallholder farmers like us in practicing sustainable agriculture. This ensures our products meet the standards of manufacturers and buyers. Sustainable, climate-adaptive production does not just bring immediate results; it leaves a legacy for future generations.”

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About the MekongElevate Project

MekongElevate aims to strengthen the climate resilience of upland communities in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. The project focuses on supporting minority groups, including women, youth, and people with disability from ethnic minority backgrounds across six border provinces of the three countries. In Vietnam, the project is implemented in Dak Lak and Son La provinces.

The project pursues three strategic objectives:

- **Promoting Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA):** Assisting people in adopting sustainable farming techniques and innovations to protect their livelihoods against climate change.

- **Strengthening Safety Nets:** Supporting communities in accessing recovery mechanisms and risk contingencies to minimize loss and damage caused by natural disasters and extreme weather.
- **Empowering Leadership:** Enhancing the voices and roles of ethnic minority women, youth, and people with disabilities in climate-related governance and decision-making processes, from the local to the regional level.

Implemented by CARE and its partners, the project expects to bring direct benefits to over 70,000 people and indirectly impact approximately 1.1 million individuals. MekongElevate not only addresses environmental issues but also aims to eliminate gender and social inequalities, laying out the foundation for sustainable development in the Mekong region.

About CARE International in Vietnam

CARE has been active in Vietnam since 1989, collaborating with numerous partner organizations to implement over 300 projects. CARE believes that the key to equitable and sustainable development is addressing the root causes of poverty, social injustice, and inequality. CARE consistently walks alongside its partners to support women farmers, workers, and micro and small business owners in enhancing their capacity and confidence to participate in economic development, adapt to climate change, and strengthen resilience after natural disasters. CARE strives for a society that develops equitably and sustainably for all. For more information about the organization's activities, please visit: www.care.org.vn

About the Community Development Center (CDC)

The Community Development Center (CDC) is a social enterprise in Vietnam committed to promoting sustainable development and improving the quality of life for vulnerable communities. CDC focuses on enhancing livelihoods, strengthening resilience, and promoting equal opportunities for women, children, ethnic minorities, and other disadvantaged groups.

Since its establishment, CDC has implemented numerous initiatives in areas such as sustainable agriculture, livelihood diversification, gender equality, community development, environmental protection, and climate change adaptation. CDC's operations are guided by principles of inclusive and responsible development, aiming for long-term solutions that harmonize economic growth, social progress, and environmental protection.

CDC works closely with local authorities, social organizations, businesses, and international donors to empower communities by providing knowledge, skills, and resources. As an active member of various development networks, CDC continuously

promotes innovation and collaboration for a future that integrates economic growth, social justice, and environmental responsibility. For more information about the organization's activities, please visit: <http://cdc.org.vn/cong-thong-tin/>

About the Mekong-Australia Partnership

The [Mekong-Australia Partnership \(MAP\)](#), launched in 2020, is an Australian Government initiative that responds to shared regional and transboundary challenges to support a peaceful, stable and prosperous Mekong subregion. Australia engages pragmatically and flexibly in support of the subregion's priorities and where Australia can add value. Australia works with Mekong partners in Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar to improve water security and climate change resilience; counter and disrupt transnational crime; enhance economic resilience and subregional integration; build leadership and skills through scholarships and short courses; and support inclusive development, including gender quality and disability equity.