

### *Viet Nam*

In Viet Nam the Netherlands Red Cross completed the first stage of the 'climate change and disaster preparedness' program by the end of 2005 and prepared a second phase for the program with advice from the Climate Centre.

#### **Impact of the 'disaster preparedness/climate change program in Viet Nam 2003-2005 on the farmers of Ha Tinh Province**

In the Ha Tinh province people and especially farmers of the Quang Phu commune suffered a lot from heavy rains and extreme droughts. A small dam was built to protect the fields from floods and droughts. However, the unstable dam was quickly destroyed after extreme rainfall causing floods. The bad construction couldn't prevent floods during the rainy season and droughts during the dry season. Every year local farmers had to be rebuilt the dam, to safe their harvest.

Pham The Phu is a farmer and she was involved in the Hazard, Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (HVCA) conducted by the Vietnamese Red Cross in her commune: 'Together with other villagers we decided that a dam was what everybody needed mostly. Most people in this village work as farmers so they really depend on water.' The money provided by the Red Cross was used to construct a new dam, which was finalised last year. The advantages are already noticeable: 'The dam has not yet collapsed so the fields have not been flooded. That means that we can have two crops a year instead of one. Also the amount we harvested last time was 30 % higher than usual.'

Ti Lam, another farmer, is also very pleased with the dam: 'We can harvest more and during the dry season people don't have to go very far to get water. Although the dam was constructed just a few months ago it has been very effective because last year there was no rainfall, but the dam provided enough water for everybody.'

Besides the dam, the project taught the farmers also how to prepare themselves for disasters. Lam: 'We now have clear guidelines on what to do when we are threatened by a storm and we know how to respond afterwards.' Phu: 'When the loudspeakers announce the weather forecast and warn for a disaster we start preparing ourselves. We help each other to harvest the rice which otherwise will be destroyed. We preserve seeds, prepare food and water and wait inside our houses until the storm has passed on.'