

# The human side of climate change: identifying community needs and storytelling for social action



Dr Lisa Jones and Katie Parsons

**Presentation for: Rivers of Life – Social Action Projects in response to climate change and COP26, 17 March 2021**

# Youth-led adaptation for climate change challenges in Vietnam:

social action, intergenerational and intercultural  
learning

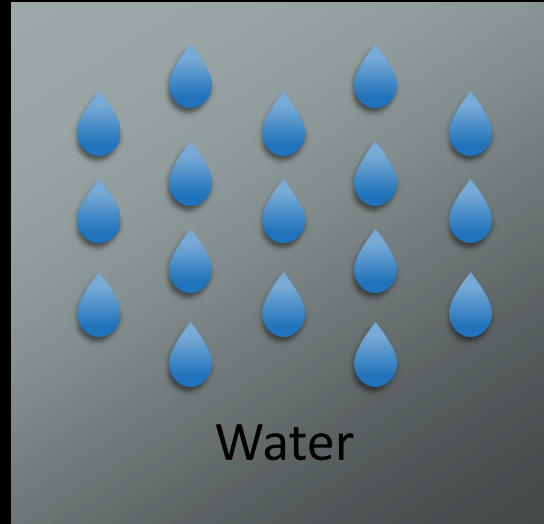
Youth working together in partnership, will be supported to identify imaginative ways to mitigate climate change challenges in the Red River catchment.

Youth will explore how local, traditional and indigenous knowledges can develop understandings and strengthen local and societal resilience.

Using a participatory action research approach drawing upon anticolonial methods, the project will result in innovative forms of knowledge exchange rooted in these diverse ways of knowing. Creating culturally-specific forms of affective and aesthetic expression.

# Global Systems Vulnerable to Climate

## These May Lead to Political or Societal Instability



# Climate change – identifying needs in the community



Some questions to ask:

- How do the different groups view/understand climate change?
- What is the impact of climate change on them? How are these impacts similar/ different?

AND IMPORTANTLY:

- What community assets exist already?
- What are people already doing to mitigate the impacts of climate change in their community?

# Storytelling

Story-telling and social justice –  
'expands our imaginative capacity for  
how solidarity can be thought of and  
fostered' (Weatherall, 2019: 471)

Stories are important for  
social change as they are able  
to:

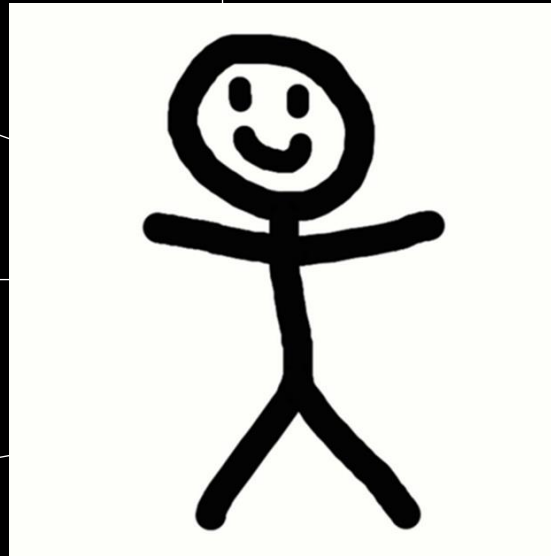
- Draw you in
- Communicate events from particular perspectives
- Avoid confrontation
- Activate people

(Gonzalez, 2020)

They help emotional  
connection

Can foster dialogue

Stories often in first-  
person narrative



Can be a powerful tool that  
can be used to both advocate  
for others (to help  
communicate the stories of  
others) but can also be  
empowering for individuals  
and groups themselves to  
represent their own stories.



Storytelling  
for raising  
awareness

BUT  
also...

Positive stories  
of 'hope' and  
action

De Meyer et al. (2021) Transforming the  
stories we tell about climate change:  
from 'issue'  
to 'action'



# References

- De Meyer, K., Coren, E., McCaffrey, M. and Slean, C. (2021) Transforming the stories we tell about climate change: from 'issue' to 'action' *Environmental Research (Lett.)* 16 015002
- Gonzalez, A. (2020) Storytelling for Social Change – introduction and overview.  
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/storytelling-for-social-change>
- Weatherall, R. (2020) Even when those struggles are not our own: Storytelling and solidarity in a feminist social justice organization. *Gender, Work and Organization*. 27(4): 471-486

