



Youth Connect Programme

HARVESTING E-BOOK

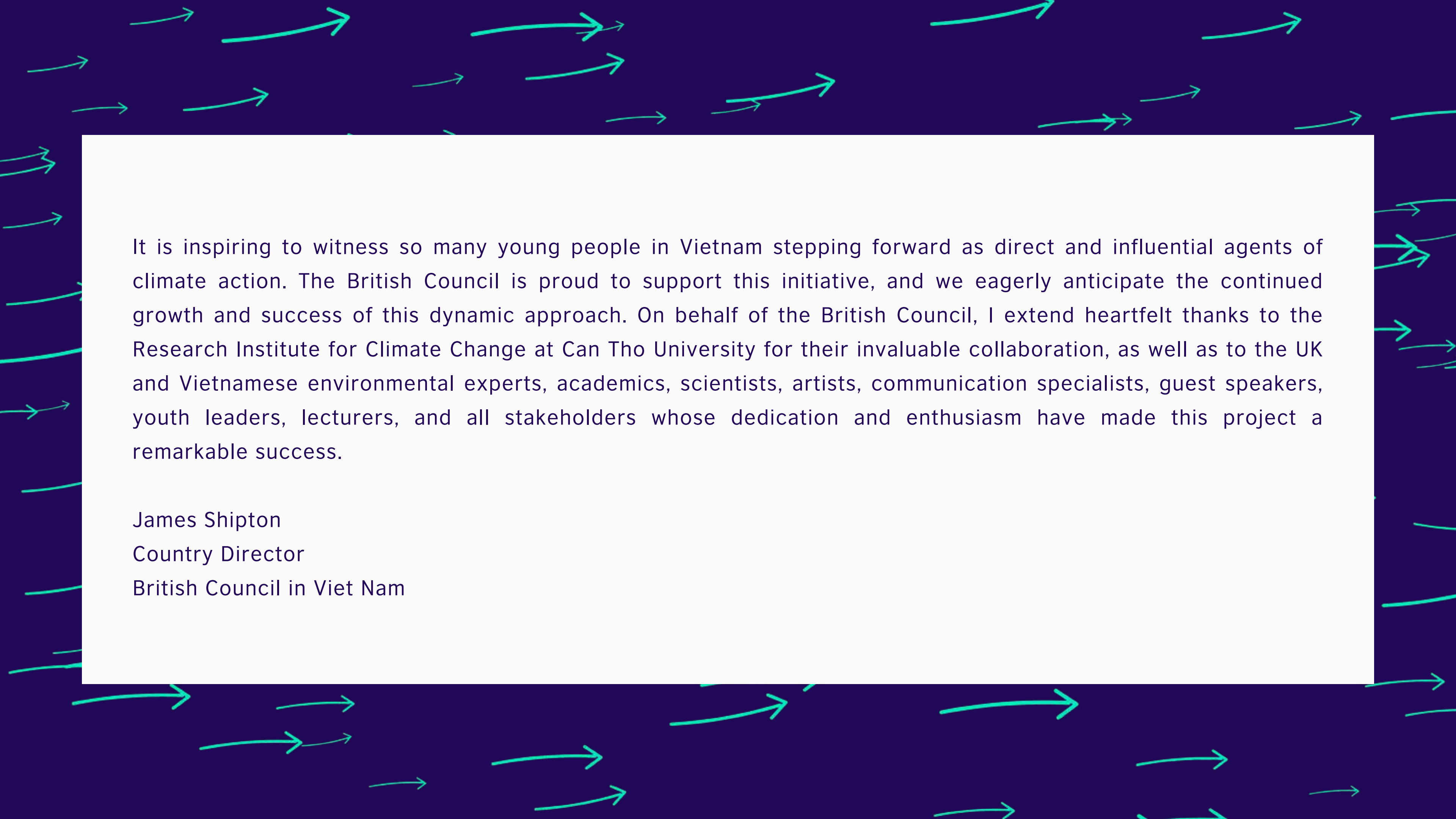
Empowerment Journey of Youth Community
Resilience to Climate Change in the Mekong
Delta (Y-CoRe) Project

February 2023–April 2025

FOREWORD

FROM THE BRITISH COUNCIL IN VIET NAM

I am thrilled to present this e-book, a vibrant collection of facts, figures, and inspiring stories showcasing youth-led social and climate action projects in the Mekong Delta. These initiatives are part of our Youth Community Resilience to Climate Change in the Mekong Delta Project, known as Y-CoRe, implemented from 2023 to 2025. Within these pages, you will discover the powerful impact of climate action projects designed and driven by passionate youth leaders, alongside their personal journeys of growth and empowerment. A feature of these projects is the rich diversity of approaches employed by young leaders to raise awareness about climate challenges, not only among their peers but throughout their wider communities. This has sparked greater community engagement and a shared commitment to climate resilience. By integrating different perspectives from science, arts, communication, and education – and supported by a dedicated team of scientists, artists, and communication experts – the participating youth leaders and students conducted research, created cartoons, experimental films, audio stories, artworks, and educational materials. Their creative efforts have significantly enhanced climate awareness among young people and their communities.



It is inspiring to witness so many young people in Vietnam stepping forward as direct and influential agents of climate action. The British Council is proud to support this initiative, and we eagerly anticipate the continued growth and success of this dynamic approach. On behalf of the British Council, I extend heartfelt thanks to the Research Institute for Climate Change at Can Tho University for their invaluable collaboration, as well as to the UK and Vietnamese environmental experts, academics, scientists, artists, communication specialists, guest speakers, youth leaders, lecturers, and all stakeholders whose dedication and enthusiasm have made this project a remarkable success.

James Shipton
Country Director
British Council in Viet Nam

FOREWORD

FROM THE DRAGON-MEKONG INSTITUTE

Amid the increasing challenges posed by climate change in the Mekong Delta, the role of youth in adaptation solutions and sustainable development has become more crucial than ever. From March 2023 to April 2025, the Research Institute for Climate Change (DRAGON-Mekong), Can Tho University, implemented the Learning Journey of Youth Community Resilience to Climate Change in the Mekong Delta (Y-CoRe) Project under the Youth Connect programme of the British Council in Viet Nam.

The project was implemented in two phases:

- Phase One (February 2023 – November 2023) focused on building a youth network, providing knowledge and skills on climate change adaptation, and supporting social action project (SAP) implementation.
- Phase Two (December 2023 – April 2025) expanded the youth network, enhanced the project's impact, and integrated the climate skills toolkit into university curricula.

Throughout these two phases, Y-CoRe continuously expanded in scale, broadened its beneficiaries, and deepened its impact, aiming to build a community of young people equipped with the knowledge and innovative mindset to develop community-based climate adaptation initiatives. To date, the project has supported the implementation of 21 social action projects and two projects integrating the Climate Skills toolkit into teaching at Can Tho University and Dong Thap University. These projects address urgent issues such as the food-energy-water nexus, biodiversity conservation, plastic waste recycling, gender equality and social inclusion, and disaster risk response.

With guidance from a multidisciplinary team of advisors, young participants have adopted an interdisciplinary approach, combining science, communication, and the arts to raise awareness and inspire action in local communities. Moreover, the project has contributed to building a dynamic, creative, and proactive youth network capable of spreading positive values in climate change adaptation efforts.

In addition to resource support from other partners, the Youth programme of the DRAGON-Mekong Institute has also received collaboration and attention from stakeholders such as: the Viet Nam Youth Federation; city and provincial Youth Unions, Departments of Natural Resources and Environment, and Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development in the Mekong Delta; the British Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City and the British Embassy in Ha Noi; public agencies in Can Tho City; news and media organisations; and, most importantly, over 500 young participants from different provinces across the Mekong Delta.

On behalf of the DRAGON-Mekong Institute, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the British Council for their invaluable support of Y-CoRe throughout both phases, as well as to all young participants and partner organisations that have contributed to the project's success. I hope this e-book will not only document the efforts and initiatives of young people but also inspire others to join hands in building a sustainable future for the Mekong Delta.

Associate Professor Dr Van Pham Dang Tri
Director, Research Institute for Climate Change
Can Tho University

Key words: Climate adaptation solutions, Climate change, Climate-resilient youth community, Youth action

CONTENT

Project Introduction

page 7–14

Journey of Seeds Sprouting

page 15–40

Empowerment Journey with Y-CoRe

page 41–59

Social Action Project Owners

page 60–64



PROJECT INTRODUCTION

Youth Community Resilience to Climate
Change in Mekong Delta (Y-CoRe) Project



Y-CoRe

EMPOWERMENT JOURNEY OF YOUTH COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE MEKONG DELTA

Within the framework of the Youth Connect Programme, the British Council in Viet Nam has collaborated with the Research Institute for Climate Change at Can Tho University to develop and implement the Youth Community Resilience to Climate Change in the Mekong Delta project (known as Y-CoRe). The project consists of two phases:

- Phase One: February – November 2023
- Phase Two: December 2023 – April 2025

Project Objectives:

- To empower young people by strengthening their leadership capacities and influence on climate change adaptation activities in the Mekong Delta.
- To build a community that fosters knowledge exchange, interaction, and the development of essential skills for the youth network across the Mekong Delta.
- To amplify youth voices and expand capacity-building opportunities for young people and educators from educational institutions in the region, encouraging active engagement in climate change adaptation efforts, with a focus on gender equality.

www.britishcouncil.vn/en/youth-community-resilience-climate-change-mekong-delta-y-core



TIMELINE

Y-CoRe phase One

28 Mar 2023

Project launch

29 Mar–2 Apr 2023

Training of Trainers (ToT)

20–23 Apr 2023

Cascade training on youth-led initiatives to respond to climate change in the Mekong Delta

24 Oct 2023

Youth forum on promoting youth engagement in climate actions in the Mekong Delta and exhibition showcasing 15 social action projects

1 Aug 2023

Mid-term dissemination event

24–25 Oct 2023

Media training

1 Nov 2023

Closing ceremony of the Y-CoRe project phase One on facilitating youth engagement to promote community resilience to climate change in the Mekong Delta

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TIMELINE

Y-CoRe phase Two

3 Apr 2025

Y-CoRe project dissemination, youth actions showcasing and dialogue

6 Dec 2024

Stakeholder meeting and discussion on Lower Mekong region sustainable development

16 Nov – 7 Dec 2024

Youth exchange in Wales, United Kingdom

18–20 Aug 2024

Cascade training at Dong Thap University

1–5 July 2024

British Council's 90 Youth Voices for the Future

21–23 Jun 2024

Cascade training at Tra Vinh University

7–9 Jun 2024

Cascade training at Can Tho University

14 May 2024

Media training by Viet Nam Television (VTV)

31 Mar–4 Apr 2024

Training of Trainers at Can Tho University

12–13 Jan 2024

Y-CoRe project stakeholder meeting on integration of climate change and environmental literacy into education and training activities in general and higher education in the Mekong Delta

HIGHLIGHTS

Y-CoRe Phase One

03

socio-political organisations engaged

197

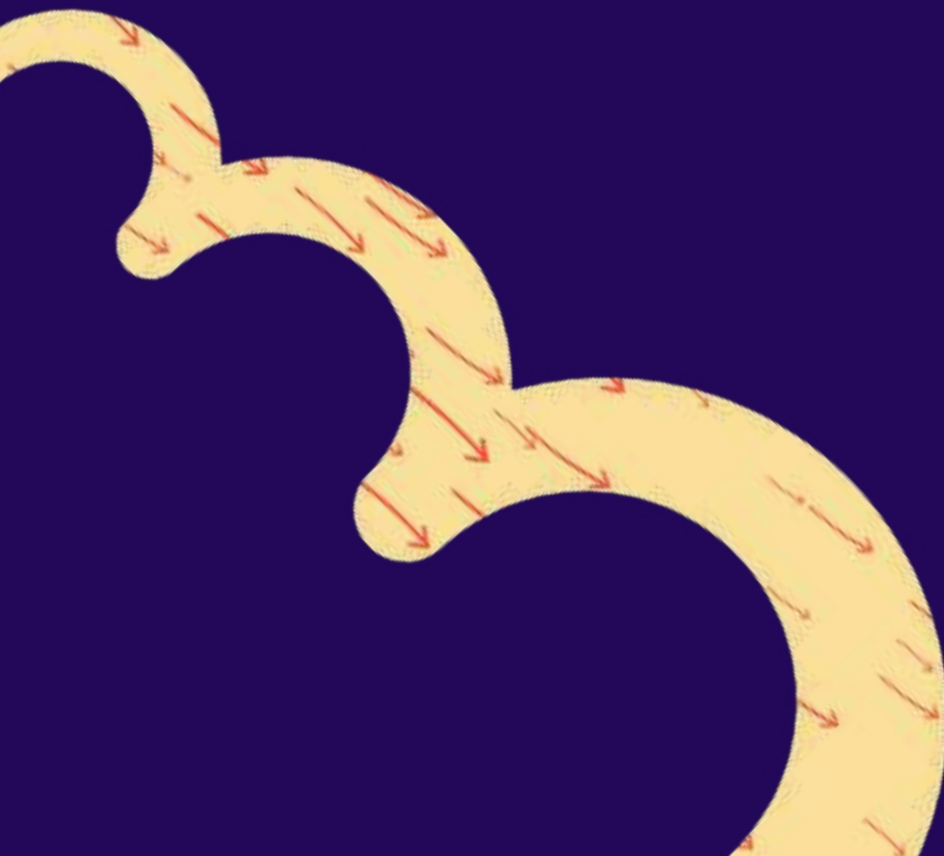
young people trained
(101 females included)

72

social action project owners
(36 females included)

15

social action projects granted



03

UK consultants delivered Training of Trainers

100,000

audience reached through the project's communication activities

2,929,500

viewers of Preparation for Life broadcast on VTV1

01

e-book compiling youth-led social action projects

HIGHLIGHTS

**Y-CoRe
Phase One**

HIGHLIGHTS

Y-CoRe Phase Two

01

partnership between Viet Nam and the United Kingdom

452

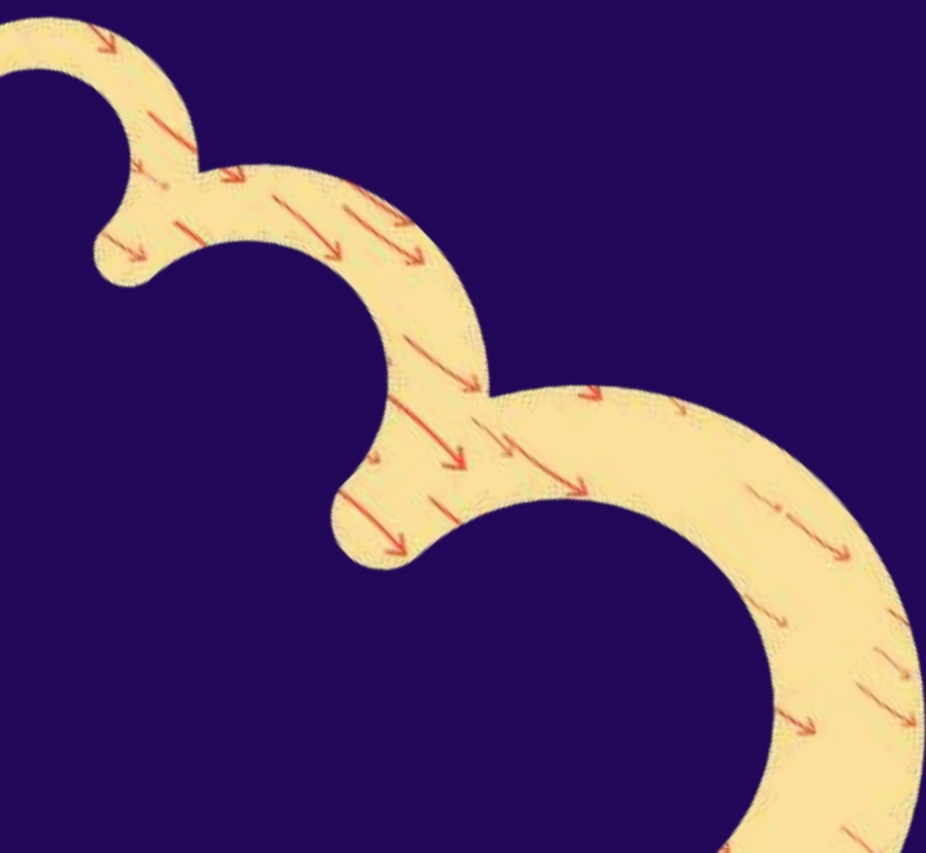
young people trained
(**231 females included**)

36

social action project owners
(**14 females included**)

06

social action projects were provided with seed funding, with 01 social action project in Y-CoRe phase One facilitated for scaling-up



03

UK consultants delivered Training of Trainers

32,000

audience reached through the project's communication activities

1,953,000

viewership of Preparation for Life broadcast on VTV1

01

e-book compiling facts, figures, and impact stories and youth-led social action projects of the project

HIGHLIGHTS

**Y-CoRe
Phase Two**



Journey of Seeds Sprouting

Social Action Projects on Climate Change
and Gender Equality in the Mekong Delta



Lang - A Journey of Sharing (Silence)

Through an innovative and artistic use of audio storytelling, Lang (meaning Silence) creates a deeply moving soundscape – one where listeners are invited to feel every note of life and immerse themselves in heartfelt stories from the blind community in Vinh Chau, a coastal township in Soc Trang Province.

Vinh Chau is a coastal town blessed with both a long coastline and fertile lands. Spanning over 47,300 hectares and home to more than 166,000 people, it is a place where the Kinh, Khmer, and Hoa ethnic groups live together in harmony. The town is renowned not only for its rich natural resources – such as black tiger prawns and luscious longan – but most famously for its purple shallots. With over 6,200 hectares of shallot fields, Vinh Chau produces around 100,000 tons annually. It is no exaggeration that Tuoi Tre newspaper once crowned it the Kingdom of Purple Shallots, a title proudly held for over a decade (Source: Tuoi Tre Newspaper, 21 October 2015)

But

ironically, the very specialty that brings livelihood to local people has also, over time, taken away their sight. According to statistics from the Red Cross Society of Vinh Chau, there are over 1,200 blind individuals in the area – more than 220 of whom are completely blind in both eyes, and over 1,000 who have lost vision in one eye. Some families have two to three members suffering from blindness. One such case is the family of Thach Polla from Lac Hoa commune, Vinh Chau. For three generations, his family has made a living peeling shallots. Thach lost sight in his left eye at the age of five. Four years ago, he went completely blind after losing vision in his remaining eye. His wife also lost sight in one eye after shallot powder accidentally blew into it. His daughter-in-law, only in her twenties, is now completely blind. (Source: Vietnamnet, 12 May 2015)

It was not until three years later that Soc Trang Newspaper finally shed light on the root cause behind the rising cases of blindness that had earned Vinh Chau the heartbreaking name ‘the village of the blind’. A task force from the Ministry of Health conducted a field study and officially confirmed the primary cause of blindness among local residents: corneal ulcers. The research found that these ulcers were predominantly linked to the farming, harvesting, and processing of purple shallots – a key livelihood activity in the region. This is largely a matter of occupational health and safety, with mechanical factors playing a significant role. For example, while cutting shallots or preparing the soil, tiny particles like dirt, shallot skins, or even pungent essential oils from the shallots can irritate the eyes.

It’s a story from ten years ago, and while the causes may vary, those dry statistics – once transformed into voices, breath, and sounds in the sound documentary ‘Listen!’ – suddenly came alive with emotion and resonance.

It all began with a deep concern over the story of Vinh Chau’s ‘village of the blind’. During the Y-CoRe training workshop, our project team came together to craft a community action plan for this coastal town. Though none of us came from Vinh Chau, we shared a heartfelt desire to do something meaningful for the people there. That is why we decided to create a movie based on aural elements, not visual ones. Through this unique format, we hoped to bring the story of Vinh Chau to life, touching hearts and inspiring others to care, to act, and to share. More than just a film, it was our way of spreading awareness, sparking conversations, and empowering young people in the region to take action. In the quiet moments after the film faded to black, perhaps each audience found their own answer to what needs to change in this environment.

But Silence goes beyond merely portraying reality – it serves as a bridge, sparking care and calling for action. With over 8,000 views on Facebook and 15,000 reaches on TikTok, the project’s effort to spread awareness has been met with warm engagement. Each post, image, and podcast has helped tell the local story of climate change in a way that resonates.

We did not want Silence to exist only in the digital space. It also began reaching people in a more personal, tangible way through a live screening and awareness session on climate change and gender inequality – impacting over 700 students at the Khanh Hoa Lower and Upper Secondary School. Silence also organised ‘Mid-Autumn for Children’ – a gift-giving initiative that brought joy to children in Vinh Chau during the Mid-Autumn Festival.

Silence was never just a film. It was always a journey: a project that connects communities and inspires youth in the Mekong Delta to take climate action, a series of open conversations that spark long-term support for vulnerable communities. Above all, Silence is a story that does not end with the credits. It continues to echo – softly at first, like scattered notes – until those small voices rise together into a powerful chorus, becoming a voice for change.



Project members

Lam Thi Diem Thuy
Tang My Quyen
Huynh Giao
Phan Huu Kiet
Ly Minh Anh
Nguyen Anh Thu
Truong Quoc Binh
Le Ngoc Thanh
Bui Quoc Khanh



**Discover the full
journey of the
Silence project
at this link.**



**Experience
the audio
movie here.**

Project The Fading Salt Season

The dazzling white salt fields shimmer under the blazing southern sun. Heavy baskets of salt rest on the shoulders of local workers, while the soft splashing of bare feet wading through briny water whispers the rhythm of daily life.

These are the beautiful images of salt-making – a national intangible cultural heritage of Bac Lieu. But behind that beauty lie the sudden downpours of unseasonal rain, increasingly polluted waters, and the weary eyes of salt farmers gazing – almost unconsciously – toward an uncertain future.

And from those deep concerns was born the documentary project The Fading Salt Season, created by four young students from Can Tho University – Hong Minh, Nhat Tan, Ma Hiep, and Minh Thu. The Fading Salt Season is a journey – a sincere attempt by young people to tell the story that is unfolding right before our eyes.

In their very own hometown, what seems like a simple story about salt-making unfolds into a deeper narrative – one shaped by the harsh realities of climate change and the sweeping tides of modernity. As the younger generation turns to fast-growing industries and emerging careers, the age-old tradition of salt farming slowly fades, its legacy quietly slipping away.





The 15 to 20-minute documentary is a portrayal of the lives of salt farmers that vividly captures the harsh grip of nature on each grain of salt. The rains arrive earlier now, the tides rise higher, and shifts in the surrounding environment are slowly pushing this traditional craft into uncertainty. The film serves as a gentle yet powerful reminder to the people of Bac Lieu of a fading heritage. With a quiet grace, it weaves its way into the viewer's heart through scenes of scorching sunlight, windswept fields, and glistening white salt crystals. The salt flats, reflecting the vast blue sky like a polished mirror, become the stage where humans blend into the landscape – no more than slender silhouettes beneath the sun.

Woven into the film is the story of salt villagers such as Nguyen Hoang Han, who has devoted more than half his life to the craft – a person caught between the pull of tradition and the realities of making a living, between a deep love for the trade and the pressures of a changing era. What the film reveals is that climate change, while present, is not the central narrative here. Rather, it is the fading awareness among local youth of their ancestral craft – salt farming. How many young people in Bac Lieu still recognise that their heritage is slowly being weathered by nature's harsh transformations and the quiet indifference of time? Half of the filmmaking team are from Bac Lieu province – once small children trailing across the shimmering salt fields, growing up amidst the white expanses, yet never truly understanding the essence of the craft. Through *The Fading Salt Season*, they found the chance to listen, to witness, and to feel the fragility of this livelihood – and, more importantly, to learn how to tell its story with the fullness it deserves.



The Fading Salt Season

hopes to spark a sense of responsibility among the youth of Bac Lieu, helping them realise that climate change is not a distant story, and that salt farming is not merely a memory of the generations before them.

The project has attracted over 500 followers across social media platforms and hosted a film screening at Bac Lieu University, directly reaching 50 local young people. It also received passionate support from various youth organisations, including the Green Agriculture Club, the Bac Lieu City Student Association, and the Bac Lieu University Student Union. Their interest and companionship have given strength to the project, allowing the story of salt farmers to go beyond the screen and reach deeper into the hearts of many more.

Some professions are slowly fading under the harshness of time. But with enough care, enough love, and a sense of responsibility, they do not have to quietly disappear. The Fading Salt Season is a heartfelt confession, a silent cry for help, and a fragile hope that the younger generation will choose to carry on this sacred craft. So that the day will never come when the salt farms vanish from the land without a trace.



Project members

Ma Hiep

Nguyen Hong Minh

Pham Le Nhat Tan

Nguyen Ngoc Minh Thu



Discover the full story of The Fading Salt Season here.



Watch the documentary here.

Project

The Application of Water Level Monitoring and Warning Devices Combined with an Automatic Water Pumping System (AWD)



As climate change accelerates at an alarming pace, agriculture – the backbone of Viet Nam’s economy – is facing mounting challenges. The Mekong Delta, the country’s most vital source of rice, continues to suffer from prolonged droughts and saltwater intrusion. Farmers in the region remain resilient, enduring the harsh impacts of a changing climate. But the pressing question remains:



“ Is there a solution that can help them not only adapt – but take control, actively managing their water resources to secure stable and reliable harvests?

”

Seeking to answer that very question, four passionate students from Can Tho University – Danh Tinh, Tu Quyen, Hoang Long, and Thanh Duoc – have come together, driven by their shared interest in land, natural resources, and environmental research. Together, they are turning ideas into action by integrating Internet of Things (IoT) technology into agricultural irrigation systems through their project: The Application of Water Level Monitoring and Warning Devices Combined with an Automatic Water Pumping System (AWD).



Gone are the days when farmers had to rely on traditional know-how or simply hope the weather would be kind. Today, they can turn to real-time water level monitoring systems that offer precise, up-to-the-minute data – putting control back into their hands.

The project will provide a water level monitoring and warning system in Giong Rieng District, Kien Giang Province, helping farmers manage their agricultural water resources more effectively than by using traditional methods based solely on years of experience.



In addition, the project aims to build on existing resources and solutions, saving time, cost, and effort. By doing so, it hopes to foster continued growth and bring practical benefits to even more communities in the future.



Through training sessions on how to use and operate the system, the team aims to empower women, ensuring that not only husbands – who are often the primary farmers – but also wives and other family members can easily understand and use the monitoring system. The AWD system has already been installed and piloted in Giong Rieng District to ensure its reliability and feasibility.

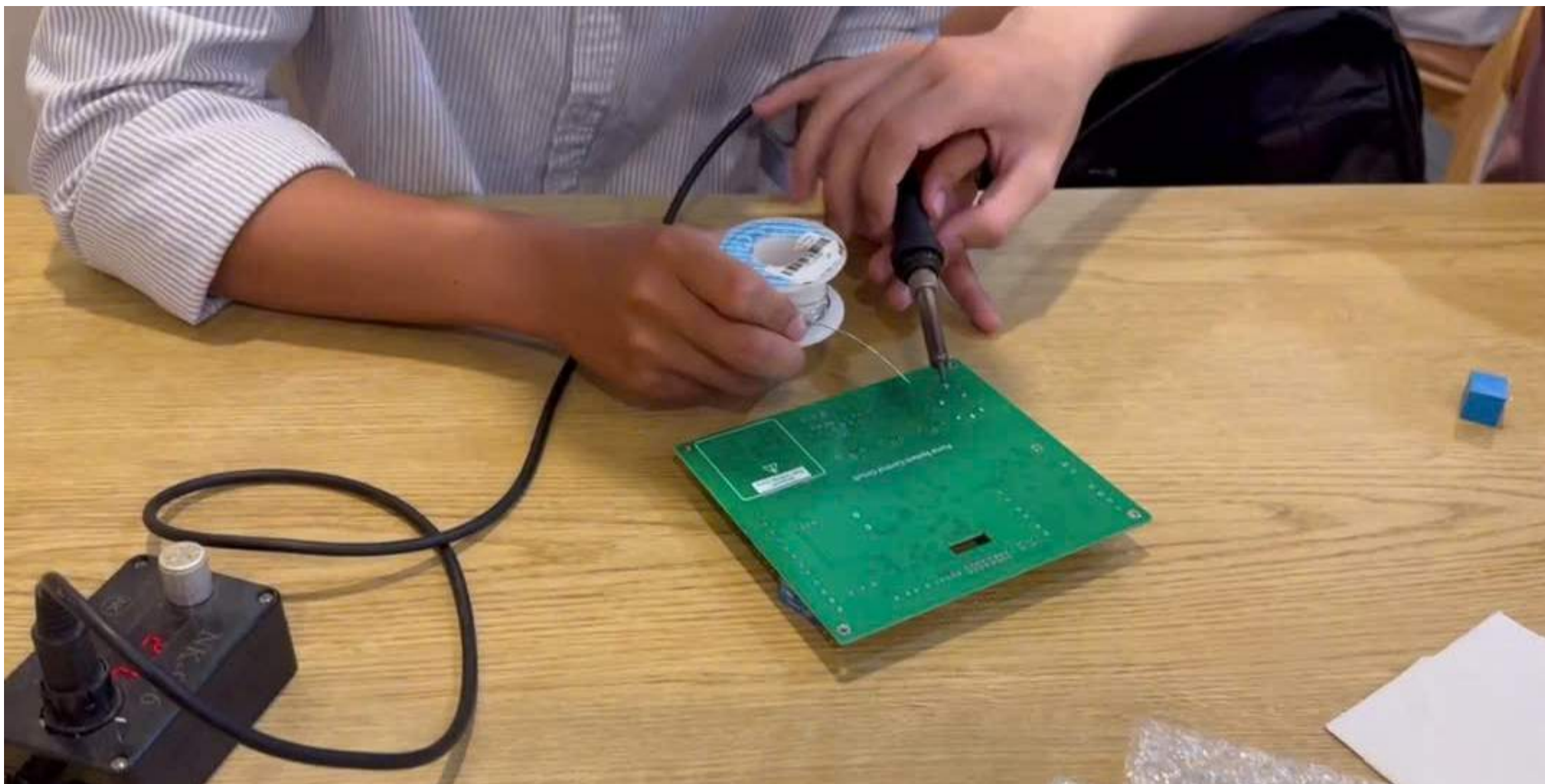
The project has delivered remarkable results in local water management, particularly in rice cultivation. Farmers have expressed satisfaction with the benefits it brings. In the most recent rice season, the amount of water used for irrigation by over 20 farming households decreased significantly compared to previous seasons, helping to conserve water resources and reduce production costs. The operation of the pumping station has also become much easier thanks to the application of modern technology. Farmers can now control the pump remotely via a mobile app—even in the harshest weather conditions. This not only improves water efficiency but also enhances farmers' safety during operation, reducing the risks associated with manually running the pumping station.

“

Since the system was installed, I no longer have to worry about irrigation. I can control the pump right from home using my phone. The electricity consumption and water savings have also helped local farmers significantly cut down on costs.

Mr Huynh Van Tri (a farmer in Long Thanh Commune, Giong Rieng District, Kien Giang Province)

One of the project's highlights is the creation of a training hub for local households to learn how to use IoT devices. This initiative equips farmers with new knowledge while also paving the way for the project model to be expanded more widely. But it does not stop there – the project aspires to empower local farmers not only as cultivators but also as stewards of the environment, especially in the face of increasingly complex climate challenges. In the coming period, the project will officially hand over the AWD system at the pumping station to the commune.



Upon completion, the project plans to expand the system's application as additional financial resources become available. At the same time, the team will continue to research, develop, and improve the devices to better suit the specific conditions of each locality, ensuring both long-term efficiency and sustainability. This includes further enhancement of the AWD. With the successes it has already achieved, this is clearly more than just a technological initiative by a group of young students – it is the beginning of a new journey to protect water, the Mekong Delta's most precious and life-sustaining resource.

Project members

Danh Tinh
Tang Tu Quyen
Tran Nguyen Hoang Long
Le Thanh Duoc

**Discover the full story
of the project here.**



PROJECT

Recycling Plastic Waste into Floor Tiles

In the heart of Tra Vinh Province – once known as the shadiest province in the Mekong Delta thanks to its abundance of ancient trees – now lies a different reality. Each day, over 428 tonnes of household waste spill out onto the streets, even into the courtyards of local universities.

In a place where stark statistics reveal the overwhelming spread of plastic waste, a passionate project has emerged, led by a group of dedicated students from Tra Vinh University.

The project first began to take shape in October 2024. From discarded nylon bags and broken plastic fragments, these energetic and visionary students have crafted a different story – one of renewal. It is the story of waste being reborn, transformed into durable floor tiles that not only serve a practical purpose but also embody a deep yearning for a cleaner, healthier environment.

Through a careful process of collection, sorting, and cleaning, plastic waste – those forgotten nylon bags and scattered fragments often left to pollute the environment – was given new life in the most remarkable way. Melted into a malleable mixture, the plastic is poured into moulds, cooled in water tanks, left to dry, and then coated with an eco-friendly paint. The result? Floor tiles that are not only highly water-resistant, fire-retardant, soundproof, and heat-insulating, but also bear the mark of sustainability. Even after aging, they can be recycled again, continuing the cycle of renewal.





With just a mould, a cooling tank, and a layer of eco-friendly paint, fragments once seen as culprits of environmental pollution have been transformed. No longer mere witnesses to the passing of time, they now form the very foundation of green, sustainable constructions. Each tile serves as a quiet affirmation that the past can be renewed, and that human mistakes, when met with awareness and action, can be turned into something meaningful.

Within just three months, from October to December 2024, the project successfully met its target – transforming 300 kilograms of plastic waste at Tra Vinh University into 400 durable floor tiles. These tiles have since been put to use in a youth-led construction project at Building D8, Campus I of Tra Vinh University

This journey goes far beyond turning waste into construction materials. Behind each tile lies a process of learning – of building research skills, nurturing creativity, developing teamwork, and gaining hands-on experience in project management. It is a lesson in circular economy, a gentle reminder that even the smallest plastic fragment can spark innovation and breathe new life into the values of nature. At the same time, the project has opened doors to collaboration and inspired a deeper sense of environmental responsibility. It has drawn the attention of organisations, businesses, and investors with a shared interest in green technology.



Moreover,

the project has also sparked powerful inspiration within the community. When students realised that each of them could help reduce 0.034 kg of plastic waste per day, environmental awareness began to spread. Over the course of three months at Tra Vinh University, more than 500 students have joined the project – not just through training sessions, but through tangible actions. Together, they have helped reduce 699 kilograms of the university's CO₂ emissions.

According to a United Nations report, over 400 million tonnes of plastic is produced worldwide every year (less than 10 per cent of which is recycled) with half intended for single use. In such a reality, this project serves as a spark, reigniting environmental consciousness among young students. Each tile becomes a quiet testament to life, to transformation, and to hope, built from what was once discarded. A greener, cleaner space does more than improve public health and wellbeing; it stands as living proof of human creativity – the ability to pause, to reflect, and to reimagine what has been forgotten.

Amidst the blend of modern and traditional buildings in beloved Tra Vinh, nestled in the heart of the Mekong Delta, plastic waste tiles quietly tell a new story – a story of transformation. It is the journey of Tra Vinh, shifting from the chaos of waste to the promise of sustainable beauty. These humble tiles mark the beginning of a new chapter – one of life, spirit, and a greener future, shaped by the courage and confidence of the young generation leading the way.

Project members

Nguyen Minh Chanh
Do Thi Thao Tien
Tran Khanh Duy
Tran Tuan Kiet

Le Van Hoc
Ngo Thi Kim Ngan
Nguyen Thi Mong Ngan



**Discover the
full story of the
project here.**

Tram Chim National Park, a vast wetland in Dong Thap Province, was once a thriving sanctuary for hundreds of Eastern Sarus Cranes – a rare and endangered species, and a treasured symbol of the Dong Thap Muoi region. However, in recent years, the number of cranes migrating back to Tram Chim has been steadily declining. A study published in the Environmental Journal revealed that the shrinking area of eleocharis grass fields – the cranes’ main food source – along with the disruption of the natural rhythm of dry and rainy seasons, has had a profound impact on their habitat. These changes, seen as a manifestation of climate change, are threatening the survival of this iconic species.

According to an article published in the Environmental Journal titled Management and Conservation of Wetlands in Tram Chim National Park, the fields of eleocharis grass have been shrinking – leading to a significant decline in the food supply for the Sarus cranes whenever they migrate to Tram Chim during the dry season. As a result, the number of cranes returning to the park has steadily decreased each year. One of the key reasons behind this lies in climate change. In the past, the seasons of Tram Chim had a clear rhythm: six months of sun, six months of rain. Now, however, sunshine and rainfall can arrive unpredictably in any month. Prolonged rains have led to a critical shortage of food sources. At the same time, excessive heat has lowered water levels in wetland depressions, shrinking habitats for many waterbirds and increasing the risk of wildfires. It’s fair to say that our understanding of climate change is deepening – revealing a wider range of impacts, complexities, and increasingly direct consequences for all living beings.



Yet, what’s even more concerning is the limited awareness among young people regarding this issue. In a survey conducted in August 2024 with 100 students from Nguyen Quang Dieu High School for the Gifted in Dong Thap, 95 per cent acknowledged the impact of climate change on wildlife. However, 86 per cent admitted they had never actively sought information about the decline of the Sarus cranes, and 64 per cent said they did not prioritise participating in environmental protection activities. This leads us to a critical question:

“

How can we spark genuine interest among today’s youth in the preservation of nature?



Project
The Crane’s Footsteps

Out of this reality, the project The Crane's Footsteps was born – an initiative led by three young students from high schools and universities in Dong Thap: Khanh Duy, Thuy Oanh, and Yen Vy. Carrying a mission to raise students' awareness about the Tram Chim ecosystem and the decline of the Eastern Sarus Crane, the project stands out not only for its purpose but also for its creative approach. Rather than following conventional educational models, the project turns to science and comic storytelling. Instead of dry lessons and heavy texts, students are engaged through vivid narratives and illustrations – making knowledge about biodiversity more accessible, relatable, and exciting to explore.



The project was carried out from February to April 2025, with the enthusiastic involvement of students from Nguyen Quang Dieu High School for the Gifted – most notably, the AAC-NQD Club. From brainstorming ideas and researching content to creating illustrations, The Crane's Footstep was a beautiful blend of scientific knowledge and the art of storytelling. The project served as a valuable opportunity for students to develop teamwork, creative thinking, and project management skills.



The project achieved remarkable outcomes:

- Approximately 60 per cent of students who read the story gained a deeper understanding of the reasons why the red-crowned cranes no longer return to Tram Chim.
- Two teachers have decided to incorporate the storybook into their Local Education curriculum.
- Two book launch and biodiversity conservation workshops were held as part of Local Education lessons for 10th and 11th graders.
- The team collected over 800 feedback forms from students.
- The project's outreach activities were also extended to two local primary schools in the area.

The project did not stop at the school level – it extended its reach into the broader community through interactive sessions and outreach activities at local primary schools. More importantly, The Crane’s Footsteps served as an entry point for young nature lovers. These activities not only helped spread the message of environmental conservation but also encouraged younger students to develop a lasting appreciation for nature and the habit of protecting the environment from an early age.

Although the project is still continuing its journey of outreach and education, The Crane’s Footsteps has already begun to yield meaningful results, especially in sparking youth interest in nature conservation across Viet Nam. With its clear vision and purposeful approach, the project goes beyond raising awareness about the Eastern Sarus Crane. It offers a fresh path for environmental education – one that blends science with storytelling and learning with empathy. With each page turned, the story is not only about a rare bird, but also a deeper message: a reminder of our shared responsibility to protect nature. While The Crane’s Footsteps may not immediately bring the cranes back to Tram Chim, every page acts as a stepping stone, bringing the next generation closer to a future where humans and nature can truly thrive together.



And who knows – perhaps one day, the majestic Sarus cranes will once again soar across the sky of Dong Thap, thanks to the young hearts who laid the very first stones on this journey of conservation, just like The Crane’s Footsteps.



Project members

Nguyen Khanh Duy
Tieu Thi Thuy Oanh
Bui Nguyen Yen Vy

**Discover the full story
of the project here.**



Project Eco Youth Tour

Designed as an experiential travel programme inspired by the rising popularity of Bed and Breakfast tourism, the project taps into the Mekong Delta's aspiration to promote eco-agricultural tourism as a means of raising environmental awareness. This combination has given birth to an innovative initiative called Eco Youth Tour, led by students from Can Tho University. The project offers students direct exposure to climate change issues through real-life field trips. These journeys serve as a platform for young people to understand, reflect, and engage in meaningful conversations about climate adaptation and mitigation. By blending experience with education, Eco Youth Tour empowers students to shift their perspectives and become agents of change in their own communities.

The project is the passion of the group of students – Chi Hieu, Nhat Tan, Thi Thanh, Hai Dang, and Van Nhi – who share a common vision of bridging science, tourism, and education to drive sustainable change. At its core, Eco Youth Tour began with the formation of a student club of 30 members trained in eco-tour guiding skills, climate change knowledge, and hands-on field experience. The group successfully organised a pilot experiential tour at the Hoa An campus of Can Tho University. During the tour, the 30 students had the opportunity to participate in field-based research activities at the Wetland Biodiversity Conservation Area and agricultural experiment stations focused on sustainable crop cultivation, livestock, and aquaculture. These experiences offered students practical insight into climate-resilient agricultural tourism models. Beyond immediate benefits to the local community, Eco Youth Tour sets its sights on creating long-term impact by scaling the model to other regions. The team hopes that by designing and participating in eco-tours themselves, students will gain deeper environmental awareness, foster a personal sense of responsibility, and carry forward the spirit of environmental stewardship to the communities they live in.



The project was born out of an urgent need to develop agricultural tourism in Viet Nam – a model that has been widely embraced around the world for its multifaceted benefits. Agricultural tourism not only diversifies farming activities and drives local economic growth but also helps preserve cultural identity and minimise environmental pollution. Despite its potential, agricultural tourism in Viet Nam still faces numerous challenges, most notably the lack of well-trained human resources. Recognising this gap, the project team saw the importance of providing students with both professional training and hands-on experience. Their vision goes beyond turning students into tourists; it empowers them to become pioneers in designing and managing sustainable agritourism models.

By taking part in an Eco Youth tour, young people are not merely participants – they are also changemakers of the future. They do not just gain knowledge; they actively contribute to the development of agricultural tourism through their creativity, enthusiasm, and sense of responsibility. From training sessions to field trips at the Hoa An campus, students had the opportunity to learn directly from experienced professionals in the tourism sector, such as Le Thi Minh Chau, Head of Operations at Soha Travel International & Event Joint Stock Company, and Dr Le Tran Thanh Liem, Lecturer at Can Tho University. Beyond sightseeing, students acquired valuable insights and practical skills in tourism, including how to design a green tour, and deepened their understanding of environmental issues and climate change. These are essential foundations for building sustainable tourism models and empowering young people to adapt to climate challenges in an increasingly unpredictable natural world.



What makes the project particularly special is its inclusivity – it does not solely focus on tourism students, who may already have an advantage in the field of green tourism. Instead, Eco Youth Tour encourages students from all backgrounds to take part in the development of agricultural tourism. By doing so, the project promotes sustainable income generation for local communities, while also contributing to nature conservation and the mitigation of climate change impacts.

Looking back on the journey so far, there is a strong belief that Eco Youth Tour goes beyond simply raising awareness – it opens the door to new partnerships and paves the way for greater strides towards building a greener, more sustainable tourism sector in Viet Nam. As the team’s message beautifully puts it:

“
Act today for a more
sustainable tomorrow!”



Project members

Nguyen Chi Hieu

Dao Nhat Tan

Luu Thi Thanh

Le Ngoc Van Nhi

Tran Hai Dang

Discover the full story
of the project here.



In the Mekong Delta region, many young people – like the majority across the area – still feel hesitant when it comes to presenting or discussing climate change issues in English during related events. Recognising this challenge, CTU GreenEng was established to strengthen both the public speaking and English communication skills of students at Can Tho University, specifically in the context of environmental and climate change topics. The initiative was founded and developed by a group of young people, led by Duc Trung, along with eight other dedicated members.

By focusing on language skills development, the group also indirectly encourages and strengthens the engagement of students who are interested in environmental issues. Driven by passion and a love for language and community, the team has created a fresh and dynamic learning environment. Through training workshops and competitions, they have provided students with opportunities to improve their English presentation skills while deepening their understanding of environmental and climate change topics. This collaborative space allows students to grow together – both as communicators and as environmentally conscious citizens.



Project

CTU GreenEng

A Continuing story





Motivated by that aspiration, CTU GreenEng began its journey of outreach within the student community at Can Tho University. The initiative was implemented from June to August 2023, featuring four training sessions with a dual objective: to enhance students' English presentation skills and to provide essential knowledge on topics such as the environment, climate change, and urban heat islands. The project also successfully organised an English public speaking competition, where students proposed solutions to pressing environmental issues facing the Mekong Delta.

In addition, the group contributed four innovative solution ideas from participants, addressing issues such as fast fashion, soil pollution, water pollution, and urban heat islands – specifically in Can Tho City and the Mekong Delta more broadly. Through these practical efforts, the team has continued its mission to raise awareness and engage the wider community. This includes producing and sharing environmental advocacy videos via the CTU GreenEng Facebook page, which have helped spark important conversations and reached a growing audience – garnering 898 likes and over 1000 followers.



These tangible figures reflect the voice of CTU GreenEng – a passionate pursuit of learning through innovative educational approaches, a dynamic space for English practice, and engaging competitions. The project has not only empowered participants with greater confidence but also equipped them with valuable knowledge on environmental and climate change issues. Even after its official conclusion, the project continues to sustain its momentum and maintain engagement through collaborative activities with English clubs across Can Tho University.



Notably, the spirit of the Y-CoRe project as a whole – and of the CTU GreenEng project in particular – has continued to spread to Ly Tu Trong High School for the Gifted in Can Tho City, thanks to the leadership of Van Duong Mai Thu, the youngest member of the project team. In the first half of 2025, Mai Thu took the lead in designing and delivering the ECO NEXT GEN initiative, which featured workshops on topics such as climate change, gender equality, and urban heat. Through engaging sessions with expert guest speakers, the project helped raise awareness and inspire action among students at her school.



Having grown through the Y-CoRe project, Mai Thu stands as a shining example of how the project's impact continues to evolve and expand across the youth network in the region. From this foundation, the CTU GreenEng project continues to grow and contribute to the wider community, serving as a powerful testament to the lasting social impact that young people can create. It highlights the potential of youth to lead meaningful change – especially in raising awareness around climate adaptation and resilience at the local level.

Project members

Nguyen Duc Trung
Phan Thi Thuy Hang
Nguyen Tran Thai Duong
Tran Quoc Khang
Van Duong Mai Thu
Le Duy Dat
Pham Truc Khue
Nguyen Huy Vu

Discover the full story
of the project here.



**Explore more
youth-led social action
projects !**



Scan here!

90 YOUTH VOICES FOR THE FUTURE

Three young Vietnamese leaders took part in 90 Youth Voices for the Future – the British Council's Global Youth Connections Network, held in the United Kingdom from 1 to 5 July 2024:

- Phan Ky Trung, MSc, Researcher, Research Institute for Climate Change, Can Tho University
- Tran Nguyen Hoang Long, Staff, Research Institute for Climate Change, Can Tho University
- Nguyen Tran Mai Chi, Master's student in Communication Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore



Through the programme, the young leaders had the opportunity to take part in both online and in-person workshops, exploring themes such as building inclusive communities and spaces, using digital technology for positive impact, and introducing green spaces to urban areas. During the journey, the three Vietnamese participants listened to inspiring insights from policymakers and youth organisations across the UK. They also enjoyed cultural immersion through visits to historic landmarks in the cities they travelled to, including London and Cardiff.

90 Youth Voices is one of the flagship programmes marking the 90th anniversary of the British Council. Bringing together 90 young activists, entrepreneurs, content creators, and youth leaders from over 45 countries – including Viet Nam – the programme took participants across cities in the United Kingdom to develop new skills, share ideas, connect with local advocacy efforts, and explore pathways for positive change. With a mission to connect cultures, spark dialogue, and drive meaningful transformation, this network of 90 young changemakers serves as a vibrant platform for global youth collaboration, learning, and action.

YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

Wales, United Kingdom

Within the framework of cooperation between Global Wales and Can Tho University, three outstanding representative of Y-CoRe with both expertise and strong interest in climate challenges and sustainable development were selected to represent the Mekong Delta youth network in a youth exchange programme in Wales, United Kingdom, from November 18 to December 6, 2024.

The three outstanding candidates include:

1. Nguyen Duc Trung, a recent graduate in English Translation and Interpreting, Can Tho University
2. Nguyen Hoang Tan, a Master's student in Climate Change and Delta Management, Can Tho University
3. Le Thi Yen Thy, an undergraduate student majoring in Computer Science, Can Tho University.



During the exchange trip, the participants had the opportunity to engage, learn, and exchange knowledge on issues related to climate change and sustainable development. The trip enabled them to expand their understanding, develop leadership skills, and connect with international experts and fellow young people. It marked an important first step for them to contribute more actively to the Mekong Delta youth network.

With the goal of building a youth network ready to take action in response to climate change in the Mekong Delta, the DRAGON-Mekong Institute, in collaboration with the British Council in Viet Nam, the University of South Wales, and a team of experts, will jointly carry out a series of activities to establish and strengthen a youth network that connects two regions – the Mekong Delta in Viet Nam and Wales in the United Kingdom. The successful learning exchange journey of outstanding Y-CoRe youth representatives stands as a clear testament to the British Council's ongoing commitment to accompanying, equipping, and empowering young people in Viet Nam with the knowledge, skills, and shared understanding needed to address the impacts of climate change.

Empowering Journey with Y-CoRe

Narratives of growth and empowerment through
Y-CoRe told by the core youth



PHAN KY TRUNG, MSc

Founder of CoRe Viet Nam, Researcher at the DRAGON-Mekong Institute, Can Tho University



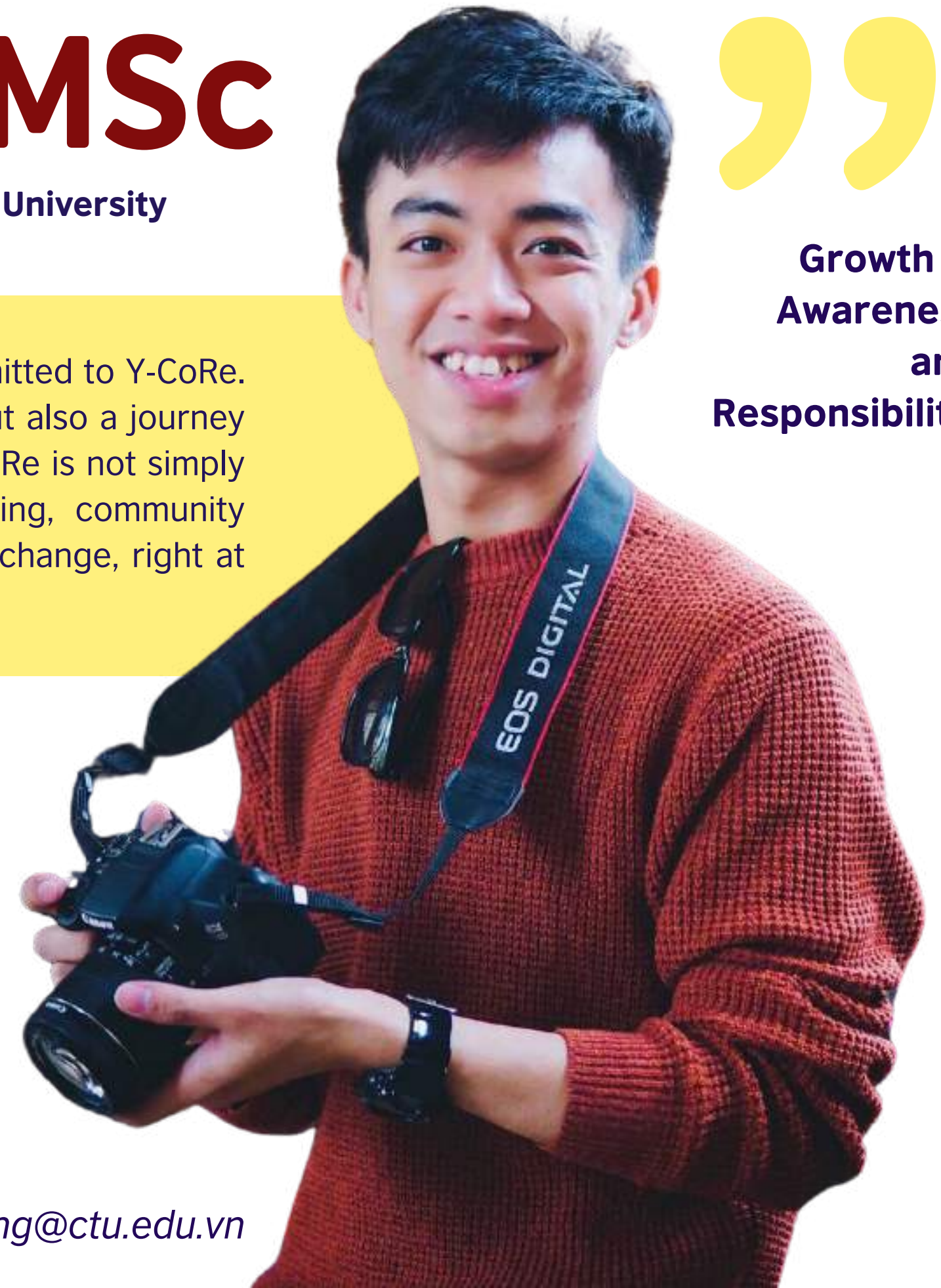
**Growth in
Awareness
and
Responsibility**

As a boy born and raised in the Mekong Delta, Trung feels deeply motivated and committed to Y-CoRe. For him, this project is not only a platform to experience, learn, connect, and grow, but also a journey shaped by meaningful, well-crafted, and thoughtfully invested activities. To Trung, Y-CoRe is not simply a community initiative – it is a heartfelt aspiration. It represents knowledge-sharing, community connection, and above all, a way for young voices to be heard in the face of climate change, right at their doorstep.

The journey with Y-CoRe has also been Trung's personal journey of growth – in mindset, awareness, and purpose. It has shaped his development not only as a researcher and student in the field of environmental science and natural resources, but also as a communicator and a bridge-builder, working to raise awareness among local communities.

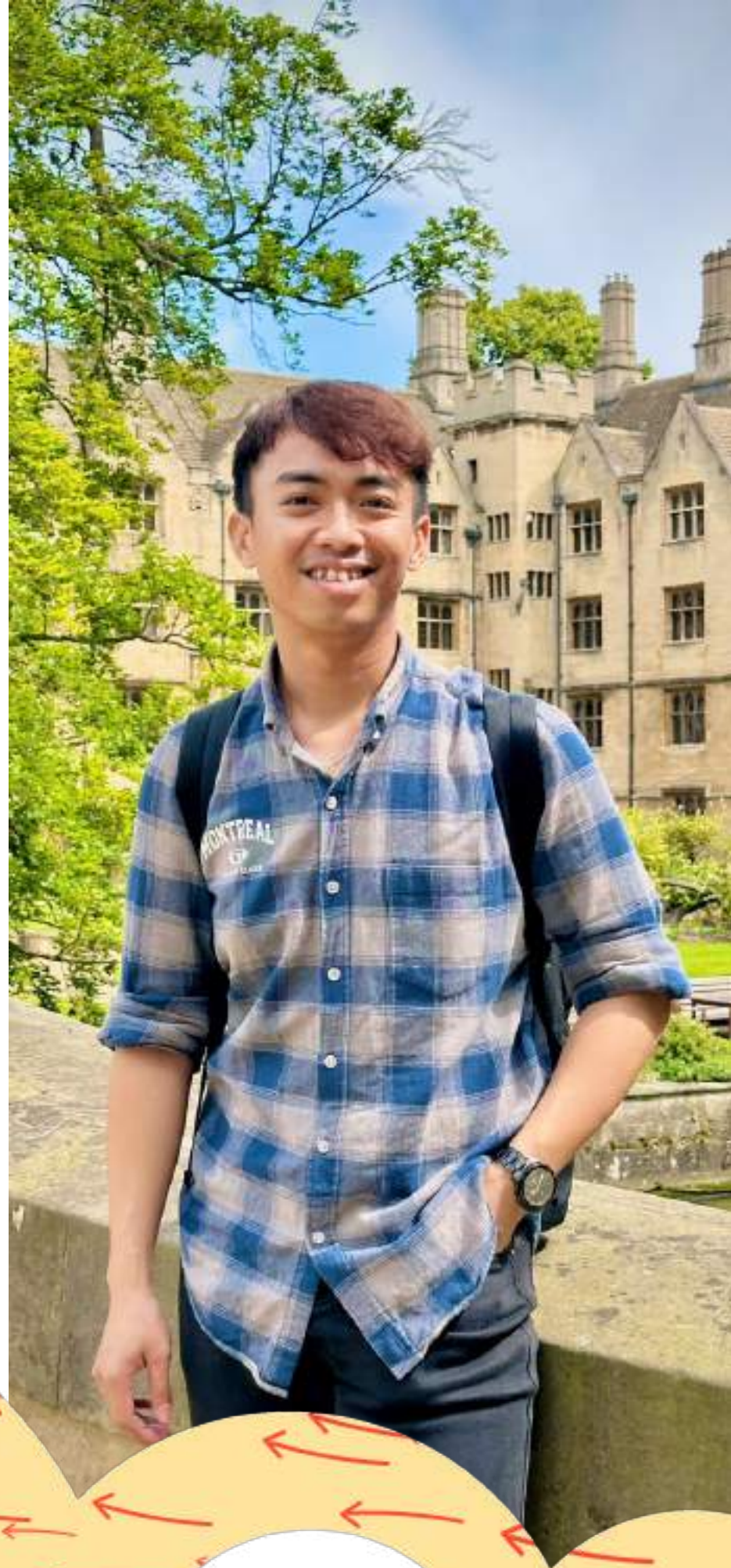
Looking back, Y-CoRe was first built and developed upon the foundation of the British Council's Youth Connect programme and the youth development initiatives of the Research Institute for Climate Change, Can Tho University, through the MekongNet network, starting from 2023.

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Over two phases, Y-CoRe has expanded in its participants, beneficiaries, activities, and overall reach across universities throughout the Mekong Delta.

From being a participant in the youth connection programme, Trung has grown into the role of a project founder, taking on responsibilities in organising and coordinating activities. He later stepped into the role of mentor and expert.



Perhaps through every activity and turning point in Y-CoRe, in every word he shared, and in each response he gave to the questions submitted by participants, he came to truly understand a fundamental philosophy: the balance of ‘giving and receiving’. This was not something abstract, but something vividly brought to life through the project’s practical, organic, and diverse experiences. It unfolded gradually, yet fully, through each step we took. Looking back on two successful project phases, Trung still carries within him a deep sense of gratitude for all the individuals and organisations whose support, presence, and belief helped shape Y-CoRe’s journey.

The Mekong Delta is one of the most severely affected deltas in the world when it comes to the negative impacts of climate change and sea-level rise. Young people play a crucial role as agents of change, with the capacity to mobilise stakeholders and drive actions aimed at responding to and mitigating the effects of climate change.

”

Prof Dr Ha Thanh Toan

*Former Rector of Can Tho University
Closing Remarks for Y-CoRe phase One*

These reflections serve as a gentle reminder – a source of motivation that encourages Trung to remember, believe in, and truly appreciate the journey he has taken with Y-CoRe, as well as the personal growth he has experienced along the way.



**Growth in
Gender
Awareness
and
Community
Engagement**



LAM THI DIEM THUY

Marketing student, Can Tho University - contact.thuylam@gmail.com

Gender stereotypes, gender roles, and stories of inequality are by no means new in society. These issues have been raised, both directly and indirectly, across various aspects of social and everyday life. However, as a young woman born and raised in the Mekong Delta, my three-year journey with Y-CoRe has profoundly shaped my understanding of gender and strengthened my commitment to taking meaningful action for the community.

Right from the welcome board at the entrance to the Y-CoRe training, the message was clear: this space is safe for all of us – it encourages participation from everyone and embraces all genders. While I personally have not grown up in an environment heavily impacted by gender stereotypes, through the project and my connection with other passionate young people, I came to realise a shared motivation: the drive to do something, to help heal the wounds caused by gender inequality experienced by women in the Mekong Delta in general, and in Vinh Chau Town in particular.

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In phase One, I joined Y-CoRe as a member of a scientific project researching the impacts of saline intrusion on women's health in Vinh Chau. This experience gave me deeper insight into the hardships that women are forced to endure in the face of climate change. Returning in phase Two of the project, I continued my journey back to the coastal land of Vinh Chau through the creation of Silence – a communication and art-based initiative that tells the story of a young girl born and raised in this region, brought to life through a sound-based film.



I hope that Silence will resonate more deeply and spread more meaningfully, helping stakeholders and youth organisations reflect on the intersection between climate change and the inequalities in livelihoods and gender bias faced by women in this region. In particular, women in Vinh Chau often carry multiple roles, from domestic care to agricultural labour. The local economic conditions have, in some cases, led women to take on the physically demanding work of cultivating and processing agricultural products like shallots. This has indirectly caused blindness and negatively impacted their health.

Perhaps the story in Vinh Chau is just one of many glimpses into the broader picture of life and gender issues in the Mekong Delta. However, by receiving support and becoming part of the Y-CoRe network, I have had the opportunity to explore these issues more deeply, gain greater awareness, and grow both in thought and in action in my commitment to the community.

Through every role I have taken on with Y-CoRe – from team member to project leader, and later as a communications advisor for other initiatives – I have learned to listen, to empathise, and to build with intention. To me, every journey needs a beginning. Y-CoRe was that starting point – a place that offered me the opportunity, the connections, and the tools to take action for the community. In my experience of building community-based projects, I have come to realise that it does not take grand gestures to make a difference. What matters most is authenticity and kindness – because even the smallest acts, when rooted in sincerity, can carry the greatest value.



NGUYEN DUC TRUNG

English Translation and Interpreting student, Can Tho University - trungnd.titus@gmail.com

During my student years, I often wondered what kind of person I wanted to become. And where could I find the opportunity to take flight, to realise my ideas and build meaningful connections with the community through responsibility, creativity, and the passion of youth? I told myself: 'Don't wait for opportunities to come before taking action – you are the one who creates change for your own community.' Taking part in the Y-CoRe project has brought lasting impact and meaningful value to my life, my work, and my experiences.



**Growth
through
Proactivity
and
Opportunity**

Raising awareness and enhancing the role of an English Language student in engaging more deeply with climate change adaptation issues in the Mekong Delta.

Through co-developing the CTU GreenEng project – an initiative aimed at strengthening youth capacity for public speaking in English on climate change – I had the opportunity to connect with like-minded young people who shared a common passion, dedication, and willingness to support others. Together, we created a community ready to listen and speak out in confidence for the environment. The hands-on experiences I gained from Y-CoRe have played a key role in shaping my professional journey in the fields of climate adaptation research and action.



Turning proactivity into a key to unlocking new opportunities, Trung has developed essential skills such as teamwork, leadership, public speaking, time and project management, and cross-cultural communication. With these tools in hand, he has stepped onto the path of pursuing international opportunities and participating in both national and international conferences in various capacities. These include serving as a young climate negotiator at the COP29 Simulation in Egypt, representing Y-CoRe youth in a youth exchange in Wales, and being selected as a delegate for the Asia-Pacific youth leadership training on Sea and Human Security in Japan.



It is not only about personal growth, nor just about the opportunities I have been fortunate to receive – it is the proactivity and the journey I have taken with Y-CoRe that have shaped my growth through each opportunity I have encountered.



“ Danh Tinh

Project lead, The Application of Water Level Monitoring and Warning Devices Combined with an Automatic Water Pumping System (AWD)

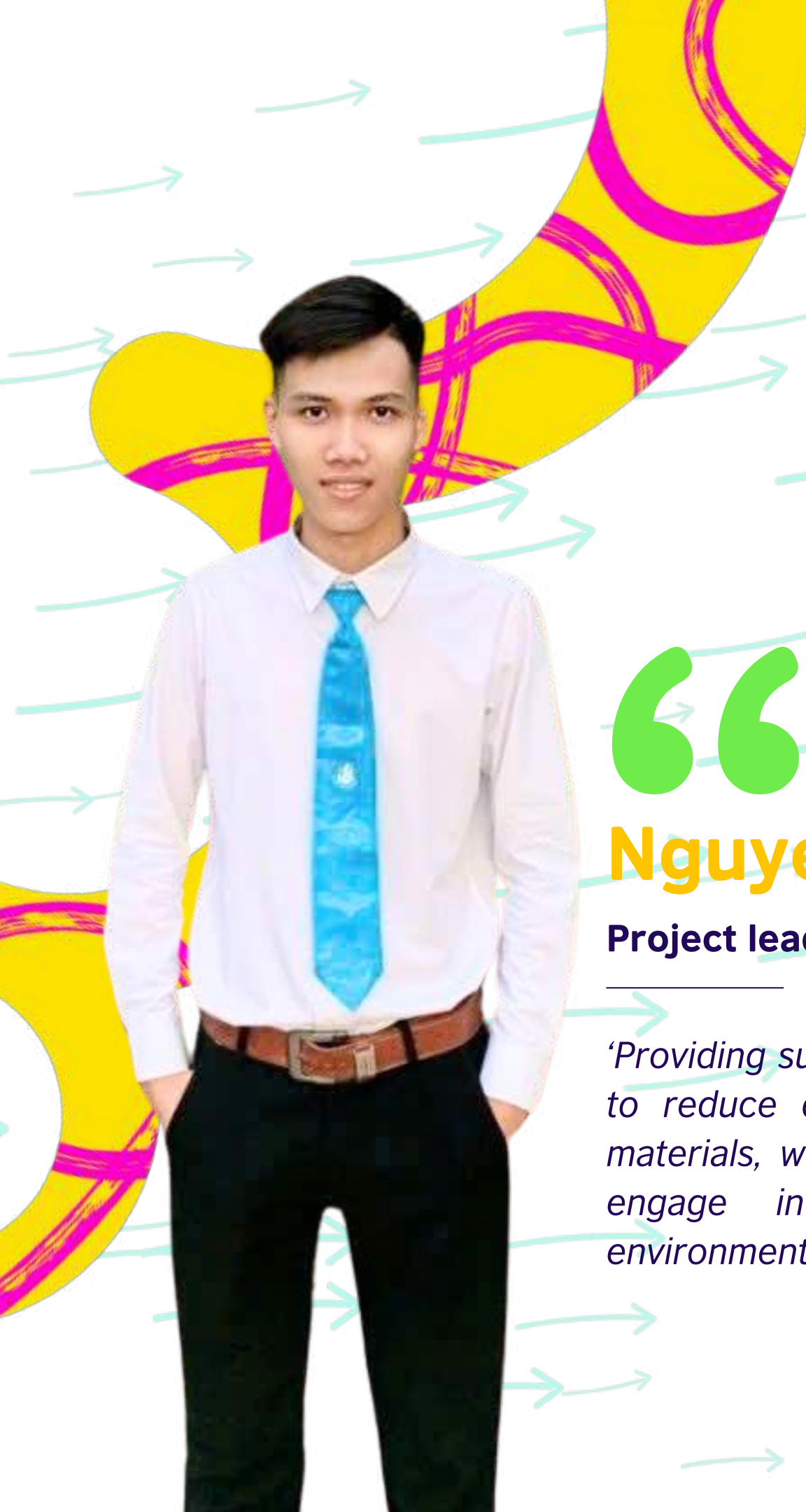
‘By connecting with individuals, organisations, and communities, the project has built a strong and thriving network that fosters engagement among its members and the wider community.’



“ Bui Nguyen Yen Vy

Project lead, Crane’s Footsteps

‘The Crane’s Footsteps is a communication project aimed at raising awareness about the decline in the population of the Eastern Sarus Crane at Tram Chim National Park, through an illustrated storybook designed for schoolchildren.’



“

Nguyen Minh Chanh

Project lead, Recycling Plastic Waste into Floor Tiles

‘Providing sustainable alternative solutions to reduce dependence on conventional materials, while inspiring more people to engage in recycling activities and environmental protection.’

“

Nguyen Hong Minh

Project lead, The Fading Salt Season

‘The project aims to convey the message that every profession carries its own unique story and deserves to be heard. At the same time, it highlights the responsibility of young people in preserving and promoting traditional values.’





“

Nguyen Chi Hieu

Project lead, Eco Youth Tour

‘Raising students’ awareness of climate change adaptation and mitigation through experiential tourism activities.’

“

Phan Huu Kiet

Project member, Lang – A Journey of Sharing

‘Conveying the story and its meaning to a wider audience concerned with climate change and local livelihoods in Vinh Chau’s ‘Blind Village’ through an audio movie.’





“

Dr Hoang Thi Viet Ha

Lecturer, Dong Thap University

htvha@dthu.edu.vn

‘I received positive feedback from students after delivering 12 pilot lessons of “Introduction to Socio-Economic Geography I” using the integrated toolkit from the British Council. The students were able to grasp the content more effectively, as the overlap between climate-related knowledge and geographical concepts helped reinforce their understanding.’



“

Tran Nguyen Hoang Long

**Administrative staff, DRAGON-Mekong Institute,
Can Tho University**

‘You don’t have to be an expert to make a difference – all it takes is a heart willing to learn and a spirit brave enough to act.’



“

Dr Nguyen Thi Ngoc Phuc

Lecturer, School of Education, Can Tho University
ntnphuc@ctu.edu.vn

‘By integrating the toolkit into activities for students in the course Geography Teaching Methodology, supervising thesis research, and piloting the toolkit in the Local Education curriculum in Can Tho City, I facilitated four lessons involving over 100 school students. The result was a highly engaging learning experience. The students participated actively, expressed joy in self-discovery, and shared their thoughts in a sincere and heart-warming way.’

“

Le Nguyen Bao Ngoc

Communications ambassador, Y-CoRe project

‘For Bao Ngoc and the Gen Zero team, joining and accompanying the Y-CoRe project has created meaningful impact and motivation to continue taking climate and environmental action. Young people are the generation that drives change in responding to climate change. We hope that the contributions of youth will help reduce the negative impacts of climate and environmental challenges. Be part of the solution with us – let’s act together!’



“

Assoc Prof Dr Le Anh Tuan

Scientific Advisor, Y-CoRe project
latuan@ctu.edu.vn

‘The future of the ecosystem and the sustainable development of the Mekong Delta depends on the awareness and actions of today’s younger generation.’



“

Bui Thi Bich Ngoc

Television journalist, Viet Nam Television
ngocngoaigniao@gmail.com

‘I have come to realise the incredible energy, enthusiasm, and creativity that young people bring. It has changed the way I think about the role of youth. You can do it. You can do anything. Take your chances.’



NGUYEN ANH THU

Master facilitator, Youth Connect Programme, British Council in Viet Nam



The first thing I noticed was a shift in my own awareness and behaviour regarding climate issues. In the past, I cared about the environment, but I did not fully understand the real impacts of climate change on the Mekong Delta. Through my journey with Y-CoRe, I became more conscious, proactive in learning, and more responsible in making daily lifestyle choices to reduce my environmental footprint.

I was also powerfully inspired by the young people involved in the project. Their passion, energy, and dedication strengthened my belief in the power of the younger generation to drive positive change. Their creative ideas and unwavering commitment to action reminded me to stay motivated and hopeful in my work.

More than that, Y-CoRe has been a valuable journey of personal growth. I had the opportunity to work with and learn from leading experts in climate and environmental fields from the Research Institute for Climate Change at Can Tho University, as well as experienced designers and programme facilitators from the United Kingdom. These experiences enhanced my professional skills, broadened my perspectives, and helped me grow in designing and implementing impactful community programmes.

Y-CoRe was a defining milestone in my life, one of learning, connection, and spreading the values of sustainability. In many ways, it was not simply a project, but a living embodiment of change itself. Being part of Y-CoRe offered the opportunity to understand climate change not only from a theoretical perspective, but through hands-on, community-based actions. It was a place where you became part of the solution – contributing to social initiatives that helped communities adapt to and better cope with the challenges of climate change.

Joining Y-CoRe as a facilitator, I not only had the opportunity to deliver training and support university students in their journey of implementing social projects but also experienced many positive changes within myself.



“

Nguyen Hoang Thanh Le

Project Manager, Climate Skills Viet Nam, British Council in Viet Nam

The Y-CoRe project in the Mekong Delta has truly been an emotional and meaningful journey. The passionate young people of the Western region of Viet Nam have come together to explore themselves, celebrate their local culture, and create an inspiring and vibrant working environment. Through each activity, I have not only gained a deeper understanding of the people and youth here but also felt their strong sense of connection and genuine love for their homeland.

Every time I joined a project activity, I felt re-energised and inspired by these dedicated young individuals. Their stories, their smiles, and their sincerity have left a lasting impression on me. The Mekong Delta is no longer just a place where I work – it has become a place where I find true joy and connection.

One of the most memorable moments was during the mid-term review session, when I listened to three youth groups present their projects. I was deeply moved to see how much they had grown – not only in their thinking and self-expression, but also in how they uplifted one another and genuinely cared about taking action to address the impacts of climate change on their communities. This experience has given deeper meaning to my role as a project manager and has become a powerful source of motivation for me to continue supporting and walking alongside them on their journey of growth.



Assoc Prof Dr Van Pham Dang Tri

Director, DRAGON-Mekong Institute, Can Tho University

“

When it comes to youth and climate change, the Research Institute for Climate Change, Can Tho University (DRAGON-Mekong Institute) is not merely running small-scale projects – we are implementing a comprehensive programme, which we refer to as the Youth Programme of the Research Institute for Climate Change.

Through this programme, we actively engage in dialogue and build and maintain partnerships with a wide range of local and international collaborators, working together to develop concrete projects for young people in the Mekong Delta. We believe that they are a highly practical, vibrant, and capable force for creating positive change in society. With their dynamic and creative approaches, we are confident that the programme can be widely replicated and scaled. Young people are pioneers – they have the power to inspire and lead transformative efforts. That is why we have chosen to start with their age group, and gradually expand to other social groups, contributing to the sustainable development of the Mekong Delta.

In Viet Nam, within the fields of environment and climate change, there are currently a growing number of support programmes designed for students and young people. Various agencies, organisations, and youth unions have developed their own initiatives to accompany and empower young people in their development. When engaging with the Y-CoRe project, we can clearly see the strong support provided by the British Council. However, we have yet to fully unlock the potential of young people. Through the Y-CoRe project, we have taken important steps towards creating enabling environments where young people are encouraged to express themselves and realise the best of what they have to offer.



I sincerely hope that what this programme has achieved so far will not stop here but will continue to grow and spread even further – not only in terms of scale, but also in the depth of its approaches and implementation. Through the reflections shared by project teams during the closing ceremony of Y-CoRe phase Two, we could clearly feel the passion and strong aspirations of young people for development. It is precisely this spirit that opens up vast new possibilities for them to contribute further to their communities and country – especially in the context of climate change adaptation in the Mekong Delta, and across Viet Nam as a whole.



Youth are the future – the future of families, of society, and of the nation. When we speak of sustainability, we often speak of the future. But the truth is, that future will not exist unless we begin to act today. The message I wish to convey is this: to build a sustainable future, we must take action now. Through the Y-CoRe programme in particular, and the Institute's broader Youth Programme as a whole, we can see how young people have demonstrated creativity, initiative, and commitment by turning their ideas and aspirations into concrete actions. This is something we deeply value and highly appreciate. Many outputs developed by youth participants through the Institute's programmes and the Y-CoRe network have been successfully implemented and applied in real-life contexts across the Mekong Delta – including in Can Tho, Soc Trang, Bac Lieu and beyond – receiving positive feedback from both local youth and community members.

Over the past five years, since the establishment and development of the Youth Programme, we have always held the hope that it would continue to be sustained and expanded in the future. Each small-scale project that has been implemented contributes to the collective voice of the Institute, affirming that the long-term sustainability of the entire programme is indeed achievable.

Therefore, when we talk about the current challenges or limitations faced by young people, I personally believe these should not be seen as weaknesses. What matters more is creating the right environment – a space where young people can actively grow, unleash their potential, and develop themselves within the broader framework, conditions, and direction of the country. Given the right opportunities, they will not only overcome obstacles but also rise to become pioneers in the effort to build and develop society.



Scan here!



**Watch the
Y-CoRe project recap video!**



Explore youth-led social action projects from the Y-CoRe network, featured on the 'Preparation for Life' segment of VTV1.



Scan here!

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WITH SINCERE THANKS TO



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