

Giang and Nhe protects the mangrove

Giang works in the Green Team – a team young people dedicated to make the newly planted mangrove trees survive. Without the mangrove, her village is very vulnerable to the typhoons that are predicted to increase in strength with climate change.

Tran Thi Giang is 19 years old and the leader of the Green team of Da Loc Commune. 20 young people from 16 years to 20 old have been volunteering for the Green Team for one year. The Green Team is a co-operation between the Youth Union and CARE to clean the beach and remove garbage and barnacle shells from mangrove trees.

“I’m very happy that we get more knowledge about the environment and climate change and I would like to thank CARE on behalf of the village, because we understand better now why the mangrove forest is so important. I deliver leaflets to other people in the village to increase their knowledge about the environment,” she says. “I like cleaning the beach and to remove the plastic bags and rubbish from the young mangrove trees, because I want to protect the our environment and make it cleaner and greener.”

She was voted for by all the team members to be their leader. She knows about climate change from TV programs and CARE and understands that the factories, cars and motorbikes emit smoke that changes the weather and makes the typhoons that hit the coast of Vietnam every year stronger.



“My message to the rest of the world is that we should protect the environment together. In the future I’d like to establish more Green Teams like us to help clean the environment,” she says and continues, “I would like to enter the university for Agriculture and Forestry in Hanoi. After I can come back to work in the commune to improve the way we work with the mangrove and climate change.”

The Mangrove Protection group

Not only the Green Team is working regularly with mangrove forest. Dao Van Nhe, 55 and Bui Van Quang, 32, were elected by the community to join the Protection group.

“Everyone should consolidate their efforts to protect the mangrove because it is the responsibility of the whole community. This area is at the highest risk,” explains Mr. Dao Van Nhe. “The people like to dig



for mussels and crabs under the young mangrove trees. When the next tide comes the plant is too loose because of the digging and it will be uprooted. We tell them they can dig in the areas between the trees, where they don't do harm to the trees.”

This is a small community so everybody knows each other and the illegal harvesters come from within the area to dig for the seafood because they are poor. The Protection group has identified the rush hour where it is most likely the local people will go to dig for shells in the mangrove. They also watch out for boats that make shortcuts through the young mangrove.

The Protection group will give a first and second warning. If the people continue their harmful behaviour they will be reported to the People's Committee. They can receive a big fine and will be instructed to replant the mangrove trees.

“Protection of the mangrove was first established by another organisation in 2005. But it failed because the local people were not aware of the harm they did,” explains Dao Van Nhe. “Now we are successful in maintaining and protecting the mangrove forest. We are very proud that other projects come to see how we are able to have such a mangrove.”