Cùng hành động
để giảm thiểu
rác thải nhựa

HUE

PLASTIC
SMARTCITIES

WWF

MANUAL ON
PLASTIC WASTE REDUCTION
USING THE PAOT METHOD

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|	
3R	Reduce - Reuse - Recycle
5R1C	Refuse - Reduce - Reuse - Recycle - Replace - Collect
PAOT	Participatory Action-Oriented Training
HEPCO	Hue Urban Environment and Public Works Joint Stock Company
WU	Women's Union
SUPs	Single-use Plastics
WSAS	Waste Separation at Source
PW	Plastic waste
PWR	Plastic waste reduction
TVA	"Hue - A Plastic Smart City in Central Viet Nam" Project
PC	People's Committee
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION ON PAOT

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

> **The Participatory Action-Oriented Training (PAOT) is a practical method that fosters grassroots initiatives and bases on** self-help voluntary actions **that enable** local people to implement immediate improvements **in occupational health and safety and working conditions by using available local resources (manpower and materials).**

The PAOT method inherits and promotes the research and practice results in (Ergonomics)**1**. This involves applying findings on the compatibility between humans and their working environment to optimize both human well-being and system productivity.

Recognizing the need to improve working conditions in small enterprises, specialists integrated the **participatory ergonomic approach** to develop a practical method that promotes the voluntary involvement of business owners and workers, which aims to jointly enhance working conditions and boost productivity.

Summary of the development and evolution of the PAOT method:
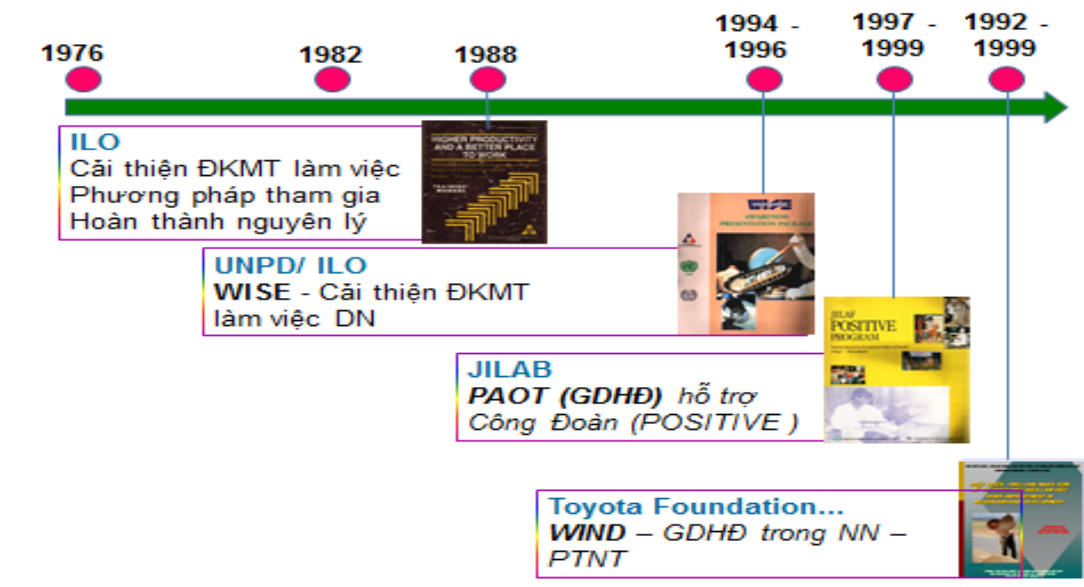
- From 1976 to 1988, under the auspices of the International Labour Organization (ILO)**2**, authors Joe E. Thurman, A. E. Louzine, and Kazutaka Kogi finalized the principles of the method, leading to the publication of the training manual *Higher Productivity and a Better Place to Work.*

- From 1994 to 1998, with funding from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and technical support from ILO, the project was piloted in the Philippines. Authors Kazutaka Kogi, William Salter, and Tsuyoshi Kawakami developed the tools and guidebook "Work Improvement in Small Enterprises" (WISE). The WISE programs were implemented in Viet Nam and other countries, respectively: *Can Tho (1994), Hanoi (1998–2000), Thailand (1994), Mongolia (1998), and Laos (2000).*

- From 1997 to 1999, with funding from the Japan International Labour Foundation (JILAF), the project was piloted in Pakistan, together with the application of WISE programs. During this time, authors Kazutaka Kogi and Tsuyoshi Kawakami developed the PAOT method to support trade unions in improving workers' health and safety, known as the POSITIVE program. It was subsequently implemented in Pakistan and other countries, including Bangladesh, China, Mongolia, Nepal, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

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1 Visit: https://vi.wikipedia.org/wiki/C%C3%B4ng_th%C3%A1i_h%E1%BB%8Dc
2 International Labour Organization (ILO) is a special agency of the United Nations responsible for labor-related issues.

- From 1992 to 1999, with funding from the Toyota Foundation and technical support from the Kawasaki Institute for Science of Labour in Japan, authors Ton That Khai and Tsuyoshi Kawakami developed the PAOT method for agriculture and rural development, known as the WIND program, which was implemented in Can Tho (1992), the Philippines (1998), and Thailand (1999).

- To date, the PAOT method has been widely promoted and applied by the International Labour Organization – the United Nations agency responsible for labour in various fields and with different versions, including[3]:

  ± Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (WISE).
  ± Work Improvement in Neighborhood Development (WIND).
  ± Work Adjustment for Recycling and Managing Waste (WARM).
  ± Work Improvement for Protection of Environment (WIPE).
  ± Work Improvement for Small Construction Sites (WINSCON).
  ± Work Improvement for Safe Home (WISH).

2. PRINCIPLES OF THE PARTICIPATORY ACTION-ORIENTED TRAINING (PAOT) METHOD

- *Building on local customs* - the easiest way to implement changes is by applying available improvements that are suitable for the local context. Focusing on practical, widely accepted, and successful solutions within the community (rather than relying on external solutions) helps promote specific and convincing improvements, while also avoiding delays due to various factors (materials, funding, skills) or mismatches with local conditions.

- Focusing on **achievements** - instead of pointing out shortcomings, focusing on simple, clear achievements and encouraging further improvements will foster positivity and creativity. A small, successful change originating from the community is more likely to inspire others to follow than perfect designs from experts that lack feasibility (due to different implementation conditions).

- Connecting working conditions with **objectives** - achieving set objectives stems from a series of effective working days. When current conditions are improved, performance efficiency increases, leading to objective fulfilment. Good work results bring benefits, and recognition and honoring of achievements foster a sense of pride and success – all of which create motivation for further improvements.

- **Learning by doing** – *the community can create significant changes by starting with concrete actions and then multiplying them within groups*. Although knowledge may be limited, the **proactive spirit** of seeking innovative solutions, along with practical and flexible ways of working, will help the community make rapid progress. This approach addresses the delay in behavior change through the sequence of 'knowledge transfer – awareness raising/attitude change – practice', as the gap between attitude change and practice can be vast (sometimes infinite). The time it takes to move from attitude to practice varies depending on the individual and the circumstances, sometimes taking a lifetime.

- **Encouraging** experience sharing – sharing experiences is a fast way to scale up improvement activities (or solutions). This also fosters independence and enthusiasm within the community, while simultaneously creating connections and a sense of ownership in the process of change.

- **Enhancing the** active participation of the community – from daily life experiences, the community is the best at understanding its own circumstances and issues. Therefore, it is important to let the community solve its own problems. Active participation from the community is crucial. The community discusses, generates ideas, and offers practical advice, and from small, initial successes, builds confidence to continue improving.

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3 Reference: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/safety-and-health-at-work/resources-library/training/WCMS_736031/lang--en/index.htm

3. APPLICATION OF THE PAOT METHOD

- In Viet Nam, the PAOT method was first applied in Can Tho, at the Center for Occupational and Environmental Health, under the Can Tho Department of Health, where Dr. Ton That Khai worked. It began with training courses to enhance the capacity of health sector staff (1997–2000). Subsequently, it was expanded to other fields and areas, including:

- Improving working conditions in preschools and elementary schools in Long My District, Can Tho (1998 – 1999)

- From 1998 to 2004, the application of PAOT was expanded to all 63 provinces and cities across the country, focusing on improving the quality of life in rural communities (WIND), food safety, improving working conditions in government office environments, and preventing accidents and injuries among children.

- Later, more programs and projects applied the PAOT method, including: the National Target Program II on Clean Water and Rural Sanitation (for the Central Highlands region, projects were applied in Dak Lak and Ninh Thuan, 2008–2010), and the *"Community-based Climate Change Grants"* (CCCG[4]) program funded by the Australian government. From 2012 to 2024, two organizations, Oxfam and CARE International in Viet Nam, applied the PAOT method in the fields of *climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction*.

- From 2011 to 2019, the WINDY[5] version was applied in high schools in Can Tho. WINDY is the application of the PAOT WIND program, which focuses on *"fostering community spirit to improve working conditions for youth through active participation in environmental protection"*. The program focused on creating action plans for low-cost improvements at home and school, based on three themes: *(i) creating a healthy and comfortable living environment; (ii) practicing environmentally friendly agriculture; (iii) collaborating with the community on reducing, reusing, and recycling*.

- Specifically, the application of PAOT in waste separation at source (WSAS) and plastic waste reduction (PWR) was tested by WWF-Vietnam in the two projects in Hue City and Phu Quoc City (2022–2024). In Hue, the TVA Project tested the method at both the communities (households, businesses) and schools. When applied, the method was adjusted in some aspects compared to the previous programs:

  - Structure of the monitoring checkbox and checklist.
  - Monitoring questions based on the project's reporting indicator requirements.
  - Modification of recording methods and addition of online information and data entry.
  - Focus on behaviors related to WSAS and single-use plastics (SUPs) reduction, creating a specialized version.

4. CONTEXT OF THE TVA-HUE PROJECT & DECISION TO APPLY THE PAOT METHOD

4.1 Context of the TVA-Hue Project

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is one of the first international non-governmental organizations to operate in Viet Nam. In 1985, WWF began working on a national conservation strategy and has since closely collaborated with the Government of Viet Nam on numerous environmental issues, implementing activities across various provinces nationwide. In recent years, WWF-Viet Nam has been actively developing programs related to plastics, aiming to contribute to mitigating marine plastic debris while addressing national priorities in policy, raising awareness, and fostering behavior change within communities.

In 2021, WWF-Viet Nam received funding from WWF-Norway to implement the project "Hue – A Plastic Smart City in Central Viet Nam," hereinafter referred to as the "TVA Project." The project aims to reduce 30% of plastic waste leakage into the natural environment in Hue City by the end of 2024. Spanning four years (2021–2024), the project is divided into two phases: the project inception phase (2021) and the implementation phase (2022–2024), with the ambition of transforming Hue into a plastic-free destination by 2030.

From the perspective of the TVA Project, raising awareness through communication, laying the foundation for behavior change, and promoting community participation in WSAS and Plastic Waste Reduction (PWR) are essential factors in achieving the project's goal. With this approach, the TVA Project collaborated with local authorities in several communes and wards in Hue City to outline plans for communication activities that

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4 Community-based Climate Change Grants (funded by DFAT)
5 Source: https://baocantho.com.vn/chuong-trinh-windy-huong-hoc-sinh-bao-ve-moi-truong-a46525.html#:~:text=%C4%90%C3%A2y%20l%C3%A0%20%E1%BB%A9ng%20d%E1%BB%A5ng%20c%E1%BB%A7a,l%C3%A0%20Kh%C3%B3a%20%C4%91%C3%A0o%20t%E1%BA%A1o%20WINDY.

aimed at raising awareness and creating a favourable environment for community engagement in WSAS and PWR. The project explored various communication methods and selected PAOT for implementation.

Building on the experience of implementing the PAOT method for plastic reduction awareness in the "Mitigating marine plastic debris" project implemented by WWF-Viet Nam in Phu Quoc, the TVA Project adapted and adjusted the PAOT toolkit to suit the practical solid waste management in Hue City. Alongside the research and adjustment of tools, efforts were made to develop human resources for communication activities. The project also collaborated with local partners to advocate for pilot implementation of the models and establish local plastic reduction communication teams. These teams included representatives from diverse groups, such as key officials from commune and ward People's Committees, representatives from various mass organizations (e.g., the Fatherland Front Committee, Women's Union, Youth Union, Veterans' Association), and leaders of selected residential groups/villages (e.g., Party cell secretaries, residential group leaders, village heads, and members of the grassroots Fatherland Front Committee and more).

Initially, the TVA project selected its communication target groups for behavior change interventions using the PAOT method - the communities. These included: i) Households, ii) Household businesses (small-scale family-operated businesses such as grocery stores, food stalls, beverage vendors, and the like.), iii) Small commercial enterprises (e.g., small restaurants, small-scale hotels). After a trial phase in communities, positive results were achieved, the TVA project consulted with school administrators and teachers overseeing the "I Love the Environment" club about piloting PAOT-based communication in schools. With the agreement of school principals, homeroom teachers, and teachers, the TVA project expanded PAOT-based communication activities to students at primary and secondary schools in Hue City.

4.2   Decision to apply PAOT

Once adhering to the principles of PAOT outlined in Section 2, Page 4, **the distinct characteristics and practical applications** of PAOT can easily be recognized. These attributes make PAOT particularly suitable for implementation in the context of the TVA project.

4.2.1   Characteristics of PAOT

- Solution-oriented – The PAOT method focuses on **practical solutions from the community** and experience-sharing rather than theory. Therefore, when applying PAOT, we should not spend time explaining communication theories or technical factors but should instead direct toward discussing practical solutions with simple, low-cost objectives. Due to this characteristic, PAOT is not suitable for training complex technical contents, such as biological or electronic techniques.

- **Bottom-up process => people-centered approach** – **complementing its solution-oriented characteristic**, PAOT seeks to find and encourage **practical solutions within the community**. These include both **previously** applied solutions and new ideas from community members tailored to their specific conditions and circumstances (manpower and material resources). As such, in PAOT, the role of facilitators is to inspire people to come up with their own initiatives and solutions. External solutions should be presented only as examples for testing and should not be imposed on the community.

- Focus on **positivity** – PAOT emphasizes improvement and a positive perspective, even if it starts with small initial steps. It, therefore, focuses on clear, beneficial solutions (without adopting a negative or prohibitive approach or a combined negative and positive approach). Positive language is used in PAOT, no criticism, and term such as "issues for improvement" is preferred rather than "weaknesses" or "problems" in order to foster confidence, proactivity, and creativity at the community level.

- **Step-by-step implementation** – PAOT seeks simple, realistic solutions that can gradually improve conditions through incremental steps. The solutions are designed to be acceptable to the community, encouraging participants to learn from early successes and continue improving. As such, *monitoring - evaluation* will become tracking - supporting to create changes**6**.

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6 Also known as 'change management'

- **Diverse and practical** – PAOT allows __each household__ within the community to be **flexible** in prioritizing issues for improvement, find solutions suited to their own circumstances and needs. A single problem can have multiple solutions. If a uniform solution is expected for all issues, such an approach may not align with the principles of PAOT.

4.2.2   Practicality of the PAOT method

- Provides a practical communication toolkit with easy-to-use tools for communicators, and the motivational communication contents have encouraged the target groups to make positive changes immediately after engagement.

- Mobilizes local community involvement that engages residents in collaboratively finding solutions to address issues in their living places.

- Promotes sustainability: the solutions come from the communities, are implemented by the communities, and designed for the benefits of the communities.

- Encourages the use of simple, locally available materials together with the skills and expertise of local residents.

- Enables immediate action without delay - given the daily release of plastic waste causing environmental degradation and microplastics entering the food chain, PAOT emphasizes urgent action starting with small, individual contributions within the community.

CHAPTER II - HOUSEHOLD

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CHAPTER II – HOUSEHOLD

PART 1 – PILOT PHASE

The pilot implementation phase plays a crucial and highly significant role for all relevant parties involved in different parts and stages of the communication program. This phase will allow participants to gain real-life experience, learn valuable lessons, and avoid unfortunate mistakes that could occur if large-scale communication is implemented immediately. The pilot implementation phase includes the following steps:

```
Human resources        Tools development     Communicator         Communication to
connection                   2              training -            each houshold
    1                                     Communication              4
                                        plans development
                                              3

Monitoring the        Interim and final review
implementation        of implementation
     5                     results
                             6
```
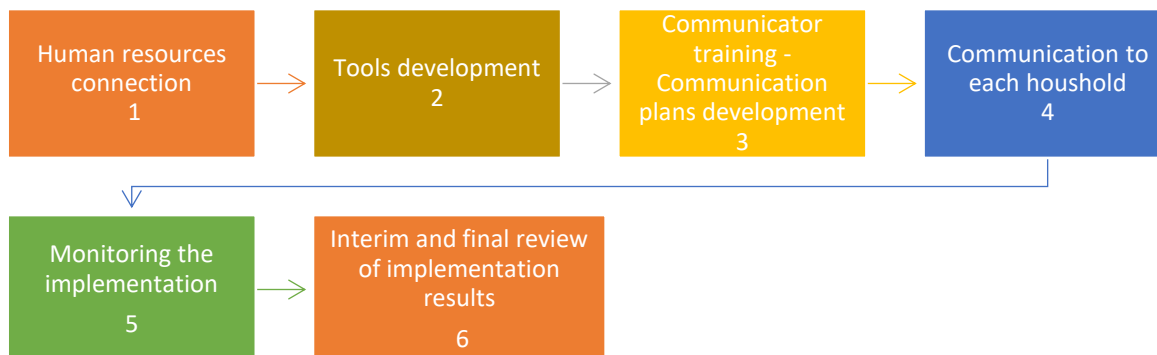
The details of each step in the pilot phase are described as follows:

ACTIVITY 1 - HUMAN RESOURCES CONNECTION

- *Discuss with local partners about the plan for the communication program on PAOT*: For the communication contents on WSAS and reduction of SUPs, some relevant departments and organizations are responsible for similar activities. For example, in addition to the People's Committees and officials from the communes and wards, there are also the Youth Union, the Women's Union, the Veterans' Association, and others. Therefore, a task force can be established with participation from multiple departments and organizations, but the main partner will be chosen depending on the project design.

  Similarly, depending on the project context, local partners can be at the provincial, city/district, or commune/ward level. However, regardless of the main partner's level, the human resource network for communication activities **must be able to reach** each household. Therefore, if the lead unit is at the provincial level, close coordination between departments and agencies at all levels is a crucial factor determining the program progress and outcomes.

  > The TVA project has chosen the People's Committees of the communes/wards as the main partners to implement grassroots communication activities, under the organization and overseer by the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, the Women's Union, the Youth Union, and the Veterans' Association of the communes/wards. Within the scope of local management and resource mobilization, the People's Committees at the communes/wards in Hue, along with their extensive network of principal officials down to each residential group, have made convenient to communicate with each household regarding the behavior changes in WSAS and SUPs reduction.
  >
  > **In May 2023,** the TVA Project began to take the first steps to pilot the behavior change communication using PAOT method in Hue City

- *Plan for selecting communicators*:

  In some provinces, communicators on WSAS and SUPs reduction are members of community media teams, established from the human resources of the organizations and non-governmental projects. In many provinces and cities, community media teams can conduct communication activities in the local ethnic languages."

  For the required number of communicators: To determine the required number of communicators, the first step is to determine the target number of households that the communication program aims to reach. Once this figure is known, we can determine how many communicators need to be mobilized within each partner or collaborating unit.

  Please refer to the target set for health or population collaborators, which is usually 100-150 households. Some provinces and cities apply the target of 50-100 households (M.Hền, 2023).

> **Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:** In the pilot phase, as agreed with local partners, each communicator is responsible for 10-20 households. Some communication officers oversee up to 30 households each.
>
> Selection targets for communicators in TVA- Hue project:
> - Reside in the communication activities; have a good reputation and influence in the community.
> - Communicator should be responsible persons, who are eagerly interested and involved in environmental protection activities.
> - Have experience in participating in communication activities in the province
> - Be proficient in reading and writing, and able to use a smartphone

- *Assign personnel to implement the program, design the tools, oversee the training of the communicator network:* If the organization lacks staff experienced in conducting communication programs using the PAOT method, seeking external consultation is also an option. Additionally, the task force should follow the guidance in PAOT manuals and conduct pilot tests before scaling up the program.

ACTIVITY 2 – TOOLS DEVELOPMENT

PAOT tools include:

- **Main tools**

    - Checklist

    - Logbook

    - Online data entry form

This decision rests with the implementing unit. However, in the context of digital transformation and the need to improve work efficiency, allowing each staff member to directly enter information into the online form is the optimal choice. This approach not only enhances productivity but also improves the information storage efficiency, avoiding the assignment of someone else to manually transfer data from logbooks to the computer.

- **Supporting Tools**

    - Handbook or flipcharts providing information to communicators

    - Visual aids illustrating simple solutions

Designing the Checklist

The design of the checklist for the PAOT program is a critical and essential task. The checklist serves as a "prompting" tool to guide actions toward practical solutions tailored to local circumstances. It is not merely a list of items to be checked off, despite often being referred to as a "*checklist*". When interacting with households, based on the *behaviours on the checklist* and solution images, the households can select and commit to adopting positive behaviours, depending on their specific conditions. Thus, the checklist plays several roles:

- ± Encouraging participation: It provides systematic and straightforward information with illustrative examples
- ± Expanding the range of actions: It offers suggested solutions, enabling households to choose those that suit their needs
- ± Fostering positive thinking: It focuses on solutions and encourages gradual improvements
- ± Serving as an effective tool for community engagement: It is easy to understand and remember, directly linked to specific, practical actions.

To complete the design of the checklist, the following tasks should be carried out in sequence:

(1) Develop communication messages: Define the content and number of messages. In the context of Participatory Action-Oriented Training (PAOT), the communication message serves as the solution or positive behaviour to be promoted for households to adopt.

(2) Capture or create illustrative images: Take photographs or draw images *(if photographs are unavailable)* to illustrate the promoted messages, solutions, and behaviours.

(3) Design the structure of the monitoring boxes: Identify indicators to be monitored and measured, ensuring clear tracking of results and behaviour changes.

(4) Organize and arrange the monitoring boxes by content and theme within the checklist.

Developing communication messages:

Before designing the checklist, it is essential to develop communication messages. These messages may be referred to by various terms, such as improvements, best practices, positive behaviours, or others. However, the common goal is to **engage** households and community members to **take action**. If households have never taken action, the objective is to transition them from **not doing it** to taking action. For those who have already taken action but inconsistently, the aim is to encourage more regular practice. Lastly, for actions that are already being performed but are not yet highly effective, the objective is to improve and enhance their effectiveness.

The content and number of messages in a checklist or within a communication program or campaign must align closely with the objectives, particularly the output indicators of each project or program. **For the PAOT method, the messages should emphasize the positivity and encouragement to take action, rather than using prohibitive or discouraging language. Additionally, it is important to avoid combining multiple themes into a single message to ensure clarity and focus.**

Content of communication messages can be determined by several approaches:
- Gather ideas from the involved parties and staff.
- Organize workshops or discussions for communication messages and reach a consensus on the finalized set of messages.
- The task team or task force in charge of the communication program or campaign to develop the messages, followed by consultation workshops to refine and agree on the content.

Regardless of the approach taken, the contents of communication messages should be thoroughly discussed with officials and staff from the local departments and agencies. These individuals interact directly with the households, so their feedback on phrasing and word choice can make the messages more relatable and easier for families and communities to understand.

In cases of having to choose communication messages among numerous ideas, the "paired comparison and priority selection" method can be used to identify the messages with the highest consensus.

Table 1: Form for Paired Comparison and Priority Selection of Communication Messages/Behaviors (B)

	HV1	HV2	HV3	HV4	HV5	HV6	HV7	HV8	Cộng	Xếp hạng
HV1	✕	HV1	HV3	HV1	HV1	HV6	HV1	HV8	**4**	1
HV2		✕	HV3	HV2	HV2	HV6	HV7	HV2	**3**	2
HV3			✕	HV4	HV3	HV3	HV7	HV8	**2**	3
HV4				✕	HV5	HV6	HV4	HV8	**1**	4
HV5					✕	HV5	HV5	HV8	**2**	5
HV6						✕	HV7	HV6	**1**	6
HV7							✕	HV7	**1**	7
HV8								✕		

Select the results in order from 1 down and stop at the desired number of messages.

Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:

The communication messages in the checklist are referred to as "positive behaviours". Based on the implementation content of the TVA Project, the messages are classified into **two main groups**:

HƯỚNG DẪN PHÂN LOẠI RÁC TẠI NGUỒN - THÀNH PHỐ HUẾ
GIAI ĐOẠN 2

Part ❶ - WASTE SEPARATION AT SOURCE: According to the waste segregation guidelines of Hue City, domestic solid waste is classified into three main categories: i) Hazardous waste; ii) Recyclables and reusables (glasses and other recyclables); and iii) Residuals.

For the Hazardous Waste, Recyclables and Reusables, households are instructed to collect and handle them separately according to guidelines. They are encouraged to dispose of waste in the designated bins for domestic solid waste available in the area. Specifically: orange bins are for hazardous waste, gray bins are for glass, white bins or "green houses" are for recyclables and reusables, and green bins are for residuals.

Part ❷ - PLASTIC REDUCTION ACCORDING TO THE 5R1C RULE: REFUSE - REDUCE - REUSE - RECYCLE - REPLACE - COLLECT

	REFUSE	▪ Prepare and bring personal belongings to refuse using plastic products ▪ Willingly refuse SUP products (sincerely make it clear to the seller/customer) when not necessary
	REDUCE	▪ Only use plastic products to the minimum extent necessary
	REUSE	▪ Reuse plastic products many times or for other purposes (storing spices, nuts, and others)
	RECYCLE	▪ Make plastic products into other items (tools, toys, decorations, gardening supplies, and others) ▪ Sell/donate to scrap dealers, contribute to local "green houses"
	REPLACE	▪ Replace *disposables* with *reusables* by refilling them ▪ Replace SUPs with reusable plastics or replace them completely with other materials (glass, ceramic, stainless steel, and others)
	COLLECT	▪ Separately collect, treat (clean, stack and so on), store, and dispose of waste according to the public collection system as prescribed or use small-scale collection services (that is permitted to operate).

The communication messages (positive behaviours) are drafted by project officials and will be consulted with partner leadership during the consultation workshop.

Communication messages can be illustrated with either pictures or drawings, but real photographs from the community are preferred. If suitable photos are not available, drawings may be used instead. Photographs can be taken during the brainstorming phase for the messages or after the content is determined. Choose one of these methods to complete the illustrative images:

- Method 1: After the content is determined, invite professional photographers to take pictures of households that practice the behaviour conveyed by the messages (These households are introduced by the partners)
- Method 2: Send the messages to the partners, call for support to find and take photos of households that practice positive behaviours
- Method 3: The person who comes up with the idea for the messages takes the photos himself, then sends the messages and photos to the tool development team.
- Method 4: Select available photos from the "photograph archive".

> **Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:**
> The draft checklist is designed based on the desired messages. The photos are **selected from the available photograph archive collected during the project implementation**. Selecting available photos helps shorten the time to create the checklist.

Designing the monitoring box

The checklist consists of several monitoring boxes, the number of monitoring boxes on the checklist is equal to the number of selected communication messages.

- The structure of a monitoring boxes includes: i) communication message, ii) illustrative image for message, iii) assessment questions and answer options.
- Illustrative image: The placement of photos can vary (left, right, top, or bottom) based on the size of the checklist and design concept.

- The presentation of the monitoring questions (to measure the outcomes) can vary based on the objectives of the project or program.

- The structure of monitoring boxes may be modified based on communication objectives, target audiences, and communication outcome indicators as required by the report.

Table 2: Example of structure of a monitoring box

Structure of a monitoring box
Positive Messages/Behaviours to be Communicated

Illustrative image	Monitoring questions and registration for implementation

. Messages should be concise and easy to understand, printed in a larger font than other text in the monitoring box.
. Illustrative images for the messages should typically depict solutions that households are encouraged to adopt.
. Monitoring questions should reflect: i) The household's status before exposed to the communication, ii) The household's registration for the project or program, iii) The results achieved by the household.

To design comprehensive monitoring boxes, particularly with sufficient monitoring questions to assess the plastic usage reduction when positive behaviours are adopted, the communication team of TVA Project has engaged in extensive discussions on various approaches and reviewed multiple checklists designed by other projects and programs.

Table 3: References for the structure of a monitoring box to design one for the TVA Project:

Example of a monitoring box – WISE Program *(Working condition improvement in small and medium enterprises)* *35- Provide separate bins for different types of waste at work.* **Any suggestions for improvement?** □ No □ Yes □ Priority Remark:………………………..... 7	During the monitoring process, the monitor and the recipient of the communication will discuss to determine whether the behaviour is being performed or performed EFFECTIVELY or not. If **it is not being performed or not EFFECTIVELY**, the monitor will decide whether to **RECOMMEND IMPROVEMENTS** and whether to designate it as a PRIORITY BEHAVIOUR. The corresponding checkbox is then marked accordingly. □ No □ Yes □ Priority The method is noted in the Remark section. During the result assessment, if the solution or behaviour on the checklist has been adopted, the outcomes will be **recorded in the tracking log or marked on the monitoring checklist.**
	This monitoring box includes: . A sentence to describe whether the behavior is being adopted at the time of monitoring or before the communication campaign. During the household visit, if the behavior is being performed, mark (x), or (✓)in the "current" checkbox. . If the household registers to adopt the behavior and agrees on the completion deadline, a corresponding mark will be made in the "desired time" checkbox.. This layout is very simple and easy to implement in communities with lower education levels. However, if the box is not marked, it may be unclear whether the household does not adopt the behaviour or the communicator simply forgets to mark it.
	This monitoring box includes: . A section for the completion deadline. . Monitoring section: options to indicate whether the behavior should be adopted or not and whether it is a priority or not. . No space for the household's results This layout is relatively simple. However, because it does not clearly show whether the household is currently adopting the behaviour or not, it may create difficulties when compiling results and calculating the percentage of changes from not performing the behaviour to good practice. The "completion deadline" section (1 month, 2 months, and 3 months) encourages households to take responsibility and promptly adopt the desired behaviour.

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7 WISE Program - Materials of the International Labour Organization (ILO), aiming to raise awareness among workers about production improvements. The WISE Program applied the PAOT method for other contents.

Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:

After reviewing the guidelines on the PAOT method and reviewing checklists from other organizations, the TVA Project decided to design a monitoring box for the pilot phase that fully includes of the following points: *i) Illustrative photos, ii) Communication messages, iii) Assessment of the household's current behaviours/actions, iv) The household's willingness to participate in PAOT, v) The household's intention to improve the behaviour, vi) Registration of the completion deadline, vii) Results from the household visits.*

Figure 1: Monitoring box in the checklist - Pilot phase

Layout of the Monitoring Box on the Checklist (Page Layout):

After determining the full content, number of messages, illustrative images, and layout of the monitoring boxes, designing the checklist becomes straightforward. The design process involves organizing the communication messages in an appropriate order, grouping messages with similar themes, and ensuring that the illustrative images match the message contents. It is encouraged to design the checklist attractively to grab attention. When selecting colors, **concerns** should be made to the branding of the organization in charge of the communication campaign and the funding entity (e.g., logo, primary colors, background color, and text color matching the color scheme of other communication tools, etc.). In addition to aesthetics, it is important to ensure that the font size is large enough and that the background color contrasts clearly with the text color to make the content easy to read.

The size of the checklist should be appropriate for the space where it will be displayed or posted. Therefore, it is recommended to print a sample before printing in large quantities. If possible, test the sample by hanging or posting it in a few locations to ensure the size is suitable for the open space.

Figure 2: Household checklist – Pilot phase

The checklist used for household communication in the TVA Project during the pilot phase is printed in A3 size, in landscape orientation, with content evenly distributed across two pages. The colour scheme for the checklist follows the project's branding, using green as the primary colour.

To access and download the pilot phase checklist, please scan the QR code in the APPENDIX.

Designing the result tracking tool

The Result Tracking Tool is typically a logbook designed based on the content of the monitoring checklist. In recent years, with the trend of digital transformation, in addition to printed logbooks, an online data entry form has also been designed to match the content of the logbook. The difference is that information is entered via smartphone or computer applications instead of being written on paper.

Communicator's logbook – Handwritten logbook

. The content and order of the messages in the Communicator's Logbook should align with the content and order in the monitoring checklist.

. The logbook must include both quantitative and qualitative tracking, as behaviour change monitoring is not only about tracking the number of households adopting good practices but also capturing the quality of the behaviour change, such as the development of habits, effective execution, creative and unique approaches, etc.

. The Communicator's Logbook is similar to a diary, recording the overall situation of the households assigned to the communicator. It documents the impressive practices of the households as well as the community's feedback throughout the process.

. The number of pages in the logbook depends on the number of households assigned to each communicator.

. Each communicator should have their own logbook to avoid confusion and make data and information checking and aggregation easier.

. If the budget allows, the logbook cover can be printed in hardcover, while the pages can simply be photocopied.

Figure 3: Sample of Household logbook – Pilot phase

To access and download the pilot phase logbook, please scan the QR code in the APPENDIX.

Designing the online data entry form

In the digital transformation trends, it is necessary to replace manual methods with computer and smartphone applications to improve work efficiency. Some organizations have started using Google Drive to store and exchange data and information quickly and in a timely manner. This enables multiple users to enter data into a shared Excel file or Google Sheet. Additionally, several firms utilize the "Google Form" to create templates for data entry via smartphones. Afterward, the database can be downloaded in Excel format.

Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:

The TVA Project has chosen Kobotoolbox as the design application to create the online data entry form. The contents of the form are similar to those in the Communicator's Notebook and can be considered an online version of the notebook. Information will be entered via the KoboCollect app on smartphones, or directly on the website through a provided link or QR code scanning.

Figure 4: Sample – Online data entry form

Online data entry form,

Access via the link

Online data entry form,

Fill in via KoboCollect.
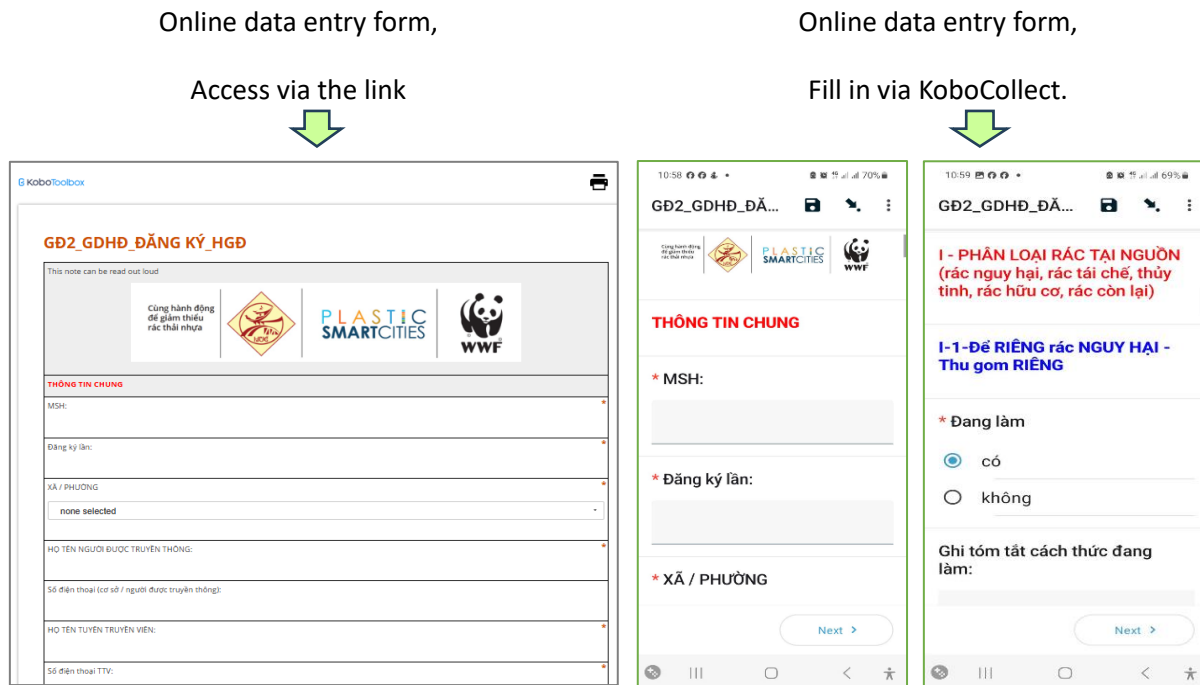
To refer to the online data entry form, please scan the QR code in the APPENDIX.

Note: This form is for reference purposes only and cannot be downloaded for editing or data entry. To create and design a form based on the content of the Communicator's Logbook, you need to create an account on Kobotoolbox and follow the instructions provided on the Kobotoolbox website.

The method for online data entry should be selected based on the availability of human and material resources. If Kobotoolbox is used, personnel skilled in designing templates via the XLSForm standard is required for easier editing when necessary. To learn more about XLSform, search on Google using the keyword "XLSform".

Consulting with relevant partners

The advantages of the PAOT principles are:

. **Based on local realities:** Selecting improvement solutions available in the locality.

. Encouraging individuals and communities to **share their experiences**: - This fosters personal insights and enthusiasm as people share their opinions and various solutions.

. **Promoting everyone's participation** – Local residents are the ones who best understand their conditions and challenges, enabling them to come up with the most suitable solutions for their families.

To mobilize the participation of relevant partner, multiple PAOT programs, projects or organizations usually hold workshops on "*PAOT Tool Development and Communication Program Planning*". This method requires considerable time, as the workshops last at least three days while PAOT tools development takes place concurrently with the workshop.

After the workshop, the tools were modified and tested for usability.

Pretesting

The tool testing phase, including the checklist and logbook, is conducted after revisions are made based on feedback from managers and leaders of relevant parties during the consultation workshop. **Pretesting is a critical and unskippable step** when organizing any communication program or campaign, including the PAOT method. Pretesting helps identify the following issues:

. Wording in the checklist or logbook that may be unclear to the target audience.
. Illogical presentation of communication messages (e.g. unreasonable flow of messages or unnatural order of messages).
. Message contents that may be misinterpreted, deviating from the intended communication objectives.
. Nearly identical messages despite having different communication purposes.
. An excess or shortage of communication messages in the checklist.
. Colours and images in the checklist that may need adjustment for better balance (e.g., images causing misunderstandings or conveying unintended meanings).
. Font size and text colours that may require changes to improve readability.
. Reactions from the target audience regarding the actual communication contents and duration, which may lead to adjustments in communication methods, message content, or the inclusion/exclusion of topics during a session.

The more pretests conducted, the better the results will be; however, it is crucial to test with a minimum of ten communication targets. If time allows, it is recommended to design a "Pretesting Results" Form that includes notes on the key points during the tests. This approach ensures that all findings from the pretesting phase are thoroughly compiled, avoiding any oversights during the tool revision and finalization.

The "Compass – Social Behaviour Change Communication"[8] website offers some noteworthy suggestions for pretesting communication materials:

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[8] How to Conduct a Pretest - The Compass for SBC

UNDERSTANDING

Does the target audience understand the message and image correctly? Do they see the benefits of acting on the message?

_____

ATTRACTION

Do the communication materials appeal to the target audience?

_____

TRUST

Are the materials factual and do they build trust in the target audience?

_____

RELEVANCE - APPROPRIATENESS

Is the message content relevant and appropriate to the issue faced by the target audience?

_____

MOTIVATION/PERSUASION

Does the communication message persuade and motivate the audience to take action?

_____

IMPROVEMENT

Is there anything that could be done to improve the communication materials? Are there any specific, detailed suggestions from the target audience?

Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:

During the pilot of communication tools, the TVA Project was divided into several groups that met directly with households to pretest the PAOT tools:

. Greet the household and introduce the meeting purpose.
. Ask the communication target (household representative) to read the checklist and review the images without explaining the checklist content at this stage.
. Request the household to summarize the checklist content and mark areas that may cause misunderstandings or sensitivities.
. Discuss each content in the checklist and take notes on the checklist.
. Record information from the checklist into the Communicator's Notebook; mark errors such as typos, printing issues, or mismatches between the checklist and the notebook.
. Write down feedback on colors and font sizes.
. Compile all feedback and submit it to the PAOT tool development team.

Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:

After pretesting, the communicators of the TVA Project have identified the following issues:

- The order of communication content was not suitable for natural conversations.
- The wording needed simplification so that both the communicators and households could immediately understand or think of immediate solutions (avoiding uncommon terms that might cause confusion during communication).
- Some messages were not aligned with actual conditions and needed to be removed.
- Households preferred the conversation to last no more than 30 minutes.
- Suggested size for the household checklist: 40 cm wide x 60 cm long or larger.

Due to time constraints, pretesting of online data entry was conducted within the PAOT tool designing team.

Some photos from the PAOT tool consultation workshop conducted by the TVA Project:

ACTIVITY 3 - COMMUNICATOR TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

After completing the tool preparation stage, training for communicators can take place. The training should follow a participatory approach, with an optimal number of participants not exceeding 40. It is advisable to avoid conducting a meeting with 70 to 100 participants.

Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:

<p style="text-align:center"><strong style="color:#2e74b5">Communicator Training</p>

<p style="text-align:center" style="color:#2e74b5">Theory</p>

(a) Update knowledge on WSAS and plastic reduction via quizzes

(b) Introduce PAOT and how to use PAOT tools in communication

±   Understand the checklist

±   Learn how to fill in the checklist

±   Learn how to record information in the logbook

±   Learn how to access the online data entry form via a URL or by scanning a QR code.

±   Learn how to download the KoboCollect app

±   Learn how to fill in the online data entry form

===

How to put information in the checklist

- Before starting, communicators may let households read the checklist or have explain it explained to ensure understanding, particularly regarding the communication messages/positive behaviours that households are encouraged to adopt. Show illustrative images (examples/suggested solutions) and discuss any confusions.

- Ask about the household's status regarding the positive behaviours on the checklist. If the household members invite communicators to observe their home, the communicator should accompany them. This helps create a friendly atmosphere, provides an opportunity for the communicator to observe and suggest registering for behaviours adopted and not yet adopted by the household. Based on the household's situation, mark (x) in the corresponding checkbox on the checklist.

- Ask the household about registering to adopt the behaviours on the checklist and their desired completion deadline. Mark (x) in the corresponding checkbox.

- If there are any important issues, put them in the "Notes" section.

- Before concluding, ensure that:

  ✖ All items have been marked "YES" or "NO".

  ✖ Columns for status, registration, and desired completion deadline are correctly and fully marked.

  ✖ All household information on the checklist has been fully filled in (this is **often forgotten**).

- If there are any images of good practices, photos of such practice should be taken to use as supporting materials for reporting.

Pow to put information in the logbook

- Based on the information on the checklist, put it in the logbook. Ensure that all household information is fully recorded in the logbook (this part is often overlooked, which leads to issues when entering data into the database, requiring revisits to the household).

How to download the KoboCollect app

- Go to Google Play and search for "KoboCollect"
  • Tap on KoboCollect to download the app
  • Once the download is complete, tap Open
  • Tap on "Configure with QR CODE" (blue box) to proceed with the setup (the QR code will be provided to participants by the form editor).
  • After setup is complete, download the online form for use.
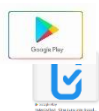
How to fill in the online data entry form

- Follow the instructions in the downloaded form, enter the information, and submit it to the database.

(a) Exercise - First Household Visit: Communication and Encouragement for PAOT Registration

- Greet the household and explain the purpose of the visit.

- Introduce information related to WSAS and reduction of SUPs to the household.

- Practice recording information in the checklist and logbook in two rounds:

¥ **Round 1:** Learners were divided into groups of 5-7 communicators. Each group practiced completing **1-2** monitoring boxes related to a section of behaviours that needed to be communicated. A group member was assigned a specific role: Household representative, communicator in charge of the checklist, communicator in charge of the logbook (Some active groups suggested having the household representative also fill in the checklist while the communicator completed the logbook during their discussion. This method promoted the highest level of household participation).

¥ **Round 2**: Participants were divided into groups of 3 learners. One played the role of the household representative; one took the role of the communicator in charge of the checklist, and one was the communicator in charge of the logbook. Practice filling information in the online form: The information gathered from the exercise is entered into the online form as instructed during the theory session. *Participants can choose whether to access the form via the URL or use the KoboCollect app for data entry.*

(b) Exercise - Second and Third Household Visit:
- Participants were divided into groups of 5-7 learners (communicators), Each group reused the monitoring boxes practiced earlier to visit and encourage households to participate in PAOT. The member playing the role of the communicator asked the household representative how they had implemented the behaviours and put the information (☐ **yes** / ☐ **no**) in the column for the 2nd or 3rd visit in the logbook. The member playing the role of the household representative answered the questions posed by the communicator.

Field practice

After the theory session, communicators returned to their assigned areas to carry out field practice. To manage time effectively, the communicators prepared a list of households and scheduled visits in advance. During the household visits, communicators practiced:

± Greeting the households and explaining the purpose of the visit,

± Introducing information related to WSAS and reduction of SUPs.

± Filling information in the checklist, logbook, and online data entry form.

The TVA Project officials provided support to the communicators during their practical communication on WSAS and reduction of SUPs at the households. During the field practice, any errors detected in the checklist or logbook were promptly reported by the communicators to the project officials for timely corrections before large-scale printing.

Developing a Local Communication Plan

Developing a Local Communication Plan is a part of the communicator training program. Beyond providing knowledge and communication skills via the PAOT method, the expectation is that each communicator will understand the workload and the deadline for their assigned tasks.

Activity 1 – Present the targets to be achieved, the workload to be completed within the communication program, the program's implementation timeline, and, importantly, the milestones for completing the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd household visits.

Activity 2 – Divide participants into groups based on their assigned residential groups to discuss and develop an implementation plan **9**. Based on the communication plan, communicators will be provided with the corresponding number of checklists and logbooks.

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9 If time permits, a community mapping activity can be conducted before developing the implementation plan. This exercise will help communicators better understand the residential groups assigned to them.

Some images from the training sessions on the PAOT method conducted by the TVA Project:

ACTIVITIES 4 & 5 - IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

Before communication activities are implemented at the local areas, the tools must be fully printed. Based on the established plan, communicators proactively carry out communication activities with each household. The duration of each household visit depends on the practical conditions of the local area. In many cases, because local communicators take on multiple roles and participate in various activities, they ask questions on several communication topics during their household visits.

Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:

The local-level unit responsible for coordinating communication activities was the People's Committees of the Wards or Communes. Depending on the ward or commune, the contact unit would be a local association or an appropriate official.

Activity 1: **Review the Communication Plan**
- As the contact unit for coordination, facilitation, and monitoring, the designated official reviewed the plan agreed upon during the communicator training and made any adjustments if necessary.

Activity 2: **Provide Communication Tools**
- Checklists and logbooks would be distributed to the communicators if the required quantities were not provided during training.
- URL and QR codes would be shared for accessing the online data entry templates via the Zalo group for ease of use.

Activity 3: **Encourage Household to register for PAOT (1st Visit)**
- The communicators would schedule visits in advance or stop by when convenient, depending on the circumstances.
- **Communicators would focus on households within proximity to save travel time and achieve a sufficient number to create a social learning model - when one household adopts the behaviour, it influences others nearby to follow.**
- During the visit, the communicators spread the words about the benefits of WSAS and reduction of SUPs and wrote down information as practiced during training.
- Communicators would take photos of creative and impressive behaviours already implemented by households.

Activity 4: **Household visits – Encourage the implementation (2nd Visit) and record the results (3rd Visit)**
- **Conduct visits according to the agreed schedule. Visits should be arranged based on availability and convenience, progressively covering all assigned households.**
- **Communicators documented the progress of households in their logbooks and took photos of changes observed.**
- **Before leaving, communicators summarize key findings, such as:**
  - **Implementation status, challenges and facilitators of behaviour change.**
  - **Experiences learned from self-implementation or shared by other households.**
  - **Next steps (if the household has not implemented or failed to implement the behaviours).**
  - **Ask the household if they have any additional feedback or if they agree/disagree with the discussed matters.**
  - **Thank the household and confirm the date of next visit.**

Monitor the progress, support, create favourable condition for communicators to visit the households

- Despite labelled as "Activity 5", this task was ongoing throughout the communication program. The contact unit at the ward or commune continuously tracked progress, reported data to the People's Committee of the Ward or Commune, and requested support from the TVA Project if needed.

Each ward or commune maintained a Zalo group for communicators to share information and request support promptly. Project officials were also often included in these groups to ensure seamless two-way communication during the program implementation.

Some images from the household visits conducted by the communicators after the training sessions:

ACTIVITY 6 - INTERIM REVIEW OF THE PILOT PHASE

It is essential to organize interim or final review for each phase. These events provide an opportunity for communicators and local units to share lessons learned, discuss ongoing challenges, and find the solutions, as well as recognizing and honouring individuals and groups who excel in their performance. For some projects, the interim or final review also serves as an occasion to announce the results of competitions held alongside communication activities, such as: "*Images of and Solutions for Behaviour Change*", "*Recycled and Reused Products*", "*Communication skits*", and others.

Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:

The Interim Review Workshop for the Pilot Phase of the PAOT Program under the TVA Project was conducted at the end of October 2023. The workshop aimed to assess the progress achieved up to that time and discuss plans for scaling up the communication activities.

Discussions during the workshop[10]:

- Advantages of application of the PAOT method in communication
- Challenges encountered and solutions adopted
- Plans for scaling up communication activities after the pilot phase

Key points **agreed upon in the Workshop:**

- While challenging and labour-intensive due to the need for direct engagement with each household, the household communication activities received considerable support from the families. Communication on WSAS achieved higher consensus compared to communication on the reduction of SUPs.
- For the communication on the reduction of SUPs, resources would initially focus on encouraging behaviour change in the household. Then, changes within households were expected to create a ripple effect, leading to changes in business establishments, particularly by fostering the "necessary cooperation between buyers and sellers", as sellers often aim to "please" their customers. Therefore, it was agreed to gradually scale up communication activities targeting households across other wards and communes in Hue City via a cascading approach.
- A new, simplified checklist would be designed to help the household feel less burdensome.
- Specific behaviours, metrics for measuring household behaviour change, and calculations of reduction of SUPs will be fully recorded by communicators in the logbooks.
- Instead of **SHOWING** all 28 behaviours, the revised household checklist would only **INCLUDE** 9 key behaviours, formatted on a single A3 page. This was different from the previous version, which spread across two pages[11] and was *divided into **six sections** (three for WSAS and three for Reduction of SUPs/5R1C).*
- The wards and communes participated in a "Let's Write a Behaviour Change Story" competition. Outstanding, creative, and inspiring stories will be printed and showcased during the **Year-End Review Workshop** in December 2023.

Some Images from the Interim Review Workshop for the Pilot Phase conducted by the TVA Project:
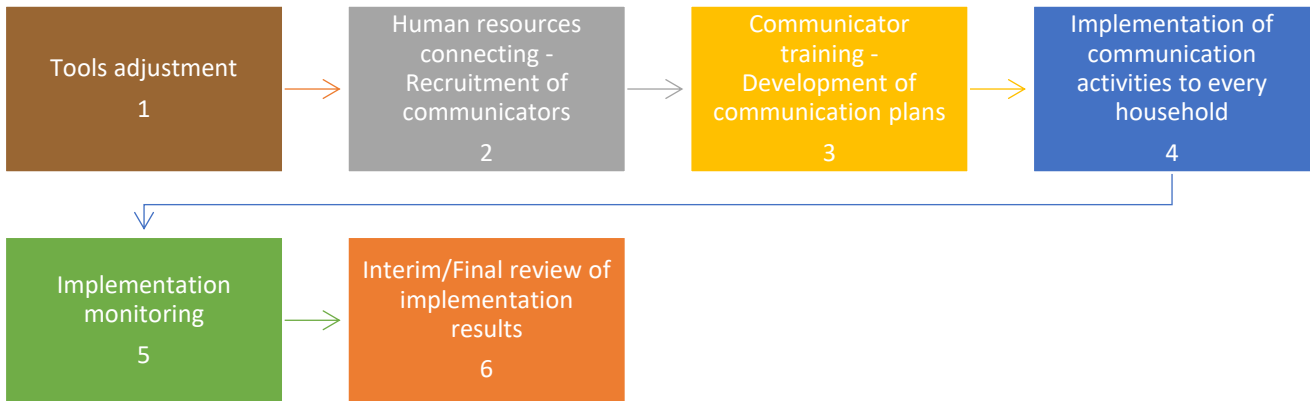

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10 See the Lessons Learned
11 See the Tool Adjustment - Large-scale Communication Phase

PART 2 – LARGE-SCALE COMMUNICATION PHASE

The activities conducted during the large-scale communication phase at TVA project include:

Tools adjustment 1	Human resources connecting - Recruitment of communicators 2	Communicator training - Development of communication plans 3	Implementation of communication activities to every household 4

Implementation monitoring 5	Interim/Final review of implementation results 6

Activities 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 were carried out in a similar manner to the pilot phase, with adjustments in scale to meet the targets set for the large-scale communication phase.

Following the pilot phase conducted from May 2023 to September 2023 (referred to as Phase 1), the large-scale communication implementation was carried out in two subsequent phases: Phase 2: from October 2023 to February 2024 and Phase 3: from April 2024 to September 2024.

ACTIVITY 1 - TOOLS ADJUSTMENT

Adjusting PAOT tools, including redesigning the entire monitoring checklist with updated message content and visuals, is a common practice in any communication campaign. This approach aligns closely with the core principle of PAOT: learning by doing and improving step by step.

Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:

Based on practical experience, feedback from communicators, and input from leaders at the People's Committees and local mass organizations, the team responsible for designing the PAOT tools made the following adjustments:

- **The boxes on the monitoring checklist were simplified and the structure was reorganized:**

  ✓ Removed the detailed lines about the message (behavior) and only kept the main headings

  ✓ Removed the columns for registration of methods and participation, simplifying them to: ☐ Yes / ☐ No.

  ✓ Removed the column for completion time (since WSAS and SUPs reduction actions should be implemented immediately after registration and must be continuously maintained, so no need to track completion time).

  ✓ Removed the result column and replaced it with a heart-shaped icon in the top right of the monitoring box if the action was carried out (Note: This heart icon was removed in the checklist for phase 3).

  ✓ Replaced the visuals to better illustrate the meaning of the communication messages.

Monitoring box – applied in the pilot phase	Monitoring box – applied in the large-scale communication phase

- **Checklists**
  ✓ Modify the wording, phrasing, and positioning of each message
  ✓ Adjust the color scheme

Figure 5: Checklists for different PAOT communication phases

Checklist – Pilot phase (Phase 1)	Checklist – Large-scale communication phase (Phase 2 – above photo and Phase 3 – below photo)

- **Logbooks, online data entry forms:** These are also modified according to the content of the checklists. However, the information related to the measurement indicators of reduced SUPs remains, with only adjustments made to the way the entries are recorded for better alignment and clarity.
- Progress tracking tools: In the large-scale communication phase, as the communication activities gradually expanded to cover 19 districts and communes over each phase, the progress tracking tools were also developed. For example, adding more Kobotoolbox accounts, creating Excel files linked online with the Kobotoolbox website, and linking multiple Excel files into one for easier tracking of the progress **12**. To view and download the checklists and logbooks for phase 2 and phase 3, please scan the QR code in the APPENDIX.

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12 See how to do it at: Dynamic Data Attachments — KoboToolbox documentation

ACTIVITIES 2 & 3 – HUMAN RESOURCES CONNECTING & COMMUNICATOR TRAINING

Human resources connecting

The process of connecting human resources at this phase is similar to the pilot phase. The most important factor is that depending on the scale of the communication activities expansion, it is necessary to plan for the recruitment of additional communicators to ensure timely training. The training content for communicators should be adjusted according to the revisions made to the tools.

Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:

Leveraging the strengths of collaboration between local government and grassroots mass organizations from the pilot phase, the TVA project continued to work alongside the People's Committee (PC) and the Women's Union (WU) at the commune and ward levels at this phase. In phase 3, the Veterans Association from 8 communes and wards was also mobilized to participate. With the implementation of two consecutive phases in the large-scale communication phase, the PAOT communication activities expanded from 4 communes and wards in the pilot phase to 27 additional communes and wards, with the participation of 612 communicators.

See Chapter 4 for a detailed understanding of the achievements in human resources connecting.

Communicator training

The training contents can remain the same or be revised and supplemented depending on the changes required for the large-scale communication phase.

Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:

The training contents for the communicators remain structured into two main parts:

(a) Updating knowledge on WSAS and PWR through fun quizzes.
(b) Introduction to the PAOT method & how to use PAOT tools in communication

- Training on how to use the PAOT tools, including the Checklist, Logbook, and Online Data Entry Form, which have been updated according to the newly designed checklist contents.

☑ The **"Stories of behaviour change"** writing method has been added.

A total of **612 communicators** have been trained and equipped with knowledge about WSAS and PW reduction, and the PAOT communication method throughout the three implementation phases, from May 2023 to the end of September 2024. The training sessions for phases 2 and 3 were conducted by the TVA Project team.

ACTIVITIES 4 & 5 – IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

Building on the lessons learned from the pilot phase, adjustments were made to improve the methods of implementation and monitoring. It is important to note that monitoring household participation in PAOT communication involves direct follow-up with every participating household, rather than using representative sampling to record results. Therefore, conducting sufficient household visits as outlined in the program design is essential. This ensures accurate reflection of behavioural changes and highlights outstanding household initiatives observed during the communication process.

Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:

The method and sequence of implementation is similar to the pilot phase. However, this phase places greater emphasis on monitoring and supporting household visits, ensuring they are conducted on schedule and include a total of three planned visits.

- **First visit to households - Encourage participation in PAOT**. Communicators will document the household's **current good practices** or no practice. Subsequently, households will be encouraged to register for PAOT. Those already practicing good behaviours can register to maintain or improve them, while **households without established good practices will receive guidance on implementation from the communicators**.

- **Second visit to households - Conduct follow-ups, provide encouragement, and discuss solutions** to obstacles that hinder good practices. At the same time, check on progress, **record preliminary results, and remind households to take action if they have registered but not yet implemented any practices**.

- **Third visit to households - Document the results of behavioural changes at the end of the communication campaign,** encourage households to sustain the good behaviours they practiced before participating in PAOT or those newly adopted as habits as they participate in the PAOT.

During Phase 3, **improvements were made to address the limitations** in monitoring household behaviour change observed during the pilot and Phase 2. Notably, a "linear change" was recorded, meaning the consistency of the total number of households from the initial engagement to the results was maintained. This improvement was thanks to the precise recording of Household Identification Code (HIC) from the first visit, coupled with strict monitoring during the HIC entry process. The HIC was used to link the information collected across the three household visits. Consequently, the project could accurately track households visited in previous visits and update their information in subsequent visits. This ensured that data analysis excluded households visited only once or twice, retaining only those visited three times. This approach significantly improved the accuracy of comparative and analytical results.

During Phase 2, the writing competition titled "Stories of Change in the community" was conducted alongside household visits. This initiative inspired and motivated both communicators and households to adopt positive behaviours promoted through the checklist messages. Communicators actively captured images of good practices by households and shared these positive examples widely through social media platforms like Zalo and Facebook.

ACTIVITY 6 – INTERIM/FINAL REVIEW

The implementation method remains similar to that outlined during the pilot phase. However, if the project employs multiple communication approaches aimed at the same goal, sharing methods and results during the review workshops can create an engaging and dynamic atmosphere, and benefits participants, primarily the communicators, by allowing them to share achievements, exchange insights, and gain additional knowledge.

Application of the PAOT method in Hue City within the TVA Project:

In December 2023 and late October 2024, the TVA Project conducted Interim and Final Reviews of the behaviour change communication phases that applied the PAOT method to promoting WSAS and SUPs reduction in the community. During each session, results and lessons learned from the pilot and implementation phases were summarized and shared with representatives of communicators' groups and local leaders from each ward and commune. The main contents at the workshop included:

- Sharing the results of implementing self-managed plastic waste collection teams, community monitoring teams, and other participatory communication models to raise public awareness and practice.
- Outcomes recorded across the three behavior change communication phases based on the PAOT approach:
  - ✓ These models complemented each other and enhanced effectiveness in mobilizing community collaboration.
  - ✓ Achievements from the two mentioned activities were shown in waste audit results conducted by HEPCO and Hang Trung (the two waste collection and treatment companies) in Hue City.
- **Recognizing and awarding teams that made significant contributions and achieved the best results in each phase.**
- **Rewarding individuals and teams with good stories highlighting behaviour change in WSAS and SUPs reduction in the community.**
- Gathering feedback and facilitating discussions among communicators and local leaders on effective communication strategies and approaches for future initiatives, building on the achieved successes.

Photos from the Workshop on sharing practical experiences of community models implemented by the TVA Project at the end of 2023:

Photos from the Final Review of the communication model using the PAOT method implemented by the TVA Project at the end of 2024:

PART 3 - MONITORING & EVALUATION (M&E)
MONITORING

Monitoring is an indispensable activity in any program, project, or event. Regular monitoring ensures that information about implementation progress is updated promptly, enabling those responsible for managing and coordinating the program to identify trends and situations in a timely manner. This allows for informed decisions to adjust methods or strategies, ensuring the plan's success. While the section above includes a dedicated part on "Implementation & Monitoring", it mainly focuses on how communicators track the progress of communication activities. This section elaborates further on monitoring, aiming to clarify **two entirely different aspects of monitoring that need attention in the context of behavior change communication using the PAOT method.**

(a) *Monitoring the implementation of behaviours registered by households* is a form of tracking good practices as well as monitoring behaviour changes.

The purpose of monitoring behaviour changes among targeted groups in programs utilizing the PAOT method is similar to other approaches: to provide timely support, help participants overcome barriers to behaviour change and sustain the adoption of new behaviours. The accompanying image illustrates the stages of behaviour change and the role of communicators[13].

(b) *Monitoring the progress of communicators and their coming to households for communication activities:*
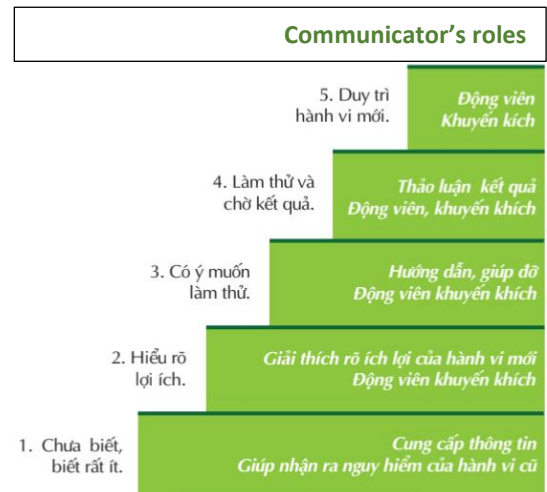
Based on the agreed plan and targets with the communicators, the project management staff conducted monitoring through statistics from the online data entry system or required communicators to submit periodic reports or organized periodic meetings of communicator teams or groups.

Monitoring methods and tools previously used in PAOT

In cases without access to computers: Communicators record information in logbooks and, during reporting periods, transcribe the data into pre-printed report forms. Staff responsible for monitoring and evaluating communication activities consolidate data from communicators' reports to compile a comprehensive report for the entire communication network. In such cases, the report templates are designed to be simple, primarily allowing for the recording and counting of whether a behaviour (message/solution) **is implemented or is not implemented** (□ Yes / □ No). See the checkboxes on page 8.

In cases with computers but without an online information storage system (e.g., Google Drive): Printed or handwritten reports submitted by communicators were manually entered into a computer. In locations with computer access, communicators could directly input data into a pre-designed Excel file and then share the file via email or by copying it to the relevant reporting department. With Excel's functionality, processes like data compilation, analysis, and comparison become faster and more convenient. However, for monitoring and supervising personnel, data entry becomes labour-intensive, particularly when a large number of households are reached through communication activities.

In cases with computers and an online information storage system: Reports are designed as Excel files shared via a Google Drive URL or Google Sheets. All participants input their data into a single, shared online file.

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[13]Refer to the images in the Handbook on Health Behavior Change Communication by the Center for Community Health Research and Support

In the era of smartphones and wireless internet (3G, 4G, 5G, or Wi-Fi): Manual monitoring of household performance is becoming less common. The main shift is that information is entered into a database via mobile applications. Monitoring personnel rely on the data in the database to periodically compile and analyse results. When communicators input data directly into the database, it significantly reduces the effort and manpower required for data entry into computers for processing. Data can be entered immediately during household visits or later by communicators, based on notes recorded in their logbooks.

Application of the PAOT method in Hue city within the TVA project:

(c) To monitor the behaviour registered by households and provided timely support, after each visit, communicators carefully recorded the information regarding the behaviour registered/implemented by the households in **their logbooks**. They then entered the information into the online database using **the online data entry form, designed with the functionality of Kobotoolbox**, as outlined in Section 0, page 10. During the communication campaign, communicators and households had regular opportunities to meet, exchange information, share results, and requested assistance when needed.

(d) The methods for doing this were clearly outlined in Section 0, page 16 during the pilot phase and Section 0, page 21 during the large-scale communication phase.

The monitoring tools used by the TVA project combined the use of handwritten logbooks and online data entry forms via smartphone applications. However, it is not mandatory to have an online data entry form in order to implement PAOT. Please refer to Section 0, page 25 to determine the appropriate monitoring method when implementing communication activities using the PAOT method.

EVALUATION

Similar to MONITORING, EVALUATION is essential and indispensable for any program, project, event, or plan. Evaluation serves many purposes, but the most significant are: "providing lessons learned and highlighting meaningful successes" and most importantly, "promoting and honouring the work of all participants by showcasing the achievements they have worked hard to accomplish, inspiring further action, and unlocking potential resources." The evaluation methods or indicators depend on the requirements outlined in the project document or plan. However, it is crucial to define indicators to be evaluated at the very beginning.

Application of the PAOT method in Hue city within the TVA project:

The key indicators for monitoring and evaluation identified by the TVA Project were established at the time of designing the Checklists, Logbooks, and online data entry forms. These indicators include:

- Baseline status of household implementation for each behaviour prior to communication activities:
  ☐ Yes / ☐ No
- Registration status of households for implementing each behaviour:
  ☐ Yes / ☐ No
- Implementation results of households after each communicator's/project officer's visit for each behaviour:
  ☐ Yes / ☐ No
- Conventions for measuring the frequency of household actions to reduce SUPs, enabling the calculation of reduced plastic waste.

  See CHAPTER 4 – RESULTS & LESSONS LEARNED for further insights into the evaluation and analysis applied by the TVA Project using the PAOT method.

CHAPTER III – ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER III – ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

1   SUMMARY OF THE PAOT APPLICATION IN COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES IN HUE CITY

1.1 Methods

In each communication phase, the TVA Project followed a **6-step** process as shown in the diagram below (for the details of each step, please read the entire Chapter II). However, the steps of how the communication activities were implemented throughout each of the three phases of the TVA Project were different as follows:

- Step 1: Phase 1 – tools development; Phase 2 and 3, tools adjustment

- Step 2: In Phases 2 and 3, more personnels were needed compared to Phase 1 due to the expansion of the targeted communication areas.

- Step 3: The selection/recruitment of communicators depended on the project areas, the selection process was not different in each phase, the only difference was the expansion of the targeted areas.

Tools development/ Tools adjustment 1	→	Human resources connecting - Recruitment of communicators 2	→	Communicator training - Development of communication plans 3	→	Implementation of communication activities to every household 4
Implementation monitoring 5	→	Interim/Final review of implementation results 6				

Step 4: When communicating with each household, the activities remained consistent across all three phases. That is, direct communication, including three official visits, was carried out at the households. However, the communicators could visit the households at any time to support them in implementing their registered behaviors as per the checklist, the "unofficial" visit was subject to the convenience and relationship between the households and the communicators. The content that needed to be communicated in three visits to the households included:

-    The first visit: promote and encourage the households to register for participation.

-    The second visit: visit, discuss the advantages and difficulties, encourage the practice, record changes, if any.

-    The third visit: record the results and encourage the households to continue the practice.

Step 5: The implementation monitoring was integrated into Step 4 of all three phases. That is, when visiting a household for the first time, the communicators observed and recorded the household's situation at the time of communication. During the second visit, besides communicating, asking questions and encouraging the practice, the communicators recorded the changes of the household compared to the first visit. During the third visit, the final implementation results of the household were recorded. The information recorded during each visit could be written in a logbook or filled in an online template. For the TVA Project, in all three phases, the communicators took notes in logbooks at the household and then entered the information into the database later, however, they had to ensure the time frame for completing the target number of households **committed** to the TVA project.

Step 6: Interim/Final review. Each phase of the TVA project had an interim review. The final review of all three phases was organized by the TVA Project at the end of November 2024. (For details, please see Chapter II)

1.2 Tools used for communication

Necessary tools for Step 4, and Step 5:

- Checklist (posted/hung in each household)
- Logbook (at least one logbook per communicator)
- Online data entry template on Kobotoolbox website for entering information of each household during each visit.

To better understand the method and communication tools applied by the TVA Project through the communication phases, please see details in **Chapter II**.

2 OUTCOMES

Presentation scope: The results of communication with the households

2.1 Targeted communication areas

Large coverage area: Regarding the communication applying the PAOT method with households as target audience, the TVA Project reached almost throughout Hue City, although the number of households reached depended on the human resources status of each ward/commune. Starting from 04 wards/communes in the pilot phase (May 2023 to September 2023), the communication targeted area gradually expanded to 27 other wards/communes. **By the end of September 2023, the communication coverage percentage was 86.1% (31/36 administrative units of wards and communes).** Please refer to the tables below for the names of the wards and communes participating in the PAOT-based communication within the TVA Project.

2.2 Extent of communication to each household

Figure 1: Number of households communicated in three phases
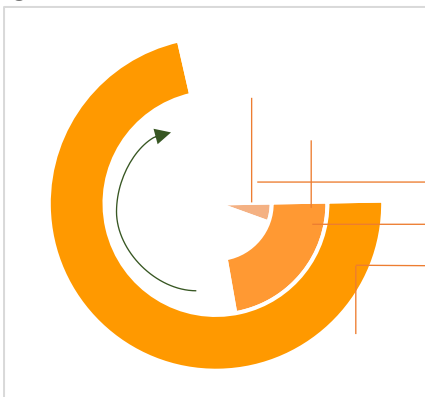
The number of households communicated gradually increased in each phase.

| Phase 1 (pilot): Started with **907 households** |
| Phase 2: Accelerated **to 3,347 households** |
| Phase 3: Finished with **10,928 households** |
| Total number of households communicated about WSAS and SUPs reduction by the end of September 2024 was: **15,182**. |

The number of households communicated varied by commune or ward due to the application of a participatory, flexible approach subject to local resources, no need for equal number of households or imposed quotas.

Figure 2: Number of households communicated - statistics by ward/commune
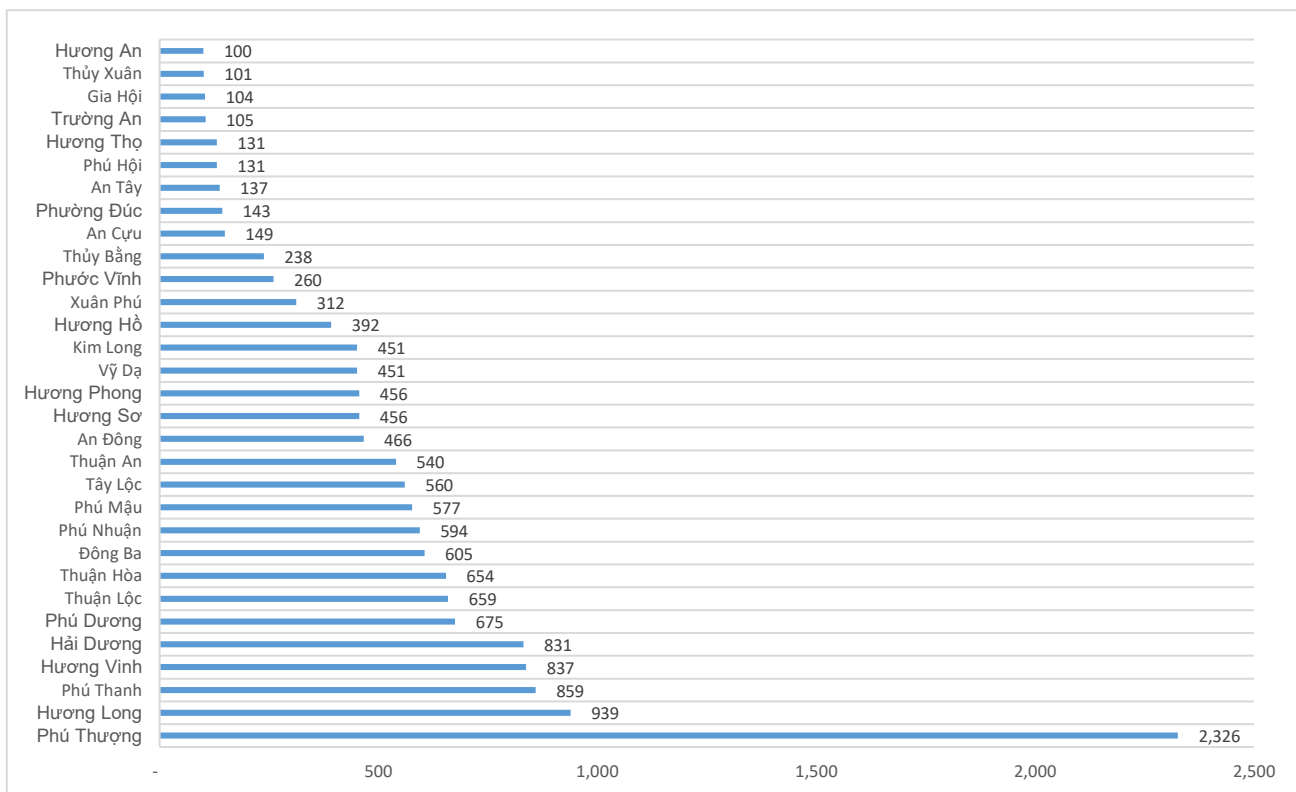
Phu Thuong Ward participated right at the pilot phase, always acted as a pioneering ward with high targets, that is why Phu Thuong Ward reached the finish line with 2,326 households communicated. Due to the gradual outreach strategy, some wards/communes participated in the final phase, so, the number of households communicated was lower than others.

In Phase 3, the number of visits to households was better implemented by communicators. According to the communication plan, each household would be visited three times by communicators as presented in section 1.1, but the household visit schedule in the pilot phase and Phase 2 did not meet the plan, for many different reasons. In Phase 3, the number of households visited three times was clearly improved in each ward and commune.

The benefits of making three visits were reflected in the aspect of: observing changes from not implementing to implementing and gaining additional insights into changes in the quality of implementation, such as implementation habits (frequency), implementation methods. When there is time and the conditions to observe changes within the community, it will be discovered that the community is always creative in its approach to problem-solving.

The total number of household visits during the communication program (three phases) was: **44,251. The percentage of households visited three times as per the program's design reached: 95.8% for the entire program.** Upon statistical review of each ward/commune, the lowest percentage of households with three visits was 87.3%, and the highest was 100%. Only two wards/communes had the percentage of below 90% of households visited three times.

Figure 3: Percentage of visiting the households three times - statistics by ward/commune

Ward/Commune	Percentage
Phú Dương	87.3%
Thuận An	88.9%
Hải Dương	90.5%
An Cựu	91.7%
Phú Thanh	93.0%
Phú Thượng	93.1%
An Tây	93.9%
Hương Vinh	94.5%
Hương Long	94.5%
Phường Đúc	95.6%
Phước Vĩnh	96.2%
Thủy Bằng	96.8%
Hương Thọ	97.2%
Trường An	97.5%
Tây Lộc	98.5%
Phú Mậu	98.6%
Thuận Hòa	98.7%
Hương Sơ	99.0%
An Đông	99.1%
Hương Hồ	99.1%
Phú Hội	99.2%
Thuận Lộc	99.4%
Phú Nhuận	99.5%
Đông Ba	99.5%
Xuân Phú	99.6%
Vỹ Dạ	99.7%
Kim Long	99.8%
Hương Phong	99.8%
Thủy Xuân	100.0%
Hương An	100.0%
Gia Hội	100.0%

2.3 Mobilized human resources

During the communication with the community in all three phases, **the human resources for communication were widely developed in grassroots units. 612 communicators were mobilized from the departments and organizations** of 31 wards and communes in Hue City**,** with members from the Women's Union, the Veterans Association, and the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, playing a key role. Of which, there were 529 communicators (86.44%) in charge of communicating with households and 83 communicators (13.56%) in charge of communicating with businesses, however, these two groups could support each other if necessary.

86.44%

Communicators   13.56%
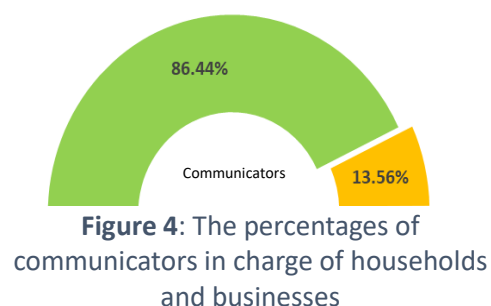
Figure 4: The percentages of communicators in charge of households and businesses

Figure 5: Network of mobilized communicators in the PAOT program.
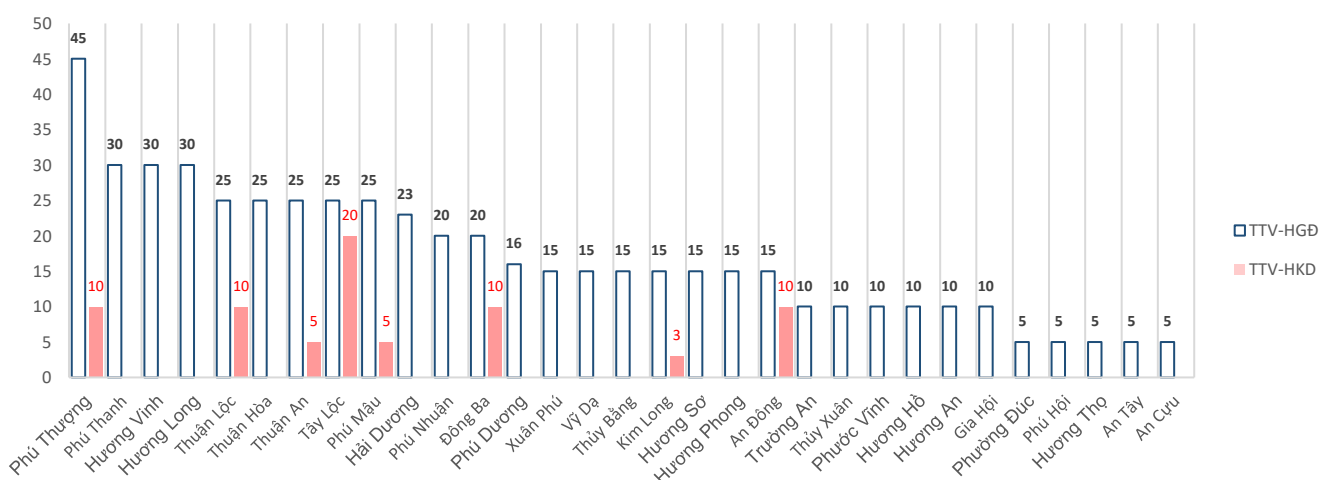
When participating in training and seminars, the communicators were updated with knowledge related to WSAS and SUPs reduction. Particularly with the PAOT method, its history and development, the areas where PAOT method has been applied, as well as the principles that need to be followed when applying the PAOT

method in community behavior change communication were shared to the communicators. In addition to theoretical content, the communicators got to practice in class and at the household on direct communication skills, how to use checklists when communicating, and how to use handwritten (offline) logbooks and online templates to record information about the good practice of the households.

2.4 Behavior change results

The statistical results presented in section 2.2 show that the number of households communicated in all three phases of the program was **15,182, with a total of 44,251 visits.** However, there were some difficulties in synthesizing data from all three phases to conduct a detailed analysis of the results for each behavior, i.e., the content and order of the behaviors changed when the content of the checklist was modified in each phase. In addition, in Phases 1 and 2, the number of households visited three times could not be accurately tracked due to household identification codes not being strictly controlled when entering information. Many household identification codes were entered incorrectly, which led to difficulties in synchronizing data between visits. When implementing Phase 3, the problems related to data statistics were effectively solved. Therefore, the data from Phase 3 was the most comprehensive. For this reason, the Phase 3 data were used to analyze and share the achieved results, demonstrating the effectiveness of behavior change communication. Specifically, 10,750 households were visited three times, and 15,182 households were communicated with across all three phases, which is equivalent to 70.54% of the total number of households. This means that the number of households communicated with in Phase 3 were visited three times, reaching 70.54% of the total number of households communicated with in all three phases.

The information and data used for analyzing the results, as presented above, are obtained from records based on the checklist contents used for communication with each household.

Table 4: List of behaviors (HV) communicated – printed on the checklist – HOUSEHOLD

WASTE SEPARATION AT SOURCE			
HV- 1	Separate hazardous waste -> SEPARATE COLLECTION	HV-4	Dispose of trash: on schedule, in designated area - DO NOT LITTER
HV-2	Separate RECYCLABLES (plastic, paper, cardboard, metal and glass) => USE / GIVE AWAY / SELL	HV-5	Contact for SEPARATE collection of construction waste, animal carcasses, bulky waste => DO NOT DISPOSE with household waste.
HV-3	Separate ORGANIC waste (kitchen waste, garden waste, leftovers) => MAKE USE OF / GIVE AWAY	HV-6	Put PLASTIC waste (non-recyclable/non-reusable) into the CORRECT bin - DO NOT BURN
PLASTIC REDUCTION ACCORDING TO THE 5R1C RULE			
HV-7	REFUSE/ REDUCE plastic bags and use baskets/bags when going to the market or shopping	HV-9	Participate in Green Sunday, promote environmental protection in the community
HV-8	REFUSE/ REDUCE SINGLE-USE PLASTICS => USE personal items (reusable food containers, water bottles, straws)		

- Improving the content of checklists, logbooks, and especially digitizing data entry tools made it simpler, more concise and more effective to communicate to the households and engage the household's participation:

± The percentage of all households visited three times in Phase 3 was 98.37% (10,750 households visited three times out of 10,928 households communicated in Phase 3). Thus, the number of visits to households was better than in Phases 1 and 2, although it did not reach the expected 100%.

± The majority of households participating in the PAOT program tended to change and begin the good practice of certain behaviors or continue to maintain and implement them at a higher frequency for behaviors they were already practicing if they have not yet implemented such behaviors. The percentage of good practice recorded during the third visit was very close to the target percentage set when encouraging their participation in the PAOT program.

± The results could be reviewed for each household because, in Phase 3, the household identification codes were strictly managed and verified from the beginning, and timely adjustments were made throughout the implementation monitoring process. The number of households was reviewed, compared, and only those households that were visited three times were included in the statistical list and analyzed.

The analysis results of each behavior are summarized by the following content:

2.4.1 Changes in waste collection, separation and treatment behaviors according to instructions

☑ **The number of households with good practice in collecting, separating and treating waste according to instructions <u>increased</u> after the PAOT communication program.**

2.4.1.1 Regarding hazardous waste, recyclables, organic waste

Communication messages include:

HV-1: Separate hazardous waste -> SEPARATE COLLECTION
± 1A- Separate HAZARDOUS waste (such as chemicals, flammable and explosive substances, infectious waste, electronic waste, old batteries, etc.)
± 1B-Put the waste into the ORANGE bin at the city's designated waste separation locations (if available)

HV-2: Separate RECYCLABLES (plastic, paper, cardboard, metal and glass) => MAKE USE OF/GIVE AWAY/SELL
± 2A- Separate recyclables (plastic, paper, cardboard, metal, etc.), clean, fold, and label.
± 2B- Separate glass waste, put neatly, wrap sharp objects, and label.
± 2C- Put the waste into the correct bin at the city's designated waste separation locations (if available) □ WHITE bin (for plastic, paper, cardboard, metal, etc.) □ GREY bin (for glass).
± 2D- Donate or sell scrap.
± 2E- Donate to local "Green House" models.
± 2F- Reuse or make use of boxes, crates, packaging for other purposes (storage, decoration, toys, gardening tools…).

HV-3: SEPARATE ORGANIC waste (kitchen waste, garden waste, leftover food) => MAKE USE OF/GIVE AWAY
± 3A- Save for people who collect leftovers or feed livestock and poultry
± 3B- Make fertilizer or do composting
± 3C- Make enzyme cleaners

Table 5: Number of households with good practice in collecting, separating, and treating hazardous waste, recyclables, and organic waste

Visit	Number of households										
	HV-1A	HV-1B	HV-2A	HV-2B	HV-2C	HV-2D	HV-2E	HV-2F	HV-3A	HV-3B	HV-3C
First visit	**6,626**	**5,367**	**9,104**	**7,565**	**5,636**	**10,088**	**5,980**	**6,093**	**8,693**	**2,204**	**1,399**
Second visit	10,529	9,851	10,646	10,516	9,913	10,492	8,805	8,633	9,914	4,376	3,726
Third visit	**10,710**	**10,283**	**10,727**	**10,692**	**10,222**	**10,594**	**9,250**	**9,174**	**10,034**	**5,168**	**4,463**
Register for implementing the behaviors [14]	10,728	10,554	10,733	10,718	10,584	10,538	9,704	9,131	10,080	5,943	5,805
Commit themselves to implementing the behaviors	10,693	10,278	10,639	10,598	10,208	10,578	9,220	9,103	9,985	5,114	4,443

To easily understand and compare the level of good practice of each of the above waste separation behaviors, see the following chart:

Figure 6: Percentage of households with good practice in collecting, separating, and treating hazardous waste, recyclables, and organic waste
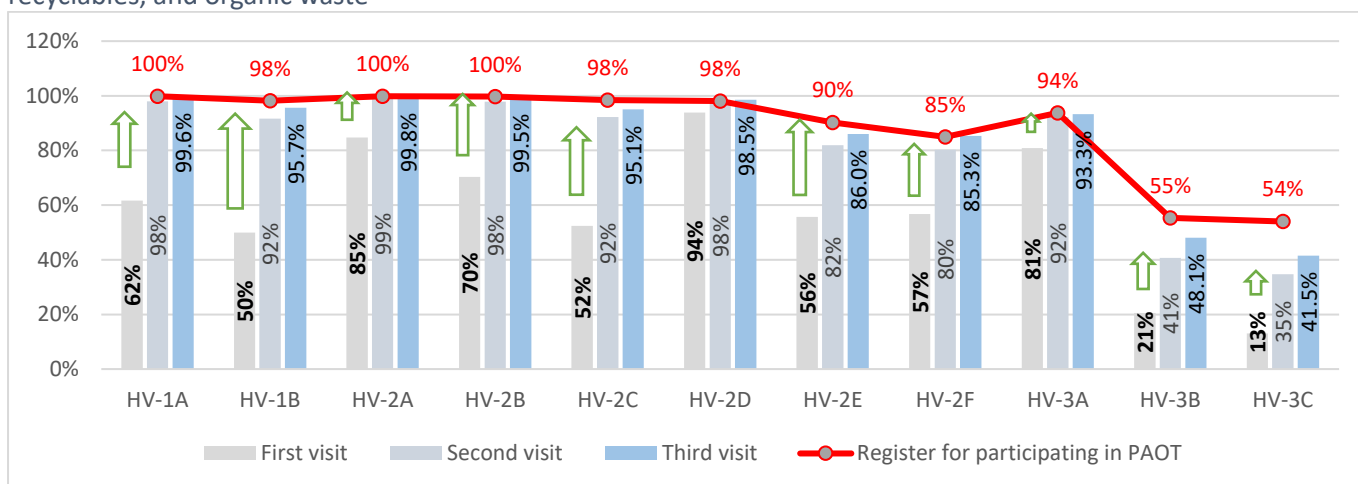
All behaviors were well implemented, almost reaching the registered level. Each behavior had different quantitative changes, depending on the commitments of the households, for example, with the HV-2D behavior - Donate or sell scrap, the increase in the number of households implementing it was lower than other behaviors, because their starting point was already very good. For behaviors HV-1B, HV-2C, HV-2E, HV-2F, the change in the number of households implementing well was between 30% and 40%. Regarding the HV-3C behavior - Make enzyme cleaners, it also showed a positive change in the number of households participating, although not all households had the conditions to implement the behavior. This is why the implementation percentage did not reach the registered target.

2.4.1.2 Regarding collection and treatment of other types of waste

Communication messages include:

HV-4: Dispose of trash: on schedule, in the designated area - do not litter

HV-5: Separate, contact for separate collection of construction waste, animal carcasses, bulky waste - do not mix with household waste

HV-6: Put plastic waste (non-recyclable/non-reusable) in the trash bin - do not burn

Table 6: Number of households with good practice in treating other types of waste

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[14] Registered for implementing the behaviors: means that the household agrees to register to implement the behaviors as per the checklist, in this section, behaviors from HV-1A to HV-3C

| Visit	Number of households		
	HV-4	HV-5	HV-6
First visit	**10,698**	**7,924**	**9,589**
Second visit	10,724	10,393	10,687
Third visit	**10,745**	**10,593**	**10,729**
Register for implementing the behaviors[15]	10,739	10,689	10,705
Commit themselves to implementing the behaviors	10,725	10,568	10,710

As for the **HV-4** behavior **-** Dispose of waste on schedule and in the designated area, it achieved a good practice percentage, reaching nearly 100% at the time of communication.

As for the **HV-5** behavior **-** Separate and dispose of bulky waste, construction waste, animal carcasses and many more, some households were recorded as not implementing this behavior, not because they disagreed with it, but because during this period, these households did not have bulky waste.

As for the **HV-6** behavior **-** do not burn plastic waste (non-reusable, non-recyclable waste), there were 23 households burning waste, occasionally burning plastic waste along with other waste. These households were explained and reminded by the communicators.

Figure 7: The percentage of households with good practice in treating waste according to instructions
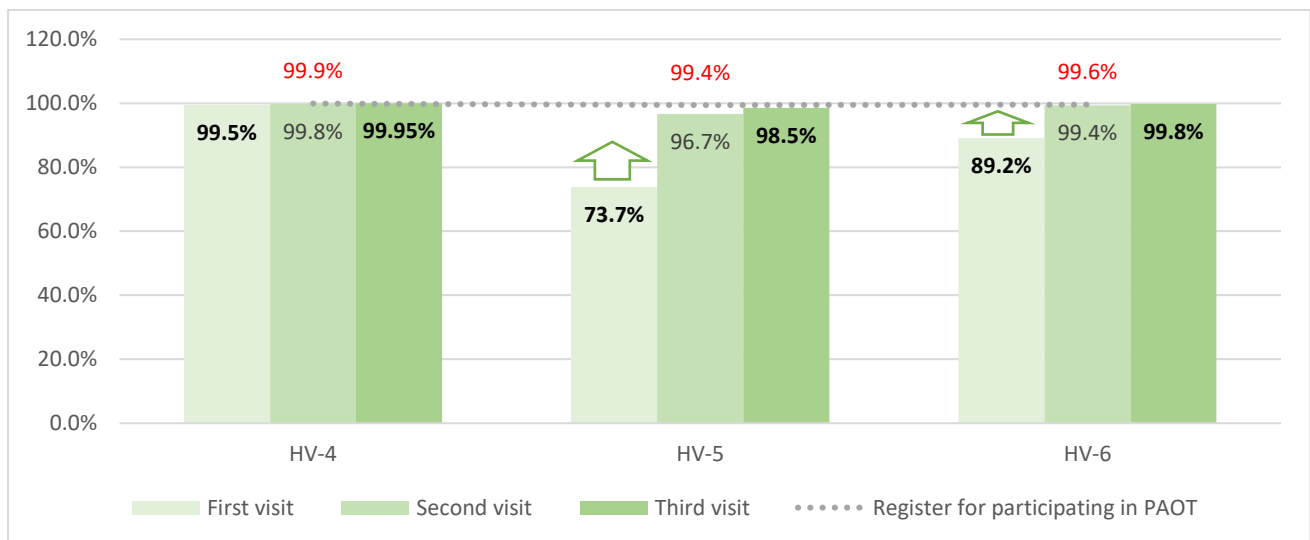
The HV-4, HV-5, HV-6 behaviors achieved the implementation percentages as per the registered percentages, with high implementation percentages ranging from 99% to 100%. Especially for the **HV-4** behavior, the good implementation percentage already reached at the beginning of the communication.

2.4.1.3 Regarding the method of waste separation at source - treating waste according to instructions

All started with the distribution of color-coded WSAS bag sets to households in the wards/communes during the implementation of communication campaigns for participation in the PAOT method, which served as a reminder, encouragement, and motivation to promote the practice of WSAS. In addition, the alignment between the bag colors and the colors of the trash bins along with the illustration of the corresponding waste group was very useful for everyone to easily recognize and put trash in the right bin.

Although there were many opinions suggesting that the size of the bags was not large enough to accommodate the amount of waste after sorting at the households, the fact that the bag set was a 'catalyst' for behavior change is recognized by all; for example, as noted from Kim Long Ward: *'the provision of three waste-sorting bags to every household contributed very positively to changing the habit of WSAS of each family member. When facing the issue that "the bags provided were smaller than the amount of garbage,"* and the households themselves were able to come **up with innovative solutions** suitable to their actual conditions and needs. The

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[15] Households register to implement the behaviors from HV-4 to HV-6

search for solutions and initiatives to implement WSAS above shows the *positivity and continuous improvement* of PAOT method in actual situation of the localities, for example:

- ± Provide bins and bags large enough to sort and contain trash.
- ± Use plastic bottles/boxes to store batteries and other small hazardous waste.
- ± Use cardboard boxes, plastic baskets, and burlap bags for recycling.
- ± Make wooden bins containing trash (cans, iron boxes, buckets, barrels, toys, glass bottles, etc.).
- ± Use paint cans and plastic buckets to store leftover food for livestock farmers.
- ± Kitchen (organic) waste is often thrown away with the rest of the waste (some households separate it to make organic fertilizer, bury it under trees and wait for it to decompose into compost, or make enzyme cleaners and so on.

The habit of *separating and collecting hazardous waste separately*, especially used batteries, was often mentioned and was a new behavior that the project communicated. Thanks to that, people understand that batteries contain toxic substances that pollute water and soil. Collecting used batteries, which is easy to do without costing much, is a good behavior that contributes to environmental protection. Collecting and generating income from recyclables has transformed into a more meaningful, social and humane activity. That is, recyclables collected from the 'Green House' campaign of the Women's Union, or the recyclables collection campaign of the Youth Union are sold to raise money for charity funds, and education encouragement funds at the residential groups.

Processing organic waste by composting and making enzyme cleaners are two methods depending on the actual needs and living conditions of the households. These activities were introduced to households by key members of the Farmers' Association and the Women's Union after they participated in training courses on composting techniques and making biological detergents (enzyme cleaners).

When the communicators conducted communication at the households, they usually met only 1 or 2 people in the household. After that, the individuals who received the information w*ould be responsible for reminding other family members to implement the practices, thereby helping the whole family establish good habits.*

Some households found that communication activities about WSAS and SUPs reduction in the residential groups attracted more attention than television programs. This suggests that communication is more effective when it is approached in a friendlier manner, tailored to the audience and their living environment.

2.4.2 Changes to plastic reduction behaviors according to the 5R1C rule

(Refuse - Reduce - Reuse - Recycle - Replace - Collect)

HV-7 - Reduce/refuse plastic bags and use baskets/bags when going to the market and shopping

± 7A – Refuse or reduce plastic bags when shopping.

± 7B - Prioritize purchasing products with reusable, environmentally friendly packaging.

± 7C - Use shopping baskets/bags.

HV-8 - Reduce/refuse SUPs & use personal items (reusable food containers, water bottles, straws)

Table 7: Number of households with good practice in SUPs reduction

Visit	Number of households			
	HV-7A	HV-7B	HV-7C	HV-8
First visit	8,824	9,090	9,297	9,054
Second visit	10,546	9,837	10,433	10,501
Third visit	10,556	10,639	10,586	10,607
Register for implementing the behaviors[16]	10,713	10,690	10,666	10,697
Commit themselves to implementing the behaviors	10,531	10,607	10,557	10,586

All 3 behaviors, HV-7A, HV-7B, HV-7C, at the time of calling households to participate in PAOT, many households had implemented beforehand, as a result, the good practice percentage reached from 82% to 86%.

Figure 8: Percentage of households with good practice in SUPs reduction
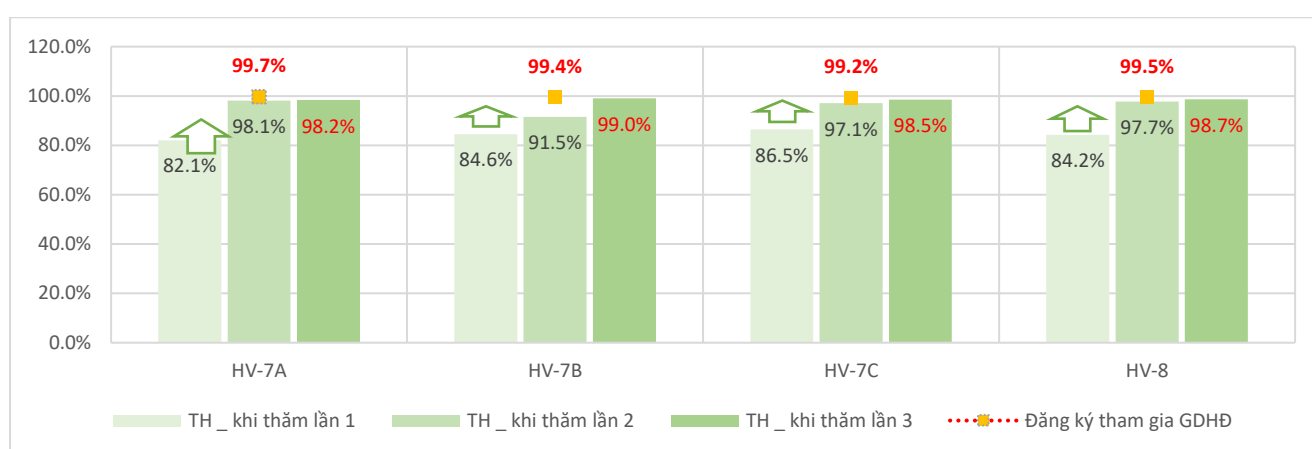
Next, the percentage of households agreeing to register was high, almost absolute, **99% for all three behaviors of the HV-7.** When recording the results, as for **the HV-7B behavior**, the implementation percentage was approximately 99% of the registered percentage, almost absolute, compared to the number of participating households visited three times. The **HV-7C** behavior **(use bags/baskets to go shopping)** also had an implementation percentage close to the registered percentage, implementing 98.5% while the registered percentage was 99.2%. The reason is that some households still depend on the plastic bags of the vendors, do not like to use baskets to go to the market; buy little food, so they go to the market "empty-handed", then use plastic bags to carry the items home, which is more convenient.

For the **HV-8** behavior**,** the percentage of households implementing immediately at the time of communication was 84%, during the third visit, it was recorded that the implementation percentage was 98.7%, almost reaching the registered percentage of 99.5%. The good practice percentage increased by about 15%. Communicators recorded that the majority of households were very aware that eating food in styrofoam boxes or plastic bags, especially hot food, would affect their health. Some households were recorded as **not using** personal items when buying food and drinks because they ate and drank at the restaurant using glass cups, and ceramic bowls of the restaurant. And some households refused to participate because the family did not have the habit of using personal items to buy take-out food.

 Cost savings and health benefits also contribute to facilitating plastic reduction, as seen when *"households prioritize buying large-capacity cleaning products for gradual use mainly to save costs'*, they may not intend to reduce plastic use when making the decision, but this behavior inadvertently helps reduce the use of many
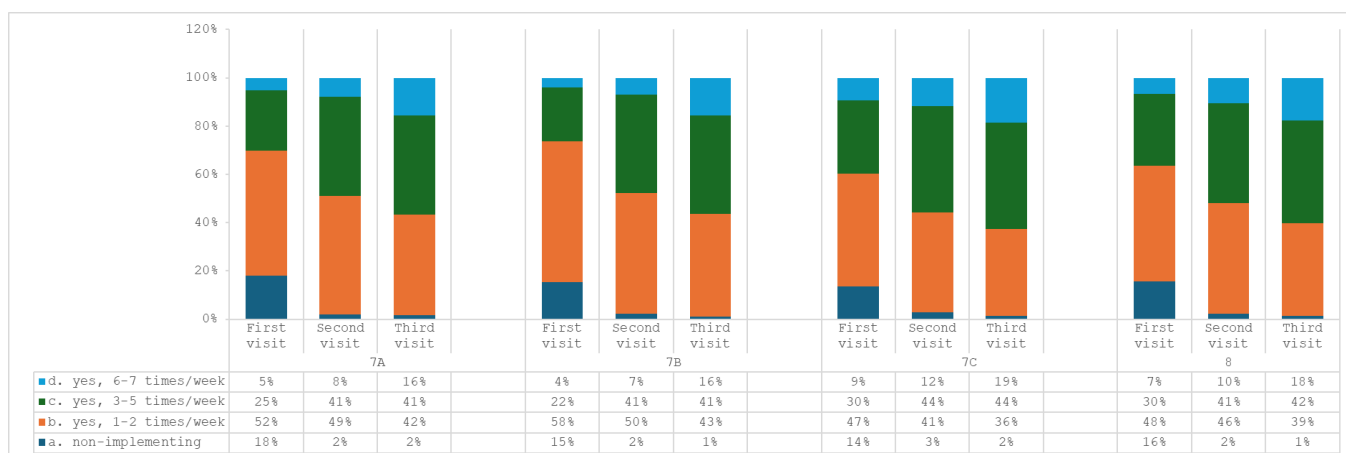
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[16] Register to implement behaviors from HV-7A to HV-8

small-capacity plastic bottles and jars. Regarding hot food, many households have switched to using reusable food containers instead of storing food in plastic bags/containers after being informed about the health benefits related to SUPs reduction.

Regarding reuse and recycling, the households had many ways to suit the needs of use, such as *using labeled cardboard boxes to contain reusable plastic bags, using 5-liter barrels (oil, dishwashing liquid, etc.) as water buckets or to water plants, etc. Both of these ways* save money and reduce the amount of plastic waste released into the environment.

II   Good practice frequency

Figure 9: Frequency of implementing SUPs reduction behaviors

	First visit	Second visit	Third visit		First visit	Second visit	Third visit		First visit	Second visit	Third visit		First visit	Second visit	Third visit
		7A				7B				7C				8	
d. yes, 6-7 times/week	5%	8%	16%		4%	7%	16%		9%	12%	19%		7%	10%	18%
c. yes, 3-5 times/week	25%	41%	41%		22%	41%	41%		30%	44%	44%		30%	41%	42%
b. yes, 1-2 times/week	52%	49%	42%		58%	50%	43%		47%	41%	36%		48%	46%	39%
a. non-implementing	18%	2%	2%		15%	2%	1%		14%	3%	2%		16%	2%	1%

Regarding HV-7, as shown in this chart, in all three behaviors HV-7A, HV-7B, HV-7C, the percentage of practice frequency of **3-5 times/week** (level c), **and 6-7 times/week** (level d) **increased**, while the practice frequency of 1-2 times/week decreased, it is **most clearly seen at the reduction in the percentage of non-implementing households** (level a) **from about 14-18% down to 1-2%.**

Similar to the HV-7, in **the HV-8**, the percentage of practice frequency of 3-5 times/week (level c) increased; at the time of registration, it was 29%; during the second visit, it increased to 41% and during the third visit, it was 42%. The percentage of practice frequency of 6-7 times/week (level d), also increased, from 7% when called for engagement, then increased to 11% and 18% during the second and third visits, respectively. The percentage of practice frequency of 1-2 times/week (level b), decreased from 48% to 39%, a decrease of 10%. The percentage of not implementing (level a) decreased from 16% to 1%.

To better understand the increase and decrease in frequency of implementing HV-7A, HV-7B, HV-7C, and HV-8 behaviors, please refer to the following chart:

Figure 10: Comparison of changes in frequency of implementing SUPs reduction behaviors
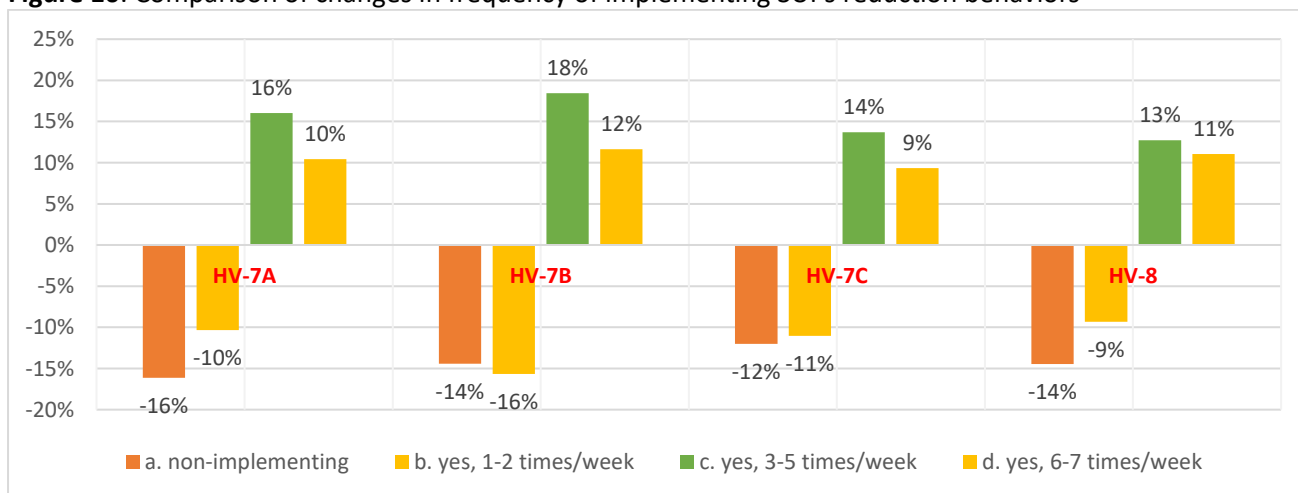
The chart above clearly shows a decrease in the percentage of practice frequency, level a (not implementing), level b (1-2 times/week), while shows an increase in the percentage of practice frequency, level c (3-5 times/week) and level d (6-7 times/week).

III   The number of SUPs reduced

IV   The number of plastic bags reduced

Table 8: Number of households implementing by frequency - **HV-7**

Behavior	Household visit	Number of households implementing by frequency - HV-7 (households)				Total number of households visited
		a. not implementing	b. 1-2 times/week	c. 3-5 times/week	d. 6-7 times/week	
HV-7A	1st visit	1,926	5,580	2,690	554	10,750
	2nd visit	204	5,285	4.404	857	10,750
	3rd visit	194	4,467	4.414	1.675	10,750
HV-7B	1st visit	1,660	6.253	2,404	433	10,750
	2nd visit	230	5.403	4,366	751	10,750
	3rd visit	111	4,569	4,385	1,685	10,750
HV-7C	1st visit	1,453	5,045	3,248	1,004	10,750
	2nd visit	317	4,448	4,734	1,251	10,750
	3rd visit	164	3,858	4,721	2.007	10,750

Table 9: The calculation of the number of plastic bags reduced
- Conversion method for the HV-7:
  - 1-2 times/week = reduce 1 plastic bag
  - 3-5 times/week = reduce 3 plastic bags
  - 6-7 times/week = reduce 6 plastic bags

Behavior	Household visit	Converted plastic bags reduced (bags)			Total (bags)
		b. 1-2 times/week	c. 3-5 times/week	d. 6-7 times/week	
HV-7A	1st visit	5,580	8,070	3.324	16,974
	2nd visit	5,285	13,212	5.142	23,639
	3rd visit	4,467	13,242	10,050	27,759
HV-7B	1st visit	6.253	7,212	2,598	16,063
	2nd visit	5.403	13,098	4,506	23,007
	3rd visit	4,569	13,155	10,110	27,834
HV-7C	1st visit	5,045	9,744	3.012	17,801
	2nd visit	4,448	14,202	3,753	22,403
	3rd visit	3,858	14,163	6.021	24,042
Total					**199,522**

➢ **The amount of plastic bags reduced is 199,522.**

Table 10: Comparison of the number of plastic bags reduced through household visits

Household visit	Bag reduced	Reduction rate at the 2nd visit compared to 1st visit (%)	Reduction rate at the 3rd visit compared to 1st visit (%)
1st visit	50,838		
2nd visit	69,049	9.13%	14.4%
3rd visit	79,635		

・ The reduction rate of bag usage during the second visit compared to the first visit was: 9.13%
・ The reduction rate of bag usage during the third visit compared to the first visit was: 14.14%

V   The number of SUPs reduced

Table 11: Practice frequency of households – **HV-8**

Household visit	Practice frequency of household implementing HV-8 / household visit (household)				Total
	a. not implementing	b. 1-2 times/week	c. 3-5 times/week	d. 6-7 times/week	
1st visit	1,696	5,148	3,183	723	10,750
2nd visit	249	4,931	4,447	1.123	10,750
3rd visit	143	4.144	4,552	1.911	10,750

Table 12: The calculation of SUPs reduced

According to conversion, for the HV-8 (**use reusable food containers, water bottles, straws as an alternative**)

・   1-2 times/week = reduce 1 time of SUPs use
・   3-5 times/week = reduce 3 times of SUPs use
・   6-7 times/week = reduce 6 times of SUPs use

Household visit	Converted SUPs reduced (equivalent to times of SUPs use)			Total
	b. 1-2 times/week	c. 3-5 times/week	d. 6-7 times/ week	
1st visit	5,148	9,549	4,338	19,035
2nd visit	4,931	13,341	6,738	25,010
3rd visit	4.144	13,656	11,466	29,266
Total				**73,311**

➤ **SUPs were reduced by 73,311 (equivalent to times of SUPs use).**

2.4.3   Changes in participation in Green Sunday, environmental protection communication in the community (HV9)

Table 13: Number of households participating in Green Sunday, promoting environmental protection in the community

Visit	Number of households
1st visit	7,067
2nd visit	9,409
3rd visit	9,612
Register for implementing behaviors[17]	9,946
Commit themselves to implementing behaviors	9,588

The percentage of households that implemented well during the call for engagement was 65.7%, the registered percentage was 93%. During the third visit to the households, the number of households that implemented well was 89%, also close to the registered percentage.

Figure 11: Percentage of households participating in Green Sunday, promoting environmental protection in the community
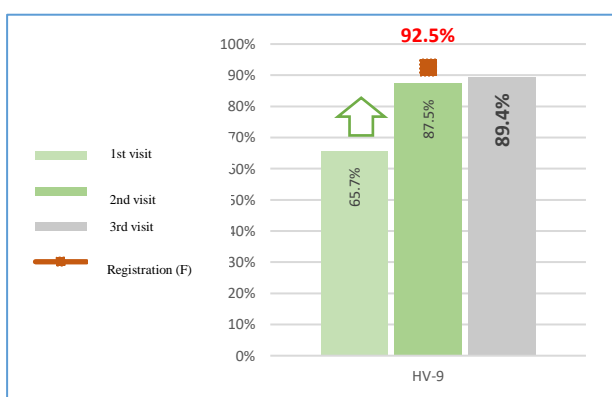
Some households did not join due to the lack of time while other households stated that the areas around their houses were always clean. Communicators reported that although some households had taken action, the frequency of their participation in Green Sunday and level of engagement remained low.

3   ADVANTAGES & OBSTACLES

3.1   Advantages

The activities implemented within the TVA Project in general and the contents of messages in the PAOT communication program in particular **are completely consistent with the policies that have been carrying out in Viet Nam and Hue City.**

Vietnam, along with many countries around the world, has committed to taking strong action, outlining a clear roadmap to gradually reduce plastic waste. Specifically, according to Decree No. 08/2022/ND-CP, from January 01, 2026, there will be no production or import of non-biodegradable plastic bags with dimensions smaller than 50cm x 50cm in Viet Nam. After December 31, 2030, it will be prohibited to produce and import single-use plastics, non-biodegradable plastic packaging, and items containing microplastics (Tạp chí điện tử Môi trường và Cuộc sống, n.d.).

In Hue City, the Provincial Party Committee issued Directive No. 24-CT/TU launching the campaign "All people join hands to build Thua Thien Hue into a bright - green - clean - zero plastic waste province", and implementing the project "Green Sunday". The Women's Union of Hue City cooperated with the Women's Unions of other provinces and cities to promote the implementation of "Bringing your own baskets to the market" and "Green house" Programs.

In addition, **the PAOT Communication Program on WSAS and SUPs reduction according to the 5R1C Rule bring many benefits to the community**, creating a better living environment as well as reducing waste pollution. Therefore, the PAOT Communication Program has received support from the majority of households in the community. "Our desire is *to protect the natural environment where we live, keep the living environment clean for the future generation, and, more importantly, build a safe and healthy community, etc." said residents. Some c*hanges can be seen though the results of the PAOT Program, *for example, the residential areas are cleaner and tidier, illegal dumping is no longer found at waste collection points, recyclables are sold*

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[17] Register to implement the HV-9

to raise funds for scholarships for the residential areas, which is a source of motivation for both the communicators and households.

In addition to the support of the political system, the TVA Project has provided facilities and coordinated with Hue City to build a separate collection system for different types of waste to effectively respond to behavior changes in the communication activities. Before the communication activities had been promoted in wards and communes, waste separation bins were installed throughout the city, making it convenient for people to take action after being encouraged. Currently, 292 sets of bins and 122 green houses have been installed, the locations of waste storage points can be looked up on Hue-S by local residents and people visiting Hue City.

Interaction and mutual support among the comunicators: With a wide circle of communicators from the wards and communes such as the People's Committee, the Women's Union, the Veterans Association, the Fatherland Front Committee, everyone can support each other while carrying out communication activities, launching a community movement. Therefore, the communication targeted households are also open to change and succesfully adopt positive behaviors without fear of being considered "weird" as everyone takes action together, for example, adopting the behavior of "Bringing your own baskets to the market", bringing your reusable water bottles when going out for a drink or bringing your reusable food containers when shopping for food, etc.

Advances in science and technology have developed applications for smartphones that effectively support the communication activities. For example, Zalo enhances communication, facilitates the exchange of information as well as provides timely advice among the propagandists in the same ward, commune or residential group; Kobotoolbox allows for data to be collected from multiple users immediately, saving time and human resources used for processing and analyzing information on the implementation results.

As for the communicators with background knowledge of digital platforms: Training and practice activities on the applications of digital transformation carried out by local agencies and departments have equipped them with the necessary skills to use smartphone applications, making it feasible for the PAOT Program to apply the online data entry template.

3.2   Obstacles

Convenience is a major obstacle to behavior changes. While reducing the use of plastic bags and single-use plastics, both sellers and buyers still have the habit of using such products because of their convenience. They find it inconvenient to bring their own shopping bags or baskets to the market, especially when they travel by motorbike or only visit the market for a very short time. Similarly, some single-use plastics such as straws, spoons and forks are much more convenient to use than personal items. For instance, drinking soft drinks through a straw is much easier than drinking directly out of a cup.

Time-consuming and labor-intensive. Direct communication activities using the PAOT method to reach each household is more time-consuming than mass communication using loudspeakers and videos broadcast on TV channels. Sometimes, the communicators have to visit the households several times to reach the communication targeted individuals because most of them are often busy with their countless daily tasks.

Some communicators still have difficulty entering data into smartphones. Unfortunately, if the data entry network is slow or congested, the entry of data becomes even more challenging, sometimes causing frustration.

It is necessary to put an emphasis on the value of "quality" over quantity in the communication results. Since data entry is done using smartphones, communicators do not collect too much qualitative information

to save time. Besides, the phone keyboard is small, which is unsuitable for "filling in" a lot of qualitative information on online forms.

It is difficult to keep up with changes when positive behaviors are adopted, such changes might be used as evidence of the communication results. The strength of PAOT method is the combination of messages and images. For changes that leads to "visible" results, using images as typical examples of implementation results gives communicators more confidence. On the contrary, some behaviors can only be recorded through sharing stories. Without images, it is difficult to engage the community.
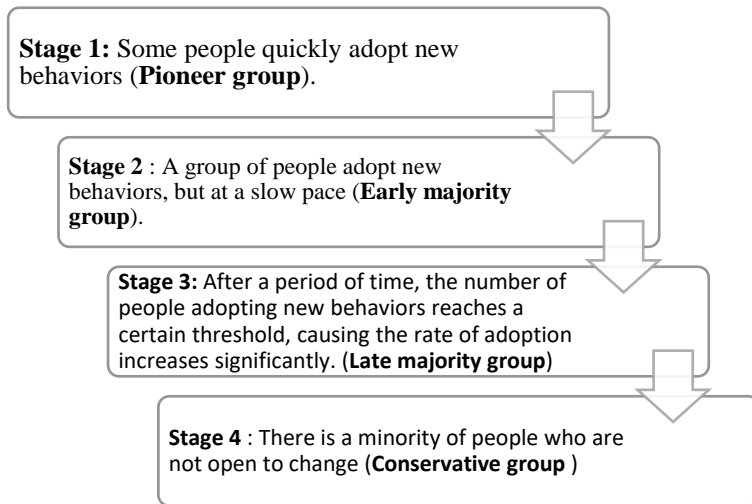
4   LESSONS LEARNED

❖   **The communication messages and activities are established on the basis of common goals and objectives. This especially creates collective strength for the community to join hands and strive towards the goals.**

Hue is the 7th out of 10 cities participating in the Plastic Smart Cities Program of the World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF), and the 32nd city in the world participating in the Plastic Smart Cities Initiative (Dương, 2023). Furthermore, the leaders and people of Hue City are striving to make Hue a centrally-governed city on the basis of preserving and promoting the heritage values of the ancient capital and Hue's cultural identity, in the harmony of heritage, culture, ecology, landscape, environmental friendliness and smart city.

❖   **The communication messages are** appropriate **with the actual needs of the community, the practice of WSAS and making good use of recyclables have been successfully adopted. This is an advantage for the PAOT communication program.** The majority of household representatives expressed their desire to live in an environment free of pollution, especially waste pollution. Therefore, the communication activities on WSAS has received enthusiastic support from the community. Vietnamese people have developed good saving habits, therefore, the communication messages on reusing organic waste and recyclables are very relevant to daily life, reminding the households to promote positive behaviors that have been adopted. For the households that put an emphasis on health care, the messages and proposed solutions on how to reduce the use of SUPs are adopted as a solution to protect their health and avoid the harmful effects caused by microplastics.

❖   **Results achieved thanks to close coordination between the project and its partners, between the government agencies and mass organizations.** There are few projects that can engage as many authorities and mass organizations at the wards and communes as the TVA Project. The People's Committees of wards and communes play a leading role in mobilizing human resources and focal point officers from the wards/communes or mass organizations (Fatherland Front, Women's Union, Farmers' Association, Veterans Association) to act as "focal point officers for monitoring, participating in and promoting the communication activities". All stakeholders have coordinated very smoothly throughout the three communication phases of the program.

❖   **Communicators have experience in interacting with the community during the communication for behavior change.** Most of them have a lot of life experience in working with communities, nearly 95% of the members are over 40 years old, therefore, reaching communities to mobilize their participation **is very suitable for behavior change in communities**. The process of changing the community's behaviors also takes place through each stage as shown in the chart below.[18]

[18]Training Document on Communication Methods. Ho Chi Minh City Department of Health - Center for Disease Control, 2022

Figure 12: Stages of community behavior change

> **Stage 1:** Some people quickly adopt new behaviors (**Pioneer group**).

> **Stage 2** : A group of people adopt new behaviors, but at a slow pace (**Early majority group**).

> **Stage 3:** After a period of time, the number of people adopting new behaviors reaches a certain threshold, causing the rate of adoption increases significantly. (**Late majority group**)

> **Stage 4** : There is a minority of people who are not open to change (**Conservative group**)

To promote the communication for behavior change in communities, the communicators approach each household in the following stages: Firstly, they engaged the positive individuals in the community who quickly adopt new behaviors. Next, they visited the early majority group, then encouraged the late majority group. Finally, came the conservative group, whose members changed very slowly, so it is essential that communicators need to be patient rather than discouraged.

❖ **The strength of** <u>**community development based on internal resources**</u> **has been promoted by the TVA Project.** The project has mobilized human resources at the localities, creating a wide circle of communicators who are enthusiastic and dedicated. As the local people, they can understand the needs and expectations of their community. **With a group of 612 members**, reaching each household is even more convenient. Meanwhile, the communication messages and behaviors should be implemented **by the households and family members themselves,** NOT ACTIONS THAT COULD BE HELPED BY OUTSIDE.

❖ **Implementing multiple communication methods at the same time along with the PAOT method. With the same theme, the project has implemented abundant activities through various channels and forms of communication, reaching many different groups of people at the same time. This approach creates a great source of strength, helping to promote behavior change communication.**

If we learn about the factors that influence behavior, we will realize that the communication programs and methods implemented by the TVA Project have developed into a comprehensive communication campaign, creating a decisive factor for the success of adopting new behavior. That is, in addition to the PAOT communication program, the Project also implements communication programs and campaigns at different scales, for example, organizing the National Plastic Waste Reduction Initiative Contest, Annual "Plogging" Event, and "Plastic Bag Free Week/Month" program at supermarkets, organizing the "Plastic Free Heroes" contest and awarding prizes for the winners; coordinating with the local press agencies and Hue-S to communicate on WSAS and plastic waste reduction, carrying out communication activities through social media such as the project's Fanpage; building a landing page for the "Modern users, no fear of reducing plastic" campaign, promoting communication programs at schools by applying the plastic waste free schools model, etc.

❖ **Implementing communication activities along with providing facilities to support behavior change.** Together with the communication activities on behavior change, the Project also provided facilities to help people get acquainted with WSAS and the practice of plastic waste reduction, such as sets of trash bins for drop-offs of sorted waste at public places and sets of three types of waste separation bags for households. However, promoting behavior change faced significant challenges and obstacles, especially when encouraging communities to adopt waste separation practices without providing the necessary means to support such changes. In addition, ensuring consistency and uniformity in the design and color of the facilities (for the waste bins at designated sites and waste bags at households) helps the households to easily remember and change their behaviors properly.

Figure 13: Factors that influence behavior - The simplified version of Triandis model[19]
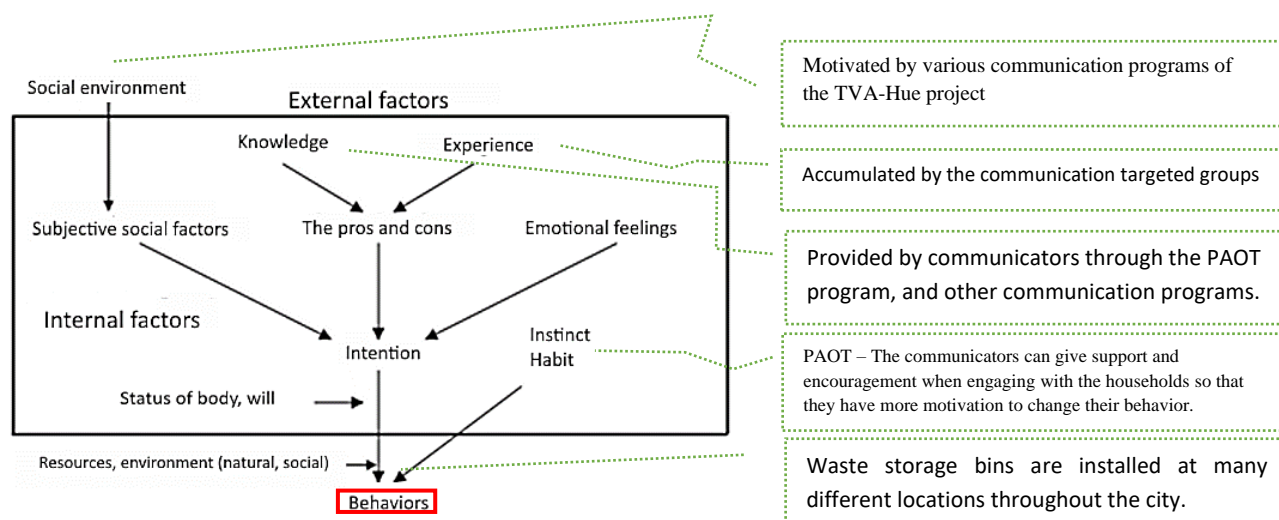
Therefore, when multiple influencing factors are at play, the successful adoption of good behaviors by households will occur more quickly and at a higher rate. This outcome would be difficult to achieve with only a single PAOT communication.

❖ **The results of behavior change in communities are more convincing when combined with other methods of testing results.** The results of the waste audits of HEPCO and Hang Trung showed that the percentage of waste placed in the right bin at each waste storage point demonstrates the effectiveness of the communication program as well as behavior change in the communities.

❖ **Dare to think, dare to act, and dare to change.** The decision to change almost all the content and design of the checklists from the pilot phase to redesign new checklists for phase 2 and phase 3 of the PAOT Program Implementation Team is a vivid demonstration of the message "dare to think, dare to act and dare to change". The entire content of messages, test questions as well as the checklist design of the pilot phase demonstrate all the "efforts and expectations" of the whole team. However, in the next phase, realizing that the "expectations " were not really close to reality, changes have been made even though the Implementation Team had to redesign all the tools. However, the results of changing the checklists and logbooks received high consensus from the communicators and local partners and led to positive results in phase 3.

❖ **Promote the spirit of PAOT and keep practicing, learning, and improving.** In phase 2 and 3, in addition to the decision **to change** almost all checklists and logbooks designed from the pilot phase, progress management tools were also gradually developed based on Excel functions directly linked to the Kobotoolbox website, allowing for convenient monitoring progress and timely information aggregation according to the needs of the local units. The monitoring and tracking management tools were developed based on the spirit of self-learning and experience without instructors.

❖ **Pay attention to monitoring, supervision, and development of indicators for result assessment.** Requirements for monitoring, supervision, and indicators are determined right from the beginning of the development of the checklist and communication plan. There are timely adjustments when shortcomings are detected; For example**, in order to achieve the goal** of being able to accurately find the number of households that have been visited for 3 times, in phase 3, the communicators are also guided by the project staff to manage the Household Identification Code (HIC) more strictly, and adjustments are made immediately when errors are detected. As a result, statistics and data analysis on the results of changing the households' behavior are more convenient and accurate than that in the previous two phases.

❖ **Spend time on the pilot implementation phase, interim review, and final review.** Spending time on the pilot implementation phase, interim review, and final review has allowed the parties engaging in the communication activities learn valuable lessons, promptly correct shortcomings, and apply methods that

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[19] Training Document on the Communication Methods. Ho Chi Minh City Department of Health - Center for Disease Control, 2022

have brought good results, for example, choosing the appropriate time to visit the households, interating with the households during the visit, how to take notes, how to enter the data using online templates, etc. **Most importantly, the time for interim review, and final review is the opportunity to share the results achieved and motivate everyone to strive towards a common goal.**

5 SHARING OF THE COMMUNICATORS & HOUSEHOLDS

People in Hue City, or visitors to Hue in the past two years, sometimes accidentally come across middle-aged men or women holding logbooks in their hands, walking around street corners, occasionally visiting a family. It was very likely that you had met some of the communicators carrying out the PAOT Communication Program on WSAS and plastic waste reduction among 612 communicators of the TVA project. This is the force that has contributed significantly, or rather, is key to the achievements of the communication for behavior change in communities implemented by the TVA Project.

It would not be mistaken to assume that the communicators mobilize the households' participation by "going to every corner, knocking on every door" because there are passionate about social work, with the desire to build Hue into a Green - Clean - Bright City. Most of them are retired. Their participation in the communication team of the residential groups is voluntary, and this is encouraged by the TVA Project and the Associations, Unions of the ward and communes.

Let's review and reflect on the stories shared by the communicators to better understand their passion for taking action to contribute to a better environment as well as their expectations in the journey of joining hands to build Hue into a Civilized and Green - Clean - Bright City, and at the same time congratulate their achievements when some households has successfully implement WSAS and SUPs reduction according to the messages that have been conveyed.

"*If everyone does positive things, I am happy, everyone is satisfied, the government is contented, and the environment is sustainable.*" Said **Mr. Nguyen Cong Minh** (The communicator of Phu Nhuan) to the staff of the TVA-Hue project.

When the TVA-Hue Project officials visited Minh, he did not hesitate to share his story, "Online data entry is a big challenge in the communication activities with the households, since the majority of communicators are required to use smartphone while they are retired, elderly, with poor health and eyesight". He laughed loudly with the "funny" expression on his face when mentioning the word "SMART PHONE". Although he had difficulty using the smartphone, in communication with the households, he overcame such obstacles by writing down their information in his logbook. When there was time available, he would "transfer the data to the device. Ms. Phuong, Minh's wife also engaged in the communication activities on WSAS and SUPs reduction. Therefore, regarding the entry of information into smartphones, Ms. Phuong added, "When interacting with other communicators, we advise them to write down the information in their logbooks first, then transfer it to the device. Entering data while engaging with the households can be time-consuming. Taking notes in the logbooks first and transferring the data to the phones afterwards. It is wiser and more time-saving for both households and communicators."

Mr. Minh also said, "Although it is hard, there is a POSITIVE thing. When engaging with the households, I realize that they understand what they should do and change their behaviors for the better, they reduce the use of plastic bags by bringing their own baskets to the market or using their reusable containers for shopping, *the result is really satisfying*". His voice was getting softer and quieter, "Reducing plastic waste is a long-term goal, we should be patient to get the households engaged step by step so that they gradually grasp, understand, and change their behaviors, then encourage their family members to reduce the use of plastic bags. Communicators also need to mobilize the participation of their family members. Only by doing this can we reduce waste leakage into the environment and protect our environment from pollution, then everyone will be satisfied, our future generations will also be happy because they do not have to deal with the burden

left by the past generations". He switched to a cheerful tone as he said, "*If everyone does positive things, I am happy, everyone is satisfied, the government is contented, and the environment is sustainable* ".

When visiting Mr. Minh's house, visitors would be able to capture the moment when Ms. Phuong checked the information in the logbook, reading it out loud so that Mr. Minh could transfer it to his phone. They carried out the tasks carefully, meticulously and cheerfully. This is the long-term goal that many projects are aiming for, "Gender Equality and Justice".

As for Mr. Ha Viet Chuong, "the prestige of Uncle Ho's soldiers" is the driving force for him to successfully carry out the communication activities to change the community's awareness and behavior, despite many difficulties."

Mr. Chuong is a member of the Environmental Protection Club of the Veterans Association of Phuoc Vinh Ward, Hue City. In his presentation at the Summary Conference on the Communication Model on Waste Separation At Source and Plastic Waste Reduction using the PAOT method at the end of October 2024, he said with great enthusiasm, "Although the communicators faced difficulties due to their old age, many people in the community did not know how to properly carry out the separation of waste at source according to the instructions of the People's Committee of Thua Thien Hue Province, and did not clearly understand the harmful effects of plastic waste on the environment and human health, with the prestige of Uncle Ho's soldiers, the communicators have successfully mobilize the participation of 9 out of 12 residential groups of the ward."

Mr. Chuong confirmed, *"All communication targeted households have successfully carried out waste separation and SUPS reduction according to the contents of the communication message. Recyclables are sent to Women's Unions and sold for money: Part of the fund is allocated to develop the piggy bank model, another part is contributed to the Nguyen Thi Dinh charity fund, and the remaining part is donated to support the disadvantaged at the locality. Along with implementation of waste separation, the households also reduce the use of SUPs, instead of using plastic bags, they bring their own cloth bags or plastic baskets to the markets, use reusable food containers to shop for processed food, bring their own water bottles to refill water, and actively participated in the Green Sunday".*

Mr. Chuong also mentioned the advantage of the PAOT communication program when changes lead to positive results: "*Households that have successfully implemented at the beginning become a great source of motivation for other households in their neighborhood to join hands to create a positive change in the community"*. With his enthusiasm, Mr. Chuong also expected, "All local agencies, departments, and organizations should participate in communication activities to achieve better results".
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Ms. Tran Thi Hong, who is always creative in communication activities, applying different methods to convey messages in a very scientific and psychological way to achieve communication goals, even though she is not really a communication expert. She is the President of the Women's Union of Mau Tai Village, where 10 communicators had mobilized the participation of 120 households so far.

She said to the TVA-Hue project staff, "When engaging with households, I used statistical data as evidence to talk about the amount of waste and the harmful effects of plastic waste. In addition to just talking, I also took some women to my house to see how my family classified and processed organic waste from indigenous microorganisms (IMO), how we made enzyme detergent. I also told them how to do it enthusiastically." She also knew that the job she was doing required perseverance and patience, thus she always encouraged herself, "I understand that communication on waste cannot be done in the short-term, in fact, it requires determination and engagement of the community."

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Ms. Ho Thi Hang, head of the Women's Union of Hai Thanh Village, Phu Thanh Commune, accepted the offer to become a communicator just to strive towards the goal: "A poetic Hue should not be polluted by plastic waste."

Ms. Hang has been involved in the communication activities of the Women's Union for many years, hence it is convenient for her to interact with the community. However, when she took on the communication activities about the separation and reduction of plastic waste, she once said, "*My child run a small stall at the market, providing a large number of plastic bags to customers, so it is difficult to persuade others to reduce the use of plastic waste*", and she intended to refuse to be a communicator. At that time, Ms. Hue, Vice Head of the Women's Union of Phu Thanh Commune, encouraged her, "*sincerity and good practice will be the most effective and convincing way to communicate messages, a beautiful Hue should not be polluted by plastic waste*". Following Ms. Hue's encouragement, she mobilized the households to reduce the use of plastic bags to households, while encouraging her family members to take actions. Ms. Hue told that Ms. Hang was really satisfied when a neighbor said to her: "*Recently, I use my reusable food containers when I go out for breakfast, With baskets and reusable food containers in my hand, I rarely use plastic bags. Sometimes I only use a plastic bag to cover the fish bought from the market because I am afraid of getting dirty*". Ms. Hue said with pride, "Ms. Hang and I are very happy to realize our great joy even though the achievement is not too great, it is simply a gradual change in the thinking and behavior of each person around us."

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"Communication through actions instead of words, if you can do it, others will follow your action," said Ms. Doan Thi Tuoi, a member of the People's Committee of Thuan An Ward

Ms. Tuoi said to people around her, "*Before carrying out communication activities, I took actions at home first. I tried making fertilizer for plants and trees and they grew very well. So, I encouraged other women to do it. This could reduce organic waste, making use of the waste while still having quality fertilizer for the plants*". Observing Tuoi's action and its effectiveness, everyone followed her, making it easier for the communicators during the communication activities on waste separation at source.

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'… The gap between thought and action is quite long. In our communication activities with the households, not everyone is open to change, even after listening to our messages, not everyone takes action... But we are not discouraged... We keep moving forward, visiting and mobilizing their participation...' said Ms. Hien, a veteran sewing teacher of the Women's Union of Vinh Ninh Ward.

Ms. Nguyen Thi Hien is also the Head of the Women's Union of Group 4, Vinh Ninh Ward. After more than 3 months of implementing the communication activities on Hai Ba Trung Street, her communication team has mobilized the participation of 30 households. The pioneer group established by her communication team includes Mr. Tro, owner of Cay Xoai coffee shop, Ms. Cam, who sells grilled pork noodles, Ms. Diem's grocery store, Gao Restaurant, Rang Dong Hotel, Thanh Lich Hotel, etc

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This is the story shared by a young communicator, a special member of the Youth Union. He once wrote on his blog: *"These are question we are always asked! Do they have nothing to do? Why do we need to sort waste? Isn't sorting waste just extra hassle? Trash is trash no matter what, they are so annoying"* (Ms. Tran Thi Phuong Thao – Communicator of Thuan An Ward)


WE STILL KEEP MOVING FORWARD FOR

The way we keep patient, the way we to talk to convey messages to everyone all gives us certain lessons in our lives. And most importantly, we work together, make friends, discover new things and interact with all other communicators.

Within a handbook, it is impossible to include all stories of each communicator, therefore, the following survey results illustrate the Communicators' assessment on the PAOT method, the difficulties they have encountered, and their expectations for positive changes in WSAS and SUPs reduction in the community.

(1) **The effectiveness and suitability of communication methods implemented in the wards and communes**

This evaluation result showed that mobilizing the households' participation by using the PAOT communication method was the most effective, accounting for 55%. This was followed by meeting with local people to provide training sessions at the residential group, with 21% of respondents.

(2) **How effective is the PAOT method after being implemented at the locality?**
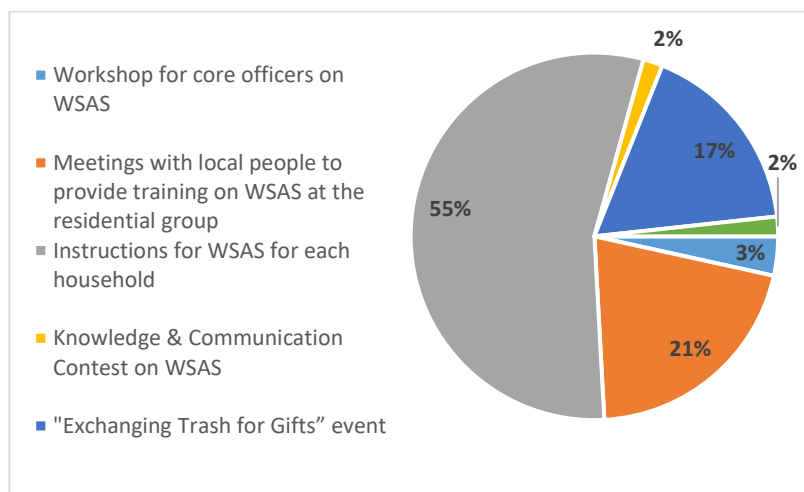
The result shows that 15.5% of respondents agreed that the PAOT method was not very effective. However, no one assumes this method is ineffective. The total percentage of respondents who evaluated it as effective and very effective is 84.8%, of which 60.34% are effective, and 15.52% are very effective.

(3) **What factors are favorable for communication activities using the PAOT method to achieve good results?**
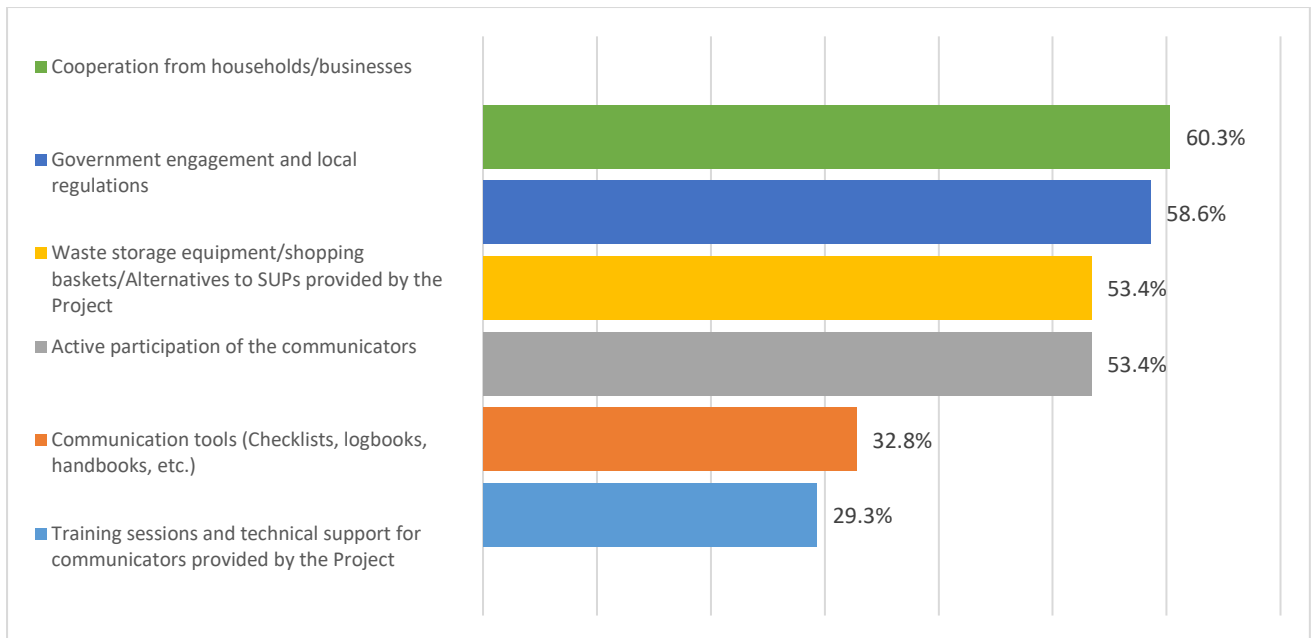
The data shows that the cooperation of the households/businesses plays an important role, accounting for the highest percentage: 60.3%. This is followed by i) Authority engagement and regulations at the locality, ii) Facilities provided to support the implementation, iii) active participation of the communicators, with the percentage of respondents ranging from 53.4% to 58.6%.

Providing the communicators with technical support, communication tools, and training sessions, with the percentage of respondents ranging from 29.3% to 32.8%.

(4) What difficulties still exist when engaging in communication that affect the implementation results?
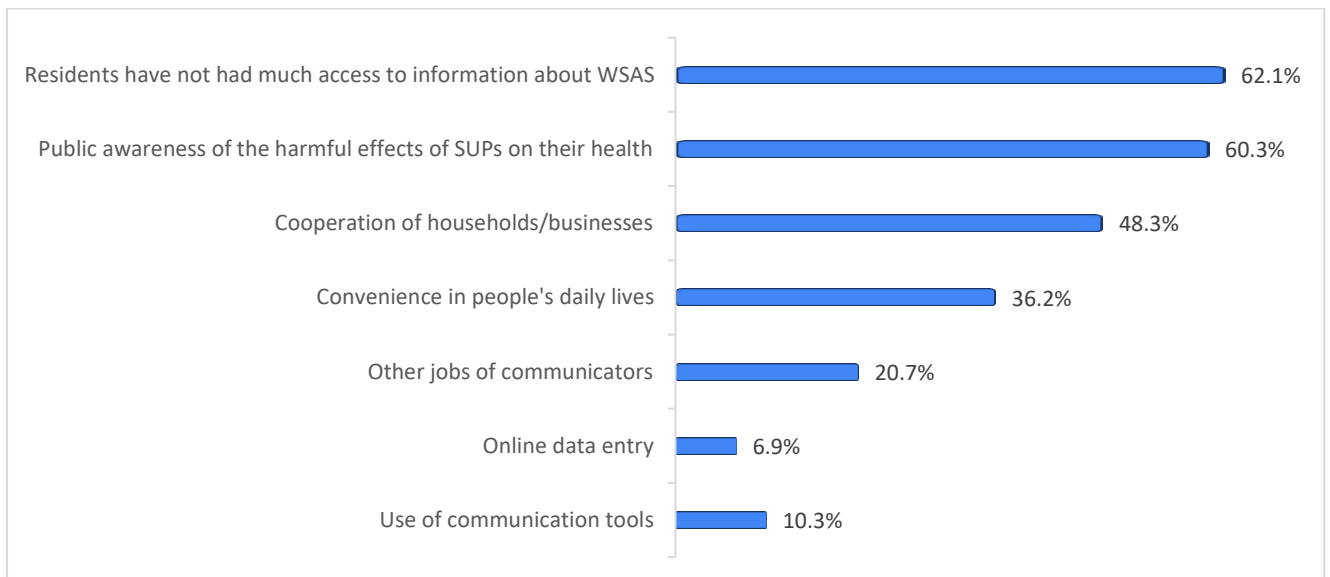
Online data entry or the use of communication tools are not a major obstacle for the communicators, with around 6.9% to 10.3% of people agreeing with these. Other jobs of the communicators are also not a big challenge, with the percentage only at 20%. Meanwhile, information about waste separation and the harmful effects of using SUPs provided to the households plays an important role in the communication results with a fairly high percentage: 60.3% to 62.1%. In addition, the obstacle of cooperation with the households/business stills accounts for 48.3% of opinions, and the obstacle created by the convenience from using plastic items in daily life is at 36.2%.

(5) **Proposed solutions to maintain and promote the effectiveness of communication activities on waste separation at source and plastic waste reduction:**

- Keep getting households and businesses engaged, give instructions on waste separation at source and plastic waste reduction.
- Ensure conscious, responsible, and coordinated involvement and engagement from all levels, sectors, and the community.
- Continue with direct awareness raising at households within each residential group in a synchronized manner. It is necessary to choose small residential areas as the starting point to thoroughly implement communication and training activities on WSAS, then gradually spread these activities throughout the wards and communes as well as the entire city.
- Provide waste storage equipment/shopping baskets/alternatives to SUPs.
- It is necessary to continue to receive attention from the WWF Project and competent authorities to further promote waste separation at source as well as sharpen people's awareness and discipline.
- More waste storage points should be allocated to make it easier for people to find suitable disposal places.
- The project should maintain and especially replicate the model of regularly mobilizing the households' participation to raise their awareness of waste separation at source.
- We should coordinate with the government to issue regulations and sanctions to raise public awareness of waste separation at source; Meanwhile, more waste separation bins should be allocated so that people can separate their waste properly, sometimes people just throw it away wherever they can because they live far from the disposal place.
- There needs to be more methods to get the households engaged in the communication activities on waste separation at source.
- Promote communication activities regularly and continuously, reduce the production of plastic and nylon items, produce new products to replace plastic and nylon ones.
- Promote communication activities at schools to raise students' awareness of reducing plastic waste leakage into the environment.
- Apply laws and legal regulations to handle violations of environmental protection.
- The project needs to install more surveillance cameras on main roads or at polluted hotspots to record images as evidence to handle violations of environmental protection.
- Raise public awareness and discipline so that it is easier for the communicators to get people engaged in the communication activities on waste separation, contributing to reducing waste leakage into the environment and making our community a safer place to live.
- Strengthen inspection and supervision by local authorities. Promote communication activities at the markets to encourage sellers and market-goers to reduce the use of plastic bags.
- Regularly share stories about the risks of not separating waste.
- Encourage and motivate people, especially the young, to properly separate their waste and reduce SUPs through social media.

The communicators' opinions and comments show their willingness to continue mobilizing the households' participation in WSAS and SUPs reduction, and are also the foundation for the TVA Project to develop another plan for further communication activities, if any.

APPENDIX

1. **Inspiring stories from the community after they received messages from the PAOT communication program**

2. **Application of the PAOT tools in the three stages of communication in Hue City**