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MITIGATING MARINE PLASTIC DEBRIS IN VIETNAM THE MARINE PROTECTED AREAS COMPONENT IN PHU QUOC

REPORT

ASSESSMENT OF THE BEHAVIOR CHANGE COMMUNICATIONS ADOPTING PARTICIPATORY ACTION-ORIENTED TRAINING APPROACHES (PAOT)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BHH	Business The HHs (The HHs with business; business-owners/ shop-owners/ vendors...)
CC	PAOT communications collaborator
NBHH	Non-business The HHs (The HHs without business; so-called to distinguish with the BHH)
HH	The HHs (for both types of The HHs with/ without business)
PAOT HH	The HHs participating in the PAOT communications
Non-PAOT HH	The HHs not participating in the PAOT communications
PAOT	Participatory Action-Oriented Training –PAOT
Project	Mitigating Marine Plastic Debris Project, Marine Protect Areas component (MPA Project)
Q	Quarter
WU	Women's Union
WS	Waste sorting
SUP/ SUPR	Single-use-plastic/ single-use-plastic reduction
PC	People's Committee

SUMMARY

The "Mitigating Marine Plastic Debris in Viet Nam" project, implemented under the auspices of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Vietnam in cooperation with WWF-VN, spanning from 2020 to 2025, aims to reduce plastic waste leakage to the ocean and protect the marine environment of Vietnam. To protect Phu Quoc's Marine Protected Area from land-based plastic pollution, the "Fishery and Marine Protected Areas" component in coordination with the city Women's Union has promoted community participation in waste sorting at sources and reducing plastic waste adopting the Participatory Action-Oriented Training approaches (PAOT). This program has reached 1,671 households (HHs) in the period of 2022 - 2024 and trained 16 key trainers and 60 communication collaborators (CCs) on PAOT methods, tools and story of changes writing. In December 2024, the Project carried out the assessment of the PAOT communications on the base of the criteria: relevance, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability, examining the possibilities of sustaining the implementation in the existing areas, expanding and replication, as well as documenting lessons learned for sharing with the stakeholders or outside the Project.

The assessment results are inferred from a participatory process - involving relevant parties, including the partners (local PCs/ WU), implementing force (the CCs), and the beneficiaries (the HHs with/ without business) – combining qualitative analysis (SWOT analysis through interviews with the leaders of the local partners and evaluation workshop deploying focus group discussions with the CCs) with quantitative analysis (interviewing 176 HHs in a knowledge - attitudes - practices survey) [of which 125 HHs participated in PAOT communications (72.8%) and 51 HHs did not (27.2%), and analyzing data by SPSS 20 software]. The assessment findings, lessons learned and recommendations from those involved are included in this report as follows:

Relevance - The PAOT communications is in line with the local policies and plans, needs of partners and communities, namely these major focuses: *Phu Quoc working towards a plastic waste-free island city, Phu Quoc environmental day, New Rural criteria, '05 no - 03 clean' movement* and the local partners' work plans (People's Committee/Women's Union). In the view of the community, the PAOT checklist including 9 messages, with 4 messages on waste sorting (WS) and 5 messages on single-use-plastic reduction (SUPR), is deemed to be clear, easy to understand and practical. 96% of the HHs found that the actions on how to WS is suitable for their daily life, making it convenient to follow. 94.2% of the HHs said that the actions of SUPR is directly related to their daily needs, helping them change their consumption habits. 96% of the HHs (out of 176 the HHs participating in the assessment) said that the knowledge about WS and waste treatment shared by the CCs was relevant to their daily activities.

Effectiveness – PAOT communication is reckoned to contribute to the completion of the task plans of participating partners, raises awareness of the implementation team leading to practicing before sharing with the target audience. 90% of the PAOT HHs sort their domestic waste on a regular basis, compared with the non-PAOT HHs only 12.5% do, and 85.6% of PAOT HHs practice SUPR, such as reducing nylon bags and SUP items. The rate of the HHs having good knowledge of WS reached 94.4%, while the non-participating group only reached 50%; participating in PAOT campaign is promoting the changing from KNOWING to PRACTICING. The CCs play a crucial role in passing on the messages to the HHs, with 71% of the HHs receiving

information on WS and 77.8% receiving information on SUPR from them, reaching more and more the HHs in the community.

Impact - PAOT communications – Knowledge and capacity of staff from partner agencies and units implementing the PAOT communications have been improved through the implementation. The local partner, especially the WU, stated that they have "grasped and successfully applied the PAOT methodology" and plan to continue using this approach in the future. Additionally, they intend to introduce the methodology to relevant agencies and partner organizations for implementation, either within the same field of WS/SUPR or in other areas of work. From the community perspective, the knowledge and practices of WS and SUPR done by the PAOT HHs have had positive effects on other HHs: 73.5% of the PAOT HHs said that their neighbors followed their good practices, 32% of the non-PAOT HHs said they learned from their neighbors, whilst there are 64% of the HHs learned how to reduce SUP from the HHs with the checklists, 84.1% of the HHs practicing WS and SUPR reported noticeable benefits from their actions, including a cleaner environment, cost savings, and the reuse of recyclable waste.

Sustainability – with the experiences gained and capacity built through implementing PAOT communications within the framework of the Project, the partners, especially the main partner (the city WU) affirmed that they can continue to implement PAOT communication in both scenarios: within the WU and in association other agencies, both with the same contents and/or other contents (namely food hygiene and safety, public health-related contents, epidemic control, fire prevention and road safety). The leader of the wards and communes (participated in the assessment) said they are willing to maintain PAOT communications to take advantage and build up on top of what has been started up. Regarding the community, 99% of the PAOT HHs affirmed that they would maintain good practices after the campaign. Those evidences have proved the sustainability of the PAOT approaches.

Following are the comments and recommendations by the stakeholders involved in the assessment and by the consultant team.

Having necessary facilities (such as trash bins, hazardous waste collection areas, etc.) will facilitate the implementation. Recycling waste collection models should be expanded and diversified (exchanging trash for gifts, donating 'recycled waste', etc.).

The content of the checklist and the communication methods (household visit) should be kept the same. The checklist should be printed in larger font, with good quality paper to be more durable, and in larger quantities than the target number to distribute to interested parties/ HHs. Pay more attention to promote the SUPR as the HHs are less interested in this part (compared to WS).

Implement the initiative in a systematic manner, starting with pilot activities before scaling up. The implementation strategies may include: (i) applying the approach within the vertical structure of relevant departments and mass organizations, with the Women's Union serving as a technical support resource and/or implementation partner; (ii) expanding by geographic area with full mobilization of resources, particularly through the network of CCs; and (iii) extending the approach to other sectors where applicable).

It is advisable to combine PAOT communications with other media, tapping local and social media; at the same time, approach both interactive target groups (e.g. sellers - buyers) to

promote change; and cooperate with organizations, businesses, projects... working in the same areas and having similar objectives.

Make effort to integrate PAOT communication's outputs into the resolution of the local Communist Party unit or/and involve PCs of the ward/ commune (to involve those by directly steering or to be reported by the coordinating agency) so that it has the binding in terms of assignment/ direction, and support (for coordination, human resources and budget). There should be funds allocated to support the CCs. It is suggested that WWF-VN continues to support the next phase of expanding WS/ SUPR communications throughout the city.

I. BACKGROUND

The project "Mitigating Marine Plastic Waste in Viet Nam", funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety (BMU) through WWF-Germany, is being implemented by WWF-Vietnam in collaboration with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) of Vietnam, along with local authorities, departments, and organizations. The project runs from 2020 to June 2025, with the overall goal of reducing plastic waste discharged into the ocean and protecting marine biodiversity in Vietnam. Within the "Fishery and Marine Protected Area Component" implemented in Phu Quoc, WWF-Vietnam has been working with the Phu Quoc City Women's Union to mobilize community participation in waste sorting at source and plastic waste reduction (WS/ PWR). This initiative applies the Participatory Action-Oriented Training (PAOT) approach from 2022 to 2024, over a period of three (03) years, across nine (09) wards and communes in Phu Quoc City, reaching 1,671 HHs. Regarding capacity building, the Project has trained the key trainers and CCs on methods and tools of PAOT, how to use the online data entry tool on Kobo toolbox and write the story of changes, training a total of 16 trainers and 60 CCs.

In addition to visits to monitor and document good behavioral practices by the PAOT HHs, the project aims to conduct a specific evaluation. Therefore, a survey was carried out through in-depth individual interviews with local government leaders and the HHs, as well as an evaluation workshop with the CCs. This survey was conducted from November 28, 2024, to December 3, 2024, across six wards and communes: Duong Dong, An Thoi, Duong To, Cua Duong, Bai Thom, and Tho Chau. The evaluation report will compile and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data collected during the survey. This will provide a basis for assessing the PAOT model on WS and PWR, particularly focusing on single-use plastics (SUPs). The evaluation will be based on key criteria, including relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact, and scalability. Those criteria are commonly used in development projects to assess projects.

II. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The evaluation aims to assess the application of behavior change communication through the PAOT approach in the community, based on the following criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact. Specifically, the evaluation seeks to determine whether the PAOT approach is feasible and effective in driving behavioral change in WS and PWR, aligning with the MPA project's objectives.

Explore the potential for replicating the PAOT approach in other areas of Phu Quoc, either through the WU or other relevant agencies.

Document key lessons learned to share with project stakeholders and external partners.

III. METHODOLOGIES

The evaluation process was structured using both qualitative and quantitative methods, ensuring a comprehensive assessment. The data collection and analysis are based to the evaluation criteria. Additionally, to better understand the effectiveness of communication as

PAOT model, information and data were collected not only from the HHs participating in PAOT but also from those not participating.

3.1 Criteria

Relevance: Is the implementation program designed in a way that aligns with the needs of the beneficiaries and local conditions? Does it contribute to achieving the overall objectives of the project?

Effectiveness: Has the implementation program been carried out efficiently? To what extent have the activities met the set objectives and expected outcomes?

Sustainability: Are the results achieved so far sustainable? Assess the likelihood that the benefits generated by the program activities will be maintained after funding ends.

Impact and Dissemination: What are the unforeseen positive/negative impacts of the activities and unintended results? Focus on the influence of the implementation program on environmental sanitation within the project area.

Identify best practices and lessons learned and provide recommendations.

3.2 Location & Timeline

Location: The PAOT campaign has been implemented in 09 wards and communes in Phu Quoc City. For this evaluation, 05 communes have been proposed: An Thoi, Duong To, Bai Thom, Cua Duong, and Tho Chau. These communes account for 65.85% of the HHs participating into PAOT campaign, corresponding to 1,057 out of 1,065 the HHs.

Timeline:

- To collect quality information: from 28/12/24 to 03/12/24.
- To collect quantity data: 18-19/12/2024

3.3 Tools

- **Collecting qualitative information:** Open-ended questions based on the SWOT analysis framework are used in:
 - Evaluation workshops, including focus group discussion exercises.
 - Individual interviews
- **Collecting quantitative information:** Information was collected based on the evaluation criteria through a structured questionnaire designed as an online data entry form (digital format). Data is entered using smartphones, with form design done via Kobo toolbox and data entry conducted through the Kobo Collect app or the Kobo toolbox website.

3.4 Human Resources

- **Qualitative Information Collection:**

The consulting team is responsible for conducting qualitative interviews, facilitating discussions at evaluation workshops, and conducting in-depth individual interviews with local leaders and key characters of the stories of changes. The consulting team consists of two members:

- MA. Nguyen Thi Thuy Linh (Team Representative)
- MA. Dang Tran Thi Trang Nha

- **Quantitative Data Collection:** conducted by one of the consultants and CCs who played the roles as interviewers, and the total number of interviewers is 13 persons¹, excluding the comminutors who guided the HHs.

Before, the survey is organized to interview the HHs, interviewers were trained on the quantitative questionnaire content and meaning of questions, and how to make questions, as well as how to entry data to questionnaires via smartphones.

29/11/2024 (afternoon)	The training course for interviewers from the wards/ communes of An Thoi, Duong To, Cua Duong, and Bai Thom was conducted at Seashell Hotel, Duong Dong, Phu Quoc. Total participants: 14 members.
30/11/24 (morning)	For the investigator team in Tho Chau commune , training was conducted online instead of offline due to severe weather which caused the delay of the ferry to Tho Chau. After the training, consultants will provide remote support as interviewers conduct the HHs interviews. Total number of interviewers in Tho Chau commune: 06 members.
Training contents: questionnaires designed by Kobo toolbox (offline and online) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of installation, access, and usage methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Installing and using the Kobo Collect app (data entry app) on mobile devices to download online data entry forms. . Downloading data entry forms via web link (URL), QR code, or the Kobo Collect app. - Guidance and explanation on the content and structure of the online questionnaire form. - Practice entering information into the questionnaire (test data will be deleted before the survey starting in wards/communes). - Interviewers present the possible scenarios that they may encounter during the HHs interviews, and consultants provide guidance, discussions, and answers for each potential situation. 	

3.5 Data Collection & Sources

- *Secondary Data – Document Review*
 - National New Rural Development (NRD) criteria for waste management
 - Information about Phu Quoc socio-economic development reports and plans

¹ Including 07 interviewers for the main island and 06 interviewers for Tho Chau commune.

- *Primary Data – Qualitative data*

Date	Location	Activities
Workshop to evaluate the PAOT approach model with Communication Collaborators (evaluation workshop)		
29/11/25	Phu Quoc City – Seashell Hotel	With the participation of 33 members from 9 wards, communes, and the Women's Union of the city, including: An Thoi Ward (4 members), Bai Thom Commune (5 members), Cua Can Commune (2 members), Cua Duong Commune (3 members), Duong Dong Ward (6 members), Duong To Commune (4 members), Ganh Dau Commune (3 members), Ham Ninh Commune (4 members), and Phu Quoc City (2 members).
Individual Interview – Representatives of Women Union of Phu Quoc City, People's Commune Committee, Party Commune Committee, Women Union of Communes, and other persons related to project activities.		
28/11/24	Bai Thom commune	Interview with the commune leaders: 1) Nguyen Thi Ngoc, Vice-Chairman of the Commune People's Committee, and 2) Tran Thi Ngoc Ha, Vice-Chairman of the Women's Union. Visit the key character of the change story - Mrs. Bui Thi Kim Van, who grows vegetables using nylon bags and foam boxes.
	Women Union of Phu Quoc city	Interview with Bien My Linh, Chairwoman of the Women's Union of Phu Quoc City.
29/11/24 (afternoon)	Hamlet 8 – Duong Dong Ward	Interview with a garbage collector in group 6, Q8, Duong Dong - Mr. Pham Phi Long.
02/12/24 (morning)	Duong To Commune	Interview with the commune leaders: 1) Nguyen Phuoc Long, Vice-Chairman of the Commune People's Committee and 2) Phạm Thi Bich Hong, Vice-Chairman of the Women's Union. Visit the character in the change story - Mrs. Mai Thi Thuong, who weaves the flat winnowing baskets from plastic strips, which used to tie bricks.
02/12/24 (afternoon)	Cua Duong Commune	Interview with the commune leaders: 1) Nguyen Thi Le, Chairman of the Women's Union. Visit the character in the change story - Mrs. Nguyen Thi Nu, who sells breakfast food
03/12/24 (morning)	An Thoi Ward	Interview with ward leaders: 1) Do That, Vice-Chairman of the Ward People's Committee. Interview with Mrs. Vo Thi Huong, Hamlet 7, who did not participate in the PAOT program (18/02/2024).

Date	Location	Activities
06/12/24 (afternoon)	Tho Chau Commune (online)	Interview with commune leaders: Online interview with Ms. Giao Ha, Vice-Chairman of the Commune People's Committee
08/12/24 (afternoon)		Online exchange with Ms. Be Hai, Chairwoman of the Commune Women Union
<i>Not as planned:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- For An Thoi Ward: could not meet the leaders of the Women's Union An Thoi and the garbage collector in charge due to they were too busy handling year-end tasks (2024).- For Cua Duong Commune: could not schedule a meeting with the Commune People's Committee leaders.- For Tho Chau Commune: online exchange instead of direct as planned.		

- *Primary data – Quantitative data:*

Collected from interviews with representatives of the beneficiary the HHs (referred to as the evaluation sample). The sample size for interviews is determined using a convenience sampling method, meaning that the sample is randomly selected based on the project area and the HHs' location rather than a statistical formula for selecting a sample from the entire project area or all the HH population. The advantage of convenience sampling is that it saves time in traveling to locate the HHs for interviews."

Number of the HHs interviewed: 176 HHs (01 more HH vs planning)	
From 7/12 to 6/12/2024	Tho Chau Commune
From 02/12 to 10/12/2024	Duong Dong Ward (hamlet without PAOT)
18/12/2024	An Thoi, Cua Duong
19/12/2024	Duong To, Bai Thom

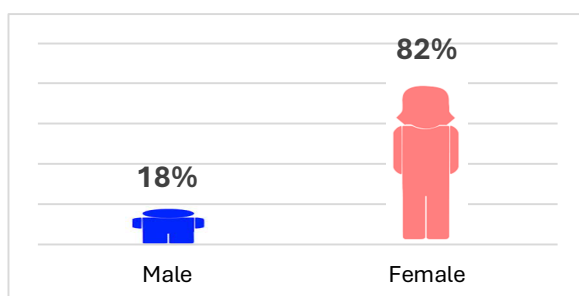
Number **of the HHs interviewed:** 176 HHs

- Proportion of the HHs participating in PAOT: 72.8%
- Proportion of business the HHs participating in PAOT: 27.2%
- Proportion of the HHs not participating in PAOT: 74.5%
- Proportion of business the HHs not participating in PAOT: 25.5%
- The proportion of business the HHs interviewed was lower than the proposed plan.

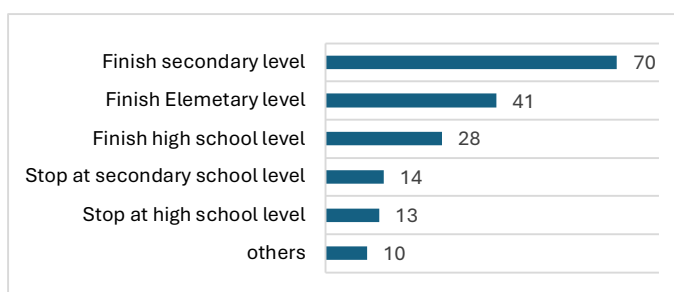
Table 1: Number of the HHs interviewed at each commune

PAOT HHs					Non-PAOT HHs				
Ward / Commune		NBHH	BHH	Total	Ward / Commune		NBHH	BHH	Total
Duong Dong	KP4	14	11	25	An Thoi	Quarter 4, and 5	19	6	25
					Duong To	Cua Lap	16	10	26
					Bai Thom	Bai Thom	19	7	26
An Thoi	KP7	14	2	16	Cua Duong	Cua Duong	11	5	16
Cua Duong	Cua Duong	10		10	Tho Chau	Bai Ngu Hamlet	26	6	32
Total		38	13	51	Total		91	34	125
Total: 176 HHs									

The reason for selecting 25 non-PAOT HHs in Duong Dong Ward and 26 HHs (in An Thoi and Bai Thom) is that this number is nearly equivalent to the number of PAOT HHs in An Thoi Ward, Bai Thom Commune, and Duong To, making it suitable for comparative analysis when needed.

Chart 1: Ratio of male and female who are representative of the HHs interviewed

Male: 32 persons
Female: 144 persons

Chart 2: Education level of the representative of the HHs interviewed

Others consist these options: not go to school, illiterate, self-learning, university level, and college level.

3.6 Data analysis

Qualitative information is synthesized and analyzed based on evaluation criteria. Depending on the criteria, it may be considered from two aspects: communication content (messaging), communication methods, or from the perspective of two key stakeholders: the agencies and units involved in communication and the non-business HHs (NBHHs) and business HHs (BHHs), who implement behavior changes based on the communication content.

Quantitative data is entered online via the Kobo collect app/ Kobo website and then exported to an Excel file. The data is processed and analyzed using SPSS 20, following the same evaluation criteria as the qualitative analysis.

IV. FINDINGS

4.1 SUMMARY RESULTS OF COMMUNICATION AS PAOT APPROACHES

Phu Quoc City has 09 wards/communes, the PAOT communications program was implemented in all 09 wards/ communes. However, in each unit, **HH groups/ hamlets** with active WU cells and people interested in WS and WUPR are selected for implementation. The target group is the households, including BHHs and BHHs.

The number of HHs reached in the period of 2022 - 2023 (including NBHH and BHH) is 1,169 HHs (including 1,163 HH enlisted from the end of 2023 and 06 HHs later added by the CCs of Duong Dong ward). In 2024, the CCs continue conducting communication campaigns on WS and SUPR for 502 more HHs (NBHH and BHH). Thus, the **total number of HHs** communicated **from 2022 to 2024** is **1,671 HHs**.

Each HHs was averagely visited 03 times: i) promoting the action-taking, ii) sharing, guiding and motivating for implementation, iii) recording results, encouraging sustaining the desired behaviors that have been practiced. With 03 visits per HH, the total number of the HHs visited is 5,013 turns.

Table 2: Number of HH reached by PAOT communications per ward/ commune

Ward/ Com.	2022		Sub-total 2022	2023		Sub-total 2023	2024		Sub-total	TOTAL
	NBHH	BHH		NBHH	BHH		NBHH	BHH		
An Thoi	103	16	119	30	40	70	61	-	61	250
Bai Thom	43	17	60	54	3	57	14	6	20	137
Cua Can	48	18	66	17	26	43	10	10	20	129
Cua Duong	48	24	72	25	11	36	40	11	51	159
Duong Dong	36	34	70	29	29	58	80	16	96	224
Duong To	92	-	92	67	12	79	73	21	94	265
Ganh Dau	16	4	20	15	25	40	9	10	19	79
Ham Ninh	35	10	45	38	3	41	28	6	34	120
Tho Chau	-	-		152	49	201	75	32	107	308
TOTAL	421	123	544	427	198	625	390	112	502	1,671

4.2 RELEVANCE

4.2.1 Communication contents and messages

In PAOT communications, the checklist is the main and indispensable tool, which was developed based on the overarching objective of Phu Quoc city and WWF-VN "*Phu Quoc working towards a plastic waste-free island city*". The checklist under the Phu Quoc MPA project comprises **09 messages: 04 messages related to WS, 05 messages related to SUPR**.

Table 3: Contents/ messages in the checklist used after the piloting

CHECKLIST FOR NON-BUSSINESS HHs			CHECKLIST FOR BUSSINESS HHs		
Action	Group	Content	Action	Group	Content
1	Waste sorting and disposal	Sort waste (organic, inorganic, recycleable)	1	Waste sorting and disposal	Sort waste (organic, inorganic, recycleable)
2		Reuse organic waste (compost, animal feed)	2		Reuse organic waste (compost, animal feed)
3		Collect and dispose of waste properly/ as guided	3		Collect and dispose of waste properly/ as guided
4		Burn waste safely	4		Burn waste safely
5	3Rs - Single-use-plastic reduction	Use bags when going to market	5	3Rs - recycle	Collect recyclable waste (donate/ sell)
6		Bring containers, bags when buying food, drinks...	6	3Rs - Single-use-plastic reduction	Encourage customers to bring containers, bags when buying food, drinks...
7		Reduce using plastic straws	7		Reduce using plastic straws in serving drinks.
8	3Rs – reuse, recycle	Collect recyclable waste (donate/ sell)	8	3Rs – reuse, recycle	Reuse, recycle packaging, plastic items, used net...in sales/ services/ production...
9		Reuse, recycle packaging, plastic items, used net...	9	3Rs	Encourage the tourists follow the motto of Phu Quoc Tourism

- **Communication contents, messages are apt to the local development plans of the wards/ communes and the Project partners.**

The interviewed leaders had a common view that the implementing the communication messages on WS/ SUPR in the checklist making both i) the overarching goal of Phu Quoc city – *working towards a plastic waste-free island city* and ii) the specific objectives/ tasks of the agencies/ units were achievable.

- **For the People's Committees of communes and wards**, it was contributory to the achievement of criterion 17 (17.6, 17.7, 17.11 and 17.12) of **19 national criteria** on new rural areas and advanced new rural areas.
- Waste sorting at source, and Single-used Plastic Reduction (by classifying waste into recyclable waste, non-recyclable waste and promoting organic waste to compost-fertilizers)

are part of the city's overall policy, being implemented now and will continue in the future. Additionally, at the local level, there is a project conducted by the Clean City Blue Ocean (CCBO) that supports solid waste management: it includes collection, sorting, and the production of organic fertilizer from waste collecting from the several routes in Duong To and An Thoi, centralized at the solid waste sorting site in Dong Cay Sao, Cua Duong commune (extracted from the statement of Mr. Nguyen Phuoc Long, Vice Chairman of the Duong To Commune PC).

- . In recent years, Phu Quoc city has implemented waste sorting/plastic usage reduction. In An Thoi Ward, it is carried out not only by the Women's Union but also by the Youth Union and by businesses. (Quoted from Mr. That's statement)
- **For the Women's Union of commune/ city levels**, it was contributed to the achievement of 02 programs: i) building the families with 05 NO's (no poverty, no violations of the law/ social evils, no domestic violence, no violations of population policy, and no malnourished children) and 03 Cleans (clean houses, clean kitchens, and clean alleys), ii) Skillfully Public Engagement.
- . The leaders of the city WU stated that the WS/ SUPR via PAOT approach was a step to concretize the city's policies and plans, for instance, Phu Quoc working towards a plastic free island, the movement of the day for the environment of Phu Quoc (taking place every first Saturday of each month), in the case of WU, PAOT communication had its contribution to the propaganda campaign of '05 NOs, 03 Cleans' oriented to the new rural construction.
- . Ms. Le, Chairwoman of the Cua Duong Commune WU, shared that from the idea of the message in the checklist and the active learning method, she suggested that local hamlets incorporate it into the Skilful Public Engagement movement: organizing groups for composting organic waste for planting and groups for reducing plastic bag usage.

Assessing the relevance of the active learning communication message content to the goals and plans of the local authorities (partners and collaborators) ranges from quite relevant to highly relevant .

- **The communication contents and messages are well-fitting with the daily routines of NBHHs, BHHs.**
- . The responses from the leaders interviewed and focus group discussions with CCs (during the evaluation workshop) were all in agreement that the contents, messages of WS and SUPR in the checklist met the community's needs in a practical manner, for example, to keep their houses clean, reuse recyclable waste (saleable recyclable waste) and organic waste suitable to the conditions and priorities of the HHs, and at community level to keep the environment clean, reduce the load of waste and plastic waste discharged into the environment for many benefits, inter alia, the local people's health and tourism economy of this very island city.
- . **For the PAOT HHs, 96% of them said that the knowledge about WS and disposal shared by the CCs was relevant to their daily activities (of which 38% were very relevant, 42% quite relevant, 12% relatively relevant and 4% were not relevant).**
- . Among the messages communicated about WS and disposal on the checklist, the behaviors (actions) considered most relevant to daily life were “sorting and separating waste before disposal” taking up to 84%.
- . However, when asked about the necessity of WS, only 63% of the POAT HHs agreed that WS was very important, 17% said it was not really important and 20% still thought that it was fine

to just put ALL types of waste in bags and throw them in the trash. From this finding, it is envisaged that the communication activities on WS need to be continued with weight putting on the importance of sorting waste before disposal.

Chart 3: Degree of relevance of WS messages to the HHs

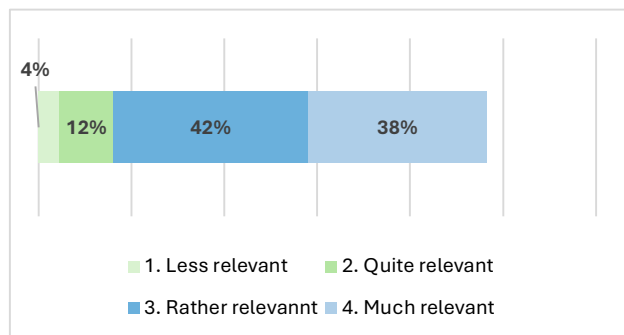


Chart 4: Proportion of the HHs agreed that WS messages relatable to their daily routine

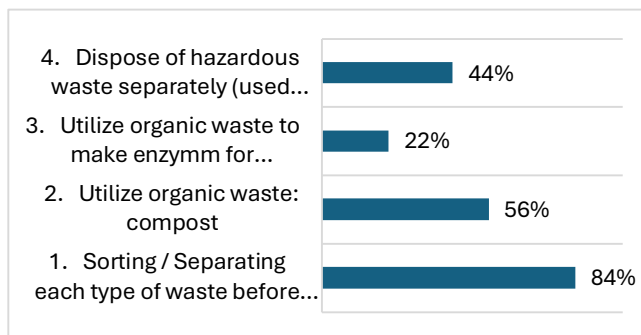
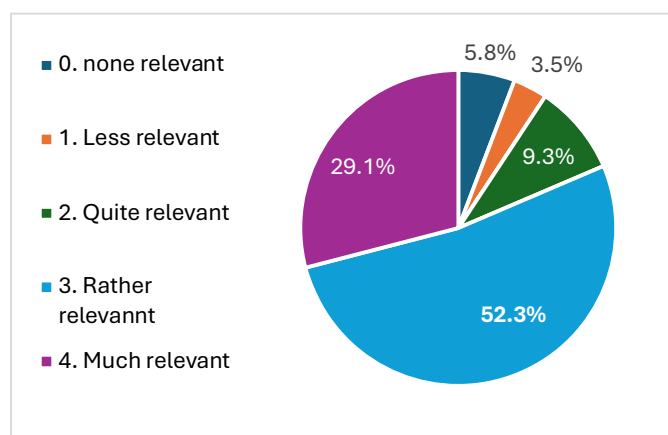


Chart 5: Degree of relevance of SUPR messages to the HHs



Examining the degree of relevance of SUPR messages, the statistical analysis showed: **94.2% of the HHs** agreed that that the SUPR messages in the checklist are relatable to their daily living and business needs, of which 3.5% less relevant, 9.3% relatively relevant, 52.3% quite relevant and 29.1% very relevant.

Regarding the SUPR messages, the contents are slightly different between those for NBHHs and BHHs, thus the results on the relevance of these messages to their daily routine differed:

For NBHHs, the message "drinking directly from glass, ceramic, or porcelain cups" is chosen by many families as the message most related to their daily living needs, at a rate of 83%, followed by the message "going to the market with multiple-used bags" chosen at a rate of 80%.

In the case of BHHs, the two messages most related are "Encourage customers NOT to use straws" and "Encourage customers to bring water bottles when buying drinks" were chosen by many BHHs as messages related to their business, with a selection rate of 82%.

Chart 6: Proportion of NBHHs choosing messages about SUPR are relevant to their daily routine.

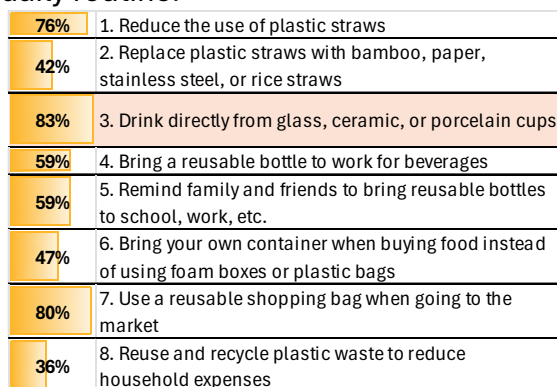
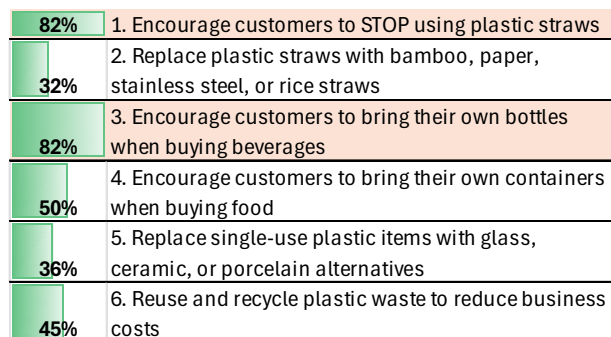


Chart 7: Proportion of BHHs choosing messages about SUPR are relevant to their daily routine.



4.2.2 Communication methods

In PAOT communications, the communication methods applied is face-to-face, meaning that the CCs, who are members/ cadres of the WU and PC cadres and departments, mass organizations, initially visited each HHs (NBHHs and BHHs), explained and encouraged the HHs to select actions to be taken (messages in the checklist), then paid two follow-up visits to encourage and/or motivate the HHs to implement, and finally recorded the positive changes by the HHs.

- **Communication methods are apt to the existing capability and skills of the CCs**

The interviewed leaders (PCs/ WU) shared the same opinion that the PAOT communications adopting direct communication (household visits) was **suitable to the existing communication skills of the CCs**, which are built upon their environmental work experience and the expertise of union members.

The sharing of the CCs at the evaluation workshop also showed the same opinion:

- ± *"The majority of the WU members have been trained in person-to-person communication methods, have experience in conducting direct communication in many different contents, this time the only difference is communicating about WS and reducing plastic waste, reducing the use of SUP items".*
- ± *"Doing the motivation with the PAOT Checklist, with clear, easy-to-understand content and illustrative images, helps the facilitators easily recall key messages and facilitates their explanations and discussions with the HHs."*

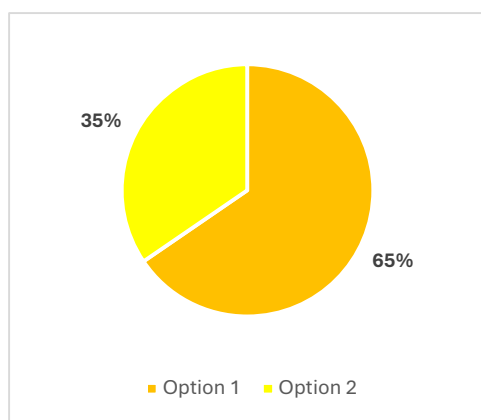
Assessing the relevance of the active learning communication message content to the goals and plans of the local authorities (partners and collaborators) ranges from quite relevant to highly relevant².

² The relevance of the active learning communication message to local goals and plans was assessed on a 4-point scale: Partner leadership (City Women's Union) scored **3** (fairly relevant), collaborators scored **4** (highly relevant), and Bai Thom Commune scored **3** (highly relevant). Due to time constraints, leaders of the four remaining communes—Duong Dong, Duong To, Cua Duong, and Tho Chau—were not scored.

- **Communication methods are apt the existing capability and skills of the HHs**

- . The results of the interviews with leaders and group discussions at the evaluation workshop with the CCs show that: for the HHs, the PAOT methods focus on practical actions, relatable to each HH; therefore, it is clear, easy to understand, easy to do for both sides (the HHs as the target groups and the CCs as the communicator), *"based on the checklist, people know what to do and to be able to identify and choose what and how to do apt to their HH conditions and priorities."* From the best practices, and improvements (actions) by the HHs, the CCs then can learn, share and take advantage of those practical experiences in their work when moving onwards.
- . Analysis of the HHs' interviews (in the following chart) gives quantitative results but is similar to the qualitative assessment above.

Chart 8: Evaluation of the HHs on the guidance of CCs



The way the CCs motivating is highly appreciated by the HHs, as indicated in interview results: 100% of the HHs that selected the CCs as the main source of information on WS and SUPR reduction commented that the CC's guidance through the checklist was appropriate to the HH's existing skills and knowledge, of which 65.5% chose the response "easy to do, never done as facilitator's guides before, able to do (choice 1)" and 34.5% chose the response "already know how to do, but still join the action-taking using the checklist, help to promote the implementation (choice 2)".

4.3 EFFECTIVENESS

4.3.1 Regarding the organizations/ units participating the PAOT communications

- **The PAOT communication program is effective when incorporated into the activities of participating organizations, units working towards the accomplishment of their assigned duties.**

- ± The leader interviewed and the facilitator groups reckoned that *'the PAOT communication program has contributed a very important part to the specific objectives and plans of the WU and PCs'* [ward/commune], contributing to the completion of assigned tasks and promoting environmental work in the localities. In the wards/ communes, PAOT communication activities were implemented based on and combined with the existing movements and activities by the Project partners or other departments, organizations, and project(s) working in the same field or similar objectives, such as *the 'three clean' movement (clean houses, clean kitchens, clean alleys), exchanging trash for gifts, 'carrying bags when going market' (reducing nylon bags when going to market)* of the WU, collecting used batteries by the Youth Union in An Thoi ward, gathering organic waste and composting in Tho Chau commune in its own 'reducing plastic waste' project, combining with the

activities of CCBO project³ (supported by USAID), which support the organizing of collection routes/ training on composting in Duong To, An Thoi, and collecting waste in HH group 6, Q8, Duong Dong ward; all those is to create greater joint-hand effort effectiveness than implementing individually optimizing local available resources.

- ± A general comment on the achievements made by the leaders of the city WU that raised public awareness resulting in behavioral changes in WS/ SUPR through implementing the PAOT communications (2022 - 2024) *'have created the precondition for the local reducing plastic waste (in line with the national roadmap) and sorting waste at sources getting a state of readiness for the time when the city has the resources to invest in a waste-sorting collection system'.*

- **The PAOT communication program is effective using the locally available resources.**

- ± In general, the implementation of PAOT communications, to fulfill the commitment to the Project, did **add some more to the workload** of the partners of all levels; nevertheless, this **did not cause any cutting down** on other activities. One of the important factors mentioned is that thanks to the local partners' extensive experiences in balancing and coordinating the implementation, mobilizing and allocating human/ other resources in an effective manner [for instance, the above-mentioned ways of combining activities in wards/ communes].
- ± In addition, workload [visiting each HH 03 times] and time are the most frequently cited 'costs' of implementing PAOT communications; however, in general, there is no claim considering this as an obstacle as preventing the completion of assigned tasks and targets, all [leaders and CCs participating in the assessment] are satisfied with the results achieved [changes in behavior and number of HHs communicated].

4.3.2 Regarding the CCs, the implementers of PAOT communications

- ± The effectiveness of PAOT communications is demonstrated in the perspective of understanding - practice - learning and sharing; before starting the communication by household visits, the CCs applied the checklist to their own families and relatives' learning how to do it themselves, gaining hands-on experiences before sharing, and in this way setting learnable examples during the campaign. Thus, although they are the secondary target group who were trained and directly implemented communications. The practicing WS, reducing waste, and recycling (applying 3Rs: reduce - reuse - recycle) of the CCs was not only behavioral changes similar to the desired behaviors in the target groups of the HHs, but it also inspired changes in the role of the pioneer group⁴.

The overall assessment by partners and collaborators on the effectiveness of the active learning method ranged from **fairly effective to highly effective**. Regarding **WS**, limitations

³ The Clean City, Blue Ocean (CCBO) Project in Vietnam will be implemented over a period of 5 years (2019-2024) in the participating localities of Phú Quốc, Đà Nẵng, Biên Hòa, and Huế, with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Reference <https://2017-2020.usaid.gov/vi/vietnam/program-updates/jun-2020-curb-ocean-plastics-vietnam-and-protect-our-home-world-oceans-day> và <https://cecad.vn/>

⁴ References: Spread out of new behaviour
https://vi.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khu%E1%BA%BFch_t%C3%A1n_%C4%91%E1%BB%95i_m%E1%BB%9Bi

remain as the HHs practice sorting, but the system still collects mixed waste, and no standardized guidelines for sorting have been applied across all wards and communes. As a result, sorting levels vary based on the HHs' needs and conditions—an objective challenge. However, even in such an environment, the active learning approach has proven effective by **driving immediate action without waiting**, despite the supporting system and services for behavior change not yet being fully in place⁵.

4.3.3 On the HHs, the target of desired behaviours

± **The effectiveness showed in generating the HHs' interest** in knowledge and information about WS at source, 92% of the PAOT HHs expressed their interest in WS, and the percentage of 'showing interest' differed between the hamlets/ quarters⁶ **with and without PAOT communications implementation**. The HHs participating in PAOT communications (the first group) showed more interest in WS issues than The HHs not participating (the second group), the percentage of the first group ranges from 93.8% to 100%, while the second group showed less interest, ranging from 18% to 52%.

Regarding knowledge and information on reducing the use of SUP items and SUP waste, and the percentage of the PAOT HHs interest was 84.6%. There was also a difference in the percentage of interest in knowledge and information on reducing SUP waste that the one of the PAOT HHs is higher than that of the non-PAOT HHs. **The percentage of the PAOT HHs who interest in SUPR are ranged from 68% (An Thoi) to 100% (Tho Chau); whilst that of the non-PAOT HHs ranged from 30% (Cua Duong) to 62.5% (An Thoi).**

Chart 9: The HHs' interest in knowledge, information on WS⁷

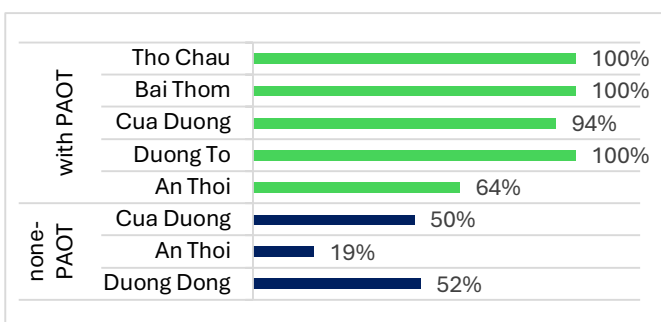
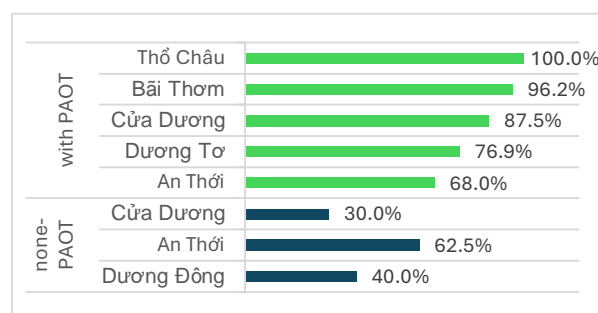


Chart 10: The HHs' interest in knowledge, information on SUPR



- The CCs have proven to be effective in **becoming the main source of information on how to sort waste and reduce SUP waste in the community** with PAOT communications. 118/ 125 HHs⁸ involved in the assess said that they knew how to sort waste, accounting for 94.4%, of which **71% of the HHs claimed that the "main source of information on WS" was the CCs, 21% learned from "checklist", 3% "from television" and 3% taught themselves.** Meanwhile, for

⁵ The effectiveness of the active learning method was assessed on a 4-point scale as follows: Partner leadership (City Women's Union) scored **3** (fairly effective), collaborators scored **4** (highly effective), and Bai Thom Commune scored **4** (highly effective). Due to time constraints, leaders of the four remaining communes—Duong Dong, Duong To, Cua Duong, and Tho Chau—were not scored.

⁶ The number of The HHs—including none business The HHs and business The HHs—is nearly equivalent between the hamlets/villages that participate in PAOT and those that do not, making the comparative ratio logical (see Table 1).

⁷ with PAOT = HHs participating into PAOT / PAOT HH, bars in green, none-PAOT = HHs don't participating into PAOT, bars in blue

⁸ Total HH with POAT in interviewing is 125 HH, none-PAOT in interviewing is 51 HH.

non-PAOT HHs, the main source of information was from Television, accounting for 70%, especially 10% learned from their neighbors who applying the "checklist". Even though that spreading rate of 10% is not high, but worthy as it makes a difference.

Chart 11: Main sources providing information and knowledge on WS⁹

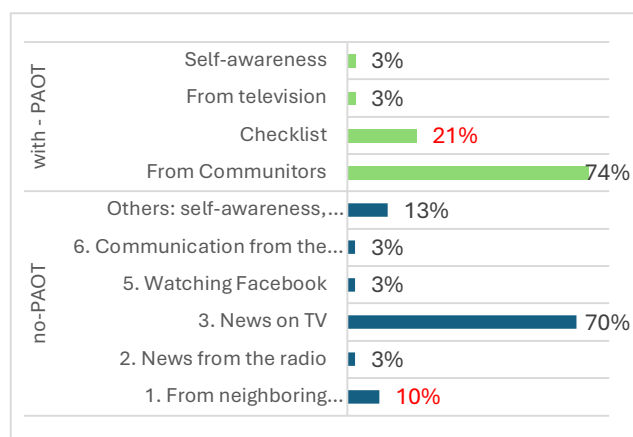
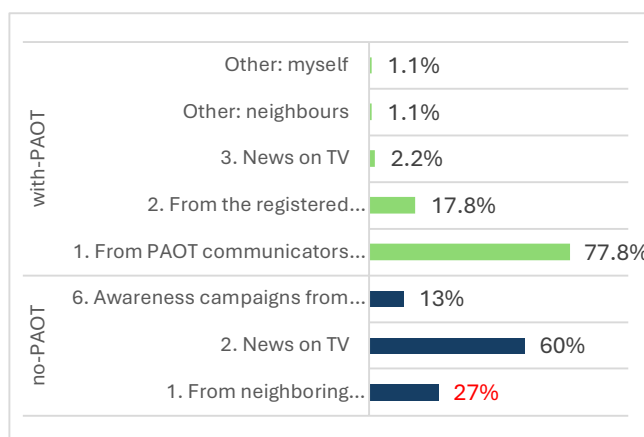


Chart 12: Main sources providing information, knowledge on SUPR



- Regarding the content of SUPR, the rate of PAOT HHs assessed as **knowing how to reduce plastic adopting 3Rs is 72%**, in which the rate of the HHs choosing **CCs as the main source of information 77.8%**, learning from the "checklist" 17.8%, from "television" 2.2%. Meanwhile, in the group of non-PAOT HHs, the main source of information were **Television, making 60%**, and it is noteworthy that **27%** said that the sources of information about SUPR were from their neighbors who applied for the checklists.

The above analysis explained why the knowledge of WS and plastic reduction following 3Rs principle **of the PAOT HHs has been improved**. The number of correct answers to questions related to WS by non-PAOT HHs is lower than that of PAOT HHs (except for An Thoi, the rate is 48% in the PAOT HHs group), referring to some examples:

	None-PAOT HH	PAOT HH
WS	Ratio of Duong Dong is at 72% An Thoi – none PAOT HH – ratio is at 50%	Duong To and Bai Thom have rates of 92% and 77%, respectively. Cua Duong (POAT group) has a rate of 88% ¹⁰ .
SUPR	Duong Dong has the rate of 48%	An Thoi, Duong To and Bai Thom respectively have the rates of 44%, 65% and 92% ¹¹ .

⁹ with PAOT = HHs participating into PAOT / PAOT HH, bars in green, none-PAOT = HHs don't participating into PAOT, bars in blue

¹⁰ Compare corresponding communes with nearly the same number of households; see the number of households in each commune in Table.

¹¹ as footnote 3

Chart 13: Percentage of The HHs with correct answers to questions on the basics of WS¹²

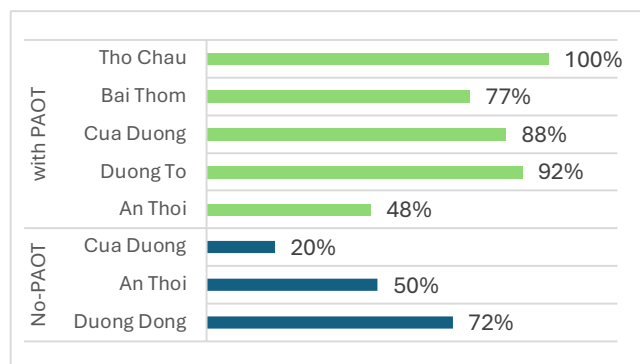
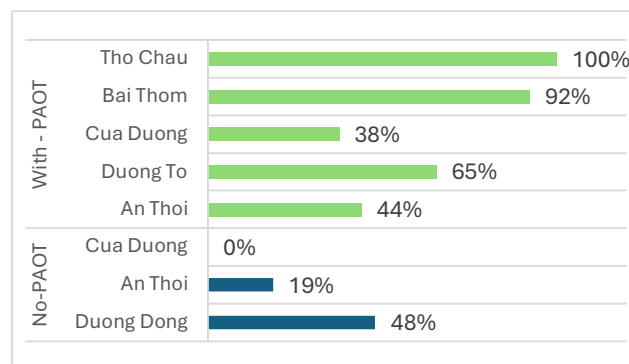


Chart 14: Percentage of The HHs with correct answers to questions on the basics of reducing plastic use following 3Rs



- **The effectiveness showed in promoting the HHs shifting from the state of getting knowledge (only KNOWING) to taking actions (PRACTICING).** The HHs that are assessed as KNOWING (having knowledge)¹³ about the 3Rs principle for SUPR all agreed that participating in PAOT communications **helped to motivate them to change** from just KNOWING to PRACTICING.

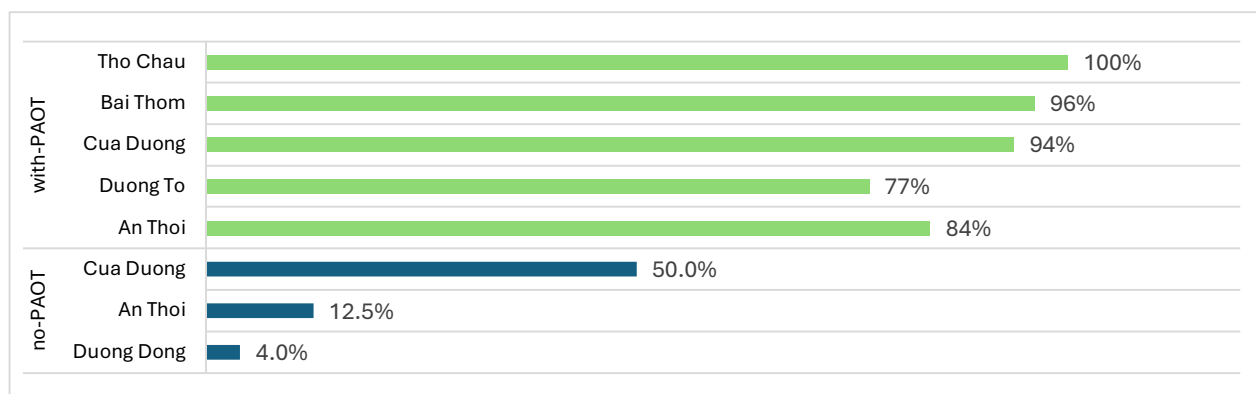
- WS: 98% agreed
- SUPR: 100% agreed

From there, it can be explained why there is a difference in practicing WS, disposal and SUPR behaviors between the PAOT HHs and non-PAOT HHs.

WS: for PAOT HHs, 90% of them confirmed that they did sort waste at home. The rates of the HHs did so between the groups of PAOT HHs and non-PAOT HHs are different.

None-PAOT HH	PAOT HH
Ratio of Duong Dong is at 4%	Duong To is 77%, in An Thoi is 84%, and in Bai Thom is 96%.
An Thoi – none PAOT HH – ratio is at 12.5%	Cua Duong (PAOT HH) is at 94%

Chart 15: Percentage of the HHs practicing WS before the disposal



¹² with PAOT = HHs participating into PAOT / PAOT HH, bars in green, none-PAOT = HHs don't participating into PAOT, bars in blue

¹³ Households correctly answered the knowledge question about waste separation / sorting and reducing single-use plastic.

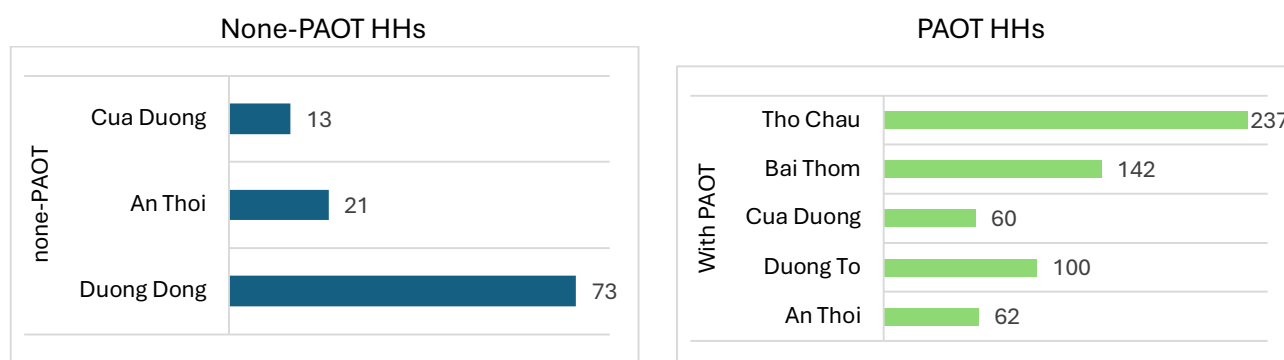
The assessment of the waste disposal practices is based on the training on the proper disposal of organic waste, hazardous waste (batteries and medical waste), and recyclable waste, and when a HH practicing the registered- behavior, it will be given 1 point, for example, for organic waste disposal, the following behaviors are included:

1. Food scraps – to feed the livestock/ give away to livestock farmers
2. Food scraps – to throw or bury under the trees as fertilizer
3. Vegetable and fruits scraps – to make compost/ giving to those needed
4. Dead animals – to bury
5. Leaves – to burn/ bury under the trees

Assessment scoring results: The total score of the behaviors related WS and waste treatment of the PAOT HHs is higher than that of the HHs non-PAOT HHs. Duong Dong got a total score of 73, Duong To and Bai Thom communes got 100 and 142 points respectively. An Thoi got 21 points for the non-PAOT HHs, while Cua Duong got 60 points for the PAOT HHs. In An Thoi, PAOT HHs only got 60 points. Therefore, it is critical to continue communication and follow-up to support the practices by the HHs.

None-PAOT HH	PAOT HH
Total score of Duong Dong is at 73 points	Total score of Duong To and Bai Thom are 100 points and 142 points respectively.
Score of An Thoi, none PAOT HH is at 21 points	The score of Cua Duong (PAOT HH) has 60 points.

Chart 16: Scoring the desired behaviors practicing by the HHs (PAOT HHs and non-PAOT HHs)



- **SUPR:** 85.6% of the HHs participating in PAOT communications confirmed that they practiced SUPR behaviors, the rate of the HHs practicing differed between the groups of PAOT HHs and non-PAOT HHs. Behaviors promoted include reducing/ not using straws, using reusable bags to go shopping, bringing containers when buying food, drinks, etc. Similar to the assessment scoring of WS and disposal, when a desired behavior is practiced, it will be given one (01) point.

Assessment scoring results: the total score of assessing the practicing SUPR desired-behaviors of the group of the non-PAOT HHs is lower than that of the group of the PAOT HHs.

None-PAOT HH	PAOT HH
Score on practicing SUPR of Duong Dong is 20 points	Score on practicing SUPR of An Thoi is 32 points, Duong To is 33 points, and Bai Thom is at 50 points.
Score of An Thoi – none PAOT HH is at: 4 points.	Cua Duong – PAOT HH is at 26 points.

It is noted that it is not possible to compare the practicing of plastic reduction related behaviors between NBHHs versus BHHs in the same unit, because the number of NBHHs was much higher than BHHs. However, if comparing the BHHs' practices between units with nearly equal number of BHHs involved in the assessment, for example, An Thoi, Bai Thom, Tho Chau, it shows that the practice scores for SUPR behaviors are quite similar (ranging from 8-12 points).

Chart 17: Scoring the practicing of SUPR – none-PAOT The HHs

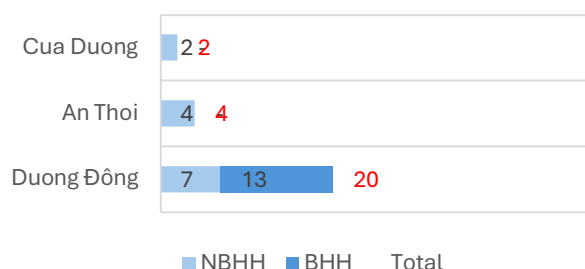
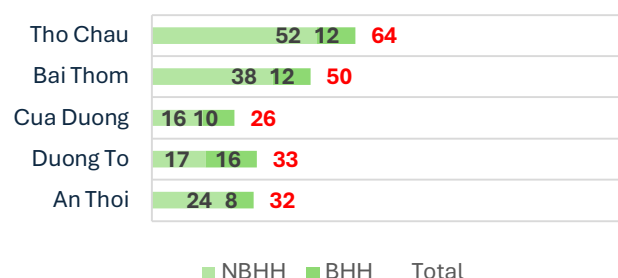


Chart 18: Scoring the practicing of SUPR – PAOT HHs



• **Effectiveness seen in terms of CCs supportively reminding and facilitating the HHs' practices**

.96% of the HHs practicing WS in the group of PAOT HHs shared that during the implementation process, CCs came to visit guiding and reminding to promote the doing, and 1% of HHs chose the response "people from the local PCs/Hamlet Committees visited, guided, reminded", plus 3% of the HHs chose "the waste collectors reminded ". Whilst in the group of non- PAOT HHs, the reminders came mostly from "local PCs/ Hamlet Committees", making up 27%. In addition, 32% of the HHs chose the supportive reminders from their "neighbors' who exercise the checklists".

.93% of the HHs practicing SUPR in the group of PAOT HHs shared that during the implementation process, there were CCs who visited, guided and reminded, and 6% of the HHs chose the response "people from the local PCs /Hamlet Committees visited, guided, and reminded", plus 1% of the HHs chose "the waste collectors reminded". Whilst in the group of non-PAOT HHs, the "reminders" came mostly from "local PCs/ Hamlet Committees", accounting for 14%. In addition, 64% of the HHs (09/14 HHs practicing SUPR) chose the supportive reminders that came from their "neighbors who HHs exercising the checklists".

Chart 19: Percentage of the HHs identifying who came to visit, supportive remind and guide towards the desired behaviors practicing

Non-PAOT HHs

Persons provide guidance and visits	waste sorting	single-used plastic
1.From neighboring households that participated in the registration checklist.	32%	64%
2. Someone from the commune/ward People's Committee or village committee provided guidance.	27%	14%
3. No one at all, done by ourselves	41%	21%

PAOT HHs

Persons provide guidance and visits	waste sorting	single-used plastic
1. Participated in registering for the checklist (GDHD), guided by TTV, with home visits for reminders.	96%	93%
2. Local government officials / village committee members provided guidance and visited families for reminders.	1%	6%
3. Waste collectors.	3%	1%

- **Effectiveness when performing desired-behaviors beneficial to The HHs the community**

84.1% of the HHs practicing the desired behaviors of WS, waste treatment and SUPR stated that adopting those behaviors brought benefits to their families, including:

Table 4: Benefits to families when adopting the desired behaviors of WS, disposal and SUPR

choice 1	Less trash, less time taking out the trash	80%
choice 2	Selling recyclable waste for extra incomes (not even much)	76%
choice 3	Savings cost via NOT buying straws	56%
choice 4	Saving cost via NOT buying SUP items	53%
choice 5	Fertilizers	40%
choice 6	Natural cleaning liquids, no-harm to hand skin	6%

84.1% of the HHs practicing the desired behaviors of WS, waste treatment and SUPR stated that adopting those behaviors brought benefits to the communities. They found that the hamlets have changed since the HHs participated in PAOT communications, including:

Table 5: Changes in neighborhood, hamlets when the HHs participation in the PAOT communications

choice 1	Roads in the neighborhood, hamlets cleaner	96%
choice 2	No trash dumped spilling out of the collecting bins	70%
choice 3	More people using bags to go market	53%
choice 4	More people bringing containers buying drink(s)	48%
choice 5	More people bringing containers buying ready served food	30%
choice 6	Recyclable waste buyers have more to buy	33%
others	Less plastic bags trash for pickers, more people aware of relevant health issues	4.2%

66% of the PAOT HHs and practicing WS, waste treatment, and SUPR shared that they had been communicated about those actions before; of which 26% received leaflets and instructions, 16% had people come to their homes to guide and propagate, but did not have a checklist, and 22% attended meetings with many people and with presenters. 97% of them said that the methodology of PAOT communications was more effective than the above-mentioned ways (76% said it was very effective compared to other forms of communication, 21% said it was relatively effective). The reasons why they prefer the PAOT communications as follows:

66% of the PAOT HHs practicing WS, treatment, and SUPR shared that they had previously been communicated about those; of which 26% of the HHs said that they received leaflets and instructions, 16% said that someone came to their house to guide and motivate, but did not use the checklist, and 22% attended meetings with many people, with someone to guide. 97% of these HHs' opinions is that the PAOT methodology is more effective than the above-mentioned communication methods (of which, 76% of the HHs said that PAOT is very effective compared to other forms of communication, 21% of the HHs said that PAOT is relatively effective). The reasons for evaluating the PAOT methodology effective for the HHs and their preferences when participating are as follows.

Chart 20: Reasons why PAOT communications is more effective as in the HHs' opinions

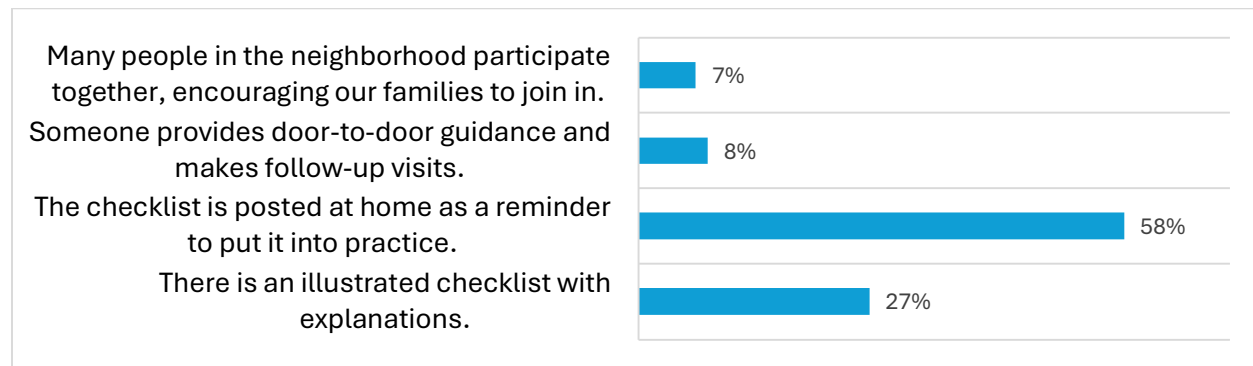
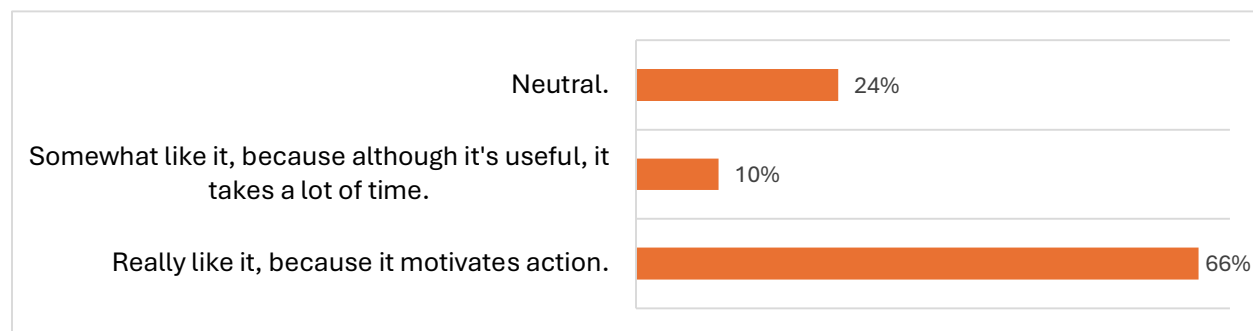


Chart 21: The level of The HHs interest in participating in PAOT communication



4.4 IMPACT

- **Knowledge and capacity of the partner organizations' staff improved through the implementation of PAOT communications.**
 - . The overall comment from the leader of the city WU is that the CCs have successfully "grasped, communicated, and applied" the PAOT methodology, in the way of "proximity to the community and enhanced interaction." This indicates that the CCs have been built their capacity to apply the PAOT communications for WS and SUPR.
 - . In particular, the CCs stated that participating in the implementation of the PAOT communications has improved and further enhanced their skills, such as presentation, sharing, ... and communication (The HHs visits) adopting participatory approaches: *with their own awareness increased, confidence built, they know how to use the checklist in face-to-face communications in a practical and easy-to-follow way*; one remarkable thing is that all the CCs recognized the learning and using the technology for entering the communication results data (into the database on the Kobo toolbox platform / Kobo Collect app) as a new skill trained. During the implementation, two lessons related to capacity building emerged: (i) online data entry, although it was simple and easy, according to the leaders of some communes (Bai Thom, Tho Chau), follow-up coaching was needed for these CCs not handy with smartphones, including many of the elderly CCs; (ii) some CCs felt they lacked confidence and wanted to improve their skills [though not specifying which skills]. Observing the actual situation, it is clear that some CCs have been key participants since the launch of PAOT communications in 2022, while others joined later and received quick training (on-the-

job training), combined with the support from the experienced CCs, probably, they need time to get used to their work and gain confidence; ideally, a refresher course provided to those to systematize their knowledge and field experiences¹⁴.

- . The proven effectiveness of the PAOT communications influences the choice of future communication methods selection by the partners (WU, wards and communes) - leaders and volunteers involved in the assessment responded that if the campaign continues, they would 'choose PAOT methodology' for the following reasons: PAOT methodology is (i) *easy in approaching [the target], easy to remember, and easy to apply*, (ii) *effective in behavioral change communication and oriented to actions*, (iii) and *'because this methodology has been implemented and proved to be effective [evidence-based]*. Regarding the opportunities, the partners said they would probably introduce it to their future partners (if any) [currently none] and they are confident that they can apply it to other contents, such as: *food hygiene and safety, fire prevention, health care, epidemic control, and road safety*.

The overall assessment by partners and collaborators on the **sustainability** of the active learning method ranged from **moderately sustainable to fairly sustainable**. However, it is important to note that this assessment only considers the **method itself**. One reason cited is that the method clearly delivers **the desired results** and rating it lower due to **resource limitations** would be **unfair**. This issue emerged during the evaluation, and only the **method's sustainability** was assessed—**resource availability was not evaluated** by the participants.

- **Knowledge and good practices related to WS and SUPR adopted by the POAT HHs have impacts on other HHs**
 - . **73.5% of the PAOT HHs** reported that their neighbors had followed the desired behaviors they practiced, including WS, disposing of waste in the right places, selling plastic waste for recycling, reusing old plastic containers for planting, reducing plastic bag usage, avoiding plastic straws, carrying reusable water bottles to work, bringing containers to buy takeout food and reusable bags to go market.
 - . When asked about the sources of information that helped the non-PAOT HHs to correctly answer the questions on WS, disposal, and SUPR, **10%** of the HHs stated that the knowledge and information relating to WS came from their neighbors who had exercised the checklists and **27%** of those HHs reported that they also got knowledge, information regarding SUPR from the neighbors exercising the checklists (based on statistical data from Q4, Duong Dong ward).
 - . When asking the non-PAOT HHs practicing good behaviors if there was anyone guided or reminded them to do, they accredited that the source of guidance was from "PAOT HHs", **for WS, the rate of choosing this response is 32%, with SUPR reduction, the rate of selecting this choice is at 64%** (according to statistics on HHs in Q4, Duong Dong ward).

4.5 SUSTAINABILITY AND REPLICATION

- With the capacity and experience gained, the partners are confident and willing to continue the implementation of the PAOT communications, aiming at building upon the foundation already established.

¹⁴ To be hold whenever convenient or on 06-month, annual basis.

- The WU, as the key partner, affirmed that with the skills and experiences acquired through joint hand working with WWF, the organization can independently conduct PAOT communication campaigns on WS and SUPR within its network. Furthermore, it can collaborate with local authorities, agencies, and other partners to apply the same approach to different topics (as mentioned in Section 4.4).
- Regarding the future direction (sustaining or expansion), the WU leadership stated that they plan to: *(i) retain the checklist and checklist exercising, (ii) pair experienced CCs with the new ones to get more trained in the communication force, (iii) provide the training by the city level and assign work targets to lower levels.*
- The CCs, who directly engage in the implementation, shared similar views, suggesting maintaining the same tools and methods, starting with piloting initiatives to demonstrate the effectiveness and persuasive for action-taking to those exposed, facilitating broader adoption and scalability.
- Local ward and commune leaders involved in the assessment emphasized the importance of sustaining the PAOT communications initiative in place. They noted that the most challenging initial phase has already been completed, laying a strong foundation that should be further built upon to generate impacts on broader targets and in the long run.
- While both the leaders and CCs are confident with the PAOT methodology, all shared the concern that resources for financial support for CCs and human resource rotation may affect both maintaining and expanding of the PAOT communication program. Local leaders suggested adjusting the implementation approach to align with locally available resources in the short term, they aim to sustain the PAOT communication activities in current areas for as long as possible while seeking solutions to resource challenges (for instance, integrating the PAOT communications into the local government resolutions and seeking partnership opportunities/ funding sources).
- For the potential of expansion into other fields (food safety, fire prevention, healthcare, epidemic control, road safety), the general consensus is that depending on the contents and resources, the WU would examine and propose the adjustments needed and how to organize, coordinate the implementation, while the program-owner organizations/ agencies will be in charge of the technical inputs.
- Regarding collaboration and expansion with other partners (agencies, individuals, organizations, businesses, and projects), the PAOT communications activities have already been integrated into the CCBO "Clean Cities, Blue Ocean"¹⁵ project in Duong To, An Thoi, Ganh Dau and Duong Dong. Under the MPA Project, PAOT communication activities were implemented alongside the CCBO project's activities, e.g. organizing waste collection routes and others. According to leaders from the city WU, Duong To commune, and An Thoi ward, there is potential for future partnerships with relevant businesses and establishments to further integrate PAOT communications.

¹⁵ To implement the "The HHs Solid Waste Sorting" project, Phú Quốc City has launched a pilot program for to promote HH sorting solid waste, implemented along two routes: Dương Đông (Nam-Bắc Bãi Trường area) and An Thới (Bãi Khem-Khu phố 7 area, An Thới Ward), with the participation of 32 enterprises and business The HHs.

<https://baophapluat.vn/phat-dong-thuc-hien-thi-diem-phan-loai-rac-tai-nguon-va-huong-ung-ngay-vi-moi-truong-phu-quoc-post534118.html>

A case study in Duong Dong – working joint-hand with CCBO project

HHs living in group 6, Q8, Duong Dong ward is located in the central area and is a working-class neighborhood. The HHs here live along the riverbank, building stilt houses extending over the water. In the past, residents used to dispose of their waste directly into the river due to the lack of a waste collection system. Since August 15, 2024, HH group 6 has participated in the PAOT communications program, in combination with a new waste collecting route establishment. The collection is now carried out by two workers using a motorized three-wheeler, with daily pickups at 3:00 PM.

Mr. Long, as a role of the waste collectors, commented that PAOT communications have been effective and facilitated waste collection work. Residents now dispose of their waste properly, separating food waste and keeping recyclable materials (such as scrap metal and plastic) to either sell or exchange for gifts through the project's incentive program. Within the neighborhood, there are two small shops selling drinks and groceries. They have also adopted waste sorting by keeping two separate bags: one for wet waste and the other for dry one, while collecting recyclables to sell.

Residents have become accustomed to the waste collection schedule. When the collection vehicle approaches, they place their bins and bags outside their homes [collection done, the area is clean].

- The results achieved through PAOT communications are sustainable, as households not only find the practices enjoyable but also recognize the importance of maintaining positive behaviors.
- . When discussing The HHs interest in practicing in the PAOT communications, **76% of the HHs** currently practicing the desired behaviors expressed their enjoyment. Among them, **66%** stated they “really like” the doing, as participating in the PAOT communications motivated them to take actions, while **10%** found “like it somehow” because of the required efforts and time needed despite the benefits. However, when asked about the possibility of sustaining those good practices, **99% of the HHs indeed keep doing WS and SUPR** following CCs’ guidance and the checklist responded: “as long as they are good and beneficial practices, we will likely keep doing it.” Only **1%** of the HHs indicated they might stop once the PAOT communications program ends.
- **The PAOT communications has strong potential for scaling up**, as the HHs recognize the benefits of these good practices brought about in the community.
- . When asked about the feasibility of applying PAOT communication with the checklist and CCs’ guidance in other locations, **93% of PAOT HHs**—who practice waste sorting, waste treatment, and single-use plastic reduction—agreed that it could be implemented in other locations. However, when asked for suggestions on how to carry PAOT out, most had no specific recommendations.

When asking the non-PAOT HHs, who have already practiced WS and SUPR if they have heard about such a program, 70% of the HHs reported that they have learned about it, and among those 80% expressed their interest in having the program implemented in their neighborhood,

hoping for a cleaner landscape, waste-free and more hygienic environment. Moreover, they indicated that they would participate if such communication activities were introduced.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Recommendations by the HHs involved in the assessment

The following are suggestions gathered from the HHs interviewed:

- . Regarding waste segregation and management, it was suggested that more public trash bins and designated waste collection points are needed, drop-off locations for hazardous waste, such as used batteries and toxic materials, to be setup, surveillance cameras to monitor and remind violators should be installed and improved waste collection services with more frequent pickup and disposal.
- . Regarding communication activities: one HH suggested that if the checklist is reprinted, it should be on higher-quality paper for durability, and for the HHs to ‘display it at home and refer to it regularly’. There should be signs for waste disposal areas so that the people know those are the right places and to prevent dumping slatternly. The current communication model should be rolled out reaching more targets for awareness raising. Actually, there should be someone to remind and particularly more and more reminders towards those ones with less compliance.

5.2 Recommendations by the leaders representing the local partners

The following suggestions were compiled from the leader interviewed:

- **Checklist printing and communication materials:** The checklist should have larger text for better readability and be printed in greater quantities so that interested individuals or organizations get copies upon request. This would be particularly useful for The HHs that have not yet joined the PAOT communications [but getting the checklists to exercise learning from their neighbors’ examples], this is one of the ways to further spread the communications of WS and SUPR. For activities with technical requirements and/or must-be-done-right, such as composting or WS... as stipulations, instructional materials should be provided so that the HHs know how to do them.
- If continuing to implement the PAOT communications: it was suggested to retain the checklist and its exercising but adjust the ways of implementation and measuring the results and reporting system suitable to the local settings; and ideally, there should be financial support for the CCs. When rolling out, it is advisable to start with piloting [approaching proactive and interested HHs first] so that those ‘pioneer groups’ change their behaviors, consequently inspiring others to follow and gradually expand to wider targets.
- To ensure sustainability, the interviewed leader advised that the PAOT outputs should be embodied as a part of the local government’s resolutions to take advantage of the commune PC’s involvement (either in direct steering or to be reported by the coordination bodies) to create the binding of accountability, direction and support (coordinating, mobilizing human resources, and budget seeking/ allocation).

- It is beneficial to diversify the modalities of collecting saleable recyclable waste besides the "exchange recyclable waste for gifts" initiative, e.g. collecting recyclable waste/ to fund educational scholarships, supporting underprivileged HHs or providing livelihood assistance.
- It was strongly suggested that WWF-Vietnam's continued support into the next phase, expanding PAOT communications covering the whole city in contribution to the achievement of the overall goal 'Phu Quoc working towards a plastic waste-free island city'.

5.3 Recommendations by the consultant team

5.3.1 *Best practices of the PAOT communications should be picked up for continuation and scale-ability.*

- The development of the contents and messages (of the checklist/ in the PAOT communications program) was based on and in line with the local policies, plans, existing activities and responsive to the need of the local partners and community to make it a contribution to the local plans in such a way that helps to root its sustainability. Additionally, the content of WS and SUPR actions in the checklist is practical and relevant to the daily life and the needs of the local community. This played a crucial role in having suitable communication tools, accepted by the community and thereby driving behavioral changes.
- The PAOT communications was integrated with the existing local movements and activities, which was quite effective meanwhile making good use of the local advantages, e.g. incorporating the "03 Cleans" movement of the WU or the organizing of waste collection routes in Duong To and An Thoi under the CCBO project...
- The "Exchange Waste for Gifts" initiative is preferable to the HHs, it helps raise the awareness and sense of responsibility for the environment. To continue this initiative in the long run, it is recommended to develop towards financial self-sufficiency to be fiscally viable, particularly to rely on the experiences and expertise in microfinance and livelihood support of the WU/ other mass organizations. Besides, it is beneficial to expand the recyclable waste collection models for community-support purposes (such as scholarship funds or assistance for the HHs in need).
- **Communication to the HHs directly and pragmatically** was a best practice as it keeps the action-taking (behavioral changes/ good practices) going; therefore, this way should be retained and associated with upholding to the principles of PAOT methodology: being realistic – not theoretical, positive, accepting not-perfect-yet solutions and seeking to continuously improve.
- The HHs were encouraged to keep the checklist even if it fell off - since it serves as a visible reminder and helps HHs monitor their own behavioral changes.
- Other learning inferred from the systematic processor PAOT communications implementation noted as follows:
 1. In the research and design stage, it is essential to review the local policies, plans, needs, and capacities to develop checklist content that is well-aligned with the community's context.
 2. The training should also include the planning of implementation (milestones, workload assignment) to reach a common understanding, and the CCs are clear about what to do afterward.

3. Piloting, supporting the implementation (technical support), and adjustments – it is risk-manageable to pilot with small groups (at least three months allowing sufficient time for behavioral change and follow-up visits) and gathering feedback on a regular basis to refine the tools and implementation strategies (as needed).
4. When moving forward to the new HH group or hamlets, repeat step 2 and provide additional training to get more CCs for the existing sites.
5. Last but not least, it is essential to hold mid-year, and annual reviews for sharing and learning and making adjustments, timely and appropriate, for the improvement of the PAOT communications program under the implementation.

5.3.2 *Recommendations for the development of PAOT communications in the next phase (if any)*

- The statistical analysis indicated the HHs (both NBHHs and BHHs) were more interested in the WS than in the SUPR; therefore, if the local people receive more information about the relationship between health and single-use plastic consumption, they may become more proactive in reducing plastic use. When discussing health benefits, it is advisable to apply the Health Belief Model¹⁶ (which links perceived health risks to motivation for action) to enhance the effectiveness of communications.
- The PAOT communications should go in complementary with other local media outlets and/or social media, as it approaches the target groups by the HHs visits, a direct communication method, which does have wide coverage like the others (e.g., loudspeakers, radio, and community meetings). As Facebook and Zalo are increasingly popular, future communication efforts should consider creating video clips for these platforms, and even TikTok, to increase the ‘socialization’ of the PAOT communication.
- The PAOT communications should go for target groups who interact and influence each other driving changes, e.g., approaching both the sellers (grocers, street food vendors) and buyers simultaneously in communications for the reduction of plastic bags, cups, and straws; while combining with the "Zero-Waste Lifestyle" movement [bringing bags, containers when going market or buying food, drinks...], By this way, it is healthy in terms of removing the barrier of lacking cooperation but enhancing the practicing by ‘having the same say and doing together’. This generates the collective power for the doers and social pressure upon those with hesitance.
- It is recommended the other departments and mass organizations interested or assigned the same task of WS and SUPR communications may adopt PAOT methodology and carry out in their linear system; and get the WU’s cooperation as a local technical resource, involving them, e.g. in sharing – learning on PAOT, checklist development workshops to develop the check and learning how to implement, planning the communications, and support/ collaborate in the implementation...
- Learning from Tho Chau commune that it reached a relatively high number of target HHs, while the commune only implemented PAOT communications in 2023-2024, later than other units,

¹⁶ Reference for potential on health believe model

https://vi.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C3%B4_h%C3%ACnh_ni%E1%BB%81m_tin_s%E1%BB%A9c_kh%E1%BB%8F

but adopting a comprehensive implementation strategy, mobilizing all: local leaders and mass organizations members as the CCs. Therefore, the tactics of mobilizing all-forces and covering the whole HHs/ hamlets prove to be promising and should be adopted for scaling up.

- The future PAOT communications program should collaborate with individuals, organizations, and projects operating in the same area or for similar objectives, for instance, working with the waste collection groups¹⁷, whose have clear operational regulations (*official group name, purpose and principles, financial management rules, main activities membership regulations, rights, and responsibilities*), is an opportunity of integrating activities with PAOT communications for optimized results (reference; the showcase of household group 6, Q8, Duong Dong ward).

¹⁷ Tham khảo <https://cecad.vn/to-chuc-hop-thanh-lap-nhom-va-xay-dung-quy-che-hoat-dong-mo-hinh-to-quan-ly-rac-thai-ran-do-cong-dong-thuc-hien-tai-xa-ganh-dau-va-phuong-an-thoi-phu-quoc.html>

VI. ANNEXES

6.1 Reference

The criteria for building new rural areas, advanced new rural areas, and model rural areas, Google the phrase "criteria of new rural commune, model rural commune" or follow this link.

[Quyết định số 318/QĐ-TTg của Thủ tướng Chính phủ: Ban hành Bộ tiêu chí quốc gia về xã nông thôn mới và Bộ tiêu chí quốc gia về xã nông thôn mới nâng cao giai đoạn 2021 - 2025](#)

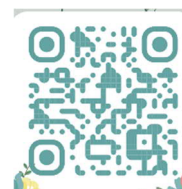
6.2 Assessment tools

Link

Mã QR

Online questionnaire

<https://ee.kobotoolbox.org/x/fAMu2RXm>



Questionnaire for interviewing individual leader and framework for focus group discussions

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FBtYWtVGe2hW6gqVywna-Llb3Mz2VkNp?usp=sharing>



6.3 List of enumerators (see the Activities Report)

6.4 Photos of the assessment (reference on the report on the completion of the evaluation activities)

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Qsqxp9laMGSprFDVoO5D0HrmrY--jryR/edit?usp=drive_link&ouid=103848778632090012907&rtpof=true&sd=true