

**In this issue:**

[Advisory Briefings on “Streamlining CPRGS into MARD rural development strategy”](#)

[The 8th Meeting of WTO accession negotiation of Vietnam](#)

[Establishment of Trust Fund for Forests \(TFF\)](#)

[CARD Program is calling for Expressions of Interest](#)

[Viet Nam issues new alert on bird flu](#)

[Planning on ODA attraction and utilization](#)

[Japan 's New Country Assistance Program for Vietnam](#)

[JFPR Grant to Develop Participatory Processes for Increasing Farm Incomes in Viet Nam](#)

[ADB Adopts New Comprehensive Approach to Disaster and Emergency Assistance](#)

[Australia help for Vietnam floods](#)

[Anti- Disaster Partnership Launches New Initiatives to Reduce Risk in Central Viet Nam](#)

[Greater Mekong Sub-region Cooperation](#)

[International Seminar on Poverty Reduction](#)

[Fruits of competitive advantages](#)

[Communications on ASEAN - China Free Trade Area](#)

[US\\$ 88 million for infrastructure in the Central Highland and Northern Mountainous Area](#)

**Advisory Briefings on “Streamlining  
CPRGS into MARD rural development  
strategy”**

ISG has been supporting MARD in preparing Advisory Briefings with consultations made to relevant MARD Departments and donors' organizations. The first Advisory Briefing entitled “Streamlining CPRGS into MARD rural development strategy” is under preparation with several comments from interested donors. On 17 May 2004, a request and questionnaire (which will serve as inputs for the Advisory Briefings) were sent to MARD Departments. ISG Secretariat has synthesized the recommendations and classified them into groups of issues, and sent it to the ISG Steering Board members for comments and suggestions, in an effort to ensure the good quality of the Advisory Briefing in the next preparation.

Furthermore, ISG Secretariat also requested ISG Steering Board members to provide institutional/policy expertise in an effort to (i) analyze the inputs from the Advisory Briefing and the comments from donors to find out what are the policy implications, and (ii) prepare a comprehensive report, including recommendations to MARD Minister and donors in terms of institutional and policy issues. It is intended that If the consultant is available from late July/early August 2004, the draft of final report can be completed by mid-August 2004.

Source: ISG Sec

**The 8th Meeting of WTO accession  
negotiation of Vietnam**

Geneve, 9 – 18 June 2004 – the 8th Meeting of World Trade Organisation (WTO) accession negotiation of Vietnam was held in WTO Head Quarter in Geneva, Switzerland. During the Meeting, both bilateral and multilateral meetings were conducted. A meeting among members that interested in

agriculture sector was conducted before the multilateral meeting. At the multilateral meeting, which were held on 15 June 2004, members as EU, Canada, the United States, Cuba, Australia, Argentina, Japan, South Korean, the Philippines...stated to support Vietnam to join WTO. These members highly appreciated Vietnam's efforts in preparing documents as well as making considerable progress in products, services and constructions quotations and development of action plans for implementation of multilateral agreements as Trade-related Investment Measures (TRIMs), Trade-related aspects of Intellectual property rights (TRIPs), Custom Valuation Agreement (CVA), Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement (TBT) and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS).

As Meeting documents were well prepared by the Vietnam delegation, most of the members attending the Meeting agreed to discuss Draft Report prepared by the Working Party (WP) on WTO accession of Viet Nam at the 9th Meeting, which tentatively will be organized in December 2004 and proposed Vietnam to speed-up bilateral negotiation process.

At the Meeting among members that are interested in the agriculture sector, Australia, the United State, EU, Japan, South Korean, Argentina, Taiwan, Columbia... highly appreciated and strongly supported Vietnam in the preparation and revision ACC 4 documents. These members also made comments and recommendations to help Vietnam clarifying some points in the document.

**Source:** ICD - MARD

## Establishment of Trust Fund for Forests (TFF)

The Vietnamese Forest Sector has been trying its best to orientate forwards a sector-wide approach instead of a project approach since 1999. For implementing this process, under the guidance of the Government and with the support of the related ministries, in cooperation with the international partners, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has made

every effort to set up the Trust Fund for Forests (TFF). The established Trust Fund for Forests will be financially supported by international donors in order to implement the Forest Sector Support Program and government's programmes for the forest sector, including the 5 Million Hectare Reforestation Project.

Objectives of the Trust Fund for Forest include: (i) aligning ODA support more closely with the agreed priorities identified in the FSSP framework; (ii) improving the poverty targeting of ODA support to the forest sector, consistent with the CPRGS; (iii) harmonizing aid to the forest sector and reducing transaction costs on Gov; and (iv) supporting a transition towards a sector wide approach to ODA support in the forest sector.

The bilateral partners committed to supporting the TFF and have reached a consensus on utilizing funds to cover the agreed priorities identified in the FSSP framework.

Obtaining permission of the Prime Minister, on June 23, 2004, in Hanoi, representing the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Vice Minister Bui Ba Bong, and representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, the Embassy of Royal Netherlands, the Embassy of Sweden, and the Embassy of Switzerland signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish the Trust Fund for Forests, and committed financial support for the TFF. More international partners will sign the MOU to join the TFF at a later date.

**Source:** FSSP CO

## CARD Program is calling for Expressions of Interest

The Collaboration for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD) Program is calling for Expressions of Interest from organisations and institutions to participate in the program implementation. According to the Program working plan, the Expressions of Interest will be short-listed in September 2004. Then, Expressions of

Interest in the shortlist will be developed to full proposals.

CARD Program is an Australian Government initiative, funded through the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), to assist the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) contribute to the Outcomes expected from the Government of Vietnam's Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS).

Total budget for the Program is A\$19.5 million to support research projects proposed by Vietnamese institutions in partnership with Australian institutions. Research projects include those in agriculture, livestock, forestry and fishery.

There is an amount of additional support to facilitate development of research management systems in MARD.

The Program duration is 6 years.

Detailed information about the CARD Program can be found on [www.isgmard.org.vn](http://www.isgmard.org.vn) (related links-CARD Program).

**Source:** CARD Program

### Viet Nam issues new alert on bird flu

The Vietnamese government has issued an instruction, asking localities nationwide to keep on preventing the reoccurrence of bird flu, following the deaths of fowls in several areas, including some testing positive to avian influenza viruses.

Under the instruction issued by Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Van Khai, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the People's Committees of localities must take four measures to prevent the return, and rehabilitate the local poultry industry, local newspaper Pioneer reported Thursday.

First, they have to actively supervise the usage of state money in recovering the industry and minimizing the risk of a relapse of bird flu, and quickly lay a siege to any outbreaks detected to

contain them immediately.

Second, strict controlling measures such as comprehensively disinfecting and detoxifying farms, residues and landfills must be maintained in areas once hit by bird flu or being vulnerable to the disease. Dead fowls, if detected, must be incinerated or buried in a hygienic way.

Third, the ministry and the committees are to inspect the granting of state financial assistance to fowl raisers so that the right people receive the right amount of money, facilitating the recovery and development of the local poultry industry.

Finally, quarantine activities towards the transport, slaughter and trade of fowls and their eggs must be conducted pursuant to veterinary regulations.

For more detail, please contact NDM-Partnership Secretariat at:  
Tel: 719 6807, 716 1176; Fax: 719 6806  
Email: [ndm-partnership@undp.org.vn](mailto:ndm-partnership@undp.org.vn)  
Post messages to: [dmwg-vn@vn-gw.anu.edu.au](mailto:dmwg-vn@vn-gw.anu.edu.au)  
Website:  
<http://www.undp.org.vn/ndm-partnership/>

**Source:** Disaster Management Working Group - Viet Nam

### Planning on ODA attraction and utilization

Official Development Assistance (ODA) is one of important capitals, which supplements to the State budget and contributes to socio-economic infrastructure development of our country. Through 11 Consultative Group Meetings (CG), which are organized annually, donors have committed to support Vietnam with US\$ 25.43 billion of ODA. These commitments have been realized by agreements on ODA, which are worth US\$ 19.6 billion and equivalent to 84% of total ODA committed.

It, however, hard to deny that attraction and utilization of ODA during

the past years were not as effective as expected due to lacking of a master plan on ODA. Donors and beneficiaries only have general orientations but haven't defined specific sectors and localities, which should get priority on ODA receiving.

According to the Deputy Minister of Planning and Investment Nguyen Bich Dat, the immediate development of a plan on ODA attraction and utilization to 2010 is regarded as one of solutions to improve efficiency of ODA in the time to come. This plan is aimed at orienting the utilization of ODA in the period of 2006-2010 to support the development of the 5-year plan 2006-2010, and to define the ODA needs for the period 2006-2010 based on balancing ODA with other capital sources as well as assistance capacity of donors and receiving capacity of Vietnam economy. ODA planning will also assure the development of a priority criteria system on integrated mobilization and utilization of ODA and a list of important programs/projects which should be financed from ODA source as well as proposal on mechanisms and policies to ensure the efficiency of ODA. Presently, the Ministry of Planning and Investment is cooperating with other ministries, ministerial-level agencies and localities to develop this plan, which is expected to be submitted to the Government at the end of this year.

Source: MPI

## Japan 's New Country Assistance Program for Vietnam

On 2 June, the briefing on Japan 's New Country Assistance Program (CAP) in Vietnam to Vietnamese relevant authorities, foreign countries and donors was carried out at the Embassy of Japan with the presence of organizations concerned from the Government of Vietnam. CAP was initiated in 2000 and will be applied for Vietnam this year. It was finalized at the Ministerial Meeting of External Economic Cooperation of Japan on 28 April and will be a major assistance program for Vietnam in the coming years.

This new New Country Assistance Program (CAP) is formulated mainly in the recipient country. It is quite different from the past when the assistance program was designed in Tokyo. Since the summer of 2002, the Japanese working group consisting of members from the Embassy of Japan, JICA, JBIC, and JETRO has made a close contact with the organizations concerned in Tokyo for the preparation of drafting a new country assistance program. Making a new country assistance program is one of the activities of the Council for ODA General Strategy of Japan. In addition to that, the Japanese working group often had discussions with other organizations concerned from the Government of Vietnam, exchanged views with donor countries and promoted the transparency and the full understanding of assistance program of the Government of Japan.

Main Characteristics of this new Assistance Program:

- (1) Three major objectives: "Promotion of Growth ", "Improvement of Living and Social Aspects", "Institutional Improvement"
- (2) This new program aims to design and select projects through dialogue, not based on "request" as in the past.
- (3) Appraise five issues concerning the scale of assistance including "institution and policy environment"

Source: Japan Embassy

## JFPR Grant to Develop Participatory Processes for Increasing Farm Incomes in Viet Nam

**HANOI, VIET NAM (11 June 2004)** - ADB and the Government of Viet Nam signed an agreement for a US\$820,000 technical assistance (TA) grant, from ADB's Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR), funded by the Government of Japan, to develop participatory demand-driven rural development processes that will increase farm incomes and reduce poverty in Viet Nam.

The grant will help poor farmers in one of the irrigation schemes to be improved under the ADB-supported Second Red River Basin Sector Project to identify production constraints, as well as design agricultural extension activities to address these. It will develop, with the assistance of an experienced nongovernment organization, participatory processes and build capacity for their widespread replication under the rural development support (RDS) component of the Red River Basin Project.

Some 40% of the almost 10 million people residing in the Red River Basin are poor, living on only \$0.35 each day. The project will directly benefit 4,000 poor and disadvantaged households and serve up to 81,000 households. The TA will design irrigation management activities to improve the irrigation supplies and interventions that benefit the poorest among the farming communities.

Farmers will be able to compare improved rice production practices through field days. Pro-poor interventions are expected to include small-scale community infrastructure, livestock raising, support services for credit use, and income-generating activities.

The \$70 million Second Red River Basin Sector Project, approved in 2001, is helping to improve the agricultural performance of poorer communities in the Red River Basin through better irrigation systems, drainage, watershed protection, and flood protection. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development will execute the JFPR project, which will be carried out over three years.

Source: ADB

## ADB Adopts New Comprehensive Approach to Disaster and Emergency Assistance

**Manila, Philippines (1 June 2004)** - The Asian Development Bank (ADB) today approved a comprehensive disaster and emergency assistance policy that will provide rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance as well

as assist developing member countries (DMCs) with prevention, preparation, and mitigation of the impact of future disasters.

Developed after extensive consultation with specialized agencies, civil society, NGOs, and developing member countries (DMCs) of ADB, the policy supersedes the 1987 and 1989 policies.

The underlying principles of the new policy include:

- Adopting a systematic approach to disaster management, including natural disasters and post-conflict;
- Mainstreaming disaster risk management as an integral part of the development process;
- Strengthening partnerships among development and specialized organizations to enhance the effectiveness of emergency aid, since no single agency can provide all the resources needed to cope with disasters and the resulting emergencies;
- Using resources more efficiently and effectively to better support pre- and post-disaster activities; and
- Improving organizational arrangements within ADB for planning, implementing, and communicating effectively on disaster and emergency-related assistance.

Formulated within the context of ADB's recognized comparative advantages and evolving conditions in the region, the new policy applies lessons learned over the past 15 years to a more effective and disciplined approach to emergency assistance.

ADB's Long-Term Strategic Framework (2001-2015) recognizes the need to reach out and assist people who are "pushed below the poverty line by natural and human-caused disasters."

To enhance its business processes, the new policy states that ADB's operational policies should be liberally interpreted to ensure speedy and effective rehabilitation, while ADB must remain accountable for compliance with established policies and procedures. Efforts will also be made to shorten project processing time.

More at [adb.org/media](http://adb.org/media)

**Source:** ADB

## Australia help for Vietnam floods

Australia has launched a \$23 million plan to help combat the impact of natural disasters in Vietnam.

The five-year scheme will also improve access to clean water in the wake of last November's catastrophic floods, parliamentary foreign affairs secretary Chris Gallus announced.

Australian non-government organisations (NGOs) would provide infrastructure and training to help more than 700,000 people in the Mekong Delta and on the Central Coast of Vietnam by upgrading disaster management systems and improving water and sanitation hygiene, Mrs Gallus said.

"More than 40,000 homes were affected by floods last November in a country that suffers every year from extensive damage to homes and livestock," Mrs Gallus said in a statement.

"Training will help local people in areas prone to flooding and typhoons prepare for floods and reduce losses."

For more detail, please contact NDM-Partnership Secretariat at:  
Tel: 719 6807, 716 1176; Fax: 719 6806  
Email: [ndm-partnership@undp.org.vn](mailto:ndm-partnership@undp.org.vn)  
Post messages to: [dmwg-vn@vn-gw.anu.edu.au](mailto:dmwg-vn@vn-gw.anu.edu.au)  
Website:  
<http://www.undp.org.vn/ndm-partnership/>

**Source:** Disaster Management Working Group - Viet Nam

## Anti- Disaster Partnership Launches

### New Initiatives to Reduce Risk in

#### Central Viet Nam

**Ha Noi -7 June 2004** The Natural Disaster Mitigation Partnership (NDM-Partnership), a coalition of Government, donors and NGOs,

launched today two new initiatives to reduce disaster risk in Binh Dinh province and Da Nang city in the central Viet Nam.

The total budget of USD 2.6 million is supported by the Governments of the Netherlands, Luxembourg and UNDP, with the Government of the Netherlands contributing the major part of the funding. Both projects aim at reducing the risks of annual floods, droughts and other natural disasters by upgrading flood control infrastructure, such as dykes and sluices in these localities together with developing local capacity.

Under these projects, the participating localities and the Dyke Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development will work together to upgrade disaster control infrastructure and build community capacity for disaster risk reduction. "These new initiatives mark an important shift away from traditional disaster control to more effective disaster risk management. The focus on the link between disaster risk and poverty reduction are fundamental for truly sustainable development," noted Jordan Ryan, UNDP Resident Representative.

Mr. Ryan called for mainstreaming disaster risk into development planning, saying that making disaster risk reduction more explicit in the local planning also enables a more broad-based participatory decision-making process. "Disaster risk is not inevitable. On the contrary, it can be managed and reduced through appropriate and collaborative development actions where central and local government, the donors and community act together." he said.

*For more information please contact Mr. Hoang Tuan Dung, Tel: 9421495 (ext: 159); Fax: (04) 9422267; e-mail: [hoang.tuan.dung@undp.org](mailto:hoang.tuan.dung@undp.org) or Ms. Pham Thanh Hang, Tel: 9421495 (ext: 151); e-mail: [pham.thanh.hang@undp.org](mailto:pham.thanh.hang@undp.org)*

**Source:** UNDP Vietnam

## Greater Mekong Sub-region

### Cooperation

This initiative has been launched by ADB since 1992. GMS member countries consists of Vietnam, Campuchia, Lao, Thailand, Myanmar and Yunan (China). GMS is a great area of 2.300 million km<sup>2</sup> with a population of more than 250 million people. There are 9 main cooperation sectors within the sub-region (transportation, energy, environment, tourism, telecommunication, trade, investment, human resource development and agricultural and rural development). One working group will be established for each of sectors and the working group on agriculture and rural development (WAG) was set up in March 2003.

Objectives of GMS program delegation concerning Southern economic corridor:

- Update and revise the contents of GMS program;
- Review projects and technical assistances which have been included in GMS development program in the Southern economic corridor which belongs to the first prioritized program of ADB, and
- Help Vietnam Government and Southern provinces within the Southern economic corridor to update and define new prioritized projects to include into the program.

Source: ICD-MARD

## International Seminar on Poverty

### Reduction

**Hanoi-10th and 11th June, 2004** , Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized an international seminar within the framework of Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) with the theme of "Poverty Reduction: Experiences of Vietnam and a number of Asia countries" in cooperation with concerned ministries and ministerial-level agencies.

Participating to the seminar was more than 100 representatives from member countries of ACD, international organizations, non-government organization, foreign agencies of other countries in Vietnam.

During the seminar, participants focused on discussion to map out the direction and solutions for improved efficiency of poverty reduction activities.

During past 10 years, poverty rate of Vietnam has been reduced by 50% and this achievement is highly appreciated by international community.

The seminar is a favorable opportunity for Vietnam to share experiences and to promote cooperation activities with regional countries in poverty reduction as well as to realize the Millenium Development Goal (MDG) and Vietnam Development Goal (VDG).

Source: People Daily

## Fruits of competitive advantages

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development have defined 11 fruits of competitive advantages which include dragon fruit, star apple, mango-steen, grapefruit, king orange, mango, pineapple, litchi, yellow longan, Taiwanese papaya and durian.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development will produce investment policies on research and development of fruit production processes, transfer of scientific advancements to improve quality and ensure food hygiene while reducing the prices. Agriculture Planning and Design Representative Office in Ho Chi Minh will re-plan the fruit tree area, especially the main fruit region of Mekong River Delta. Additionally, geographic origin will be duplicated and trademark for these kinds of fruits will be developed.

Source: MARD

## Communications on ASEAN - China

### Free Trade Area

**Lang Son Town, 1-6-2004**, National Committee on International Economic Cooperation organized a seminar "Early Harvest Program in the framework of ASEAN - China Free Trade Area (ACFTA): Opportunities and Challenges to Vietnam Enterprises" in cooperation

with the Provincial People's Committee of Lang Son.

During one-day seminar, participants had chance to listen to reporters from the Ministry of Trade and Ministry of Finance introducing markets of ASEAN countries and that of China, results of ACFTA negotiations, early harvest program, Vietnam import and export policy to China, etc.

In their statements in the seminar, Deputy Minister Luong Van Tu and experts emphasized on the importance of providing updated information to localities and enterprises on Vietnam commitments to ASEAN and China, defining opportunities and challenges of these commitments, recommendations on solutions to support localities and enterprises to improve their awareness and competitive capacity.

Representatives from local authorities, departments, sectoral agencies and enterprises to the seminar raised a lot of questions and comments which highly valued the practicality of informations provided which helped localities and enterprises cope with difficulties in their trade activities with China and within ASEAN as well as in the integration process in general.

**Source:** People Daily

## US\$ 88 million for infrastructure in the Central Highland and Northern Mountainous Area

The Prime Minister has just approved number of loan projects from OPEC and Kuwait Funds in the fiscal period from 2004 to 2006 with total loans of US\$ 88 million for infrastructure development in Central Highland and Northern mountainous provinces.

The project for irrigation system construction, economic development and poverty reduction of Dak Lac will receive US\$ 11 million; the project to construct rural road from Dak Ruong to Dakxpi in Kon Tum will get US\$ 13 million.

Whereas, 6 other projects concerning infrastructure development and poverty reduction in Cao Bang, Bac Can, Lai Chau, Dien Bien and Thai Nguyen receive US\$ 64 million.

**Source:** MPI