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## Rural water supply and sanitation

### Partnership Design Task Force

#### progress update

**Hanoi, 10th June 2005** - The First Meeting of the Task Force for Design of a rural water supply and sanitation (RWSS) Sector Support Partnership was held at the Ministry of Agriculture and rural development. All the members of the Task Force were present at the meeting.

Dr. Cao Duc Phat, MARD Minister attended the meeting and made a welcome statement and some remarks. Minister Cao Duc Phat opened the meeting by stressing the importance of RWSS in MARD's 5-year Plan and emphasized that the GoV is highly committed to the development of this sector. He urged the donors and the line ministries to strengthen the collaboration by way of

forming a RWSS Partnership. He especially emphasized that sanitation should receive very high priority, since Vietnam is not likely to reach the MDGs in that regard.

Presenting the overview of the background for the proposed Partnership and the establishment of the Task Force, Dr. Le Van Minh (Director of ICD-MARD) emphasized that the National RWSS Strategy needs to be updated with a plan of action, and that there is need for improved strategic planning, institutional strengthening and better sector coordination. Since the next phase of RWSS-NTP is currently under design and a number of donors are designing new programs, the time is right for establishing a GoV/Donor RWSS Sector Partnership. Some actions agreed at the meeting include:

- Bilateral consultations with the donors will be conducted within the coming week to discuss the details of the proposed funding support;

- Specific mobilization of international consultant's inputs should be prepared;
- Some funds will be earmarked for short-term inputs;
- Funding from donors will be channeled to the ISG;
- All parties were requested to send CVs of recommended national consultants to the partnership coordinators;
- CERWASS will consider what support is needed to the design process in terms of funding and human resources.

*Further information can be obtained from ISG website at <http://www.isgmard.org.vn/Information/Service/Partnerships/partnership.asp>*

**Source:** ISG Sec

## Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development's capacity and partnership to be improved with support from Sweden

**Hanoi, 17 June 2005** - Sweden and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development today enter into a specific agreement on a MARD-Sida Cooperation Programme. The programme objective is to facilitate and contribute to the preparation and implementation of the upcoming 5-year socio-economic development plan in the agricultural and rural development sector through institutional capacity building within the Ministry and its various partnerships. The programme will also assist MARD in its development towards a holistic approach in rural development, Sector-Wide Approach.

During a 3-year period starting from 1 July 2005, the Programme will help MARD strengthen its institutional frameworks and partnership mechanisms for effective donor coordination and improved use of foreign aid. The Swedish support will also provide senior technical assistance to MARD leadership and technical departments to improve the competence in policy analysis and institutional development within the Ministry.

The programme is the first of its kind in an attempt by Sida to harmonise donor support with the Government's efforts to better and

effectively use Official Development Assistance.

The programme is financed with contributions from Sweden and Vietnam. The Swedish contribution is SEK 39.6 million while Vietnam's contribution is SEK 400,000.

Signatories to the Specific Agreement are the Ambassador of Sweden in Vietnam, Mrs. Anna Lindstedt, and the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr. Cao Duc Phat. Speaking at the signing ceremony, Ambassador Anna Lindstedt said: "The Cooperation Programme has been designed in a new way for Swedish development assistance to Vietnam. A new relationship will be created based on equal footings and the working in partnership for support to important areas for poverty reduction."

**Source:** ICD-MARD

## Piloting a new monitoring and evaluation system on ODA projects

**June 13th 2005** - International Cooperation Department (ICD) of Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) organized an Introduction Workshop to introduce and discuss on implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system over foreign assistance projects in the agriculture and rural development sector especially the 2 pilot projects, Red river basin-second phase (ADB3) and Vietnam Water Resources Assistance Program-VWRAP (WB3). Representatives of the Central Project Office (CPO), the pilot projects, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development of Ha Tinh and WB3 Project Management Unit in Ha Tinh participated in the workshop.

The seminar focused on discussion of the 2 main issues: (i) the contents of the harmonized report form of the 5 Banks applicable to pilot projects: (ii) contents of the periodical report required for those which do not take part in the pilot implementation.

Project Management Units will quarterly report directly to the Management Agencies of the Government (Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Finance, the State Bank of Vietnam) and donors under the harmonized report form of the 5 Banks and at the same time forward one copy to the ICD of MARD for joint-monitoring. In order to reach procedural harmonization, it is proposed that

the two pilot projects should only use this report form when reporting to both donors and Government agencies.

The system structure has been agreed upon and position in the system has been defined for the two pilot projects (ADB3 and WB3). Participants to the pilot system are tentatively consisted of 42 people.

ICD also proposed to develop a monthly synthesized report form to apply to both pilot projects and those which do not take part in the pilot process in service of general management of the sector. This report will be based upon the report form under the Circular No. 06/2001/TT-BKH dated September 20th 2001 by the Ministry of Planning and Investment guiding the implementation of the Regulation on management and utilization of official development assistance projects, which is supplemented with some contents such as the working plan for the following month and changes in terms of finance and personnel.

In order to facilitate monitoring and evaluation of projects in the time to come, ICD has an intension to make some recommendations to the Ministry and the Government to enable the two pilot projects to undertake a separate reporting mechanism as well as to strengthen the implementation of legal documents on management of ODA projects issued by the Government and the Ministry. Additionally, ICD also plans to cooperate with the 5 Banks Group and projects financed by those banks and managed by the Ministry to organize a workshop to clarify requirements of the general report form as well as to make recommendations and contribution to the harmonized report form.

**Source:** ICD-MARD

## Summing-up Conference on the National Target Program on Clean Water and Rural Environment Sanitation in the period 1999-2005

**Hanoi, June 16th 2005** - Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development cooperated with the Steering Committee for the National Target Program on Clean Water and Rural Environment Sanitation to organize a meeting to sum up the program operation

in the period 1999-2005 and to map out the direction and plan for the period 2006-2010.

Representatives from State management agencies, social organizations, provinces, donors and press agencies took part in the conference.

Participants to the conference listened to report on implementation results of the program during the period 1999-2005 and proposed plan for the period 2005-2010 as well as other speeches presented by representatives from ministries, ministerial-level agencies and localities as well as donor community/international organization.

For more information on this conference, please see the minute of the conference at: <http://www.isgmard.org.vn/Information%20Service/Partnerships/RWSS%20partnership/BienBanHoinghiTongketCTMTQG-16June05-v.pdf>

**Source:** ISG Sec

## New Investment Needs to be

### Relevant and Practical for Local Poor

**Ha Noi 1 July 2005** – A national conference opened here on to find ways to effectively assist poor households expand their production to increase income as well as to help improve their access to social services. Deputy Prime Minister Pham Gia Khiem attended and delivered a key note speech at the conference.

The two-day conference, organized by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) with support from the UN Development Programme (UNDP), involved participants from Party, National Assembly and Government agencies, officials from provinces throughout Viet Nam, representatives from mass organizations as well as from the UN and donor agencies and international NGOs.

The conference concluded a series of consultations on the design of the new National Targeted Programme for Poverty Reduction for the 2006-2010 period. Previous consultations took place in Yen Bai, Hai Phong, Ha Noi, Dak Lak and An Giang provinces. The consultation series aims to seek opinions from officials and people in different regions of Viet Nam on how the new programme would be designed and

implemented so that it could best meet the needs of local poor people.

The new Programme will focus on social and production assistance to poor households, provide credit, support small scale rural infrastructure development in poorest coastal and island communes, and strengthen capacities of Programme staff at all levels.

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Source: UNDP

## Strengthening local government capacity for implementing pro-poor policies and plans

**HA NOI, 8 June 2005** - Strengthening local government capacities to prepare and implement more pro-poor socio-economic development plans and budgets is the aim of a new project, which was signed between the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The principal objective of the project is to improve provincial, district and commune service delivery frameworks and processes. Specifically, the project intends to strengthen the capacity of authorities in Tra Vinh, Quang Nam and Vinh Phuc provinces to provide high quality public services to local people, with particular focus to provision of services to the poor and disadvantaged people.

The four-year project, implemented by MPI, has a total budget of US\$4 million provided by UNDP, UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and UK Department for International Development (DfID).

The project will support processes to ensure active participation and involvement of local people in decisions relating to the allocation, utilization and mobilization of resources and accountability for their use. The way to meet the Millennium Development Goals is to improve local planning, and the lessons learnt from this project will provide the necessary knowledge to make local action work to reduce poverty.

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Source: UNDP

## National Conference Focuses on Communes with Extreme Difficulties

**Ha Noi 21 June 2005** – A National Conference opened this morning to discuss the draft document for the Socio-economic Development Programme 2006-2010 for Communes with Extreme Difficulties in Ethnic Minority and Mountainous areas. The Conference, organized by the Committee of Ethnic Minorities with support from the United Nations' Development Programmes (UNDP) and Children's Fund (UNICEF), gathered officials from concerned ministries, agencies and provinces throughout Viet Nam as well as representatives from embassies, UN agencies, and international non-governmental organizations.

The discussion is the final one in a series of consultations on the new programme, known as Post Programme 135, before it is submitted to the Prime Minister by the end of this month. The consultation process aims to seek opinions of officials and people from different regions to make sure that the new programme best meets the needs of local poor people. The previous consultations took place in Ho Chi Minh City, Ha Noi and Dak Lak province. UNDP and UNICEF are providing technical support for the designing and consultation process of the new phase of the Government's poverty reduction programmes.

A UNDP-supported evaluation of the two National Targeted Programmes (Programme 135 and National Targeted Programme for Hunger Eradication and Poverty Reduction) also highlighted the need to improve people's participation, develop participatory monitoring and evaluation system, and strengthen local capacity to ensure the effective implementation of the programmes.

In its concluding observations on the report of Viet Nam, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child recommends that the Government:

- Strengthen efforts to eliminate disparities in accessibility and quality

of health care and education between regions and minorities;

- Conduct a study in collaboration with ethnic community leaders to determine the extent to which ethnic minority children suffer from discrimination in development policies and progress, to address the root causes of any such discrimination;
- In education, to recruit and train a greater numbers of teachers from ethnic minorities groups, and continue to provide incentives to teachers working in remote and mountainous regions;
- Prioritize the construction and expansion of water and sanitation infrastructure in rural and mountainous regions.

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Source: UNDP

### CARE International combines with New Zealand government to continue the fight against Avian Influenza

**Hanoi, 8 June 2005** - CARE International in Vietnam will support the Vietnamese Government and local mass organisations in a project to prevent the spread of the Avian Influenza (AI). With funding of approximately USD138,000 from New Zealand's Agency for International Development (NZAID), the project's goal is to assist in the prevention, containment and management of Avian Influenza in Binh Dinh and Long An provinces. 'STOP - AI' Project (Strengthening Training, Outreach and Prevention services for Avian Influenza), will be implemented by CARE and partners over a nine month period.

CARE in Vietnam will work in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and Department of Health, as well as the Women's Union. Together with its partners, CARE will raise public awareness about Avian Influenza by producing and distributing information materials and through short TV spots. Systematic training on AI will be conducted at the commune level, while at provincial and district levels several workshops will be held to strengthen AI

prevention and response. The project will also distribute field-based bio-safety and clinical equipment to district and commune level animal and public health facilities.

In 2004, NZAID also funded the 'Avian Influenza First Line Emergency Response in Vietnam' project. That project, which was implemented by CARE together with Vietnamese and international partners, involved provision of emergency equipment, bio-safety and other training for animal health workers and educating farmers and households with regard to safe and effective culling practices. This new project builds on that earlier initiative.

### Bac Lieu commences construction of another water treatment plant

Ho Chi Minh 17/6/2005- Under the Australian-funded Three Delta Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Project, the construction of the Water Treatment Plant No2 has been launched in Bac Lieu City today.

By 2007, this Water Treatment Plant and elevated storage facility will enable 80 percent of the Bac Lieu City population (around 90,000 local people) to have access to a safe potable water supply. Moreover, by 2010, 90 percent of the urban population (around 105,000 people) will have this access.

Started in 2001, the Three Delta Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Project aims to improve the welfare of the residents of the townships of Bac Lieu, Ha Tien and Sa Dec by rehabilitating and extending the towns' water supply and sanitation systems, and to develop the capacity of local institutions to manage these systems on a sustainable basis. Particular focus is placed on access to improved infrastructure by the poor and by minority groups. The total project cost is approximately A\$80 million jointly funded on a 60%-40% basis by the Australian and Vietnamese governments respectively.

The project components for Bac Lieu include infrastructure for water supply, drainage, sanitation and solid waste, together with institutional strengthening, training, and community development.

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**Source:** AusAID

## JICA technical support for capacity development of participatory irrigation management system

**On June 14, 2005** - at Viet Nam Institute for Water Resources Research (VIWRR) of Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr. Fumio KIKUCHI – Resident Representative of JICA Vietnam Office and Mr. Nguyen Tuan Anh – Director General of Viet Nam Institute for Water Resources Research are going to sign the R/D on Project for Capacity Development of Participatory Irrigation Management System through Viet Nam Institute for Water Resources Research for Improvement of Agricultural Productivity in Viet Nam. The signing will be witnessed by officials of Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Upon this significant point, the project will be officially started and lasted for 5 years.

The Project Purpose is to promote participatory irrigation management and improve agricultural productivity both in terms of yield and cost through enhancement of the capacity of leading farmers and water resources engineers in the model site.

For further information, please contact:  
 Mr. Kunihiro Nakasone – Deputy Resident Representative  
 Ms. Tran Mai Anh – Assistant Program Officer

**Source:** JICA

## Workshop on Economic integration and maize-based livelihoods of poor Vietnamese

**Ha Noi, 9 June 2005** - An introductory workshop was held to present the final draft report of the study on “Economic integration and maize-based livelihoods of poor Vietnamese”. The study was co-conducted by Ministry of Agriculture and rural development, Vietnam Agricultural Science Institute (VASI), Institute of Economics, Oxfarm and Vietnam’s Farmer Union since March 2004.

The purpose of the study is to provide detailed analysis and recommendations for policy discussion and policy formulation in the context of economic integration, in order to strengthen rural poverty reduction and sustainable development in Viet Nam.

To read the report, please click here:  
<http://www.isgmard.org.vn/Information%20Service/Report/Report.asp>

**Source:** ISG Sec

## Second Red River Basin Sector

### Project – The Mid-term Review (MTR)

#### Mission

**From 13 to 30 June 2005** - A mission (the Mission) comprising representatives from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Agence Francaise de Développement (AFD) and the Netherlands Government together with representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD – the Executing Agency [EA]) undertook the MTR for the Second Red River Basin Sector Project (the Project). The Part A5 (Component 5 of the Part A – Integrated Water Resources Management under the grant) Project Management Experts provided support to the Mission.

Because of the significant implementation problems experienced under Part B (infrastructure rehabilitation part under loan 1855 VIE(SF)), the MTR focused on this part. A comprehensive review of Part A will be undertaken in November 2005 when its current second phase will be completed. Recognizing the implementation problems, MARD submitted a proposal prior to the MTR for adjustments in the design and implementation arrangements of Part B to expedite its implementation.

The overall assessment of the Mission in terms of the root causes for the difficulties experienced with the implementation of the

Project during the first three and a half years is the following:

- The Project was prepared at a time that lessons from the implementation of the two earlier ADB financed water sector projects were not yet complete. As a result, the design of the Project does not take into account important PRC recommendations from these two projects;
- While preparing and finalizing the design of the Project, MARD's ownership to implement an innovative project that integrates traditional engineering oriented investments in the rehabilitation and improvement of irrigation and drainage systems within a project framework that emphasizes poverty reduction, IWRM, sustainable O&M and improved governance in irrigation service was not adequately assessed;
- The difficulties with expanding the coverage of Part B subprojects from the Delta provinces as under the RRDWRSP to upland provinces was not fully recognized during project preparation and appraisal;
- The Project's design assumed that a relatively large JFPR grant would be available during the start-up of the Project to assist in the further development of the RDS component, a new feature and add-on to an irrigation and drainage rehabilitation and improvement project. Unfortunately, a scaled-down JFPR project could be realized much later, i.e. in 2004;
- The organizational arrangements for the RDS component were not adequately assessed during project preparation and appraisal: in hindsight it may have been more appropriate to assign RDS implementation responsibility to MARD's National Agriculture Extension Center at the national level and to Agriculture Extension Centers at the provincial level;
- The ability within CPO to review and appraise subprojects proposals against the Project's selection and appraisal criteria has been overestimated during project preparation and appraisal, and Part B consultants were consequently assigned a too limited role. As a result, the Part B consultants are constrained in providing assistance to CPO, the design companies and PIUs. The lack

of integration of the Part B consultants in the CPO structure and the difficulties in accessing data and information have reduced the effectiveness of already scarce consulting services; and

- The poorly prepared feasibility studies financed from the savings of Loan 1344 and MARD's initial reluctance to allocate sufficient resources to update and improve the feasibility studies are other important root causes.

After having the discussions and meetings, the MTR Mission concluded that the Project in terms of Part B – the MTR's main focus - still offers an opportunity for recovery from the initial problems.

The MOU summarizes the Mission's assessment, the main issues discussed and the understandings reached. The MOU was discussed and finalized at the wrap-up meeting held on 1 July 2005. The MOU has been approved by ADB, AFD, the Netherlands Government and MARD on July 2005.

(More information can be obtained from CPO or Second Red River Basin Sector Project-TA 3892-VIE)

**Source:** TA 3892-VIE

## **A protected area policy analysis**

### **undertaken by MARD with funding**

#### **from GEP/UNDP**

MARD has begun an assessment of protected areas policy uptake by Government - what is working and what is not and what needs to be done to facilitate implementation of the National Protected Areas Strategy. The project is funded through GEF/UNDP and receives technical assistance from IUCN and several IUCN members. It will analyse the experience with protected areas management over the last decade, the various models tested, their uptake within policy and legislation, the obstacles to effective policy implementation, and the ways to overcome the obstacles.

The project will make specific legislative, policy and procedural proposals relating to the highest priorities for action to senior policy-making levels, including the National

Assembly and the Government. Ten case studies will be prepared on specific protected areas throughout the country; the experience with international projects that have supported these areas will be assessed and PA staff will be involved in identifying achievements and remaining challenges.

This work will result in two written outputs. A Technical Report will provide a comprehensive picture of the findings and lessons in PA policy innovation and uptake and set out detailed proposals as a contribution to on-going revisions of legislation and mechanisms of governance. A Policy Brief will distil the most important policies and actions that need to be taken.

The Analysis is scheduled to be completed by December 2005 with most work taking place during July to September. An inter-ministerial working group of representatives from concerned ministries and selected PAs will be formed to guide the Analysis under the leadership of Mr. Nguyen Huu Dung, Head of Nature Conservation of FPD/MARD. A number of consultations with key concerned governmental organisation officials/leaders, NGOs, and working groups meetings organised throughout the Analysis will provide valuable inputs to the Analysis. A national Forum will be organised in September to help shape the results and outputs of the Analysis. The Analysis is being undertaken in a partnership with Government organisations, NGOs and donors.

At this stage the study team would appreciate hearing from anyone who can suggest PA project evaluation documents, reports or case studies which could provide useful input to the analysis of the following priority policy fields: (1) PA management institutional and operational procedures; (2) community involvement; (3) biodiversity conservation; (4) financial mechanisms; and (3) landscape management.

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**Source:** IUCN

## 80% of rural businesses are hunger of capital

**Hanoi, 31 May 2005** - Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development organized a seminar to review 3 year implementation of

the Resolution No. 15 on industrialization and modernization of the rural agriculture.

Presently, rural careers in many regions are self-generated and equipped with out-of-date technology. Up to 80% of businesses lack capital for technology renovation and expansion of production scale; 30% of businesses are in serious lack of materials in support of their production.

According to an evaluation, although considerable achievements have been made in terms of structure transformation during the past years, but these changes are unsustainable and not so clear, especially for the case of rural economy in many localities. Rice still plays a dominant role in the plant structure; percentage of husbandry value is just a bit higher than 20%; economic value generated from 1ha of agricultural land is still low in comparison with its potential.

In the time to come, industrialization and modernization of the rural agriculture will be focused on strong development of husbandry, aquaculture, transformation of plant structure in an orientation of improving effectiveness and living standard for farmers, speeding up the development of rural industries, careers and services.

**Source:** MARD

## Japan declares ending the negotiation on Vietnam's membership of WTO

The two sides has come to a basic agreement on completion of the bilateral negotiation concerning joining World Trade Organization (WTO) of Vietnam. Press secretary of Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Hatsuhsa Takashima reaffirmed this information at the press conference held in the evening of June 6th.

According to Mr. Takashima, the above agreement has been reached right before the meeting of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Nobutaka Machimura and at present final touches on wording are being made. The date for official signing, however, has not been scheduled.

The final bilateral negotiation round started on June 6th and ended in the afternoon of

June 9th after the two sides came to a common consensus on such issues concerning investment, agriculture and services.

“Reaching the basic agreement with Japan on Vietnam’s membership of WTO will help Vietnam to push up with the negotiation process with the United States and other partners”, Mr. Takashima said with the press.

Source: Vnexpress

## China wants to cooperate with Vietnam on agricultural product processing

Hanoi, 15 June 2005 - a talk on foods and agricultural products between Vietnam and China organized, the representative from China Foods and Agriculture Organization expressed wishes for close cooperation with Vietnam in the field of agricultural products processing in order to speed up goods consumption in the two countries.

Representative from the Department for Agro-forestry Product Processing and Salt Industry, Mr. Doan Xuan Hoa said that agricultural products in good consumption between Vietnam and China were fruits, coffee, salt, rubber, tea and sugar.

Mr. Doan Xuan Hoa expressed his wishes that China should assist Vietnam in terms of new seedlings, intensive cultivation skills, development of materials and new technology for raw agricultural product processing and preservation.

Many Vietnam enterprises expressed their expectation to cooperate with Chinese

partners to produce exotic rice and export fruits and rice to China. A great deal of cooperation agreements in the field of agricultural product processing has been initially took shape between enterprises of the two countries.

Source: VNA

## United State grants US\$ 5 million for Vietnam agriculture sector

According to the information source from the Ministry of Finance, around US\$ 5 million generated from auction of 24,000 tons of wheat, which were assisted by the United State for Vietnam in the fiscal year of 2004, will be used to finance projects in the agriculture and rural development sector.

The above wheat is assistance for Vietnam under the agreement signed between Vietnam and US Government on agricultural goods assistance in accordance with the Act on Foods for Advancement.

This is the forth time which Vietnam receives such assistance. The three previous ones were in the fiscal year of 1999, 2000 and 2002 with total wheat volume for each year of around 24,000 - 25,000 tons.

The above money amount will be used to invest in rural infrastructure development, agricultural production and research projects, resettlement assistance and other humanity assistances.

Source: VNA