MONTHLY BRIEFING

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN ARGICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

ISG Secretariat : Room 209-210 Building A9 - 2 Ngoc Ha, Hanoi – Tel: (84-4) 733 6610 – Fax: (84-4) 733 6624
Email: isgmard@fpt.vn – Website: http://www.isgmard.org.vn

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## ISG Website updated

ISG website has been updated with information of on-going key assignments that facilitated by the ISG process. For more information please visit ISG website at http://www.isgmard.org.vn or at the following links:

- Sector strategic planning (5 Year Plan 2006 - 2010)
- Policy Advisory Briefings (PABs)
- Provincial Dialogue Platforms (PDPs)
- Piloting an M&E system for ODA programmes/projects
- Integrated database in sector international cooperation
- Supporting formulation of RWSS Partnership
- Development of sector FDI management system
- ISG Monthly Briefings & Quarterly Newsletters

Sharing information are strongly encouraged among Secretariat to share information among ISG stakeholders.

**Source**: ISG Sec

## Strengthening information exchange between the Ministry and localities

**25 - 26 May 2005 in Nha Trang**, Khanh Hoa, Support to Public Administration Reform in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Developlment (PAR in MARD) project held a workshop on "Strengthening information exchange between the Ministry and locality". The workshop attracted 64 participants who are representatives of 21 Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) and 8 Departments of the Ministry and Office of the Ministry .

The workshop was held in order to: assess the current situation of two-way information exchanges between MARD and DARDs; identify information needs and its related advantages and disavantages; agree the contents, mechanism and method of information exchange between MARD and DARDs and vice versa; establish Information Communication & Technology Practice Network (ICTPN) among ICT Coordinators of the departments in MARD and localities; and approve the IT training programme for DARDs as well as promote using the existing IT system in the DARDs.

During the last time, with the support on Information Technology (IT) of the component III of the project "Support to

Public Administration Reform program in MARD", two-way information exchanges between the MARD and DARD have been implemented more regularly. However, there are some shortcomings and difficulties as the contents of information sent by DARD are cursory, overlapping and inaccurate not to meet the demands of the Ministry in using for giving guidelines, directions and management. In contrary, DARD have not been provided the information concerning policies of MARD and the Government, the science and technology advances, etc., in agriculture and rural development sector. A mechanism for information exchange between MARD and DARD and among DARD have not yet established so effect of using information is still low.

For more information, please contact PAR in MARD project at the following address:
Mr. Pham Van Quy, Project Asistant
Tel: 080 43 097/8
Fax: 04 733 9117
Email: vie02016.vn@undp.org

**Source**: PAR in MARD

## Danish Development Minister: Our Cooperation brings about very good results

### Danish-Vietnamese development cooperation combats poverty in Vietnam

"I am very happy to see the positive impact of our development assistance in Vietnam. The Danida funded sector programmes are clearly in line with the priorities of the government of Vietnam, and together we are effective in supporting the social and economic development. This is essential in Vietnams efforts to combat poverty."

The Danish Minister for Development Cooperation, ms. Ulla Tørnæs, expressed her satisfaction with Danish-Vietnamese cooperation at the end of her weeklong visit to Vietnam 16-20 May.

During the Meetings the Danish minister confirmed the commitment for further support to Vietnam with a broad range of Danida funded activities in Vietnam.

Apart from the four sector programmes within water and sanitation, fisheries, agriculture and business sector development, the Danish assistance comprises environment, the reform process and the poverty reduction strategy, mixed credits and the Private Sector Development Programme, which support business-to-business cooperation between Danish and Vietnamese companies.

In addition Danida is presently introducing the Business Linkage Programme, which will support the participation of Danish companies in the privatisation of the state owned enterprises in Vietnam.

The Danish minister also discussed a number of Danish investment projects with the Vietnamese government.

**Source**: Royal Danish Embassy

## Poor get a better life through Agriculture Sector Programme

### Agriculture programme well on the way

A review team concludes that "2004 has been a good year" for the Agriculture Sector Programme Support.

The fourth joint Vietnamese-Danish sector review of the agriculture sector programme support finds that the programme is important in supporting Vietnam in poverty reduction and in increasing the agricultural production.

The Team undertook in April-May an extensive review of the entire programme and its six components within a budget of DKK 435 Million (USD 76 Million) for the period 2000-2006.

The review finds that poverty reduction is being addressed by the ASPS through the introduction of technologies raising the income of the small-scale farmers, and by targeting ethnic minorities in the selected provinces.

### Gender and Governance issues

Gender and good governance are strongly addressed in components using farmers' field schools. Gender strategies are adopted by some components, but the review finds that these aspects need to be strengthened in the entire agriculture sector programme.

The main areas of the programme integrated pest management, improved husbandry of small livestock among small and poor farmers, improved handling of crops after harvest, supply of improved seeds, improved access to credits, and capacity building of the Vietnams National Farmers' Union.

The Team however finds that the sustainability of results have not yet been reached for all the components. As examples can be mentioned: the need to acknowledge the integrated pest management technologies as a production strategy in the new 5-Year and the stream-lining of the systems for offering micro-finance to small farmers without collateral.

The review team focused on reviewing the progress of implementation of the National Sector Program, Progress of the Danish supported programme, Effectiveness of Procedures. The Team also provide some conclusions and recommendations relating to new component formulation "Capacity Building of MARD"; use of unallocated funds, extension of programme implementation by 6 months to June 2007, budget status and reallocations. In addition, the Team also mentioned the phasing out and preparation for second generation ASPS.

**Click here**, if you want to download the aide-memoire of the review.

**Source**: Royal Danish Embassy

## Poor women in the Mekong Delta to address decision-makers

Although the Mekong Delta is regarded as a prosperous region, poverty remains a big problem, especially among the Khmer women in the area. The government has recently approved a new project aimed at improving the livelihoods of the poorest people in the region. The Women's Union of An Giang and Soc Trang provinces will implement the PACODE (Participatory Community Development) project together with CARE International in Vietnam. PACODE is a multi-million Dollar project which directly addresses poor women's needs and interests. It will be implemented in eight rural communes in An Giang and Soc Trang provinces.

An important element of the PACODE project will be to learn from best practices on poverty reduction efforts and share that learning with relevant decision-makers. The vehicle for this will be a proposed Community Development Forum consisting of representatives from poor communities with large Khmer populations; government and concerned individuals.

The five-year PACODE project involves a number of partners. The project will receive technical support from the Pediatric Hospital No. 1 in Ho Chi Minh City and the Energy Conservation Research and Development Center (ENERTEAM). Funding for the project comes from Danida, the Danish International Development Assistance Agency, facilitated by a group of Danish NGOs: CARE Danmark, the Danish Organisation for Sustainable Energy, and the Danish Vietnamese Association.

**For more information contact:**

Carol Sherman, Country Director of CARE International in Vietnam

Phone: 04-716 1930

Fax: 04-716 1935

Email: csherman@care.org.vn

**Source**: CARE International-Vietnam

## World Bank and Partners Award US$4 Million for Innovative Environment Projects

**Washington, DC, May 25, 2005 -** Thirty-one environmental entrepreneurs from around the world walked away with nearly US$4 million in grants from the World Bank's 2005 Development Marketplace Global Competition. Their ideas ranged from transforming discarded charcoal dust into low-cost, clean burning fuel briquettes in Kenya to re-using cleansing water from mosques for irrigation in water-scarce Yemen.

Entitled "Innovations for Livelihoods in a Sustainable Environment," the 2005 Marketplace reflects the World Bank's commitment to promote environmentally and socially responsible growth. Poor people directly depend on natural resources for their livelihoods and are severely affected by environmental degradation.

The Development Marketplace's approach complements the World Bank's broader work by focusing on grassroots initiatives and working directly with local organizations that implement projects on the ground.

More than 2,600 applicants from 136 countries responded to the call for proposal, demonstrating the huge of volume of innovative, local solutions to promote environmental conservation and poverty alleviation.

Seventy-eight finalists came to Washington, DC for the two-day competition to showcase their unique ideas to bring renewable energy to small communities, reduce air and water pollution, promote sustainable agriculture, and raise environmental awareness.

The Marketplace's Knowledge Exchange program also gave the finalists an opportunity to learn more about other funding options, share ideas, learn from each other, interact with World Bank staff and other potential funders.

There were 34 judges from different organizations, including National Geographic, USAID, Conservational International, World Conservation Union, the United Nations Environment Program, and the World Bank, as well as previous winners.

The Development Marketplace started in 1998 as an internal Bank competition to fund innovative ideas that were not picked up through the usual funding system. Over the last seven years it has evolved into a global event that has awarded nearly US$40 million for 1,000 projects in more than 70 countries through Global Competitions, Country-Level and Regional Development Marketplaces (CDMs).

For more information go to: www.developmentmarketplace.org

To view the complete list of the winners, please go to www.developmentmarketplace.org

**Source**: WB

## Vietnam raises poverty line

**24 May 2005** - The Government of Vietnam has officially approved the Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA)'s plan to apply a higher poverty line in the period of 2006-2010. Accordingly, anyone living in rural areas with a monthly income of less than VND200,000 ($ 12.74) is considered poor in Vietnam, while the threshold for an urban poor resident is less than VND260,000 ($ 16.56).

Under the previous criteria, the poverty threshold in rural areas was between VND80,000-VND100,000 ($ 5.1-6.37) and VND150,000 ($ 9.55) for urban areas. According to new criteria, Vietnam's poverty family rate will increase to 26% or 4.6 million households from 8.3% last year.

The MoLISA estimated that the country will have to spend around VND33.7 trillion ($ 2.2 billion) for the national poverty reduction program. Of the sum, 26% will come from the State budget, 11% from local coffers, 6.5% from international aids and the remainder from people's contribution. The money will be mainly used to help poor people to develop their production and have easy access to basic social services.

**Source**: ISG Sec

## Workshop on enhanced Aid Effectiveness

**Hanoi, 28 April 2005**, Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), within the framework of the activities of the Partnership Group for Aid Effectivenes (PGAE), held a workshop on Aid effectiveness to implement Paris declaration on aid effectiveness. The workshop focus on discussing the following issues:

(i) To reach a common aggreement among Vietnam Government agencies and donors on the contents and agreements that agreed at the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Paris from 28 February to 2 March 2005. The common agreement will be a firm foundation for the implementation of commitments of the Declaration in Vietnam;

(ii) To approve commitments of Vietnam Government and donors in Vietnam on the implementation of Paris Declaration on Aid

Effectiveness with obective and indicators for the period from now to 2010.

The workshop attracted more than 100 participants representing for Vietnam Government agencies, donors in Vietnam, research institutes and INGOs.

**Source**: ISG Sec

## Workshop on "Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and its practical implication"

In order to respond to the implementation of Kyoto Protocol (KP) on reduction of GHG emission to keep content of GHG in the atmosphere at the limit. On 11 May 2005, in Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the workshop on "Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and its practical implication" has been held under the financial support of SNV, Netherlands and Clean Energy Finance Committee, Japan.

Among the three mechanisms provided by KP, the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) is the most important and practical one for developing countries as Vietnam. Implementing CDM will help Vietnam to achieve sustainable development as well as to fulfill the commitments which have been approved in UN Frame Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by Vietnam.

The contents of workshop focus on introducing the CDM related activities in Vietnam in which special attention paid to Medium-term plan on CDM in Vietnam and CDM related activities in agriculture and rural development sector. The workshop also introduced briefly some CDM related projects to be implemented in agriculture and forestry field as: Support project to biogas program for the animal husbandry sector of some provinces in Vietnam which is being implemented in 12 provinces in Vietnam; "Rung Vang" project which is being pilot implemented in A Luoi, Thua Thien Hue province.

**Source**: ISG Sec

## Training on design of integrated rural development project using logframe approach

**Hanoi, 16-27 May 2005** - two 5-day training courses on design of integrated rural development projects were organized by project VIE/01/023 "Strengthening capacity for management of integrated rural development". More than 50 trainees from DPIs and DARDs of 20 provinces were attended the training. Two similar courses were conducted in December 2004 for government officials - one course for officials of central agencies (MPI, MARD, MOLISA, CEM) and one course for officials from provincial DARDs and DPIs of 10 provinces.

The objective of the training is to provide in-depth knowledge in design of IRD projects to the relevant staff of provincial agencies (DPI, DARDs) with a view to enhance their capacity to proactively and effectively coordinate and manage the designs process of integrated rural development projects. The senior instructor of the training is Doctor Dimyati Nangju, ADB's ex-senior specialist (Lead Agronomist) who has more than 23 years working with ADB office in Manila and involved in designs and appraisals of a large number of agriculture and rural development projects. The trainees were leant on concepts, principles and processes of designing IRDPs using log-frame approach. Group exercises on developing a project framework and a case study on an IRDP in Vietnam undertaken by trainees during the course helped to enhance their learnt knowledge and skills.

The training content is well fit with MARD's recent intention to apply logframe approach for development of ARD sector 5-year plan over 2006-2010. The training would enable attended government officials to take more proactive role in design process of IRDPs and apply logframe approach for sector/area planning works.

**Source**: Project VIE/01/023