SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ETHNIC MINORITY POVERTY REDUCTION IN MOUNTAINOUS REGIONS

FROM PROJECTS TO POLICIES

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Thai Nguyen, June 2014

STATUS OF MOUNTAINOUS REGION AND ETHNIC MINORITIES 1996-2010 (1)

- Under-developed socio-economic infrastructure
- Low level of production and cultivation
- Low education level
- Slash and burn cultivation practice,
- Big gap in living standard between urban and rural and mountainous areas
- Limited planning capacity of local staff
- Constraints in planning, management, decentralization and empowerment

STATUS OF MOUNTAINOUS REGION AND ETHNIC MINORITIES 1996-2010 (2)

- Hard living conditions of ethnic people compared with Kinh group:
  - In 2010: 14,6% of total population, but almost 50% of poor households in Vietnam;
  - According to VHLSS, many aspects of living standard of ethnic minorities are much lower than majority

- Therefore, many policies/ programs targeting poverty reduction for EM

POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAM 1996-2000

- Decision 133//1998/QĐ-TTg dated 23/7/1998 on approval of NTP on poverty reduction 1998 – 2000;
- Decision 135/1998/QĐ-TTg dated 31/7/1998 on approval of Socio-economic development program for extremely poor and difficult communes in mountainous and remote areas (Program 135);
- 11 NTPs in this period (Program 773/TTg dated 21/12/1994, Programs on Education and training, Health care, HIV/AID, Clean water and sanitation, Employment, Culture, Children health care, Drug prevention);
- ODA projects as CBRIP, NMPRP

CONTRAINTS IN POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS (1)

- Just solve immediate issues, lack of strategic planning
- Designed and implemented on funding source
- Separate programs/projects for specific objectives, no comprehensive objective
- Lack of policy framework, strategic institution for poverty reduction programs
- Mainly focus on hunger elimination, then poverty reduction, therefore lack of sustainability

CONTRAINTS IN POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS (2)

- Not appropriate approach in designing programs
- Centralized planning, top down, slow innovation
- Lack of institutional and legal framework, while limited capacity of staff
- Limited attention in M&E
- Overlaps, institutional constraints, particularly in collaboration, linkage and integration among programs
- Wide-spreading targets, scattered resources, leading to low efficiency
- Mainly designed as grants and subsidies, rather than support to escape from poverty, leading to limited motivation
- Limited participation of local people, contribution of communities in implementation, M&E

DEMAND FOR INNOVATION OF POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAMS 2001 - 2010

- Decentralization to local authorities
- Empowerment to local people
- Innovation in planning, bottom up, participatory, community driven
- Capacity building for authorities and people
- Facilitate participation and ownership of communities
- Transparency, integrity, accountability
- Sustainable poverty reduction

PILOTING OF POLICIES (1)

- Projects for piloting: RIDEF-UNDP, CBRIP-WB, NMPRP-WB, … with the focus on:
  - Participation of local communities (participation of people in planning and implementation process and decision-making)
  - Decentralization to commune level (projects owned by commune people committees)
  - Capacity building, empowerment to local authorities and people
  - Ownership of local authorities and people

PILOTING OF POLICIES (2)

- Transparency, integrity, accountability
- Strategically designed
- Strengthened M&E

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Projects owned by CPC (Program 135 – Circular 666/2001/TTLT/BKH-UBDTMN-TC-XD on guideline of mechanism on investment management and infrastructure construction for communes in P135);
- Innovation in planning;
- Transparency in resource allocation (Decision 210/2006/QĐ-TTg on principles, criteria and norms for investment allocation of state budget 2007 – 2010)
- Participation of communities (Decision 80/2005/QĐ-TTG on community monitoring mechanism);
- Grass-root democracy (Ordinance 34/2007/PL-UBTVQH11 on democracy at communes and towns);
- Strategically designed programs with specified objectives of poverty reduction (Program 135, 30a…)

INSTITUTIONALIZATION

- Institutionalization of policies and mechanism based on achievements and lessons from pilot projects
- Integrating and mainstreaming achieved results and lessons into NTPs (Program 135, 134, 30A, …);
- Mobilize resources for NTPs with focus on the poor and ethnic people
- Allocating resources for implementation, avoiding wide-spreading investment

ORIENTATION 2011-2020

- Strategic orientation of poverty reduction policies and resources with strong linkage with new rural development
- Access on process in design of programs
- Lesson drawn and pilot methodology in programs to scale up to NTPs
- Institutionalization of lessons from pilot projects in sustainable NTPs

EXPECTED OUTCOMES (1)

- Community driven planning
- Sustainable agriculture production, linking groups and commodity production
- Improved infrastructure for production and trade, ownership of local people with construction, O&M
- Improved income for the poor through improved livelihood opportunities
- Innovation in production, linking farmers and the poor with markets

EXPECTED OUTCOMES (2)

- Promoting ownership, active participation in poverty reduction
- Innovation in design of program with focus on identification of target groups, packaged support or conditional support to promote their ownership
- Long enough support time frame to ensure to meet poverty reduction target
- Capacity building for local staff and people in implementation, M&E

RECOMMENDATIONS TO DONORS

- Vietnam become MIC but poverty is still big challenge, particularly for EM
- Development partners consider to support:
  - Innovation in policies and mechanism related to poverty reduction
  - Institutionalization and scale-up of good practices, lessons, experiences achieved in the past 2 decades
  - New sectors important to poverty reduction as: CC, disaster management, administration strengthening at grass-root level

THANK YOU!