

“Ethnic policies for poverty reduction and socio-economic development in ethnic minority and mountainous areas: Results in the 2005 – 2013 period and mission - solution towards 2020”

**MR. VO VAN BAY,
CHIEF OF PROGRAM 135-II COORDINATION OFFICE
COMMITTEE FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES AFFAIRS (CEMA)**

Thai Nguyen, June 2014

1. Socio-economic characteristics of ethnic minority and mountainous areas:

- Make up 3/4 natural areas of Viet Nam.
- Are living areas for 54 ethnic groups, in which 53 are ethnic minorities with more than 13 million people, accounting for 14,28% of the country population.
- Advantages: concentration of natural resources and minerals, potential on tourism, hydro-electricity, favorable weather conditions for development of agriculture, forestry and breeding.
- Disadvantages and obstacles:
 - ✓ The terrain is complicated, abrupt and usually suffers from floods and natural disasters.
 - ✓ Socio-economic sector is underdeveloped.
 - ✓ Ethnic minority mountainous regions are the core of Vietnamese poor

1. Socio-economic characteristics of ethnic minority and mountainous areas (cont.):

- Ethnic minorities occupy only about 14% of the population but account for nearly 50% of the national poverty
- The average income of ethnic minority accounts for only 1/6 average income of the country
- Focus on extremely poor communes in the country: 2.331 communes

2. Implement some major ethnic policies to reduce poverty and develop economics-society at ethnic and mountainous areas during the period 2005-2013

2.1 The functionalities of CEMA in the mission of poverty reduction and social, economic development in mountainous and minority regions .

- Minister, Chairman of CEMA is assigned to be Vice Chairman of the Government Steering Committee for implementation of Poverty Reduction Programs in 2006 – 2010 period and Vice Chairman of the Central Steering Committee for sustainable poverty reduction in 2010 to 2020 period.
- CEMA is an agency of the Government level, performing the function of state management of ethnic affairs in the country
- Develop criteria for identifying extremely difficult villages, communes in ethnic minority and mountainous areas
- A total of 1.871 communes KV₁, 1.031 communes KV₂, 2.068 communes KV₃ and 18.280 extremely poor towns
- This is the basis for building and implementing the investment policies of economic development, social conditions in accordance with the level of development of each region or area

2. Implement some major ethnic policies to reduce poverty and develop economics-society at ethnic and mountainous areas during the period 2005-2013 (cont)

- Some major policies:

1. Program 135
2. Direct support policy to people from poor households in disadvantaged areas
3. Immigration support policy to implement the sedentarization
4. Policy to support production land, residential land, housing and clean water for households of ethnic minorities, difficult life

2. Implement some major ethnic policies to reduce poverty and develop economics-society at ethnic and mountainous areas during the period 2005-2013 (cont)

5. Policy to support residential land, production land and to provide jobs for poor ethnic minority households with difficult life in the Mekong
6. Lending policies for ethnic minority households to develop production
7. Implement the policy to deliver several issues, newspapers, magazines for ethnic minority and mountainous and very difficulty regions .
8. Implement projects to support economics- society development for 5 ethnics Si La, Pu Peo, O Du, Brau, Ro Mam (with a population of less than 1,000 people)

3. Evaluation of the results of ethnic policies to reduce poverty and develop economics- society at ethnic and mountainous areas during the period 2005-2013, the limitations, problems and causes:

3.1. Achievements

- The poverty rate fell rapidly; the poverty rate decreased with an average rate of 3-5%/ year.
- In 2006, the average poverty rate in particularly difficult communes, villages was over 47%; many especially difficult communes were over on 80%; there were individual communes with the poverty rate over 100% in 2006
- Up to 2010, the poverty rate in especially difficult communes fell to 28.8%,
- In 2013, Tay Nguyen Province, the poverty rate 12.56% (7.80% nationwide), poor 6.93% (6.32% nationwide)
- Changing clearly on infrastructure: up to 2012,
- 97.42% of communes had motorways to the town center;
- over 80% of villages of difficult communes had roads to the backbone;
- over 84% of communes with special difficulties had electricity from the national grid to the town center, with nearly 70% of households could use electricity,
- 100% of communes had primary schools, junior secondary schools,
- 100% of communes had medical stations.
- 198,7% of communes had cultural posts

3. 1. Achievements (cont.)

- The policy has gradually changed the viewpoints and thinking
- Switched **from** heavily imposed mechanisms **to** decentralized mechanisms for localities on the basis of openness and transparency in building and planning
- **from** direct support to households **to** support to community, household group
- and **from** capital provision **to** capital lending

3.2. The shortcomings and difficulties

1. Though formulation of policies usually had big goals, the implementation time was inadequate and remains a term and short term.
2. The implementation of the policy, balance, arranged not parallel resource, not sticking with the status and needs of socio-economic development of local, yet ensure that the objectives and plans approved.
3. The poverty rate in ethnic areas and mountainous regions also very high, the gap in development is increasing: in 2013 the poverty rate and poor mountainous areas of Northwestern's 38.78%, mountainous northeast is 24.54%, North Central is 24.28%, are about 2 to 3 times more than the average 14.12% of the country.

3.3 Lesson learned

4. The determination and unity of the political system from the central to grassroots levels, active participation of the local.
5. The involvement and support of the development partners

3.3. *Lesson learned (cont.)*

- Program 135 phase 2 (2006 – 2010). A successful lesson
- Attract international donors (World Bank, Ireland, Finland, Australia, Switzerland, United Kingdom, European Union, Program Development UN
- Cooperation mechanisms: Board partners
- Budget support (World Bank, Ireland, Finland, Australia, Switzerland, United Kingdom, European Union: 367 million).
- Technical Support: Finland, Ireland, Program Development UN (10 million Euro)
- Breakthrough in approach and implementation: communal ownership investment, gender equality, mainstreaming environmental protection, participation of beneficiaries, investment monitoring, maintenance, maintenance of ...
- P135 for 2011-2015: Irish budget support (about 26 million Euro), Ireland and the Programme for United Nations Development technical assistance.

3.3. Causes for the shortcomings and difficulties (cont)

Subjective causes:

- Awareness about role and position of ethnic minorities affairs was still low and inadequate for the demand.
- The propaganda and mobilization to raise awareness, responsibility of the society; inspection, monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation are not interested in regular, timely and are not adequate with the requirements of assigned tasks.
- State management, and direct the implementation of policies on production land in ethnic minority and mountainous areas still had some shortcomings and revealed many weaknesses.
- State management of ethnic minority affairs was not properly concerned at some places

4. Several experiential lessons

1. It is necessary to have high determination and unity of the political system from the Central to the grassroots, especially the active participation of the social and political organizations focused on poverty reduction
2. In order to concentrate investment resources, not spread, need to mobilize resources for the implementation of the policy

4. Several experiential lessons (cont)

3. Combining decentralization, empowerment, creating activeness for grassroots, all levels from the Central to provinces, districts should strengthen the supervision and monitoring.
4. Developing national policies needs be compact, suitable to the actual requirements and capabilities, level of facility management, concurrently the implementation must ensure that the principle of democracy, openness and intelligent transparency.

5.1. The task of formulating and implementing policies to reduce poverty and develop economy, society of ethnic and mountainous areas by 2020

1. Developing education, training, improving the quality of human resources who are ethnic minorities, building staffs that do national work to satisfy requirements in the new period.
2. Developing production, accelerating poverty reduction in ethnic minority and mountainous areas.
3. Developing economic social infrastructure of ethnic and mountainous areas

5.1. The task of formulating and implementing policies to reduce poverty and develop economy, society of ethnic and mountainous areas by 2020 (cont)

4. Developing comprehensively all fields of culture, society of ethnic and mountainous regions.
5. Improving the quality of the political system, strengthening rural security of ethnic and mountainous areas.
6. Concentrating development investment in poor area of mountainous and ethnic regions
7. Ensuring water and sanitation of ethnic and mountainous areas.

5.2. The solutions for the formulation and implementation of policies aimed at reducing poverty and developing economy – society of ethnic and mountainous areas by 2020

1. Prioritizing the allocation of sufficient funds to implement programs and policies approved
2. Recaping, checking the system of current policy to eliminate the duplication and overlap policies
3. Based on the results of the reviewing, researching and building multi-purpose long-term policies, which are consistent with the strategy of economic social development of the Congress Party, with characteristics of each region.

5.2. The solutions for the formulation and implementation of policies aimed at reducing poverty and developing economy – society of ethnic and mountainous areas by 2020 (cont)

4. Insituting opinions which prioritize for national policies, ethnic minorities, ethnic and mountainous areas into specific standards, as the basis for determining the priority of each policy.
5. Studying coordination mechanisms and monitoring the coordination between the ministries of planning, construction, budgeting and guiding to implement national policies.
6. Intensifying propagandize and mobilize people to understand, hold steadily and actively participate in developing, implementing and monitoring policies. Raising the people's self-consciousness to escape from poverty sustainably.



Thanks for your attention!