Biographical notes

Nguyen Trong Nhan got his Bachelor degree in 2007 from National Academy of Public Administration in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and master degree in 2015 from Szent István University, Hungary. He had taken a job as an assistant for a Vice-President of People’s Committee of Cho Lach district, Ben Tre province, Vietnam. He is an intermediary between leadership and organization in the domain of rural development and agricultural management. Phu Son commune has joined the ‘new countryside’ programme which has been broadly implemented in rural communes of Vietnam. He has chosen to research on the topic of ‘Measures to promote the process of building a new countryside, case study in Phu Son commune, Cho Lach district, Ben Tre province, Vietnam’.

József Káposzta is Associate professor. He received his PhD title almost 18 years ago. Since then he has had experience in teaching at bachelor, master and PhD level both in Hungarian and in English. He has been a visiting professor several times at universities in abroad, e.g. in Slovakia or in the Netherlands. He has been the leader and member of several national and international research projects at the Szent István University. In addition to academic activities, he has been dean at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences since 2013. He has more than 300 scientific publications, including 39 journal articles. He has been the editor or author for 38 books and has written 37 book chapters. He has been the supervisor for more than 250 students, 32 PhD students and the organizer of over 50 national and international scientific conferences.

Henrietta Nagy is associate professor. She received PhD title almost 10 years ago. She has extended teaching activity in delivering courses for BSc, MSc and PhD students both for Hungarian and international students in Hungary and in abroad. She has extended international professional relations with foreign higher institutions. She has regular courses at the Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra. She has been the coordinator and the member of national and international/EU research projects. In addition to academic activities, she has been responsible for the development of international relations at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences.
Nguyen Trong Nhan, József Káposzta, Henrietta Nagy, Lóránt Dávid, Hajnalka Csáfor - Progress in the Rural Development Policy of Vietnam, with a Special Focus on Phu Son Commune

She has more than 110 scientific publications, including 29 journal articles. She was the editor or author for 10 books and wrote 18 book chapters. She has been the supervisor for thesis for more than 150 students and the chief-organizer of more than 25 national and international scientific conferences.

Lóránt Dávid, Jean Monnet Professor College professor. He graduated in History, Geography and European Studies. He is a Jean Monnet Professor in tourism and regional development. He works at Eszterházy Károly University of Applied Sciences, Eger (Dean and Head of Department), and Honorary Associate Professor at Szent István University, Gödöllő in Hungary. He has longstanding teaching, publication and research interests in tourism, regional development and environmental studies. More recently he has been undertaking research on tourism resources and management. He is the author and editor of over 10 books as well as over 200 journal articles and book chapters and has been active in a number of international research and teaching associations.

Hajnalka Csáfor is Associate professor. She graduated at bachelor level in economics and English language as a secondary school teacher in 1998, than in 2001 as an Economist at master level. She received PhD title in 2009 at the Budapest University of Technology and Economics. She has been teaching in higher education since 2000 at bachelor and master, and from 2014 at PhD level both Hungarian and international students in Hungary and abroad. Her fields of research are sustainability, corporate social responsibility, environmental education, regional development and regional competitiveness. She has been member of national and international projects. She is the author of more than 60 scientific publications, including 12 book chapters, 12 journal articles and several conference papers. From July 2013 she has been working as the associate dean of Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences at Eszterházy Károly University College. In addition to academic activities she has been the PR director of the University College for 12 years.

Abstract
Nowadays, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is an agricultural country with a population of approximately 89 million people (est. 2013), of which 74% are farmers, covering nearly 60.7% of the national labour force. Total household income in the urban areas is 3 times higher than the household income in rural areas. About 6% of total households are considered poor, of which 90% are located in the countryside. However, with a share of 20% of the total gross domestic product of Vietnam, the agricultural sector contributes significantly to the national economy and accounts for not less than 25% of the export earnings. The previous policies on rural development have tended to increase production goals rather than focusing on the roles and interests of the farmers, who are the main subjects of rural development. Most policies hardly take into account the overall interests of farmers and establish reasonable relationships not only between rural and urban areas, but also between the three economic sectors. These are the main reasons which cause rural Vietnam to stagnate in a closed, self-sufficient agriculture after having shifted from an agricultural economy into a market economy system.

The aim of this study is to see how much progress can be realized in the latest rural development policy of Vietnam, how much the bottom-up approach is considered in the policy, whether the
policy aims are in harmony with the interests of local communities. The authors have already published several papers about local developments if rural areas in especially Central-Eastern-Europe. However, the aim of this paper is to see how much the local initiatives, endogenous developments, bottom-up approach can be realized in a one-centered, centralized country in the Far-East, namely Vietnam. Localization has been getting more and more important in the countries of Europe, local resources have gained significance, though we can observe difficulties and challenges in the realization of such rural development policies even in Europe. In countries, where there has been one-ruling party and the local actors have not had much role in the developments, the promotion of endogenous developments of rural areas should be highly supported.

**Keywords**: rural development, local community, bottom-up approach, endogenous development

**JEL**: R11

### 1. Introduction

**The main characteristics of local economic development**

Local economic development (LED) offers local government, the private and not-for-profit sectors, and local communities the opportunity to work together to improve the local economy. It focuses on enhancing competitiveness, increasing sustainable growth and ensuring that growth is inclusive. It encompasses a range of disciplines including physical planning, economics and marketing. It also incorporates many local government and private sector functions including environmental planning, business development, infrastructure provision, real estate development and finance. Terms such as local development, good governance, partnership and sustainable development are intertwined and mutually dependant (Greffé, 2007).

“The aim of LED is to create the economic capacity of an area so that it could provide the future of the economy and the appropriate standard of living for the population. This is a process in which the state, the local government, the private and the business sector work together to create more favourable conditions for the economic growth and the labour market” (Swinburn et al., 2004).

The role of LED is gradually increasing, since nowadays the local economies in rural areas need to face more and more difficulties (Pénzes, 2013), such as globalization, economic crisis, national and regional challenges and their negative impacts. The aim is to meet the demand of the community, however, the cooperation of the community and the positive attitude to the developments as well as the common responsibility are inevitable (G. Fekete, 2000).
LED refers to the endogenous development approach as well, because according to Picchi (1994: 195. p.) “endogenous development is to be understood as local development, produced mainly by local impulses and grounded largely on local resources”. In contrast to the exogenous model, the benefits of development tend to be retained in the local economy and local values are respected (Slee, 1994). Terluin and Post (2001) emphasised the importance of local resources, local activities, local actors and the integrated approach in endogenous development.

Within rural policies the emphasis has long been shifted towards rural diversification, support for indigenous business, encouragement of local initiatives and local enterprises, provision of suitable training and bottom-up approach (Lowe et al., 1995). From “local point of view” the main advantages of bottom-up approach are the following:

- local actors have a better knowledge of local challenges that need to be addressed and the resource and opportunities available,
- therefore they are able to mobilise local resources for the development process in a way that does not happen with top-down approaches,
- this gives local actors a greater sense of ownership and commitment to the projects, which allows them to make the best of the local assets (EC, 2014).

Based on the abovementioned, in many rural areas lagging behind, developments based on local resources, e.g. the development of tourism sector, agro-tourism, rural tourism are emphasized (Bujdosó-Radics, 2010). However, in areas with economic and social handicaps, where the infrastructure is poor, tourism itself will not be able to accelerate the economic growth.

Policies for rural areas in Vietnam

As Vietnam joined the World Trade Organization and other regional and global organizations for economic cooperation, the pressure of integration and development has been challenging the Vietnamese economy and in particular the agricultural sector. Meeting the emerging requirements for the industrialization and modernization of the country, the Vietnamese government needs to design fine-tuned policies to solve the economic, social, and cultural problems. Practically speaking, farmers, agriculture, and rural areas are the three main factors which considerably affect the development of Vietnam.

However, the recent agricultural policies on rural areas of the Vietnamese Government have turned out to be not really effective and yet have shown to be unsustainable in many ways.
Besides that, they failed to meet the requirements of industrialization and modernization in agriculture and rural areas. One key problem is that agricultural production in the countryside is not really included into an operative commodity market. Inappropriate policy decisions have been made due to disregarding scientific advice, resulting in mistakes and unsustainable misallocation of resources or false anticipations of future development patterns for instance.

To substantially overcome this situation, the industrialization and modernization process in agriculture and rural areas has to speed up. The important measure that needs to be done is the successful establishment of the new countryside model, which could adapt to the requirements and the internal resources of farmers, agriculture and rural development, and could integrate into world economy eligibly.

“New countryside” policy has been broadly implemented in rural communes of Vietnam; and Phu Son commune, Cho Lach district, Ben Tre province has joined the “new countryside” programme. By researching the actual situation of Phu Son commune, proposing solutions that meet national set of criteria for the new countryside programme and contributing to improve social aspects and living standard for rural people. The main content of this paper is to provide solutions to accelerate the process of building new countryside in Phu Son commune, Cho Lach district, Ben Tre province, Vietnam. To do this, finding the concepts of a new countryside, its functions as well as the legal basis is extremely necessary.

2. “New countryside” program in Vietnam
The model of new countryside is the overall characteristics, structures forming a type of rural organizations under the new criteria, adapting new requirements which set out in the rural areas under present conditions, and is the rural old-style model (traditionally) in all aspects of advanced features.

Firstly, new countryside covers rural areas. We can generalize about five basic contents as follows: (i) clean and civilized villages, modern infrastructures; (ii) production of agriculture meets sustainable development and commodity economy; (iii) enhancing the spirit and material lives of the rural population; (iv) preserving and promoting traditional culture of nation; (v) security of rural areas, democratic governance.
In Vietnam, to implement the new countryside policy, on April 19th, 2009, the Prime Minister of Vietnam signed Decision No. 491/QD-TTg to issue the national set of criteria on building new countryside. The set of criteria is a basis for designing the national targeted programme on new rural development; providing guidelines to pilot models of rural development in the period of accelerated industrialization, modernization; inspecting and certifying communes, districts and provinces achieving new rural development target. The national set of criteria for new countryside includes nineteen criteria and is divided into five groups: planning, the socio-economic infrastructure, economy and production, cultural-social-environmental system, and political system.

More specifically, nineteen criteria of the new rurality model includes: planning and implementation of planning; road system; irrigation; electricity; schools; cultural facilities; rural markets; post office; residential housing; income per capita / year; the poverty rate; the labour structure; form of production; education; health; culture; environment; political and social systems; security. In nineteen major criteria, they have specific targets with a total of thirty-nine indicators to assess.

Pursuant to Clause 3 of Article 23 of Circular No.54/2009/TT-BNN&PTNN August 21st, 2009 of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development on guiding implementation of the national criteria on new rurality. Thus, new rurality unit has three levels:

- New rural commune (reaching nineteen criteria);
- New rural district (reaching seventy-five per cent of total of new rural communes); and
- New rural provinces (reaching seventy-five per cent of total of new rural districts).

Inherent function of countryside is agricultural production. Therefore new countryside is place where the agricultural products are produced with high productivity and high quality in the direction of commodity production. This production process has to improve traditional industries of the regions which contain both intangible and tangible cultural elements. This is also an opportunity to create jobs and income for local people. Function of preserving traditional ethnic culture. The village culture is synonymous with the identity of each ethnic group. If the process of building a new countryside disrupts, it would be against popularity. Function of ensuring ecological environment. If industrial civilization breaks harmonious relationship between human and nature, agricultural production brings function of ecosystem service. In fact, many roads of
rural areas in Vietnam are gradually concreted. It is the time to take the protection of ecological environment as the basis for a complete measure of new rural model in Vietnam.

3. The legal foundation in Vietnam

Pursuant to Resolution No.26-NQ/TW dated 05th August, 2008 of the 7th Congress by Session X Communist Party of Vietnam on agriculture, farmers, and rural areas. This resolution sets out the policy on building and developing new countryside in both social and economic sides, and on improving the standard of living. The resolution has clearly defined goals which mention about building new countryside with modern socio-economic infrastructure; having rational economic structure and form of production; associating agriculture with plan of rapid rise of industry and services; stabilizing rural society with diversified ethnic cultures; enhancing intellectual standards of the people; protecting ecological environment; strengthening the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam on political system in rural areas.

The main contents of building the new rurality are defined as follows: (1) Planning to build a new countryside; (2) Developing socio-economic infrastructure; (3) Restructuring and developing the economy and increasing income; (4) poverty reduction and social security; (5) Renewing and developing forms of effective production organization in rural areas; (6) developing education and training in rural areas; (7) Developing medical services and providing health care for rural inhabitants; (8) Building a cultured life and developing information and communications in rural areas; (9) Clean water supply and environmental sanitation in rural areas; (10) Raising the quality of Party organizations, administrations and sociopolitical organizations in localities; (11) Maintaining social security and order in rural areas.

- Decision No.491/QD-TTg dated April 16th, 2009 of the Prime Minister of Vietnam on the national set of criteria on building “new countryside” and Circular No. 54/2009 /TT-BNN dated August 21st, 2009 of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Vietnam on guiding implementation of the national criteria for new countryside.
- Decision No.800/QD-TTg dated June 4th, 2010 of the Prime Minister of Vietnam on approving the national target program on building a new countryside during 2010-2020.
- Decision No.193/QD-TTg dated February 02nd, 2010 of the Prime Minister of Vietnam on approving the program of review of new countryside.
4. The need for rural development policy

Rural development is a diversified field, thus the Vietnamese Government need to concern through the development policy for rural development because of many reasons: i) agricultural products are essential to our lives; ii) production in rural areas usually takes risk; iii) the population living in rural areas occupy high proportions (70% of Vietnam's population). As a result, the intervention of government is to ensure the interests of producers in rural areas.

Standing on the corner of industry, agricultural products are often the first of chain of products, creating jobs and increasing income of workers in the various activities after harvest. Rural development supplies raw products for the processing industry; therefore it is necessary to develop. It places for rural development in order to develop processing industry.

Finally, in rural areas, the income and educational levels of farmers are generally low, thus they have disadvantages in contacting the market economy and stay themselves to living in poverty. As a result, the government wants to develop the country's economy; and improving the living standards of local people is extremely important, especially those who are depending on agriculture.

Developing agriculture to build new countryside is a common concern of the countries in the world. Thereby, some countries have carried out the construction of new rural model and have achieved very positive achievements, helping to change the face of rural areas. Currently, Vietnam has been implementing new countryside program in rural areas throughout the country. With the experiences of some countries which have finished constructing new countryside programs, these are useful lessons for Vietnam in the implementation of this model.

5. Progress of “new countryside” model in Vietnam

The “new countryside” model has been implemented in several pilot communes of Vietnam and they have initially achieved many successful important results in terms of both socio-economic sides and experience of management as follows:
The “new countryside” model was actually formed in the pilot communes of the central and local levels. Some pilot communes have got comprehensive results as: Hai Duong (Nam Dinh province); Tan Thinh (Bac Giang province); Tan Thong Hoi (Ho Chi Minh City); Tan Thanh, Binh Dinh (Thai Binh province). Some communes have taken good results in planning, developing commodity production as My Long Nam (TraVinh); resource mobilization as Thanh Chan (Dien Bien province); Thanh Tan, DinhHoa (Kien Giang province); developing production associated with the planning, soil improvement as Tan Thinh (Bac Giang province); business models to attract investors in rural areas as Tan Thong Hoi (Ho Chi Minh City), Tan Lap (Binh Phuoc province), etc.

With the results of pilot communes, we can confirm that building new countryside are appropriate with the requirements and conditions of Vietnam; meeting the aspirations of the rural population; heading in the right direction of Communist Party of Vietnam about industrialization and modernization in agriculture and rural areas during 2011-2020. Moreover we identified the mechanisms and policies needed to change. The most important policies are finance, managing construction of infrastructure in accordance with each of regions. It is the financial mechanism under supporting of government, private investments and contribution of local people with reasonable rates. These results show that the proposal and implementing of new rural models at the pilot communes is the correct, opportune and useful policy. The results help the Central Steering Committee as well as local ones to improve mechanisms and policies consistent with the objectives and socio-economic conditions of countryside in current period and the subsequent years.

Awareness of government of all levels and local people are enhanced in comparison with previous period. These are foundations to promote management and administration roles of government, and to make the belief of residents on the Vietnamese Communist Party and the Vietnamese Government on the industrialization and modernization of country. They are also the spiritual motivation and factual basis to impulse implementation of strategy of socio-economic development during 10 years (2011-2020) and the 5-year plan (2011-2015) which have promulgated by the Vietnamese Communist Party on agriculture, farmers and rural areas in 2011-2020 period and vision 2030.

Building new countryside under 19 criteria is a positive change for rural areas in Vietnam. A set of criteria for new rural areas have a wide range, reflecting the face of comprehensive rural
areas after becoming new countryside, specifically, in planning, transportation, irrigation, schools, rural markets, cultural facilities, income per capita, labor structure, political system, etc. With the results from 11-pilot communes, most of these communes have completed 50% of the 19 criteria, in which planning is extremely important factor because of its prerequisite. Besides that infrastructure is essential to put in second position, it can affect development of economy, culture, and society in rural areas.

6. Material and methods

*Secondary information* collection was collected through available data which include reports in the research location such as: socio-economic reports of the Phu Son commune, statistical yearbooks of Cho Lach’s Branch of Statistical Board, Dong Khoi News, reports of Department of Agriculture and Rural Development of Cho Lach district.

*Professional method*: Referring to officials of Department of Agriculture and Rural Development of Cho Lach district who are experts on building “new countryside”.

*Observation method*: This tool was used during the whole process of this research. The major aim of this tool is to observe the natural, socio-economic, and environmental conditions in Phu Son commune.

*In-depth interview*: 13 members of Steering Committee of “new countryside” in Phu Son commune were interviewed. The collected information include: socio-economic conditions, real conditions on building new countryside of Phu Son commune (including: planning, the socio-economic infrastructure, economy and production, cultural-social-environmental system, and political system).

From collected data in the research area, they were analyzed by using descriptive statistic method to compare between real situations of Phu Son commune and the national set of criteria for “new countryside”. Quantitative data were analyzed by Microsoft Excel software.

7. Results and discussion

Phu Son commune is one of 164 communes and wards of Ben Tre province, in which located in the Mekong River Delta. Phu Son commune lies below Phu My commune to the East, Long Thoi commune to the West, Vinh Thanh and Vinh Hoa communes to the South, and Ham Luong River to the North. (Figure 1)
Like other communes of Ben Tre province, the terrain of Phu Son commune is relatively flat and is a low-level plain not more than one and half meters above sea level at any point and criss-crossed by a maze of canals and rivers; system of rivers and canals criss-cross should be very favorable to drain off the water which supply for the development of gardening.

Phu Son area is affected by the tropical monsoon climate which is hot and humid all year round with high average temperatures of 26° to 27° C. This climate provides the commune with a wide variety of fruits, trees and animals, many of which are rare and valuable species. Each year, the climate in this region is divided into two seasons, including the rainy season that occurs in May and lasts until October, with average rainfall of 1,500 mm a year- the lowest rainfall level in the Mekong River Delta; and the dry season that usually begins in November to April of the next year.

**Figure 1. Location of Phu Son commune**

The total of natural land area of Phu Son is 1,184.99 hectares. Regarding the soil, the major type of soil in Phu Son is alluvial land. The clay accounts for a very small percentages. This is appropriate condition to cultivate rice and fruit-tree.
The highest percentage of land is agricultural land, with an area of 790.15 hectares, accounting for 66.7% of the total land area. In particular, the land for perennial plants occupies 775.90 hectares. The remaining areas in this group are mainly used for cultivating rice, vegetables, fruit-trees and breeding freshwater fishes. The remaining lands area is non-agricultural land with an area of 394.84 hectares, accounting for 33.3%.

We can conclude that Phu Son's economic development is mainly based on agriculture. However, to build the model for new rural development, it is necessary to focus on industry and trade – service. Beside that continuing to invest in developing modern agriculture is significant to do because this is source of food, which supply for local people and export. Agricultural development is also the prerequisite for the development of other sectors. (Table 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Production value (million VND)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>3,284,444</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Industry and small scale industry</td>
<td>1,119,345</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Trade – Service</td>
<td>593,338</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>In total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,077,127</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: People's Committee of Phu Son commune, 2013

To implement rural development, an important factor is human resource. The total of population of Phu Son commune was 6,887 inhabitants in 2013, with 2,045 of households and the average number of people per each household is 3.36. The total number of workers was 4,935 people, which most of employees worked in the agricultural sector with 3,318 people, accounting for 67.23%; the remainders were in non-agricultural sectors with 1,617 people. In summary, labor resource of Phu Son commune is abundant; however this force is mainly agricultural workers. It needs to organize training courses to enhance their knowledge and experience about agriculture.

8. Real situation of Phu Son commune evaluated under national set of criteria for “new countryside”

In general, after two years of implementation, the “new countryside” program has achieved many important results and contributed to the positive change of the life in Phu Son commune. The program has become a widespread social movement which is welcomed in locality. The order of this planning is that the People's Committee of Phu Son commune shall formulate plans, collect
opinions of communities on these plans, then submit them to People's Committee of Cho Lach district for approval, and implement such plans after they are approved. This is one of the important criteria in the process of constructing a “new countryside”. We can see that the planning and implementation of planning includes three main contents: planning land use and essential infrastructures, planning development of social, economic and environmental infrastructures according to new standards, and residential development planning. By the end of 2013, Phu Son has completed the planning and has begun to implement these contents of this criterion. Criterion of new rural planning achieved the highest results among criteria. This criterion is the first one in the national criteria for building “new countryside” and the expense to complete is given from state budget. Specifically, People's Committee of Phu Son commune has generally planned 1,184.99 hectares of total areas of commune. They have finished not only planning 790.15 hectares of agricultural land, which serve cultivation of annual crops, perennial plants and aquaculture but also non-agricultural land accounting for 33.3% (394.84 ha) of total area. Non-agricultural land is used for building economic, social and environmental infrastructures such as houses, offices, cemetery, local markets, rubbish dump, etc. In generally, the criterion of planning and implementation of planning met the requirements of the criteria for “new countryside”.

Infrastructure is a breakthrough, and has direct and important impact on economic and social development in the countryside. Basing on the development of infrastructure, we can know the position of locality. Socio – economic infrastructure development attracts the attention and top priority of local government but lack of effective ways to call upon strong support of the people.

About commune staff, Phu Son is full of governmental officials with required educational and political levels. In order to have machinery of local government which operate effectively, this staff are frequently trained the political thought, professional skills, foreign languages, etc. adapting tasks in integration period. Actually, the governmental staff of Phu Son commune is 39 one. In addition, Phu Son is full of political organizations according to regulations of Central Government, including: Women's Union, Youth’s Union, Farmers’ Union, Veterans Union. Every year, these organizations accomplish their political tasks. Yearly, party cells, local government system meet the standard of "effective and stable organisations". Currently, security and social order in the Phu Son province are stable; civil disputes or claims have occurred with
small the level, and they are definitively and opportune settled. These are favorable conditions for socio-economic development in the commune, contributing to the implementation of the new rural criteria.

9. Conclusions
Rural development has always caught the interest of policy-makers, scientists and experts in both developing and developed countries, especially in the era of global integration. The new rural development is a great policy of Vietnamese Communist Party and the Government of Vietnam, which has sufficient theoretical and practical basis to implement in Vietnam in general and in Phu Son commune, Cho Lach district in particular. After two years of implementation (from 2012 to 2013), this program achieved the important and significant results that are considered a good sign for implementation in next years. The result of some criterion groups was low, but reached the targets. By the end of 2013 Phu Son commune finished the ten following criteria: 01(planning and implementation of planning), 04 (electricity), 09 (residential houses), 10 (incomes), 11 (households poverty), 12 (labour force structure), 13 (types of production organizations), 14 (education), 16 (culture), 18 (political organisations are strong and stable in operations), 19 (security and social order).

There are nine criteria that it is difficult to finish them in short-term period, including: 02 (road system), 03 (irrigation), 05 (schools), 06 (cultural infrastructures), 07 (rural market), 08 (post and telecommunications), 15 (healthcare), 17 (environment).

The reality is that there are some advantages but the difficulties must not be forgotten either in process of the new rural development program in Phu Son, particularly:

- Phu Son obtained considerable achievements thanks to the resolve of political system and support and active participation of local people. Besides, this region has natural resources for development of agricultural production activities and advantages of human resources (e.g. young people, hard-working, high knowledge, etc.).

- However, some disadvantages can be mentioned, such as: low socio-economic level, limitation of local resources, low quality of life. The agriculture is still the major economic activity.

- Opportunity: getting interest and investment of central and local government.
Threat: slow progression in industrial economic, handicraft, service structure, lack of labour force with good skills and knowledge; local people are not able to access technology due to restriction of knowledge, limitation of management skill of some officials, low development and lack of infrastructure, slight innovation in policy mechanism and types of production, lack of policy mechanism to attract investment.

To develop new rural development program in Phu Son in next time, some the following integrated solutions are required: mobilizing the active participation of people; and training on management and organization skills for officials, promulgating investment policy.

Local people have played really important role who have been contributing their capacity under some different kinds of participation that can be point of view, asset, money, or labour, ect. However, most participations focused on contributing property, cash, constructive materials while confinement in participation by giving view point to plan rural development.

It is undeniable that external supports are necessary but it is only catalyst for priority activities selected in commune’s usual plan. However, the reality is that there is the slow change in awareness of local people and officials of problems in this program. The majority assume that external supports motivate the growth and they always expect government support.

10. Recommendations

Regarding local people

Rural people were identified as the major resource which had been mobilized to the fullest extent throughout the movement. The wise utilization of maximum participation of rural people could be realized through encouragement of their self-help spirit, confident and motivation in all work. New countryside development is a program which helps to change face of rural area in positive side. One of the important aims of this program is to raise people's material and spiritual lives. In addition to support of local government, the villagers has to mutual help and assistance in order to exchange production experience toward specialized production, taking part actively in activities of new rural development. Furthermore, they need to enhance agricultural knowledge, skills through different ways, for instance: joining training activities, learning from good
Apart from government subsidies, local people should cooperate with banks for loan to develop production activities. Because of benefits of commune, rural people also have responsible for implementation process of these projects, including implementation organization, monitoring and assessment. Besides, rural people made decision and raised their voice with regard to contribution and compensation degrees to individuals or households affected by project implementation.

**Regarding management levels**

This is the local group which is close and has a strong attachment to local people. They contribute the very important role in implementation of “new countryside” program. In order to promote their role, they need to do many kinds of works as follows:

- Promoting dissemination of government policy on new rural development program and people’s interest from this program.
- Collecting people’s point of view of making new rural development program planning and scheme in commune.
- Encouraging the participation in renovating pond, garden, fence to make beautiful landscape and healthy environment as a competition among villages, households.
- Organizing art, cultural, sport activities; to avoid backward habits, to increase quality of life.
- Conducting activities for support poor households toward development of economic and income, decrease in percentage of poor households, and,
- Monitoring community in building basic works, to establish self-management, operation, maintenance of works after acceptance and handover.

Leaders usually appreciated the implemented program and consolidated the belief of the people for resource mobilization. They concerned about the community demands and tried to provide sufficient services for rural people in the committed time. It is noteworthy that the promotion of local officials on the basis of their performance was institutionalized. Specifically, the management board of Phu Son commune has to implement the new rural development process according to plan proposed, to organize and enable community’s participation in this program; and to manage and conduct the steps of projects, contents which are from preparation of
Nguyen Trong Nhan, József Káposzta, Henrietta Nagy, Lóránt Dávid, Hajnalka Csáfor - Progress in the Rural Development Policy of Vietnam, with a Special Focus on Phu Son Commune

investment, implementation of investment to acceptance and use. Sufficient encouragement policies, supports and aids to help the rural people understand benefits of the movement and actively participate in.

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Nguyen Trong Nhan, József Káposzta, Henrietta Nagy, Lóránt Dávid, Hajnalka Csáfor - Progress in the Rural Development Policy of Vietnam, with a Special Focus on Phu Son Commune


Nghị quyết số 26-NQ-TW ngày 05 tháng 8 năm 2008 của Ban chấp hành Trung ương Đảng khóa X về “nông nghiệp, nông dân, nông thôn”. Resolution No.26-NQ/TW dated August, 05th, 2008 of the 7th Congress by the Session X Central Executive Committee on agriculture, farmers and rural areas.


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