**End-of-the Project Evaluation**

**VIE 02/001 project – ATLAS ID: 00015593**

**“Support to the Implementation and Improvement of National Target Programmes for Poverty Reduction”**

**2006-2011**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The end-of-the project evaluation for VIE 02/001 project focuses on reviewing and assessing the attained results, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the project. The evaluation will also take into consideration the initial signals about the possible impacts and sustainability of the results attained by the project during period 2006 - 2010. The extension period in 2011 will also be reviewed.

This is an independent review, adopting the participatory and evidence-based approach. The information about the project mainly comes from the reports and documents provided by the PMU. The interviews and discussions with the focus groups have helped collection strategic information which can be used to consolidate the lessons learnt and the design of future interventions if deemed necessary.

The key findings from the evaluation can be summarised as follows:

**1. Achievements and Results:**

*Impact level:*

* The project has created basic impacts on the approach by the GoV when designing and implementing poverty reduction (PR) efforts.
* The project has made significant contributions to facilitate policy dialogues on PR.
* The project’s TA is oriented to well address the policy priorities of the GoV in the present context, e.g. Resolution 80, NTP-PR Document and Program 135/II and the guiding documents for the two programs.

*Outcome level:*

* With the support from the project, the design and implementation of the PR programs have made progresses in the way to become more strategic, more comprehensive and sustainable PR inclusive interventions.
* The capacity of the agencies in designing and implementing PR has been strengthened, including the capacity to organize policy dialogues and consultations.
* The project also gives chance for documentation of lessons learnt, provides proves for appropriate (even not completed) processes and models for the process of designing PR policies for the coming period.

*Output level:*

Although some of the outputs have not been completed as planned or have been cancelled, the evaluation results have shown that the project has been following quite closely the demands of the GoV relating to the design of PR intervention.

In the context of changing awareness, the PR approach in the period 2006 – 2010 (and continues until now) has faced significant influences on identification of outputs and the respective progress to attained these outputs. Some of the most important outputs can be presented as follows:

* *Output 1:*
  + Program documents of the two program approved by the GOV (P135/II in 2006, and NTP-PR in 2007), and circulars and implementation guidelines for the two programs.
  + Draft of the Poverty reduction program for 2011 - 2015.
  + Supportive studies and researches.
* *Output 2:*
  + Dec No. 1053/2007 on M&E framework for NTP-PR; Dec No. 23/2007 on the application of M&E indicators for NTP-PR; Dec No. 04/2008-UBDT on the application of forms and reporting formats for Program 135-II.
  + Modified AMT and PMT for application down to commune level.
  + Manual for Citizen Report Card (CRC) survey.
* *Output 3:*
  + Circular No. 04/2007/TT- BLĐTBXH on the procedures to identify poor households annually and poverty line reporting system.
  + Decision No.163, 164 by PM on the list of communes completing and benefiting P135/II; Criteria for communes eligible to be investment owners in P135/II.
* *Output 4:*
  + Circular No. 2849/KBNN- KHTH 2006 by MOF providing guidelines for financial management and disbursements under P135/II.
* *Output 5:*
  + Documentation and several lessons learnt shared in a systematic and methodological manner (incomplete, not ended).

**2. Evaluation perspectives and indicators:**

*Relevance*

The evaluation has shown that the project design as well as its actual implementation has made appropriate contributions to Vietnam’s PR policies and the institutionalisation of innovative and new approach in the context of fast changes in awareness about policies; in line with the current demand and capacity of the GoV; in compliance with the synchronization of various PR efforts and approaches so far piloted and practiced, well addressed the policy priority of Vietnam in PR, Concentrated in solving the development issues; in line with the current demand and capacity in terms of institutional and implementation arrangements of the two NTPs; and in line with the One UN Plan.

*Effectiveness*

The activities and outputs of the project have contributed effectively to improved implementation of the NTPs, if comparing the costs to the results and impacts produced by the project. The outcomes achieved at a level higher than the description of the actual outputs, show quite good spillover effects by the technical assistance provided by the project.

*Efficiency*

In term of standard evaluation indicators for efficiency (for example completion timeframe, the availability of the resources including management and technical resources, and the activities not implemented as planned, etc.), ones can say that the project seems to be of low efficiency.

However, from the view point of the evaluators, the efficiency of the project should be looked more toward the outcomes level rather than the direct activities and outputs, because the project activities are implemented in efforts to provide TA in response to the demands for policy development of Vietnam.

*Sustainability*

The sustainability of the project is evaluated based on the capacity to sustain the results attained at Outcome and Impact levels, especially presented in the following perspectives:

* The project’s results contribute significant parts to the capacity built for the national system in the following areas: Institutional capacity of the agencies that design and implement the poverty reduction policies strengthened through the processes of implementation of the NTPs; System and methodology building for policy analysis and design for GoV agencies.
* Establishment of focal point for promotion of new concepts and approaches, and facilitation of policy dialogue, lures the attention and mobilises contributions from stakeholders, especially the donors and has been highly appreciated by the stakeholders.

However, in order to sustain and multiply the results, the efforts can not be stopped at this point. The response evaluators got from the related groups has shown that there are still weaknesses in the capacity of GoV agencies. Therefore, there needs to be additional appropriate technical support if it is expected to shift the PR approach toward a more comprehensive and integrated approach. The GoV agencies in charge of formulation of PR policies also need to identify a vision which is long term enough for new designs of PR programs in the coming period, because new approach requires more comprehensive management capacity in the GoVs management system.

*Partnership and Coordination*

The project has become a good example of supporting the GOV agencies as the host in dealing with their partners, including other GOV agencies, donors, and all the NTPs’ beneficiaries. However, GOV agencies in charge of PR dialogue and implementation may not have enough capacity for stakeholder engagement and coordination.

**3. Lessons learnt**:

*Proper identification of areas for TA support* is the most important lesson. As VIE 02/001 can be understood as *governance for sustainable poverty reduction*, technical assistance provided by the project focuses on capacity building for the national system rather than provision of direct support to PR activities. Opportunity for transformational change has been best used in this case.

*Harmonised and synchronised management of TA*, attracting initiatives and experience is very important in the context that the TA management capacity of the relevant GoV agencies at national, provincial and local levels is still weak.

*Platform for dialogue and opportunity for influence* should be linked to the national programs and the GoV system.

*Demand driven support* is a typical experience of the project. Flexible design has allowed the project to support a continuous process of discussion, agreement, and application of initiatives based on the changing context. The Vietnamese partners have highly appreciated this approach as it can help identify limitations and obstacles, which cannot be found from designing stage.

*Ownership and decentralization reinforced by “one voice” effect* has been strengthened during the project implementation, by the consensus among stakeholders (One Voice).

**4. Conclusions**

* Mission of VIE 02/002 has been successfully completed.
* Project design is relevant and appropriate given different specific conditions of MOLISA and CEM, NTP-PR and P135. However there has been a risk of distracting if Vietnamese partners do not buy the concepts.
* Achievements and results are relevant and sustainable, especially its policy making influence and transformation impact.
* GOV may need further support in order to design the new intervention and implement it in several early phases.
* UN may want to include the project experience into its One UN roadmap, with better coordination across outputs, as the project has dealt with governance and institutional aspect rather than direct poverty reduction.

**5. Recommendations**

* UNDP should consider continuing its support in the new context, applying appropriate lessons, to the new comprehensive PR programme, especially CIO, M&E system, consultation procedure, and encouraging participation.
* Policy dialogue and sharing the lessons learnt from the previous phases will be certainly useful, and this will be the key contribution to Vietnam’s poverty reduction policy development and implementation, as well as One UN effort.
* A partnership hosted by the poverty reduction lead agency is a must, if the GOV wants to better engage the participant of more stakeholders and promote a participatory approach.
* Identification of areas for TA support should be done carefully. Studies for mapping poverty reduction technical supports in a large number of NTPs related to poverty reduction should be undertaken as soon as possible.
* TA management, as a critical lesson, should be taken into consideration when designing and implementing the new poverty reduction intervention. One TA plan (which can be flexible and demand-driven) is highly recommended.
* Experience and best practices of implementation at local level and partnerships at central level as well as approaches, methodologies, procedures, templates created during P135/II (CIO, M&E, participatory approach, consultation, etc.) should be institutionalized as much as possible. Resolution 80 has introduced a good concept, however has yet provided clear intervention description. A comprehensive programme document then needs to be developed.
* The new national sustainable poverty reduction programme 2012 – 2015 is a good chance to apply a comprehensive framework for all the poverty reduction efforts. It is highly recommended that an M&E framework, which is integrated in the national system, should be designed as a part of reform curriculum for implementing agencies. Results-based planning and M&E should be introduced for interventions which are undertaken by the national system.

# PROJECT PROFILE

## Country and UN Context

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funded Project VIE 02/001 ‘Support to the improvement and implementation of National Targeted Programmes on Poverty Reduction’ (hereinafter referred to as VIE 02/001) was approved by the Prime Minister according to the Decision No. 422/QĐ-TTg, dated on May 31st 2002.

Thereafter, UNDP and Government of Vietnam agreed for extension of the Project operation until the end of 2010 according to the Document No.1451/TTg-QHQT dated on September 26th 2005 by the Prime Minister. At the end of 2010, it was once again agreed to extend the project by one more year of operations until the end by December 31st 2011.

According to the assessment by the Government late 2005, PR NTPs of the Government – especially the NTP HEPR-JC, and Program 135 – have been important efforts in order to ensure more equitable, inclusive and sustainable development.

The two programs were evaluated within a UNDP-funded project in 2003-2004, and the report *"Receiving funds, planning for the future"*, co-compiled by MOLISA and UNDP and officially made public by MOLISA minister on 24 November 2004. This evaluation helped understand better the implementation of the programs by the participatory organizations, and created the trust among the donors for provision of technical support for future formulation and implementation of the NTP-PR, and the Program SEDEMA, for period of 2006-10[[1]](#footnote-2). The wide consultations with donors (with support from UNDP) helped MOLISA and CEM to develop program documents with the new approach for the two above mentioned programs.

During the period 2006-2010 the GoV paid special attention to PR, by allocating a great deal of state budget to the NTP PR, accounting for about VND 43.488 billion[[2]](#footnote-3), including the direct fund from the GoV, local budget, contributions from the communities and direct support from international organizations. The NTP is comprised of 12 sub-components relating to an area implemented by line ministries, agencies and public authorities, and focuses on three groups:

* The policies, projects to support production development and income increase for the poor;
* The policies supporting the poor in accessing the social services;
* The projects on capacity building and awareness raising.

The Program 135/II supports socio-economic development of the poorest communes, villages (of special difficulties) in ethnic minorities and mountainous areas with 5 main components, the focus for infrastructure development and support production development together the activities on capacity building for decentralised management of investment for PR for localities has been higher and higher.

Several international donors also have programs on PR support with new approaches, which are implemented in some provinces. Among those programs, attention should be paid to the Sweden-funded Chia Se program, the rural development programs by Finland, Ireland, the WB-funded PR program for 6 northern mountainous provinces, and Australia-funded programs on support the management and implementation of the P135/II (ISP Quang Ngai) and by Finland (SM 135/II). These programs are in line with the GoV’s new orientations on PR as they introduce the rights-based approaches and taking into account the voice of the poorer groups while empowering the local levels with schemes for both decentralisation and capacity building. Those donors are also the donors actively involved in the Partnership Group on support to NTP PR and P 135.

This point of time is also when UN delivered the One UN initiative

VIE 02/001 was developed to make a sound contribution to achieving the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) outcome 1 “Economic growth is more equitable, inclusive and sustainable” and outcome 1.1 in the Country Programme Action Plan 2006-2010: “National pro-poor policies and interventions that support more equitable and inclusive growth”.

Under the One UN Initiative, the objective has been put under Output 1.1 of One Plan II: “Improved design and more effective implementation of national target programmes for poverty reduction and national programme for socio-economic development for poorest communes”.

It can be said that, series of efforts by the GoV, UN and bilateral, multilateral donors in this period of time have oriented the design and implementation of the PR programs in the way to become more strategic, compressive and sustainable PR interventions.

VIE 02/001 has therefore made basic changes in order to support the two most major PR programs of Vietnam in the period 2006-2010.

## Project Objectives and Priorities

The Project contributes to the improvement and implementation of the National Target Programmes for Poverty Reduction (NTPs), specifically:

* the National Target Programme for Poverty Reduction (NTP-PR) (MOLISA is the focal point), and
* the Socio-Economic Development Programme for the communes facing severe difficulties in Ethnic and Mountainous Areas (P135-II) (under the management of CEM).

The project provides technical assistance (TA) that is

* complementary to GOVN’s own TA, and
* necessary for ensuring sound design and effective implementation of the national target programmes for poverty reduction 2006-2010.

The support will be delivered via partnership with MOLISA and CEM as the leading agencies for the two NTPs, and other related national agencies involved in the management and implementation of the two NTPs.

Key expected results of the Project are reflected via five key outputs:

* **Output 1**: The targeted programmes for poverty reduction and its implementation guidelines are designed in a transparent and participatory manner, are gender-sensitive, and take into account the lessons of the evaluation.
* **Output 2**: More participatory and efficient M&E systems at central and local levels established to systematically monitor progress of the poverty-targeted programmes and disseminate outputs timely to the wider public and policy makers for continuously increasing program effectiveness.
* **Output 3**: Effective mechanisms for improved targeting and participation are in place that enhances the poor men’s and women’s access to, benefits from and participating in all stages of the poverty targeted programmes.
* **Output 4**: Transparent budget allocation and participatory financial managements systems are established and used in poverty reduction targeted programs.
* **Output 5**: Improved capacity of programme staffs, including the people themselves for more effective, participatory decentralized local level planning, implementation and coordination of the poverty reduction targeted programmes at all levels.

## Funding

Budget breakdown:

2002 – 2004: US$ 1,380,000

2005-2010: US$ 5,000,000

General Management Support Fee: US$ 80,000

Total budget: US$ 6,460,000

Allocated resources: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Regular US$ 3,500,000
* Other:

DFID: US$ 1,050,000

FINLAND: US$ 600,000

* In kind contributions: US$ 200,000

UN-funded budget: US $1,310,000

# EVALUATION PROFILE

## Evaluation Objectives

A Mid-term Review was conducted in 2008 to assess its progress against outputs and identify appropriate recommendations for the project to reach its objective. The review, which was undertaken in the form of performance analysis, focused *on the relevance and effectiveness aspects of the project*. Management response and implementation of the key recommendations have been set up and monitored.

As designed, VIE 02/001 will undergo a final evaluation upon completion of implementation. This final evaluation will assess the achievement, relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the project. The evaluation also looks at early signs of potential impact and sustainability of results.

As stated in the TOR (Appendix 5), the objective of the EOP Evaluation is to address the issues of:

* *Project achievements and results*: What are the end of project results against designed outputs and outcome, taking into consideration the implementation of MTE recommendations?
* *Relevance:* Was the project developed to address and did it implement the right things? Analysis of relevance of the project concept via context verification (both national situation and One Plan context) as now in comparison with the project design’s period.
* *Effectiveness:*
  + To what extent were the objectives achieved? Assessment of processes that affected the attainment of project results: examination of preparation and readiness of the project, country ownership, stakeholder involvement, financial planning, effectiveness of national and local implementing agencies and designated supervision agency, coordination mechanism with other relevant donors projects/programmes, and reasons for any bottlenecks and delays in delivery of project outputs, outcomes and the attainment of sustainability. Assessment of implementation approach: including an analysis of the project's result framework, performance indicators, and adaptation to changing conditions, overall project management and mechanisms applied in project management decentralization to local level in delivering project outputs.
  + What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
* *Efficiency:* 
  + Were the activities cost-efficient?
  + Were objectives achieved on time?
  + Was the programme or project implemented the most efficient way compared to alternatives? This includes overall project organization and processes.
* *Sustainability:* To what extent will the benefits of the project continue after donor funding ceased?
  + What are the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the project?
  + Was there a clearly defined exit strategy and to what extent did it contribute to sustainability?
  + Initial impact of the project?
* *Assessment of Partnership and coordination*
* *Lessons learned* and recommendations in each of the mentioned above aspects as inputs for the future TA project to support PR policies and Programmes.

## Key Audiences

The primary audiences for the Evaluation are UNDP, MOLISA, CEM, MPI, and other related national agencies involved in the management and implementation of the two NTPs.

## Approach & Methodology

This is an independent evaluation. The approach is considered to be credible and appropriate for identifying the results attributable to the Project, given the range of information that is currently available, and the time frame of the exercise.

Typical criteria for evaluating a development intervention, namely Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Sustainability, will be used, with a focus in the project results at impact and outcome levels.

Participatory and evidence-based approach will be applied in this evaluation. Consultation sessions, particularly with the key informants and focus groups, will provide opportunities for gathering strategic information that can be useful for consolidation of lessons and design for the next strategic interventions if necessary.

A team of two consultants of PeaPROs Consulting (Tran Nam Binh and Nghiem Ba Hung) were contracted by UNDP Hanoi to undertake the assignment.

The Evaluation was carried out during December 2011 and January 2012.

The methodology adopted for this evaluation is designed to meet the requirements and expectations set out in the Terms of Reference.

An Evaluation Framework, which is supported by information from the project’s reports and data collected from interviews of key informant and focus groups during the meetings with relevant agencies in Hanoi, has been used for supporting analysis work. Field visits to provinces were not required. However, several interviews over the telephone with some provincial contact points were made.

The Evaluation Framework systemizes the methodology, identifying the issues to be addressed, sub-questions that provide elaboration; and the performance indicators (variables to be considered), sources of information and method of information collection for each issue.

The *Evaluation Framework* is attached as *Appendix 1*.

The TOR and the Evaluation Framework both contain retrospective issues that address historical performance, as well as forward–looking issues that will be used to inform future directions. Forward–looking issues do not relate to the achievement of results and, therefore, are not assigned performance indicators.

Identifying and reviewing available project documents helped collect detailed information which addresses the responsiveness and relevance of the project to Vietnam’s development challenges and priorities. As VIE 02/001 is a support to the NTP-PR and P135/II, the documented results of the two NTPs such as Resolution 80 and P135/II Implementation Guidelines have been studied.

In addition, further efforts will provide a better understanding of the context for carrying out development cooperation initiatives, previous management of ODA funding, and the potential for future cooperative undertakings. For example, the recently designed National Sustainable Poverty Reduction 2012 – 2015 will be examined.

Available project documentation was reviewed (e.g. project approval documents, project results framework, progress reports, *monitoring reports, MTR report*). Then the interviews were carried out with the project officers, the implementing agencies, the partner organization staff and project staff, stakeholders, and beneficiaries.

Key informant interviews were conducted to obtain qualitative information on the evaluation issues. These interviews provide in–depth information that would allow the Evaluation Team to address the program’s relevance, responsiveness, and the sustainability of results.

Interviews and deep discussions have been undertaken with several groups of key informants:

* National stakeholders (MOLISA, CEM, MPI)
* Related donors (UNDP, AusAID, DANIDA, Finland, IFAD, IrishAID, World Bank)
* Project management, staff, and experts at MOLISA, CEM, two Project Offices and PMUs.

Respondents were asked questions about the historical performance of the project and forward–looking questions that would be useful for designing the next interventions.

A detailed *Work Plan* can be found as *Appendix 3*.

A *List of People met* can be found as *Appendix 4*.

# PROJECT EVALUATION

The contents and structure of evaluation are presented in the following charts. The achievements and results of the project are briefly evaluated in Chart 1. Evaluation perspectives are presented in Chart 2.

Until the time this evaluation is conducted, the Project has not produced its final report on the results. Moreover, the Project VIE 02/001 with the flexible design in the way to meet the demands of the implementing agencies has therefore had no log frame and indicators to assess the outcomes and impacts. As a result, a chain of results analysed in Chart 1 is established as follows:

* The impacts of the project have been analysed by the evaluators with inputs from the interviews conducted with relevant agencies and individuals.
* The outcomes of the project have been analysed by the evaluators with inputs from the interviews conducted with relevant agencies and individuals.
* The outputs of the project have been analysed by the evaluators with inputs from the annual reports produced by each Component, provided by PMU located at MOLISA and CEM, and the MTR report provided by UNDP.
* The activities of the MOLISA component and SEDEMA component have been synthesised by the evaluators from the annual reports produced by the PMU at MOLISA and CEM, and the MTR report provided by UNDP.

The outputs and activities completed are the basic source of information proving the analysis on the project outcomes and impacts.

The analysis and evaluation from the perspectives of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, partnership and coordination have been done by the team with inputs from the interviews conducted with relevant agencies and individuals.

The team of evaluators also provide independent viewpoints whenever needed, based on the information collected and analysis done.

**Chart 1: Achievements and results**

**Chart 2: Evaluation perspectives:**

## Achievements and Results

### *Impact level*

Support of VIE 02/001 has directly matched the needs of the Government of Vietnam in designing and implementation of poverty reduction efforts, especially institutional framework and instruments for policy dialogue and implementation management of these efforts in particular and changing context.

*Firstly*, with regards to the designing and implementing of PR efforts, the project contributed technical support during the drafting process and consultations on the guiding documents for NTP PR and P135/II period of 2006 - 2010. The response from the state management agencies under MOLISA and CEM has shown that NTP PRs and their guiding documents were developed in a transparent, participatory manner, including the involvement of the international donors, gender mainstreaming, and reflected the lessons learnt from the evaluation process over the performance of the previous period.

Particularly, the documents of the two programs approved by the GOV (P135/II in 2006, and NTP-PR in 2007) as well as the circulars and guiding documents of the two programs were all highly appreciated by the implementing agencies in terms of actuality and relevance tot he implementation capacity of all levels, especially the local level in the context where the management capacity of the local state management agencies is still limited.

It should also be emphasised that the NTP PR and CT 135/II were the ones which are different from each other in terms of design and implementation arrangements. Whereas the NTP PR inclines toward use of the state management system from the central to provide regular credits and social welfare support to the poor groups through the standard policy packages identified via Ministries, the P135/II advocating through the local level authorities (province and district, and in the roadmap to mobilise increasing participation of commune-level authorities) focuses on the investment and capacity building activities with the large participation of local people and authorities. Thence, the technical support from VIE 02/001 to these two programs is also different, and regularly directed in line with the demand of each of them.

During the designing process, the policy review studies and researches conducted with support from the project contributed great parts to formulation of policies and guiding documents, e.g. the study on indicators for selection of communes eligible to be investment owners, process and procedures to identify the eligibly beneficiary poor communes, etc.

*Secondly*, in supporting the Vietnamese agencies in PR policy dialogues for period 2006 – 2010, the project VIE 02/001 worked very closely with MOLISA (Department of Social Security) and CEM (Policy Department) in order to enable these agencies to organise policy dialogues and consultations with different stakeholders, particularly with the international donors.

At this period of time, the GoV together with the donors conducted dialogues at different levels on new issues occurring during the PR delivery, such as strong decentralisation to local levels, production and livelihood development models, people’s participation and the feedback mechanism in order to collect information for analysis, formulation and modification of policies. The P 135/II itself during the implementation is also a large dialogue and experience sharing process to reach consensus on approach, principles and completion of guidelines suitable to the wide contributions from many international donors and non-governmental organizations.

In preparation for dialogue process, the organizing agencies under MOLISA and CEM said they received quite effective support from the staff, national and international consultants of the project VIE 02/001 and UNDP Office in Hanoi.

*Thirdly*, the support from the VIE 02/001 was considered to have helped well address Vietnam’s policy priorities, focusing on the development issues, making changes in concepts, directions, approaches, and adoption of renovations, e.g. the role of investment owners by communes, results-based planning and M&E, transparent financial management, annual audits, participation, and sharing of experience and best practices in many national and provincial level dialogues.

The most special example for this evaluation is the PR design by the GoV period 2011-2015. The project VIE 02/001 also provided technical support to this effort in the context where Vietnam is making great changes in PR approach. The Resolution 80 on directions for PR period 2011-2020 pursues a more comprehensive approach compared to both programs NTP PR and P135/II 2006 – 2010, and therefore brings about another possibility rather than the continuation of the two above mentioned programs. UNDP has made exact comments about the new approach and design as follows[[3]](#footnote-4):

* Concentrated effective investment for the poorest districts, communes and villages, from the typical PR programs and policies to the priorities from the NTPs and other ODA projects;
* Gradually shift the orientation of patchy and separate PR policies and programs to a mainstreamed, universal and inclusive system of PR policies by ministries, sectors, avoiding separated resources and increasing accountability in designing, evaluating the operation of PR policies by each central professional agency and the ones at local level;
* Agreement should be made on a harmonised and comprehensive PR program for the poorest districts, communes and villages.
* In order to attain the PR objectives and shifts into new orientations, a lot should be done and many perspectives be considered.
* When making mainstreaming poverty reduction a regular task, there should be efforts right from the central agencies in reviewing, assessing the real situation of the applicable policies in order to propose an appropriate and effective system of policies, well addressing the needs of the poor, and also creating motivations to stand on their owns.
* There should be changes in terms of institutional development and organizational strengthening in order to ensure that the implementation process is smooth and in right track. These will be linked and contribute to the designing of a long term public social security system.
* The role of MOLISA and CEM in coordination, oversight and advising ministries, agencies and localities on poverty issues and ethnic minorities has been really needed and should be strengthened in order to ensure that the policies service the right targets and meet the objectives on PR and ethnic minority development.
* Some capacities to innovate have been acknowledged and recognised during the past five-year period, specifically presented in the P135/II. These capacities to innovate should be promoted, particularly the good models such as decentralising the commune level authorities to be investment owner, oversight and evaluation of programs, transparent financial management, annual audits, mobilisation of people’s participation … should be integrated into the new program. At the same time, pilot should be done with the models internationally considered effective in PR activities such as block grant and cash transfer to the poor people in the coming programs and policies.

It can be seen that adhering to the demand for change in the approach by the GoV, the technical support from VIE 02/001 also shifted in the way to identify the most vulnerable and poorest groups in order to consider application of comprehensive and overarching interventions, delivered through improvement and consolidation of the social security system rather than adoption of the special interventions/support/subsidy as in the previous NTPs.

This approach is also in line with the objectives set out in the One Plan II as already mentioned in section 2.1.

### *Outcome level*

The feedbacks from the stakeholders participating in the project via interviews have shown that the project has produced following outcomes:

*Firstly*, the design and implementation of the poverty reduction programs have made progresses in the way to become more strategic, more comprehensive and sustainable poverty reduction inclusive interventions.

The most significant change in the approach of PR policies is presented in the Resolution 80 on orientations for PR period 2011-2020.

* Resolution 80:

*Synchronous and focused investment in socio-economic infrastructure in poor districts, poor communes and villages facing extreme hardship made according to the new rural development criteria, especially for such essential construction schemes as communication roads, electricity and clean water supply.*

*(Res. 80)*

* + Prioritizes sources of investment from other national programs and ODA projects to make significant investments in the poorest districts, communes and villages.
  + A shift from the ad hoc provision of poverty reduction interventions towards a more mainstreamed, universal and comprehensive approach.
  + Better and more efficient use of the scarce resources available.
  + Accountability of each agency and local government in designing and delivering the best possible poverty reduction interventions.
  + A single harmonized and comprehensive program combining existing programs and policies together.

To a more specific extent, the draft of new NTP on PR period 2011 - 2015 applied changes in PR approach toward feasible interventions, catering to needs of the poor, and the implementation is based much on the capacity improved by the implementing agencies themselves. This has shown that the lessons learnt from the GoV’s NTPs as well as from other programs on supporting PR of the donors have been discussed and integrated into draft policy for new circle.

However, as the program document is just a draft one, the GoV should continue consultations to come to a final decision. UNDP could consider continuing their support to this process to ensure that the outcomes can be delivered *(see more at the sections: the lessons learnt, Conclusion and recommendations).*

*Secondly*, the evaluation team acknowledges that the capacity of the agencies that design and implement the PR has been strengthened, including the capacity to organize dialogues and consultations with relevant stakeholders and international donors, especially at the central level.

The MTR report assumed that the GoV-donor partnership group of both programs did not work effectively. The consultations have shown that the formulation of guiding circular for the production development support component of the P135/II was too slow with the market researches which are not appropriate. Therefore, the program found it hard to identify suitable activities. However, from a more comprehensive angle for the whole period 2006 – 2010 in the context that the stakeholders, particular at some of the GoV agencies, have not been equally aware of the new approach, the evaluation team assumes that MOLISA and CEM have made great efforts in the consultations and organization of dialogues for good solutions for policy designing. The project VIE 02/001 provided support to this process closely.

The comments from the agencies managing the implementation of the two programs: NTP PR and P135/II affirmed the capacity of the agencies as well of the program officers at these agencies has been significantly improved. Most of the staff involved in the consultations and dialogues, development of tools and delivery of M&E were considered of having better knowledge and skills on participatory approach. At the same time, the ownership and accountability have been strengthened.

*Thirdly*, the documentation of lessons learnt has provided evidence to prove that the suitable processes and models had been carried out during the project implementation. Almost all the program documents and guiding circulars issued during the project circle incorporated the results from the studies, researches and reviews conducted, as well as the comments contributed by many stakeholders via rounds of coordination workshops and policy dialogues.

However the documentation of lessons learnt was not completed, particularly in the period the process was phasing out (2010 – 2011). This led to a risk that should there be no mechanism to sustain technical support, the lessons learnt from the designing of macro PR policy interventions (NTP-PR Component), implementation of the policies with the decentralization and local participation (P135/II), and M&E models implemented by localities (especially at the P135/II with the set of PMT and AMT tools) would not be shared and properly used in designing PR programs in the coming period. *(See more at the sections: the lessons learnt, Conclusion and recommendations).*

### *Output level*

In order to evaluate the achievements at Output level, the evaluation team uses the framework comparing the results and the progress at the end of the project and the time MTR was conducted.

Appendix 2a: Achievements Against MTR Mission’s Recommendation – NTP-PR Component and Appendix 2b: Achievements against MTR Mission’s Recommendation – SEDEMA Component provide detailed information. The analysis below focuses only on several important outputs attained from the completed activities during the project circle.

Although the project made significant achievements at impact and outcome levels, the issues and recommendation of the MTR report at output level have been of significance until now. Appendix 4 of the MTR report highlighted the issues to be considered and adjusted in both components from Output 1 to Output 5.

***OUTPUT 1:*** The targeted programmes for poverty reduction and its implementation guidelines are designed in a transparent and participatory manner, are gender-sensitive, and take into account the lessons of the evaluation.

In the project circle, the major results attained from the output 1 of both components include:

* Program documents of the two program approved by the GOV (P135/II in 2006, and NTP-PR in 2007).
* Circulars and implementation guidelines for the two programs.
* Studies and researches for the development of policies/implementation guidelines.
* Draft of new Program on PR for period 2011 – 2015.

The remaining issues such as revision of the guiding documents of the production development support component, support to issuance of implementation guidelines of the Ministries, agencies for the circular 01, support to the localities in studying and research of market-oriented commodity production models, and guidelines on gender mainstreaming have not been completely addressed in both components.

***OUTPUT 2:*** More participatory and efficient M&E systems at central and local levels established to systematically monitor progress of the poverty-targeted programmes and disseminate outputs timely to the wider public and policy makers for continuously increasing program effectiveness.

* Dec No. 1053/2007 on M&E framework for NTP-PR; Dec No. 23/2007 on the application of M&E indicators for NTP-PR; Dec No. 04/2008-UBDT on the application of forms and reporting formats for Program 135-II
* Modified AMT and PMT for application down to commune level.

With regards to the NTP PR, the M&E system has not been developed or implemented (even a pilot was not done) at local level. The annual program reports of the implementing agencies were developed in a traditional style, listing the activities done but not based on the PR targets identified and indicators measuring the level of success of the results and targets. Mechanism of participatory monitoring by localities and communities has not been developed. However, the evaluation team holds that the interventions to change the working process of the GoV agencies need more time, because it relates more to the administrative reforms rather than improving designing an intervention by a program. In that context, it is clear that not much is expected from the possible intervention by the project VIE 02/001.

In the case of the P135/II, the application of the AMT and PMT formats was a great step in the areas of M&E. Quite a lot of localities were able to carry out this task even at commune level. The Australia-funded ISP in Quang Ngai and the Sweden-funded Chia Se Program in Quang Tri, Yen Bai, and Ha Giang are good examples about the combination of external support to a national program at local level, especially in the capacity in designing interventions (operational planning) and M&E at commune level.

As analysed above, M&E experience might not be sustained should the initial outputs and results not be documented and incorporated into the designing of program for next period.

***OUTPUT 3:*** Effective mechanisms for improved targeting and participation are in place that enhance the poor men’s and women’s access to, benefits from and participating in all stages of the poverty targeted programmes.

* Circular No. 04/2007/TT- BLĐTBXH on the procedures to identify poor households annually and poverty line reporting system.
* Decision No.163, 164 by PM on the list of communes completing and benefiting P135/II; Criteria for communes eligible to be investment owners in P135/II.

The participation and accessibility of the poor and women depends much on the planning mechanism, participation in delivery of program activities and M&E activities rather than on the process to identify poor households and the decentralization of investment ownership and budget management to commune levels. Many other programs such as Chia Se, ISP, IFAD and some projects implemented by INGOs have produced result reports on this area. Those are the actual experience that can be shared if it is incorporated into the consultations and policy dialogues initiated by the NTP PRs. UNDP could also consider continued its support to these activities.

***OUTPUT 4:*** Transparent budget allocation and participatory financial managements systems are established and used in poverty reduction targeted programs

* Circular No. 2849/KBNN- KHTH 2006 by MOF providing guidelines for financial management and disbursements under P135/II.

The evaluation team holds that this is an area requiring great efforts not only in terms of formulation of guiding circulars but also in development of a common understanding about the concept of “participatory”. The financial management and budget allocation system can be developed in a transparent manner in order to enable the poor households, particularly women, to monitor and make comments; however the responsibility for financial management and budget allocation still belongs to the local authorities. Several projects, programs have piloted the models of local development funds, in the way that the people can assign representative groups to directly participate in planning and budget allocating (management group) and monitor the implementation (monitoring group). This model can only be conducted should the GoV provides block grants and cash transfer directly to the poor people in the upcoming policy programs, as already mentioned by several international donors.

***OUTPUT 5:*** Improved capacity of programme staffs, including the people themselves for more effective, participatory decentralized local level planning, implementation and coordination of the poverty reduction targeted programmes at all levels.

The capacity of program staff has been strengthened not only through trainings, but mostly via the actual management and organising implementation of activities. The following capacity perspectives have been noted by the evaluation team to be significantly improved, especially at central level:

* Consultation-based policy making
* Intervention design
* Development of instruments and implementation of programme M&E
* Application of base line surveys, result-based planning and reporting, especially with P135/II at local levels
* Ownership and accountability

The project has made great efforts in provision of ToT trainings, however due to its limited budget; the project was unable to carry out such activities down to the local levels. The efforts which are recognised are the activities done in collaboration with agencies and other projects, programs, e.g the project to support management of P 135/II funded by Finland (SM 135/II) and the communication activities in coordination with mass media agencies (VOV, VTV, etc.) have brought about certain results in staff capacity.

However, the documentation and wide sharing of experience should be considered for the coming periods.

## Evaluation perspectives

### *Relevance*

*Project design:*

VIE 02/001 applies soft and flexible approach, providing technical support in line with the emerging demands of the two national programs, even though it is described in the program document as programmatic approach with a Results and Resources Framework instead of a log frame with indicators measuring results of 5 outputs. The NEX mechanism also brings about quite high level of ownership and independence of the Vietnamese agencies during project implementation.

The project’s approach to provide technical support is adopted in the way to expand the opportunities to share experience and encourage use of initiatives by donors as well as by relevant stakeholders during the implementation of the NTP PRs.

*The actual results:*

The feedbacks from the relevant stakeholders during the project implementation have revealed that they highly appreciated this design. On one hand, the technical support from the VIE 02/001 project is relevant to the demands of the GoV in the designing and implementation of PR efforts, particularly the institutional framework and the tools in service of policy dialogues and implementation management, contributing to well addressing the priorities of the GoV and development issues. Following are the main comments and recognition by the evaluation team about the relevance of the project:

* Highly relevant to PR policy of Vietnam and institutionalisation of innovative and new approach in the context of fast changes in awareness about policies, presented in the following perspectives:
  + The project has supported policy/institutional development
  + The project has supported policy implementation
* The project approach is highly relevant to the needs of GOV:
  + Capacity (institutional framework, methodologies, implementing agencies and staff), with tailor made TA packages inside the GOV agencies (MOLISA and CEM) while these capacities are still weak and need improvement.
  + Policy analysis and dialogue, in order to ensure receipt of initiatives and application of local best practices and experience.
  + Mobilisation of resources in better harmonised framework.
  + Better coordination (horizontal and vertical), especially at central level.
* The project’s technical assistance is highly relevant to the trend of synchronisation of various PR efforts and approaches which have been piloted and practiced so far, well addressed the policy priority of Vietnam in poverty reduction. Concentrated in solving the development issues.
* Highly relevant to the practical needs of the two target programmes:
  + Ownership thanks to NEX
  + Mobilisation of GOV system/staff capacity (in case of NTP-PR)
  + Mobilisation of a groups of donors (in case of P135/II)
  + Given the weak coordination between MOLISA and CEM and different design/arrangement of the two target programmes, different support modality and TA packages are wise choice.
* VIE 02/001 also made relevant and practical contribution to UN’s One Plan II Output 1.1: “Improved design and more effective implementation of national target programmes for poverty reduction and national programme for socio-economic development for poorest communes”. From this angle, the project is a channel contributing to the efforts by UNDP in Vietnam in terms of governance rather than only support for PR.

*Some notes about the project’s relevance:*

To successfully implement this design requires some basic factors as follows:

* The ownership of the GoV’s implementing agencies toward the process to learn and change.
* The GoV’s commitment level to renovate via adoption of initiatives and good experience.
* The dialogue and consultation process should be done regularly ad thematically.

The analysis of risks in the project document mainly focuses on the risks during the implementation, including two main types:

* The project’s outputs can not be converted into outcomes: the completion of the new design for NTP PR was slow; the TA inputs, study/research results and recommendations were not utilised; the co-funding agreement between UNDP and donors was delayed.
* The intended outputs were not delivered: there was not enough the collaboration among MOLISA, CEM and relevant agencies; it was slow to identify and mobilise human resources, particularly the STA, project officers, research institutions, and national resources in service of capacity strengthening; it was slow in developing M&E system and pilot models, etc.

Although the project document says that the level of risks is at medium or low one, in fact almost all the risks analyzed happened at high level, which provides a very important lesson learnt upon designing future technical support projects.

### *Effectiveness*

To the end of 2011, at the completion of the project implementation, from an external evaluation perspective, it can be confirmed that the project’s activities and outputs have effectively contributed to improved implementation of the programmes.

In some cases, it is difficult to quantify the contribution of a certain project’s product, especially in terms of researches and studies that serve the development of policies and implementation guidelines. It is also unclear to quantify the contribution of the project’s interventions as the final result of a policy intervention is a new policy, which is the product of the Government system, not of the project.

It can be seen that the inputs and/or evidences for making recommendations (from the studies/ researches) are coming from various initiatives/projects funded/ managed by other donors/agencies. However, in that policy environment, the project proved its roles in facilitation of the consultations, compilation of good practices and putting it in a policy agenda for consideration. The end-products of these policy agenda are different from each component of the project but in general it makes positive impact to the implementation of the two programs.

Under the SEDEMA component, a number of outputs have been achieved and institutionalised to support the improved implementation of the program at local level such as CIO, PIM, participatory planning, CRC, etc.

Complimentary, the NTP-PR component has obtained achievements in supporting the introduction of the Resolution 80 which brings existing programs and policies together into a single harmonized and comprehensive program for poverty reduction which addresses the neediest districts, communes and villages.

Results from programme implementation, a series of dialogues and studies for both NTP-PR and P135/II have been used as inputs for the newly issued Resolution 80 and the recently draft comprehensive poverty reduction programme 2012 – 2015 led by MOLISA. The set of implementation guidelines for P135/II emphasizing commune investment ownership, M&E system, consultation procedures, and encouraging participation, etc. can now serve as best practices for the implementation of any development programmes.

General assessment also shows that the project’s TA activities/products have contributed to achieving project outcome, as well as Output 1 of UN Development Framework “*Equitable, inclusive and more sustainable economic growth*” and Output 1.1 of UNDP Country Programme Document under One UN Initiative: “*Improved design and effective implementation of NTP-PR and SEDEMA*” through effective contributions to initially designed outputs.

The comparison of achievements against the MTR recommendations can be found in *Appendix 2a* and *Appendix 2b*.

There are some ***major factors influencing the achievement*** of the objectives:

* *Identification of areas for TA support*. As VIE 02/001 can be understood as *governance for sustainable poverty reduction*, technical assistance provided by the project focuses on capacity building for the national system rather than provision of direct support to poverty reduction activities. Opportunity for transformational change has been best used in this case.
* *Management of TA*. Both NTPs especially P135/II have demanded a lot of TA services, which make management of TA complicated and beyond the recent capacity of the related GOV agencies from national to provincial and sub provincial levels. Support by VIE 02/001 thus becomes important. However, more results could have been seen if a synchronized TA plan (or “one plan” for TA). The arrangement with different TA approaches for the two project components has created difficulties for the GOV agencies in charge of poverty reduction.
* *Platform for dialogue and opportunity for influence*. The project becomes a good platform for dialogue and also provides good opportunity for NTP-PR and P135/II stakeholders to influence. Technical assistance in this case has been aligned to national programmes. Technical advisors of several TA packages have had chances to work closely with or even “inside” the system and therefore can understand well the situation and contribute their values.
* *Demand driven support*. Flexible design has allowed the project to support a continuous process of discussion, agreement, and application of initiatives based on the changing context. The Vietnamese partners have highly appreciated this approach as it can help identify limitations and obstacles, which cannot be found from designing stage.
* *Ownership and decentralization reinforced by “one voice” effect*. Both NTP-PR and P135/II are the GOV led processes. When the GOV agencies and donors have any agreed concept, approach, or solution which would come to a possible change in policy, the advocacy job becomes easier thanks to the higher pressure to policy makers. Commune investment ownership in P135/II is an example. The GOV has for the first time ever empowered selected communes as the owners of investment projects in those communes. A series of dialogue have been organized, followed by instruction guidelines and even an indicator in the implementation roadmap of the programme. Decentralization has been for long advocated by donors. In this case the success probably come from a the effect of “one voice” or “chorus”. It is worth to note that the P135/II GOV-Donor Partnership has played an important role in this process.

The evaluators have some ***remarks*** when analysing the effectiveness of the project:

* The flexible design without a LFA for both TAs (a loose expected outputs and activities which used to be changed) has shown a high level of effectiveness. However, flexibility and often change of expected outputs would create uncertainty for the results, if the Vietnamese partners could not or did not want to apply new approaches and concepts. Furthermore, expertise availability is also an issue of flexible planning. It has not been so easy to mobilize an appropriate advisor/consultant when needed.
* In this scene expected (and indirect) results at outcome and impact levels are more important than direct outputs of the implemented activities.
* Support the policy designers/makers/implementers has created a chain of products rather than a single one: awareness, capacity, new designs of interventions, institutional frame, and policy change.
* Compared to other interventions (supported by Finland, Ireland, Sida, CIDA, SDC, IFAD, WB, ADB, INGOs), the project has its own positioning at the central of building necessary capacity for the national system rather than directly implementing PR activities. This has created a good mechanism to absorb good lessons and practices shared by the other programmes/projects.

### *Efficiency*

In term of standard evaluation indicator for efficiency, ones can say that the project seems to be low efficiency in the following aspects:

* Duration of the project: the project was extended for one more year vs the original design of the project (initially the duration of the project is from 2006 – 2010);
* Operation management structure of the project: To manage the daily operation of the project, it required to set up two parallel Project Support Units, one in MOLISA and one in CEMA.
* Left over activities: According to the latest work-plan of SEDEMA component, there are four activities have been cancelled.

However, from the point of view of evaluators, taking into account the nature of the project, the functions and management mechanism of the Government agencies and the actual context of the policy environment for poverty reduction in Vietnam, it is fair to say that the above-mentioned issues are minor in comparison with the achieved outputs made by the project management. In other words, the efficiency of the project should be looked more toward the outcomes level than the direct activities and outputs.

During the formulation process, the designers of the project intended to propose a flexible design in order to be best suit with “room for changes” of the two established Government’s Poverty Reduction programs. Therefore it is understandable that during the implementation process there would be stages, from time to time, the project had to adapt to the implementation of the two programs.

The overall objective of the project is to “support the poverty reduction efforts in Viet Nam through the formulation and implementation of a sound poverty reduction strategy and corresponding action plans”, which essentially through the two mentioned programs. Though the ultimate goal of the programs is the same but the natures of its activities are different. The NPT-PR led by MOLISA is more with the involvement of the central agencies and mass organization toward the policy at macro level while the P135-II led by CEMA is more toward the donor coordination for policy implementation at the local level. Consequently the type of coordination and management capacity as well as the needs for technical supports are different. Therefore, we can say that the operation management structure of the project is efficient in the way that it truly reflect and smoothly work with the Vietnam’s conditions.

The left over activities in this case is the reflection of the flexible design of the project as well as the nature of a NEX modality project. These two elements help to strengthen the roles and increase the ownership of the Executive Agency but it also give the agency the right to do or not do an activity. In this case, again, if we look at this from the normal evaluation point of view, then this is not the right way to do things. However, if overseeing it more toward the outcomes level, ones can say that the only way to do things right is to cancel it.

Table 1 and Table 2 below compare the results attained vs planned of both components NTP-PR and SEDEMA in 2011, in which the status of each activity was noted: completed, delayed, or cancelled. The cancelled activities were noted with comments and reasons.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 1: Planned vs. Actual Achievements of MOLISA component in 2011** | | | | | |
| **Activities** | **Status** | | | | **Remarks** |
|  | Completed | Delayed | Cancel | |  |
| **Output 1: The targeted program for poverty reduction designed in a transparent and participatory manner, gender sensitive and taking into account the lessons of the first phase.** | | | | | |
| * Provide MOLISA with national consultants to facilitate consultation workshops with line ministries to roll out the implementation arrangement of the PR Framework and brainstorm ideas for the coordination mechanism of Resolution on directions for sustainable poverty reduction (2011-2020). | x |  | |  |  |
| * Provide MOLISA and selected Ministries with national and international consultants to review policies and implementation arrangement of policies on social assistance aimed at poverty reduction. |  | x | |  | Recruitment of consultants and actual implementation of this activity has been implemented in Quarter IV and will be finalized in early 2012, then follow up and coordination of this activity will be done by UNDP and budget will be directly disbursed from UNDP. |
| * Conduct technical meetings/workshops with participation of line Ministries, agencies and national workshop for consultation and sharing information of the mainstreaming process, then to discuss and provide inputs to the development of coordination mechanisms of the Resolution and social assistance policy review report. | x |  | |  |  |
| * Support to development of design and instructions on implementation of the harmonized NTP-SPR | x |  | |  |  |
| **Output 2: An efficient M & E system established at central and local levels to systematically monitor progress of the targeted programs for poverty reduction and disseminate outputs to policy makers for continuously increasing program effectiveness.** | | | | | |
| * Support to development of the M&E system and MIS | X |  | |  |  |
| * Provide expertise peer reviews on results and recommendations of the model/system/indicators. | X |  | |  |  |
| * Conduct technical meetings and consultation workshops on the recommended system/indicators. | X |  | |  |  |
| * Support to study on poverty assessment in Vietnam as input for the formulation of harmonized NTP-SPR (2011-2015)/Rapid Impact Monitoring of economic shocks on social assistance beneficiaries (RIM). | X |  | |  |  |
| * Support to rapid impact monitoring of economic shocks on social assistance beneficiaries (RIM). | x |  | |  |  |
| * Support to final evaluation of VIE 02/001 Project. |  | x | |  |  |
| **Output 3: Effective mechanisms for improved targeting and participation are in place that enhances the access of poor men, women and children to and their benefits from the targeted programs.** | | | | | |
| * Support to development of tools and process for annual update of the list of poor households. | X |  | |  |  |
| * Provide MOLISA with national consultants to study and review current tools for annual update of the list of poor households with application of multi-dimensional poverty and piloting the targeting tools for one or two policies under the Resolution on sustainable poverty reduction (2011-2020). | X |  | |  |  |
| * Conduct field surveys for collection of evidence/practical information in three provinces from three regions. | x |  | |  |  |
| * Conduct regional/national consultation workshops and peer reviews on the process and tools for targeting beneficiaries of selected policies. | x |  | |  |  |
| * Conduct a national workshop on sharing international experience on multi-dimensional poverty and targeting |  |  | |  |  |
| * Support to social assistance system (SAS) * Provide national consultants to conduct a study feasibility and policy options to apply conditional cash transfer (CCT) for households with incomes lower than the poverty line in certain social assistance policies (target groups, financial mechanisms, costing, etc). | x |  | |  |  |
| * Conduct technical meetings/consultation workshops/peer reviews on the results and recommendations of the Study. | x |  | |  |  |
| * Conduct field surveys for collection of evidence/practical information in two provinces from three regions. | x |  | |  |  |
| **Output 4. Transparent and participatory budget allocation and financial management systems established and used for targeted poverty reduction programs.** | | | | | |
|  |  |  | |  |  |
| **Output 5: Transparent mechanisms for budget allocation and financial management for provincial and lower levels established; capacity of all program officials and the people themselves strengthened to enable them to participate effectively in the planning processes, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the NTPs at all levels.** | | | | | |
| * Support to introduce 3 members of Steering Committee and Coordination Office of the NTP-SPR with new approaches of management and coordination of poverty reduction and social assistance models through a study tour to Mexico. |  |  | | X |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 2: Planned vs. Actual Achievements of SEDEMA component in 2011** | | | | | |
| **Activity** | **Status** | | | | **Remarks** |
|  | Completed | Delayed | Cancelled | |  |
| **Output 1. Targeted program for poverty reduction is designed in transparent, participatory and gender sensitive manner, and refers to lessons of the first phase** | | | | | |
| Activity 1.1. The system of written guidelines for implementation of NTPs and P135 in the 2011-2015 period are formulated with the project's support |  |  | | x | New Program for 2011-2015 has not approved yet. Budget reallocated. |
| Activity 1.2. Manuals are updated and revised to be appropriate for use in the 2011-2015 |  |  | | x | New Program for 2011-2015 has not approved yet |
| Activity 1.3. A project providing technical assistance to CEMA in implementation of P135 in the 2011-2015 period is formulated with contribution of the UNDP-funded project and under the collaboration of Development Partners for P135 | X |  | |  | Allocated budget was not used. Budget reallocated |
| **Output 2. Efficient and participatory M&E systems at central and local levels established to systematically monitor progress of the targeted programmes on poverty reduction and disseminate outputs timely to the wider public and policy makers for continuously increasing program effectiveness** | | | | | |
| Activity2.1. The M&E system is designed and updated to be able to meet with the practical demands and requirements for implementation of P135 in 2011-2015 | X |  | |  | Unclear if a similar M&E system will be applied in the New Program |
| Activity 2.2. The quality of the End-of-Program survey and evaluation is ensured. | X |  | |  | Activity has been transferred to the management of UNDP.  Budget reallocated |
| **Output 3. Effective mechanisms for improved targeting and participation are in place that enhance the poor’s access to and benefits from the targeted programmes** | | | | | |
| Activity 3.1. Citizen Report Cards (CRC) tool is effectively used under each component of P135 | X |  | |  | One of the best examples of results from UNDP TA support |
| Activity 3.2. Lessons learnt on CIO model in P135 II are thoroughly assessed to provide the basis for recommending mechanism for the grass root levels to proactively seek to become investment owners in implementation of the next programme (2011-2015) | X |  | |  | One of the best examples of results from implementation of P135/II, with support from many donors and echoed voice for advocacy is made |
| Activity 3.3. A new modality for implementation of the Programme for SED of ethnic minority and mountainous areas in the 2011-2015 period is developed |  |  | | x | New Program for 2011-2015 has not approved yet. Budget reallocated. |
| **Output 4. Transparent and participatory budget allocation and financial managements systems established and used for targeted poverty reduction programs** | | | | | |
| Activity 4.1. The block grant model is piloted in some localities |  |  | | x | New Program for 2011-2015 has not approved yet. Budget reallocated. |
| **Output 5. Improved capacity of responsible programme staffs, including the people themselves, for more effective and participatory decentralized local level planning, implementation and monitoring of the targeted programmes at all levels** | | | | | |
| Activity 5.1. TA results of P135 for the period 2006-2010 are documented and lessons learnt are shared in a methodological and systematic manner | X |  | |  |  |
| Activity 5.2. Best practices and effective models of P135-II are shared, disseminated and maintained. |  | X | |  |  |
| Activity 5.3 An independent and comprehensive evaluation of the Project is conducted |  | X | |  | Evaluation mission is on-going |

### *Sustainability*

The sustainability of the project is evaluated based on the capacity to sustain the results attained at Outcome and Impact levels, especially presented in the following perspectives:

* The project’s results contribute significant parts to the capacity built for the national system in the following areas:
  + Institutional capacity of the agencies that design and implement the poverty reduction policies strengthened through the processes of implementation of the NTPs.
  + System and methodology building for policy analysis and design for GoV agencies.
  + Individual staff capacity at the agencies that design and implement relevant policies has been significantly improved.
* With the technical support from the project, the implementing agencies at MOLISA and CEM have established focal points for promotion of new concepts and approaches, and facilitation of policy dialogue. The coordination workshops, consultations on policy and management designs for formulation of program documents as well as circulars have been widely consulted, luring the attention and mobilising contributions from stakeholders, especially the donors and highly appreciated by the stakeholders.

However, in order to sustain and multiply the results, the efforts can not be stopped at this point. The response evaluators got from the related groups has shown several important comments and expectations:

* There are still weaknesses in the capacity of GoV agencies in analysis of poverty reduction policies, design and implementation of PR interventions, even though the progress made over the past time is not less at all..
* There need to be additional appropriate technical support if it is expected to shift the PR approach toward a more comprehensive and integrated approach as analysed in previous sections.
* The GoV agencies in charge of formulation of PR policies also need to identify a vision which is long term enough for new designs of PR programs in the coming period, because new approach requires more comprehensive management capacity in the GoV’s management system.

### *Partnership and Coordination*

During the project implementation, the project has become a good example of supporting the GOV agencies as the host in dealing with their partners, including other GOV agencies, donors, and all the NTPs’ beneficiaries.

A GOV led process and GOV hosted partnerships are critically important. The GOV in the role of leading consultative efforts and dialogues is much better solution for long term and sustainable vision and results.

With regards to the assessments made by the MTR which says that the operation of the GoV-donor partnership group was not effective enough, this final evaluation team holds that the partnership and coordination activities during 2006 – 2010 have presented several good results and should be promoted in the coming period. The role of the line agency is very important; technical support can only assist the commitments to be delivered in reality.

As analysed, both NTP PR and P135/II conducted wide consultations when formulating program documents and their guiding documents. Through this process, the stakeholders has chance to share initiatives, experience and even obtained additional technical support. In the case of P 135/II, it is the dialogue and consultation process within the partnership framework that created significant sources of funds to the program.

A managing for results process, once started by the host, is more important than any donor driven process.

However, GOV agencies in charge of PR dialogue and implementation may not have enough capacity for stakeholder engagement and coordination. Therefore, it’s the evaluation team’s opinion that UNDP should continue appropriate technical support to sustain the policy dialogue and consultation in service of the ongoing design of new programs.

# SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

* The project has achieved its objectives at impact, outcome, and output levels
* The achievements at impact and outcome levels are more significant than at the output level. This reflects the fact that indirect influence in combination with strong GOV ownership can lead to over-expected results.
* Project design and results are relevant to the Vietnam’s policy changing context
* The significant contribution of the project in changing policy development and implementation has confirmed the effectiveness of the project implementation
* Given the modest financial resource, outputs produced by the project are remarkable and considered efficient.

# LESSONS LEARNT

## Identification of areas for TA support

This can be considered the most important lesson. As VIE 02/001 can be understood as *governance for sustainable poverty reduction*, technical assistance provided by the project focuses on capacity building for the national system rather than provision of direct support to poverty reduction activities. Opportunity for transformational change has been best used in this case.

Managing for change, with indirect support through the NTP-PR and P135/II, requires a very high level of commitment from the GOV. Finding the changeable areas, where there is room for innovation, therefore is crucial for the intervention designers.

The features of support by VIE 02/001 to NTP-PR and P135/II are quite different due to the different conditions and status of the two programmes and their owners (MOLISA and CEM respectively). While the NTP-PR pursues the improvement of general social protection system with a comprehensive approach, P135/II is open for direct support from donor community in order to deliver resources and technical supports during the implementation process.

## Management of TA

Both NTPs especially P135/II have demanded a lot of TA services, which make management of TA complicated and beyond the recent capacity of the related GOV agencies from national to provincial and sub provincial levels. Support by VIE 02/001 thus becomes important.

Coordination among donors, Vietnam’s partners at central, local levels, using the manner of one plan, one TA framework (for both financial and technical supports) has significantly contributed to improving effectiveness of projects and effectiveness of both programs.

However, more results could have been seen if a synchronized TA plan (or “one plan” for TA).

The arrangement with different TA approaches for the two programmes has created difficulties for the both GOV agencies in charge of poverty reduction and donors.

This can be improved by insuring effective use of national and international advisors, especially those at policy advice in policy researches/studies, international experience sharing, capacity building on management and implementation of Vietnam agencies at all levels.

Implementation of Resolution 80, which is more comprehensive compared to the NTP-PR and P135/II, will require a wider range of agencies and stakeholders. TA design will have to be more complicated and more strategic.

## Platform for dialogue and opportunity for influence

The project becomes a good platform for dialogue and also provides good opportunity for NTP-PR and P135/II stakeholders to influence.

Technical assistance in this case has been aligned to national programmes. Technical advisors of several TA packages have had chances to work closely with or even “inside” the system and therefore can understand well the situation and contribute their values.

Incentive for change can be seen more clearly in P135/II compared to NTP-PR, as P135/II has a closer and more direct link between activities and resources. Programme support has a more specific budget line for implementation compared to general budget support. Implementing agencies and beneficiaries of NTP-PR can hardly see the linkage between PRSC funding resources and the GOV expenditures for their own activities. Furthermore, P135/II is heavily supported by various types and packages of TA.

Results from programme implementation, a series of dialogues and studies for both NTP-PR and P135/II have been used as inputs for the newly issued Resolution 80 and the recently draft comprehensive poverty reduction programme 2012 – 2015 led by MOLISA. The set of implementation guidelines for P135/II emphasizing commune investment ownership, M&E system, consultation procedures, and encouraging participation, etc. can now serve as best practices for the implementation of any development programmes.

## Demand driven support

Flexible design has allowed the project to support a continuous process of discussion, agreement, and application of initiatives based on the changing context. The Vietnamese partners have highly appreciated this approach as it can help identify limitations and obstacles, which cannot be found from designing stage.

The project has mobilized most of its resource for capacity building activities. Working closely with the GOV system requires the project activities to fit not only with the needs but also the functions and mandate of the GOV agencies and the changes of those during a reform process.

However, flexibility and often change of expected outputs would create uncertainty for the results, if the Vietnamese partners could not or did not want to apply new approaches and concepts.

Furthermore, expertise availability is also an issue of flexible planning. It has not been so easy to mobilize an appropriate advisor/consultant when needed.

## Ownership and decentralization reinforced by “one voice” effect

Both NTP-PR and P135/II are the GOV led processes. When the GOV agencies and donors have any agreed concept, approach, or solution which would come to a possible change in policy, the advocacy job becomes easier thanks to the higher pressure to policy makers.

Commune investment ownership in P135/II is an example. The GOV has for the first time ever empowered selected communes as the owners of investment projects in those communes. A series of dialogue have been organized, followed by instruction guidelines and even an indicator in the implementation roadmap of the programme. Decentralization has been for long advocated by donors. In this case the success probably come from a the effect of “one voice” or “chorus”. It is worth to note that the P135/II GOV-Donor Partnership has played an important role in this process.

## Some concerns and issues

* While M&E system is well developed for P135/II, this is still a concern of the NTP-PR with the national internal management system.
* The cease of P135 may lead to a risk that experience and best practices of implementation at local level and partnerships at central level will not be learnt and applied in the next processes. Approaches, methodologies, procedures, templates created during P135/II may be lost (CIO, M&E, participatory approach, consultation, etc.)
* Although the newly issued Resolution 80 has created an excellent direction for poverty reduction, there is still a need of appropriate design for a new comprehensive intervention and an effective built-in M&E within national system.
* Coordination between GOV agencies in poverty reduction is still an issue. This can only be solved if the same vision is introduced and understood across the agencies.

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Conclusions

* Mission of VIE 02/002 has been successfully completed.
* Project design is relevant and appropriate given different specific conditions of MOLISA and CEM, NTP-PR and P135. However there has been a risk of distracting if Vietnamese partners do not buy the concepts.
* Achievements and results are relevant and sustainable, especially its policy making influence and transformation impact.
* GOV may need further support in order to design the new intervention and implement it in several early phases.
* UN may want to include the project experience into its One UN roadmap, with better coordination across outputs, as the project has dealt with governance and institutional aspect rather than direct poverty reduction.

## Recommendations

* UNDP should consider continuing its support in the new context, applying appropriate lessons, to the new comprehensive PR programme, especially CIO, M&E system, consultation procedure, and encouraging participation.
* Policy dialogue and sharing the lessons learnt from the previous phases will be certainly useful, and this will be the key contribution to Vietnam’s poverty reduction policy development and implementation, as well as One UN effort.
* A partnership hosted by the poverty reduction lead agency is a must, if the GOV wants to better engage the participant of more stakeholders and promote a participatory approach.
* Identification of areas for TA support should be done carefully. Studies for mapping poverty reduction technical supports in a large number of NTPs related to poverty reduction should be undertaken as soon as possible.
* TA management, as a critical lesson, should be taken into consideration when designing and implementing the new poverty reduction intervention. One TA plan (which can be flexible and demand-driven) is highly recommended.
* Experience and best practices of implementation at local level and partnerships at central level as well as approaches, methodologies, procedures, templates created during P135/II (CIO, M&E, participatory approach, consultation, etc.) should be institutionalized as much as possible. Resolution 80 has introduced a good concept, however has yet provided clear intervention description. A comprehensive programme document then needs to be developed.
* The new national sustainable poverty reduction programme 2012 – 2015 is a good chance to apply a comprehensive framework for all the poverty reduction efforts. It is highly recommended that an M&E framework, which is integrated in the national system, should be designed as a part of reform curriculum for implementing agencies. Results-based planning and M&E should be introduced for interventions which are undertaken by the national system.

# APPENDIX

## Appendix 1: Evaluation Framework

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation Criteria** | **Issues to be evaluated** | **EQ** | **Specific Evaluation Questions** | **ID** | **Indicators** | **Data Source** | **Collected information** |
| Relevance | Consistency of VIE 02/001 with policies of Vietnam, policies of donors and needs of stakeholders | 1 | Consistency with poverty reduction policies of Vietnam | 1-1-1 | Changes/improvement in policy docs | Resolution(s) of the Party (Res 80); SEDP 2006-2010; PRSC Policy Matrix |  |
| 2 | Consistency with NTP-PR and P135/II | 2-1-1 | Changes/improvement in NTP docs | Decision ??/QD-TTg Related Decisions of concerned Ministries and Agencies NTP-PR and P135/II program docs | Document review |
| 3 | Consistency with the needs for financial and technical support in implementing the NTPs | 3-1-1 | Changes/improvement in support modality | Concerned Ministries and Agencies  Donors | * Highly relevance to the needs of CEMA and MOLISA; * Provided new approaches in management of the Program; * In term of absolute amount, the direct financial support from this project is not a considerable large, but it created a platform for coordinated support from donors, especially in the case of CEMA. |
| 4 | Consistency with the policies and priority of donors | 4-1-1 | One UN II | UNDP  Donors | * Consistency with UN’s policy |
| Effectiveness | To what extent were the objectives achieved | 5 | The achievement of 5 outputs of the Project against the Result Framework |  |  | UNDP  MOLISA  CEM | * The project achieved its objectives by fulfilling the set outputs; * The project with its 5 outputs helped both NTP-PR and P135-II focus on development of production and capacity building; * M&E system is an outstanding in comparison with other NTPs; * Strengthening the participation of related stakeholders thus to increase the transparent of the program * With the support of the project and UNDP, efforts made by the donor community to P135-II and NTP-PR have been coordinated |
| 6 | The achievement of 5 outputs of the Project in alignment with the priorities and needs of the nation |  |  | Concerned Ministries and Agencies  Donors | * B’coz the project was designed to support NTP-PR and P-135-II therefore it is understandable that all the project’s afford is for the needs of the nation |
| What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the  objectives | 7 | Possible gaps/weakness in the current project design |  |  | UNDP  MOLISA  CEM | * Lack of linkages with other NTPs * Lack of linkages with other projects that focus on activities at local level: Chia Se program, Integrated rural development funded by IFAD; institutionalized good practices at local levels * NEX modality enable a closed relationship with GoV but not a breakthrough/leverage * The project document did not have LFA with agreed deliverables * Lack of mechanism for quality control of activities undertaking at local level; * Lack of linkages between capacity building at central level with local level which is the most important * NTP-PR seems not using donor’s tool through PRSC |
| 8 | Possible interventions and measures that could be continued to support the country in the future. |  |  | Concerned Ministries and Agencies  Donors | * Support the strategic intervention at centre level that enable it to be institutionalized * Coordination and integration of efforts among NTPs (Poverty, rural water supply and Sanitation vs Climate changes…) * The flexibility in implementation of activities that serve multi NTPs |
| Efficiency | Evaluate the cost-efficient of the project | 9 | Estimate vs actual costs |  |  |  | * Difficult to judge the cost-efficient but the cost estimation was quite right according to the progress report |
| Evaluate the progress of the project | 10 | The completion of activities and outputs against the original annual plans |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | Reasons for any delay or adjustment of schedule? |  |  |  |  |
| Evaluate the project design and implementation | 12 | The appropriateness of the programme logic, design and strategy in achieving the programme objective and outputs |  |  |  |  |
| 13 | The implementation and management arrangements of the Project, with consideration of level of mainstreaming gender equality and human right issues |  |  |  | * Management and procedures of work flow between CEMA and MOLISA |
| Impact | Initial impact of the project | 14 | Preliminary impact on the capacity to implement national programmes for  Poverty reduction |  | Changes/improvement in NTP docs | Concerned Ministries and Agencies  Donors | * Comparison of P135-II vs previous Poverty reduction program * Comparison of P135-II vs Resolution 80 |
| 15 | Preliminary impact on architecture of poverty reduction policies and programmes in the next period |  | Changes/improvement in NTP docs | Concerned Ministries and Agencies  Donors | * With Resolution 80 GoV strikes to bring all the scattered poverty efforts into an umbrella program |
| 16 | The piloting capacity building activities in designing, planning, targeting, monitoring  national programmes for PR as well as in informing national PR policy framework |  |  |  |  |
|  | The policy linkages | 17 | The role and contribution to the Partnership with P135-2 |  |  |  |  |
| The Donor Coordination | 18 | The linkages with other donors’ TA projects  targeting national partners as well as poorest ethnic minority and mountainous areas |  |  |  | * Under this project, there are more coordination among donors for PR programs and activities |
| Sustainability |  | 19 | To what extent will the benefits of the project continue after donor funding ceased |  |  |  | * New approaches have been introduced and applied in tackling poverty reduction issues; * Supports contributed to the formulation of new PR policy and document ( Resolution 80) |
|  | 20 | Major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of  sustainability of the project |  |  |  | * Many good practices at local level were documented in institutionalized under P-135-II, however, it still treated as a specified case for P-135\_II. Need to renewal. * It seems the project was to dependant on the specified P-135-II |
|  | 21 | Was there a clearly defined exit strategy and to what extent did it contribute to sustainability |  |  |  | * Yes and NO * Yes: because the project intended to support the new cycle of policy for Poverty reduction and it did support the formulation of the new cycle * Yes: Because the project intended to bring success efforts from P135-II to the new cycle * No: Because at a more detailed level, the project is so rely on the GoV agencies which sometimes lack of clarity of strategic needs. |

## Appendix 2a: Achievements against MTR Mission’s Recommendation – NTP-PR Component

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Recommended activities by MTR Mission** | **2010** | **2011** |
| **Output 1. Targeted program for poverty reduction is designed in transparent, participatory and gender sensitive manner, and refers to lessons of the first phase.**  **Issues at MTR:**   1. Facilitation of government-donor partnership under the NTP-PR program is proved to be inefficient, with the absence of specific measures to enhance the relationship between the Government and donor organisations; Information transparency and disclose among related parties remain limited : information flow is internally closed, it is hard for other industries to obtain sufficient information to efficiently cooperate, also creating difficulties for parallel monitoring and cross-checking. | | |
|  | 1.1. Support to implementation of thematic studies on reviews of policies and proposals of new measures for poverty reduction. | 1. Group of activities 1. More streamlined and better targeting poverty reduction policies and program via support to development, management and implementation of the Resolution on directions for sustainable poverty reduction (2011 – 2020) and national targeted program on sustainable poverty reduction (2012 - 2015) (NTP-SPR)  Achievement: |
| 1.1. (Support the NTP-PR Program Steering Committee – MOLISA to) develop a technical assistance, sharing with donors, working with government/local authoritties to identify appropriate TA activities, allocate the resources, ensure close coordination and efficient interaction while avoiding overlaps. | 1.1.1. Supports to credit provision for poor people:  a) Support to study on reviews and proposals of policies and programs on credit provision for poor people:  b) Support to development of the matrix framework of current policies and programs on credit for poor households/poor people.  1.1.2. Support to livelihood development for poor people.  a) Support to reviews of policies, programs and projects on production development in connection with poverty reduction objectives and proposals of policies and mechanisms for decentralization of poverty reduction at MARD:  b) Support to conduction of workshop on directions of the policy on livelihood diversification for poor people in 2011 – 2020 period*.*  c) Support to a thematic study on development of the policy and project on production development, employment generation and income increase for poor people.  1.1.3. Support to development of management and implementation mechanisms of the NTP-SPR in 2011 – 2015 period.  1.1.4. Support to review and proposal of mechanisms for the Program’s financial management  1.1.5. Support to review on the implementation arrangements of the NTP-PR and the Program 135 –II (2006 - 2010), proposal of implementation set up for the NTP-PRBV (2011-2015)  1.1.6. Support to development of the project on capacity building for poverty reduction and communication under the NTP-PRBV in 2011 – 2015 period | * 1. Support to mechanisms of coordination and implementation of the Resolution      1. Provide MOLISA with national consultants to facilitate consultation workshops with line ministries to roll out the implementation arrangement of the PR Framework and brainstorm ideas for the coordination mechanism of Resolution on directions for sustainable poverty reduction (2011-2020).         1. Continued supports to development of the Resolution 80/NQ-CP:         2. TA for rolling out of/launching workshop on the Resolution 80:         3. TA for study and proposal of the Management and Coordination Office for implementation of Resolution 80:         4. TA for studying and proposing the model of Steering Committee for Poverty Reduction under the Resolution 80:         5. TA for development of Action-plan for implementation of Resolution 80/NQ-CP on directions for sustainable poverty reduction (2011-2020).   1.1.1.6. Review and consolidate a document of PR policies mainstreaming process as input for management and implementation coordination mechanism of the Resolution 80 on directions for sustainable poverty reduction (2011 – 2020) |
| 1.2. Develop a new in kind subsidy-based educational module for Mekong delta. | 1.2. Support to the Research and Drafting Group of the Program on sustainable poverty reduction for 2011-2020 period and the National Targeted Program on Sustainable Poverty Reduction for 2011 – 2015 period. | * + 1. Provide MOLISA and selected Ministries with national and international consultants to review policies and implementation arrangement of policies on social assistance aimed at poverty reduction.   1.1.2.1. National and international consultant  1.1.2.2. Conduct field surveys to gather evidences and information for the Study report (cancelled). |
| 1.3. Support the development of specific guidelines to implement Resolution for 61 districts (roadmap, guideline, evaluation criteria, feedbacks from pilot districts in 2009) based on the recommendations of mid-term evaluation for the NTP-PR program. | 1.3. Supports to conduction of regional and national workshops on consultation with Ministries, sectors and localities for completion of the draft Resolution and National Targeted Program on Poverty Reduction for the Government’s approval;  1.3.1. ‘Workshop on poverty reduction strategy: proposing ideas for 2011-2020 period’  1.3.2. ‘Workshop on directions for development of program on poverty reduction in 2011 – 2020 period’  1.3.3. Supports to conduction of two technical meetings on development of the draft resolution on directions for sustainable poverty reduction in 2011 – 2020 period and the draft decision on NTP-SPR in 2011 – 2015 period  1.3.4. Consultation workshop on directions of policy on livelihood development for poor people in 2011 – 2020 period  1.3.5. Workshop on ‘sharing information and consultation with international organizations about the directions for sustainable poverty reduction in 2011 – 2020 period’.  1.3.6. Supports to conduction of three regional consultation workshops on the Resolution on directions for sustainable poverty reduction (2011 – 2020) and the Decision on the National Targeted Program on Sustainable Poverty Reduction (2011 – 2015). | 1.1.3. Conduct technical meetings/workshops with participation of line Ministries, agencies and national workshop for consultation and sharing information of the mainstreaming process, then to discuss and provide inputs to the development of coordination mechanisms of the Resolution and social assistance policy review report.  1.1.3.1. “Do Son” consultation workshop to consult with line Ministries and agencies about the framework of the Action Plan for implementation of the Resolution 80 and proposed design of the NTP-SPR:  1.1.3.2. A meeting on sharing information with international development partners about progress and plan for development of Action plan for implementation of the Resolution 80 and design of NTP-SPR:  1.1.3.3. Conducted a series of technical meetings with line Ministries and sectors on development of the Action plan for implementation of the Resolution 80  1.1.3.4. Conduct (co-chairmanship with CEMA) a brainstorming workshop with line Ministries and international development partners on directions and road map for development of the NTP-SPR (2012 - 2015)  1.1.3.5. Conduct a technical meeting on reviewing and discussing issues to be put in social protection laws  1.1.3.6. Conduct technical meetings/information sharing workshops to discuss and comment on the results of social assistance policy review (in cooperation with NA, VASS, GIZ)  1.1.3.7. Conduct peer review reports on social assistance policy review and peer reports on Action plan for implementation of Resolution 80 |
| 1.4. Support the organisation of NTP-PR program coordination conference with the participation of related government agencies (MoLISA, MARD, MoH, MoET, MoF, Bank of Social Policy) | 1.4. Supports to completion of the social security strategy (2010 – 2020)  1.4.1. Support to a study on additional provision of scientific and practical evidence for the socioeconomic context of the social security strategy in Vietnam for 2011 – 2020 period  1.4.2. Support to a study on identifying and quantifying target beneficiaries of social security strategy  1.4.3. Support to a study on defining amounts of total State budget needed to support vulnerable groups when they participate in the SSS in the period of 2011-2020 | 1.2. Support to development of design and instructions on implementation of the harmonized NTP-SPR |
|  |  | 1.2.1. Support the implementation of NTP-PR in 2011 by providing national consultants to revise the criteria for selection and national guidelines to be applied for the coastal and island communes. |
|  |  | 1.2.2. Support the design of harmonized NTP-SPR (2011-2015) by providing national consultants to provide policy options on (i) financial allocation and management, (ii) implementation arrangement, (iii) content of capacity building project and (iv) cooperation mechanisms for implementation of projects under the NTP-PR (2012 - 2015).  1.2.2.1. Proposed frame of NTP-SPR (2011-2015)  1.2.2.1.a. (Extended) Roles and responsibilities (operational regulations) of sectors and agencies at all levels in commune investment ownership.  1.2.2.2. TA for conceptualizing the project on development and replication of poverty reduction models under the NTP-SPR (2011-2015).  1.2.2.2.a (Extended) Contents of production support project under NTP-SPR (2011-2015). |
|  |  | 1.2.3. Provide expertise peer reviews on results, recommendations, and policy options. |
|  |  | 1.2.4. Technical meetings/consultation workshops to discuss and improve three thematic reports.  1.2.4.1. Conducted two regional consultation workshops on conceptualization of the project on development and replication of poverty reduction models under the NTP-SPR (2012 - 2015) in Tra Vinh and Phu Tho.  1.2.4.2. Conduct a brainstorming workshop with interested development partners on design of the NTP-SPR (2012 - 2015). |
| **Output 2. Efficient and participatory M&E systems at central and local levels established to systematically monitor progress of the targeted programmes on poverty reduction and disseminate outputs timely to the wider public and policy makers for continuously increasing program effectiveness**  **Issue at MTR:**  1. Though the M&E system was developed, it has not been widely and systematically implemented at local levels; monitoring and evaluation capacity of local cadres are also limited. | | |
| 1. Support local levels in training to use M&E software; enhance the wide application of M&E system to evaluate program progress; explore the ability to extend the TA across regions to broaden support coverage. |  | Group of activities 2. Support to development of the monitoring and evaluation indicators (M&E) and management information system (MIS) of the Resolution on sustainable poverty reduction (2011-2020) and NTP-SPR (2011-2015).  Achievements: |
| 2. Support the dissemination of the M&E system to wider public |  | 2.1.1 Support to development of the M&E system and MIS  2.1.2. Provide expertise peer reviews on results and recommendations of the model/system/indicators.  2.1.3. Conduct technical meetings and consultation workshops on the recommended system/indicators. |
| 3. Support pilot tests of M&E system and indicators implementation |  | 2.2. Support to study on poverty assessment in Vietnam as input for the formulation of harmonized NTP-SPR (2011-2015)/Rapid Impact Monitoring of economic shocks on social assistance beneficiaries (RIM).  2.2.1. Support to rapid impact monitoring of economic shocks on social assistance beneficiaries (RIM).  2.2.2. Conduct peer reviews on the report and technical/consultation meetings on RIM |
| 4. Work out an action plan to review and improve existing policies and guidelines, follow up recommendations of the mid-term evaluation. |  | 2.3. Support to final evaluation of VIE 02/001 Project.  2.3.1. Provide MOLISA and CEMA with national consultants to evaluate the technical support results of VIE 02/001 Project and propose recommendations on future TA provision.  2.3.2. Conduct technical meetings/consultation workshops on the results and recommendations of the Study. |
| 5. Study to develop M&E system for 61 district program and national targeted poverty reduction program in the future. |  |  |
| **Output 3. Effective mechanisms for improved targeting and participation are in place that enhance the poor’s access to and benefits from the targeted programmes** | | |
| 1. Support the development of a mechanism to promote the application and implementation guidelines on participatory approach | 3.1. To support a study on development of tools and process for identification of poor poor people, poor household; | 3. Group of activities 3: Support to development of tools and process for annual update of the list of poor households and support to social assistance system (SAS).  Achievement: |
| 2. Support research studies on new poverty line, poverty-marginal line | 3.2. To support to conduction of workshops and technical meetings, and provision of peer reviews on the tools and process for identification of poor people, poor households.  Activities 3.1 and 3.2 were supported by the World Bank and ‘Chia Se’ Program.  Budget reallocated for 3.3. | 3.1. Support to development of tools and process for annual update of the list of poor households.  3.1.1. Provide MOLISA with national consultants to study and review current tools for annual update of the list of poor households with application of multi-dimensional poverty and piloting the targeting tools for one or two policies under the Resolution on sustainable poverty reduction (2011-2020).  3.1.2. Conduct field surveys for collection of evidence/practical information in three provinces from three regions.  3.1.3. Conduct regional/national consultation workshops and peer reviews on the process and tools for targeting beneficiaries of selected policies.  3.1.3.1. Conduct a national workshop on sharing international experience on multi-dimensional poverty and targeting  3.1.3.2. Two peer review reports (by Mr. Ngo Truong Thi (head of NTP-PR CO/MOLISA) and Mr. Dang Kim Chung) have been made. |
| 3. Support gender mainstreaming and incorporation of children issues into the NTP-PR program activities | 3.3. To support a study on development of tools and process for annual updating the list of poor households based on the new criteria.  *At the proposal of the NTPPR-CO/MOLISA (meeting on September 29th 2010) and consultation with UNDP officers.* | 3.2. Support to social assistance system (SAS)  3.2.1. Provide national consultants to conduct a study feasibility and policy options to apply conditional cash transfer (CCT) for households with incomes lower than the poverty line in certain social assistance policies (target groups, financial mechanisms, costing, etc).  3.2.2. Conduct technical meetings/consultation workshops/peer reviews on the results and recommendations of the Study.  3.2.3. Conduct field surveys for collection of evidence/practical information in two provinces from three regions. |
| 4. Organise training on participatory planning in three pilot districts to improve program performance of national targeted poverty reduction programs and support the implementation of 61 district program. |  |  |
| **Output 4. Transparent and participatory budget allocation and financial management systems established and used for targeted poverty reduction programs.**  ***Issue at MTR:***  1. Transparency of project implementation process has not been improved, especially in projects that provinces and districts are investment owners and communes are beneficiary only. Budget allocation for specific components is not clearly informed. Transparency is also significantly limited when programs and projects are incorporated with others. | | |
| 1. Support the completion of budget allocation formula to ensure fairness and transparency. |  |  |
| 2. Support research studies on good practices in incorporating different poverty reduction projects at local level. |  |  |
| **Output 5. Improved capacity of responsible programme staffs, including the people themselves, for more effective and participatory decentralized local level planning, implementation and monitoring of the targeted programmes at all levels**  **Issue at MTR:**  1. Studies showed that merely 80% of district staff, 60% of commune staff have good understandings about poverty reduction policies. Commune people are lack of information on effective policies/ongoing programs/projects in their areas, especially projects managed by provincial and district level. Capacity of local staff is limited, especially in poverty reduction planning, implementation and monitoring. | | |
| 1. Develop action plan to continue ToT training which were started in 2007-2008 period; adopt recommendations of the mid-term evaluation on capacity building. |  | 5. Group of activities 5. Support to capacity building of coordination and management of members of Steering Committee/Management Units of NTP-SPR (2012 - 2015).  Achievement: |
| 2. Organise ToT training to improve capacity and awareness about poverty reduction for poverty reduction local staff. |  | 5.1.1. Support to introduce 3 members of Steering Committee and Coordination Office of the NTP-SPR with new approaches of management and coordination of poverty reduction and social assistance models through a study tour to Mexico. |
| 3. Based on experience of Program 135-2, coordinate with mass media agencies like VTV, VOV in disseminating poverty reduction policies and projects. |  |  |
| 4. Support the organisation of ToT training for poverty reduction local staff on participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation, financial management, vocational training and communication, managerial skills. Combine with capacity building activities of national targeted poverty reduction programs. |  |  |
| 5. Support the arrangement of events to exchange lessons, experience and replicate good practices probably in the form of regional poverty reduction forum to broaden support coverage. |  |  |

## Appendix 2b: Achievements against MTR Mission’s Recommendation – SEDEMA Component

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Recommended activities by MTR Mission** | **2010** | **2011** |
| **Output 1. Targeted program for poverty reduction is designed in transparent, participatory and gender sensitive manner, and refers to lessons of the first phase.**  **Issues at MTR:**   1. The Production Development project has slow progress, low efficiency with inconsistent guidelines and market studies are not in place to identify appropriate activities. 2. Capacity of communes as investment owner remains limited, with a lack of guideline documents. 3. Coordination and partnership facilitation are of low efficiency. | | |
| 1. 1. Support MARD in reviewing, weighing the need to revise/amend implementation guidelines of production development project. | 1.1. Activity result: Manual on Community participation contracting process (community bidding process) finalized | Activity 1.1. The system of written guidelines for implementation of NTPs and P135 in the 2011-2015 period are formulated with the project's support – **Cancel** |
| 1.2. Support ministries and industries to improve implementation guidelines as specified by Circular 01. | 1.2. Activity result: Manual on Operation and Maintenance (O&M) under P 135-II finalized | Activity 1.2. Manuals are updated and revised to be appropriate for use in the 2011-2015 - **Cancel** |
| 1.3. Support local levels to conduct studies on market-oriented production development orientation (local agriculture production features, production-market linkage etc) | 1.3. Activity result: Manual on Participatory Planning under P135-II finalized and rolled-out. | 1.3. Activity result: A project providing technical assistance to CEMA in implementation of P135 in the 2011-2015 period is formulated with contribution of the UNDP-funded project and under the collaboration of Development Partners for P135 |
| 1.4. Develop and disseminate guidelines on gender mainstreaming. | 1.4. Activity result: Manual on Gender Mainstreaming and Auditing Manual under P135-II finalized and rolled-out. |  |
| 2.1. Support to develop guideline documents/training materials for commune level on investment, disbursement procedures and financial management etc. |  |  |
| 3.1. Support (the Program Standing Committee) to develop a joint technical assistance for several donors, working with government agencies/local authorities to identify appropriate technical assistance activities, resource allocation while ensuring efficient coordination and linkage and avoiding overlaps. |  |  |
| 3.2. Support the organization of Program 135 Coordination Workshop for all related government agencies (CEMA. MPI, MARD, MOC, MOF) |  |  |
| **Output 2. Efficient and participatory M&E systems at central and local levels established to systematically monitor progress of the targeted programmes on poverty reduction and disseminate outputs timely to the wider public and policy makers for continuously increasing program effectiveness** | | |
| 1. Support the implementation of AMT system in all communes of three pilot provinces. | 2.1. Activity result: The quality of End of Program evaluation improved and inputs for the development of a continuing programme after 2010 available | Activity2.1. The M&E system is designed and updated to be able to meet with the practical demands and requirements for implementation of P135 in 2011-2015 |
| 2. Support the application of CRC instrument in all communes of three pilot provinces | 2.2. Activity result: Quality of the EOP survey ensure - **postponed**  Move to 2011 as the EoP survey has not carried out in 2010 (by Finland Project of CEMA) | Activity 2.2. The quality of the End-of-Program survey and evaluation is ensured. |
|  | 2.3. Activity result: Good practice in M&E system of P135-2 replicated and sustained. |  |
|  | 2.4. Activity result: Good practice of Citizen's Report Card (CRC) is institutionalized to assess the beneficiaries' satisfaction with each of P135-II component.  2.5. Activity result: Good practices and models of P135-2 is documented, disseminated and sustained  - Three regional (domestic) workshops had been organised but not the international as the original plan |  |
| **Output 3. Effective mechanisms for improved targeting and participation are in place that enhance the poor’s access to and benefits from the targeted programmes** | | |
| 1. Support provinces to identify communes eligible to get out of the program in according to issued guidelines. | 3.1. Activity result: New implementation modality in the Programme for Socio-economic Development of Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas in the period 2011-2015 formulated.  - Completed TOR and recruitment of 2 NCs for Assessment of lessons on commune investment ownership in P135-II and provision of recommendations on mechanisms for commune level's proactiveness in becoming investment owner in implementation of the next programme (Study No8). The consultants started doing research from Q4/2010;  - Support CEMA organized WS on Ethnological approach for post P135 and Completed liquidation of some Project WSs and training courses in pilot provinces on CIO held in end of 2009 | Activity 3.1. Citizen Report Cards (CRC) tool is effectively used under each component of P135 |
| 2. Support the organization of consultations for participatory planning activities (next step to training activities on participatory planning) |  | Activity 3.2. Lessons learnt on CIO model in P135 II are thoroughly assessed to provide the basis for recommending mechanism for the grass root levels to proactively seek to become investment owners in implementation of the next programme (2011-2015) |
| 3. Support provinces (pilot provinces) to enforce budget allocation decision for operation and maintenance activities. |  | Activity 3.3. A new modality for implementation of the Programme for SED of ethnic minority and mountainous areas in the 2011-2015 period is developed - **Cancel** |
| **Output 4. Transparent and participatory budget allocation and financial managements systems established and used for targeted poverty reduction programs.**  ***Issue at MTR:***  1. According to statistic reports, 41 among 47 provinces have not equally allocated program budget, however, practical observation showed that equal allocation formula is still applicable for communes. | | |
| 1.1 Support provinces to improve budget allocation criteria to ensure equal allocation formula is no longer in use, efficient targeting mechanism and prioritized investments so as to ensure investment efficiency and avoid spread investment. | 4.1. Activity result: New implementation modality in the Programme for Socio-economic Development of Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas in the 2011-2015 period formulated  ***-*** Supported organization in country visits to Quang Nam and Quang Ngai Provinces to study the mechanism and possibility/feasibility of adopting the Commune/Community-managed Investment Fund (block-grant) mechanism to be applied in post P135 | Activity 4.1. The block grant model is piloted in some localities - **Cancel** |
| 1.2 Support the application of competitive bidding procedures in three pilot provinces. |  |  |
| **Output 5. Improved capacity of responsible programme staffs, including the people themselves, for more effective and participatory decentralized local level planning, implementation and monitoring of the targeted programmes at all levels**  **Issue at MTR:**  1. The objective of communes as investment owners is unlikely to be met/the performance is different among locations; capacity of communes as investment owners is limited and need further supports from provinces and districts; training plans have many gaps and TA project progress is slow. | | |
| 1.1. Support provinces to develop training plans/programs, curriculum and training materials. | 5.1. Activity result: Capacity of CEMA staff on the new modality improved  - Completed support CEMA to organise two abroad on-site study visits to China (with 15 officials (30% women) lead by Deputy Chair of CEMA) and to India (with 13 officials lead by Deputy General Director of EM Policy Dept) held in May and June 2010 - to learn models/initiatives for poverty reduction programmes (models on Commune-managed Fund - block-grant).  - A WS to share the lessons and experiences obtained after the study tours had been organized with participant of 25 officials from CEMA, relevant ministries and representative from Kontum province. | Activity 5.1. TA results of P135 for the period 2006-2010 are documented and lessons learnt are shared in a methodological and systematic manner |
| 1.2. Support CEM to review, revise training plans/programs and improve training methods for higher efficiency; | 5.2. Activity result: Implementation of the communication models on VOV and VTV completed  - Completed support CEMA to procure a consultant firm to conduct a survey and development of communication programme suitable for P135 communes through media such as VOV and VTV.  -The report had been commented by CEMA for improvement and finalized in Q1/2011. | Activity 5.2. Best practices and effective models of P135-II are shared, disseminated and maintained. |
| 1.3. Support provinces to develop and implement ToT training on participatory planning, investment, disbursement procedures and financial management etc. | 5.3. Activity result: Better dissemination of P135-2 good practice  - Compilation, editing, and publication of technical support products/outputs, implementation manuals and preparation of reports for experience sharing (*about 18 key packages)* | Activity 5.3 An independent and comprehensive evaluation of the Project is conducted |
| 1.4. Support provinces to understand/develop capacity building and staff supplementation for communes (e.g Community Development Staff module) to improve capacity of communes to assume investment owner roles.; |  |  |
| 1.5. Support the development and implementation of communication plan, conduct research studies on the demand, resource availability, appropriate patterns to use ethnic minority languages in training and communication activities; |  |  |
| 1.6. Support the arrangement of National Program 135 Workshop; |  |  |
| 1.7. Support the organization of events, study tours to exchange lessons learnt, experience and replicate good practices. |  |  |

## Appendix 3: Detailed Work Plan

| **Time** | **Tasks/Deliverables** | **People to meet** | **Contacts** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 16 Dec 2011 | Initial group session ( focus group): evaluation methodology and issues deification | Phong, Hanh, Quan, Doai, Minh, Yen |  |
| 20 Dec 2011 | Submission of Evaluation methodology and work plan | Hai Yen, Hoang Yen |  |
| 22 or 23 Dec 2011 | First group session ( focus group) | Phong, Hanh, Quan, Doai, Minh, Yen, Peter |  |
| 2-13 Jan 2012 | Meetings with key informants:  *GACA representative (FERD, MPI)*  *UNDP (DCD (P), Head of Inclusive and Equitable Growth unit, PO*  *MOLISA and CEMA (Vice Minister in charge, Director of Policy Dept – CEMA, Vice Director of SPD-MOLISA, Head of Coordination offices of P135-2 and NTPPR)*  *VIE 02/001 PMUs at MOLISA and CEMA (NPD and DNPD, National Coordinators, STA, etc);*  *Representative from MPI (Dept of Local Economy), MARD, MOF, SAV, VOV, GSO, SBV, Social Policy Bank, MOJ, former NCFAW, etc.*  *National Assembly committees (CSA and EC)*  *P135-2 Development Partners (WB, IA, Finland, DFID, SDC, AusAID, EC), EMWG*  *TA projects to support P135-2 and NTPPR (Finland, Irish Aid, UNICEF, GIZ, SIDA Chia se, ISP Quang Ngai)* | To be suggested by the focus group and arranged by UNDP |  |
| 9-13 Jan 2012 | Draft report |  |  |
| 13 Jan 2012 | Debriefing workshop (Second group session) | To be suggested by the focus group and arranged by UNDP |  |
| **16 Jan 2012** | **First draft submission** |  |  |
| 16-28 Jan 2012 | Comments on the draft report |  |  |
| 28-30 Jan 2012 | Translation (into Vietnamese) |  |  |
| **30 Jan 2012** | **Final draft** |  |  |

## Appendix 4: List of People met

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **ORGANISATION** | **REPRESENTATIVES** | **DATE** | **TIME** |
|  | CEMA/ P135-II | Mr. Nguyen Van Xuan, Project Director, Deputy Director of Department of Ethnic Minority Policy | 26 Dec 2011 | 14:00-15:15 |
|  | Mr. Tran Van Doai, Project Managers | 26 Dec 2011 | 14:00-15:15 |
|  | Ms. Tran Dong Phuong, Deputy Poject Manager | 26 Dec 2011 | 14:00-15:15 |
|  | Mr. Le Minh Tuan, National Project Coordinator | 26 Dec 2011 | 14:00-15:15 |
|  | MOLISA/ NTP-PR | Ms. Le Tuyet Nhung, Project Director, Deputy National Project Director | 28 Dec 2011 | 09:00-11:30 |
|  | Mr. Nguyen Truong Thi, Deputy Director of Cuc Bao Tro Xa hoi, Secretary General |
|  | Mr. Doan Huu Minh, Project Manager |
|  |  | Mr. Peter | 26 Dec 2011 | 15:30-17:00 |
|  | Advisor | Mr. Nguyen Van Thuat, former Project Director CEMA/P135-II | 27 Dec 2011 | 14:00-1600 |
|  | Mr. Nguyen Huu Dung, Former Director of Labour Institute |  |  |
|  | Mr. Tran Huu Toan, Former Director of Local Department, MPI |  |  |
|  | UNDP | Mr. Nguyen Tien Phong | 13 Jan 2012 | 15:00-16:30 |
|  | AusAID | Mr. Nguyen Quoc Viet | 14 Jan 2012 | 14:00-16:00 |
|  | Finland | Mr. Le Dai Nghia | 16 Jan 2012 | 14:00-15:00 |
|  | UN RCO | Ms. Le Thu Huong | 16 Jan 2012 | 15:00-16:00 |

1. Updated progress, June/2005 by the Partnership Groups to support NTP PR and Program 135. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Mid-term Review report of NTP PR, 2006-2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Extracted from the speech by Mr. Christophe Bahuet, Deputy Head of Mission, UNDP in Vietnam, on 30 May at the meeting officially announcing the Resolution 80/NQ-CP on orientations for sustainable PR period 2011 – 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)