

## Comments on ADB's Draft Translation Framework

TO: disclosure@adb.org

FROM: Dr. Duong Lan Hai  
Director  
Center for Social Development and Research  
Viet Nam

DATE : 31 July 2006

---

The Center for Social Development and Research (CESDER) received the ADB's draft version (in English and Vietnamese) via email; and after careful study and internal discussions, we would like to have the following comments:

### I. On establishment of the translation framework:

***This is a right policy and strongly needed*** as mentioned by the ADB: "A translation framework is needed because the current case-by-case approach misses opportunities for communication." And this policy ***also needs to be implemented as soon as possible*** in an efficient manner.

***The less information would the affected people – usually local people in the project area – receive, the more multi-dimensional negative impacts and financial losses would the project realize.***

### II. On the translation framework:

a/ According to the draft consultation, *PCP requires all ADB staff to ensure that people who will be affected by the project in the future must be regularly delivered all relevant information on the project in a suitable language and communication means.* This requirement is very important and serious. However, its implementation is expected to have considerable difficulties, because the affected people rarely have opportunity to access information related to the project, which is very relevant and important to their rights and benefits. ***This is due to various reasons, among which is language barrier.***

b/ Fund for translation is still lacking. ADB has tendency to assign the task of disseminating project information to the project recipient or a local publishing company through bidding. In this regard, fund scarcity for translation is one of major concerns. On one hand, the project recipient usually does not provide sufficient information to the affected people due to the perception of "*affected people are the beneficiary*", therefore "*anything will be acceptable*". On the other hand, books and booklets are too expensive to poor farmers, and are hardly understood by the affected people to due a low literacy rate in rural areas.

c/ Management of translators is often difficult. In reality, even though well-qualified translators for these types of documents are not many, but not very hard to find. Therefore a special translator group for ADB projects should be established in order to have work done in a short time and cost reduced.

### III. Other comments:

a/ Translation of relevant documents for the affected people in order to allow them to access necessary information is highly desired and suitable from the project's point of view. We highly appreciate this initiative. The ADB staff need to fully understand the position of the affected people. In addition, they need to check for consistency between the information stated in the report and actual profile of the beneficiaries. The main goal of the project will not be fully disseminated to the public if the affected people do not know what they will benefit and lose from the project.

b/ We support the view that ADB should be responsible for translation. If we have a right mechanism for funding arrangement and translation collaborators, we can save considerable amount of money and time for translation activities in order to ensure the project's progress on communication and information dissemination plan.

Communication and information dissemination to the affected people, especially to poor farmers in mountainous and remote areas, need to be concise, easy to understand and better illustrated with pictures and drawings. The local people are not interested in lengthy reports, therefore we need to provide them with the core information: what they will get and what they will lose from the future-project. Even to the commune and village leaders, they also need to be provided with short and concise documents, which clearly state their tasks/responsibilities after careful and detailed discussions on the project.

c/ We think that this approach of stakeholder consultation is very useful and effective, not only to the donor but also to the stakeholders, who are in the position to well understand the local conditions and people. However, we believe that if the consultation is done through workshop/seminar, we could achieve even better outcomes.

We hope that our comments could contribute some useful insights and inputs for the draft consultation.

We would like to send our warm regards to Mrs. Cindy Malvicini, Head of the InfoUnit and to all staff of the ADB's External Relations Department.

Dr. Duong Lan Hai  
Director, CESDER  
24 Tuc Mac, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi  
E-mail: <[duongcesd@fpt.vn](mailto:duongcesd@fpt.vn)>  
Fax: 84 - 4 - 9424 119

The views expressed in this paper are the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), or its Board of Directors or the governments they represent. ADB makes no representation concerning and does not guarantee the source, originality, accuracy, completeness or reliability of any statement, information, data, finding, interpretation, advice, opinion, or view presented.