

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

Division: VRM

TA No., Country and Name		Amount Approved: \$400,000	
<b>TA 4612-VIE: Results-based Monitoring of Poverty Reduction and Growth</b>		Revised Amount: n/a	
Executing Agency: Ministry of Planning and Investment	Source of Funding: MfDR Cooperation Fund	Amount Undisbursed: \$56,702.89	Amount Utilized: \$343,297.11
TA Approval Date: 14 July 2005	TA Signing Date: 20/10/2005	Fielding of First Consultant: 06/02/2006	TA Completion Date Original:31/12/06  Actual: 30/06/2008  Account Closing Date Original:31/12/06  Actual: 30/06/2008
<p><b>Description:</b> Viet Nam has made remarkable achievements in social development and poverty reduction. Several poverty and social development indicators are currently used in Viet Nam to demonstrate this but they are not always consistent and do not always follow commonly accepted or international standards. The many blanks in the Viet Nam Development Goals (VDGs) matrix manifest the difficulty of establishing clearly spelled-out indicators for the VDGs. Appropriate indicators are needed at the three levels: central, sector, and local and in thematic areas such as governance (covering public finance, public administration, grassroots democracy, and anticorruption initiatives), employment and labor skills, and gender equality and ethnic minority. The Government recognizes that monitoring of poverty reduction and social development needs to be improved at all levels. The Socio-economic Development Plan (SEDP) integrates basic elements of Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS) and serves as Viet Nam's national strategy for poverty reduction. Viet Nam is one of the first three countries where a results-based country strategy and program is being piloted. The 2007–2010 Country Strategy and Program (CSP) was to be aligned with the SEDP 2006–2010.</p> <p><b>Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs:</b></p> <p><b>Expected Impact:</b> The overall goal of the Technical Assistance (TA) was to assist the Government of Viet Nam strengthen its capacity to develop and implement a results-based monitoring and evaluation system for poverty reduction and growth efforts in Viet Nam.</p> <p><b>Expected Outcomes:</b> With the assistance of the TA, the Government was expected to (i) introduce results-based approach in development planning and development of results indicators, and (ii) enhance capacity of government institutions and officials to develop more systematic mechanisms for monitoring of poverty reduction and growth.</p> <p><b>Expected Outputs:</b> (i) Identification of gaps in results-based poverty monitoring and assessment, (ii) A set of results indicators at aggregate, sector, and local levels of internationally accepted standards, (iii) Methodology for collecting, processing, and analyzing results indicators for sectors and selected thematic areas, and at project levels, (iv) Training of government officials on managing for development results, and (v) Guidelines on monitoring development results.</p> <p>The TA design was relevant and in line with the Government's policy and strategy for sustainable poverty reduction and economic growth as outlined in the SEDP 2006–2010 and the earlier CPRGS. The TA responded in a timely manner to the Government's demand for improving result-based management planning capacity. The terms of reference for the consultants were comprehensive and adequate to meet the TA objectives. Result-based management is a new concept in Viet Nam. Hence the actual TA duration was 12 months longer than the original schedule due to the initial lack of familiarity of executing agency (EA) with the results based approach. Extensive stakeholder consultations were held during TA formulation as well as TA implementation.</p> <p><b>Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities:</b> The performance of EA is rated as satisfactory: The EA was the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) who provided adequate counterparts, office facilities and other support facilities. During implementation, MPI took the lead in managing the outputs – in particular the development of the monitoring and evaluation (M&amp;E) framework for the SEDP 2006–2010. The performance of the consultants was satisfactory as reflected in the respective performance evaluation reports (PERs). An international consultant for result-based planning and monitoring and domestic consultants for poverty monitoring and result-based sector planning were engaged. Actual total inputs were 7 person-months from the international and 21 person-months from the national consultants while 6 person-months and 30 person-months were envisaged at TA approval, respectively. Person-months of national consultants' inputs were reduced because domestic training specialist (6 person-months) was not recruited due to the lack of availability of qualified experts. Instead, the Result-based planning and monitoring specialist (international consultant) and Coordinator provided necessary training. During implementation, in order to ensure effective training programs, the government has requested some training related equipments and minor change was made to allow the procurement of four computers, a printer, a projector and a screen under the TA. The performance of ADB was satisfactory. The TA was administered by Viet Nam Resident Mission (VRM). The project was implemented in close cooperation with the World Bank and other development partners. Interaction between ADB staff and EA and consultants took place through regular meetings. The TA closing date was extended from 31 December 2006 to 31 December 2007. As mentioned above, the main purpose of the extension was to enable the adoption a process orientated approach given that the result-based concept was new and was being</p>			

applied for the first time in Viet Nam. There was \$56,709 in savings, coming mainly from the savings in the per diem and travel costs of the international consultant, who was based in Viet Nam.

### **Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome**

All TA outputs were delivered as envisaged. Gaps in results-based poverty monitoring and assessment were identified. A set of results indicators at aggregate, sector, and local levels, and thematic areas were developed. These indicators formed part of the SEDP M&E framework that was issued by MPI on 30 May 2007 as MPI Decision No. 555/2007/QD-BKH on "Implementation Monitoring & Evaluation Framework for 2006–2010 SEDP". The M&E results framework, better known as Decision 555, was developed in a participatory manner, through a series of hands-on training seminars at the national and provincial levels, and in consultation with experts, practitioners, managers and development partners. In addition, the methodology for collecting, processing, and analyzing results indicators for sectors and selected thematic areas, and project levels was introduced. A pilot survey on investment indicators was conducted to test the methodology developed under the TA. The survey assessed investment in two urban centres - Ho Chi Minh and Ha Noi, covering some 400 enterprises, including state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and private companies. Training of government officials on the concept and application of managing for development results was provided. The TA organized six workshops for Central Government and line Ministry staff with approximately 400 participants. There were seven training workshops for officials at the provincial level, with over 600 participants attending. In addition, the TA also organized a high level study tour to Canada, which included the vice-Minister of MPI, and a small group of officials from the line Ministries and Peoples Committees (i.e., local governments). The TA prepared a draft set of guidelines for applying the results-based M&E system. These were designed to assist the MPI explain the underlying principles of results based planning to officials in line ministries, provinces and cities in monitoring the SEDP and in understanding the main principles of results-based M&E.

TA outcomes have been achieved. This TA has contributed positively to ADB's support for a broader Management for Results (MfDR) agenda in Viet Nam. Result-based approach in development planning and development indicators has been introduced. Less than two years after its implementation, Decision 555 is already having a major influence on the way in which Government monitors its performance and is expected to influence a future government decree related to National Planning. In addition, the MPI used the SEDP M&E Framework for its SEDP 2006–2010 mid-term review, and ADB has closely aligned the results framework of its CSP 2007–2010 to the SEDP. The progress of the CSP is also being monitored and tracked through this framework. Feedback from government officials confirmed that the capacity and skills of government institutions and officials in results-based planning and monitoring were enhanced. The need to define, track and manage to deliver results is now widely accepted and increasingly applied in regional, sector and national planning efforts.

**Overall Assessment and Rating.** The TA is rated as highly successful. Expected outputs and outcomes were achieved. Sustainability has been ensured through the adoption of Decision 555 which marks the beginning of a more comprehensive and extensive process on results based planning in Viet Nam.

### **Major Lessons**

The combination of a high-level Government champion and a consultative and learning-by-doing process proved to be highly successful. Ensuring that the Government, rather than a team of consultants, was truly the first author of their M&E framework has reinforced a sense of ownership and commitment to delivering agreed results. The government ownership and commitment also facilitated good collaboration with the World Bank and other development partners. The TA experience suggests that Government leaders must be sensitized and awareness built before they are able to operationalize these concepts. In the design, it was anticipated that preparation of a results framework would be a fairly rapid technical task and would be completed in a few months time. As the TA was being implemented, it was realized that awareness of results-based M&E would need to be developed first, and only gradually could Government planners come to an agreement on a results-based SEDP M&E framework. In retrospect, this was a sensible and appropriate TA management decision even though it lengthened the implementation period of the TA.

### **Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions**

Results based management is a long term process, and ADB should sustain the positive momentum for MfDR initiated by this TA and continue to assist MPI to operationalize the results based approach. In the near-term, upstream capacity development support is required to assist the Government to test, validate and improve the draft M&E guidelines so that they can be refined further; to establish the performance assessment/reporting mechanisms for evaluating the current and future SEDPs; and to utilise lessons learned as inputs to future SEDPs. The implementation experience also highlighted the need for a dedicated unit in MPI with overall responsibility for monitoring the SEDP.

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