



NEW RURAL CONSTRUCTION IN HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM

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Abstract:

Ho Chi Minh City is Vietnam's the largest city with potentials, strengths on the development of industry, construction and service. The proportion of these sectors accounts for more than 99% of the city's GDP structure. Moreover, the city also has a large rural area with 05 suburban districts. In the past years, the city has also focused on strong investment to build and develop rural areas, contributing to changing the face of rural areas of the city; and simultaneously narrowing the gap between the urban and suburban areas. Since the day of national reunification up to now, Ho Chi Minh City has focused resources to invest in developing rural areas under the policy of new rural construction of the Communist Party of Vietnam, especially investment in building a synchronous and completed socio-economic infrastructure system, contributing to rural development, increasing incomes and improving people's lives.

Keywords: new rural areas, Communist Party of Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City

1. Introduction

Rural areas of Ho Chi Minh City are the cradle of the revolution, a strong base of the city in two wars to national liberation. It has the places whose name have entered the national history with the famous battleships, honoring the revolutionary tradition of Ho Chi Minh City's people: Cu Chi Tunnels, Sác Forest Base, Giồng Three-Way Crossroads, Eighteen Betel Garden Villages, Dân công Hòa tuyến historic district, Láng Le – Bà Cò, Bung Area - Six Communes, An Phú Đông Base, Phú Thọ Hòa Tunnels,... Since the liberation day till now, the city's rural area has entered the new development stage with the tasks of restoring production, turning the city's rural areas from “white belt”, “death belt” to “green belt”, “food belt”, restructuring agricultural economy towards the production of high-value goods; and building urban agriculture to contribute to the development of agricultural production; building the modern rural area of the city, to constantly improve and enhance the people's lives. The process of building a new rural area in Ho Chi Minh

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City has its own characteristics, unlike other provinces across the country. That is the city's rural area, a peri-urban rural area, which is building an urban agriculture in the context of an increasingly strong urbanization process.

2. Contents

2.1. Viewpoints, guidelines and policies of the Communist Party of Vietnam on new rural construction

Vietnam is an agricultural country in the period of accelerating industrialization and modernization with the goal of becoming a modern industrial country by 2045. That goal can only be achieved when Vietnam builds up a rural area with the modern and synchronous socio-economic infrastructure, and the material and spiritual life of the farmer is increasingly improved. Rural areas are a strategic area of Vietnam and are home to more than 65% of the population. Therefore, new rural construction is a major policy of the Party and the State of Vietnam in the policy of the current rural construction and development. This has been shown in many Party's documents, but it has been most prominent in Resolution No. 26-NQ/TW dated August 5, 2008 - The Seventh Conference of the Party Central Committee (Session X) on agriculture, farmers, rural areas.

One of the basic contents of Resolution No. 26-NQ/TW on agriculture, farmers and rural areas is to build a new rural area associated with the process of boosting the industrialization and modernization of the country. Resolution has set a goal: *"New rural construction with the modern socio-economic infrastructure, the reasonable economic structure and forms of production organization, associating agriculture with rapid development of industry, services and urban according to planning. The rural society is stable and rich in ethnic cultural identity; people's knowledge is improved; ecological environment is protected; the political system in the countryside under the leadership of the Party has been strengthened"* [5, p. 829]. To pilot the implementation and to create a practical basis for the process of directing the new rural construction program, the Central Secretariat issued Decision No. 205-QD/TW on December 30, 2008 on establishment Steering Committee for piloting the new rural construction program. The Steering Committee has developed a pilot project to build a new rural area in 11 communes of 11 provinces and cities directly under the Central Government.

Implementing that policy, the Government has issued many policies, decrees and resolutions to carry out this policy, specifically: Resolution No. 24/2008/NQ-CP dated October 28, 2008 on promulgating the Government's Action Program to implement Resolution 26-NQ/TW on agriculture, farmers and rural areas; Decision No. 491/QD-TTg dated April 16, 2009 on the issuance of the National Criteria Set for new rural areas (including 19 criteria with 39 contents of 5 groups.ⁱⁱ) and especially, the Prime Minister's Decision No. 800/QD-TTg dated June 4, 2010 approved the National Target Program on

ⁱⁱ Group 1: Criteria on planning (1 criteria and 3 contents); Group 2: Criteria on socio-economic infrastructure (8 criteria and 16 contents); Group 3: Criteria on economy and production organizations (4 criteria and 4 contents); Group 4: Criteria on culture - society - environment (4 criteria and 11 contents); Group 5: Criteria on the political systems (2 criteria and 5 contents).

new rural construction in the period of 2010 - 2020. Accordingly, the general goal of the program aims to: *“Build rural areas with the step-by-step modern socio-economic infrastructure; the reasonable economic structure and forms of production organization; associate agriculture with rapid industrial and service development; associate rural development with urban planning; the rural society is democratic, stable, rich in ethnic cultural identity; the ecological environment is protected; order security is maintained; the material and spiritual life of people is increasingly improved; follow the socialist orientation”* [1, p. 1]. The program also sets specific goals such as: By 2015, there will 20% of communes meeting new rural standards and there are 50% of communes meeting new rural standards in 2020 (according to the National Criteria Set on new rural areas) [1, p. 1].

After 9 years of implementing a new rural construction program in 63 provinces and cities, up to now the whole country has obtained positive results. For the whole period of 2011 - 2019, the whole country has mobilized VND 2,418,471 billion (equivalent to about USD 110 billion). State budget at all levels directly supporting the program is VND 319,289 billion (averaging about VND 35.9 billion/commune for 9 years), accounting for 13.2%; of which, mainly local budgets at all levels (VND 264,988 billion, accounting for 83% of the total direct support state budget), the central budget is VND 54,300 billion (accounting for 17% of the state budget at all levels) [2].

By October 2019, the whole country had 4,665 communes (52.4%) recognized to meet the new rural standards; the national average reached 15.32 criteria/commune, completing and exceeding the 5-year goal (2016 - 2020) assigned by the Prime Minister, of which, there are 2/7 regions and 19/63 centrally-run provinces and cities completed and exceeded the 5-year goal (2016 - 2020) assigned by the Prime Minister.

2.2 Ho Chi Minh City implemented the policy of new rural construction

Implementing Decision No. 800/QĐ-TTg dated June 4, 2010 approving the National Target Program on the new rural construction of the Prime Minister, Ho Chi Minh City has established the Steering Committee of a new rural construction program in the period of accelerating industrialization and modernization. The city also issued Decision No. 15/2011/QĐ-UBND dated March 18, 2011 on promulgating the Target program on new rural construction in Ho Chi Minh City in the period of 2010 - 2020. Those targets are the city's new rural construction with modern socio-economic infrastructure; the reasonably economic structure and forms of production organization, associating agriculture with rapid development of industry and services; associating rural development with urban development according to planning; the rural society is democratic, stable, rich in ethnic cultural identity; the ecological environment is protected; constantly improve the material and spiritual life of the people [9, p. 3]. Specific objective set out for the period of 2010 - 2020 is striving to have 100 communes in the city's rural areas reaching new rural standards (according to the National Criteria Set on new rural areas). In order to implement the above objectives, the city has issued many decisions, plans, specifically: Plan No.5785/KH-UBND dated November 21, 2011 on organization of implementation of emulation movement *“The whole city together to build a new rural area”*; Decision No. 2041/QĐ-UBND dated April 18, 2012 on approving the project *“Vocational training for*

rural laborers in the field of agriculture and rural industries in new rural construction communes in the city by 2015, orientation to 2020"; Decision No. 15/2013//QĐ-UBND dated April 17, 2013 on promulgating the Regulations on investment management mechanisms for construction and management of investment capital in communes implementing the National Target Program on new rural areas construction in Ho Chi Minh City in the period of 2013 - 2020; Decision No. 20/2013/QĐ-UBND dated June 24, 2013 on promulgating the assistance mechanism from the State budget to implement the National Target Program on new rural construction in Ho Chi Minh City in the period of 2010 - 2020.

The city has promoted the implementation of the new rural model construction program in 19 criteria; focused on the construction of transport, irrigation, culture and society - medical; facilitated to promote trade, develop production and improve material and spiritual life, thus contributing to labor restructuring and attracting enterprises' investment . In the period of 2009 - 2015, with strong economic potentials, the city has mobilized and effectively used investment resources for new rural construction, construction of technical infrastructure to serve socio-economic development in rural areas with a total budget of VND 26,142.985 billion; in which: capital from the central budget is VND 4,659.23 billion (accounting for 17.8%); capital from the city budget is VND 10,155.679 billion (accounting for 38.8%) and the mobilized capital from the community is VND 11,328.076 billion (accounting for 43.4%). In the mobilized capital from the community, notably, the contribution of the people reached VND 3,281.139 billion; this amount is contributed in two forms: making contributions by land and architecture materials to build infrastructure with the value of nearly VND 880 billion and the capital for production development is VND 2,401.283 billion [8, p. 114]. In the 2016 - 2020, the city has mobilized new rural construction resources with the amount of VND 43,065.410 billion. The accumulated money after mobilizing the city's new rural construction resources in the period of 2010 - 2020 is VND 79,995 billion and 850 million; of which: Central budget capital is VND 61.230 billion (accounting for 0.08%); city budget capital is VND 15,929.740 billion (accounting for 19.91%) and the mobilized capital from the community is VND 64,004.881 billion (accounting for 80.01%) [3].

In the period of 2010 - 2015, Ho Chi Minh City made a project to build a new rural area for 56/58 communes (however, Binh Hung communes (Binh Chanh district) and Trung Chanh commune (Hoc Mon district) have 100% urbanization, so these communes will not implement new rural construction, but develop a project in the direction of urban development), specifically: Cu Chi district with 20/20 communes, Hoc Mon district with 10/11 communes, Binh Chanh district with 14/15 communes, Nha Be district with 6/6 communes and Can Gio districts with 6/6 communes. As of July 1 - 2016, 54/56 communes (accounting for 96.4%) achieved 19/19 criteria on new rural construction: Cu Chi District: 20/20 communes, Hoc Mon district: 10/10 communes, Nha Be District: 6/6 communes, Can Gio District: 6/6 communes and Binh Chanh: 12/14 communes. The two communes, which have not reached 19/19 criteria, are Vinh Loc A and Vinh Loc B communes in Binh Chanh district, in which: Vinh Loc A commune has not reached 02 criteria, namely: criteria 9th (rural houses) and criteria 19th (social security and order); Vinh Loc B

commune has not reached 2 criteria, namely: criteria 9th (rural houses) and criteria 18th (The strong political and social organization system) [4, p. 37]. The Prime Minister issued a decision to recognize the 3 districts: Cu Chi, Hoc Mon and Nha Be to be districts meeting new rural standards; Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee has decided to recognize 54/56 communes meeting new rural commune standards. This has been a great and admirable result of the Party Committee, government and people of Ho Chi Minh City for 6 years (2010 - 2015) implementing the National Target Program on a new rural construction. In the period of 2016 - 2020, the city has completed the goal of building a new rural area in 2 remaining communes of Binh Chanh district, fulfilling the target of 100% of communes meeting new rural standards.

The implementation of the national target program of new rural construction has contributed to changing the face of rural areas of Ho Chi Minh City become more spacious and civilized. Technical infrastructure and social infrastructure are upgraded and improved significantly. The quality of rural area life increases, the income gap between urban and rural areas is increasingly narrowed.

Implementing the motto "The state and people work together", Ho Chi Minh City has upgraded and built more 1,100 new traffic works, with a length of 1,172 km and investment funds of VND 4,906.538 billion [7, p. 16], of which, 8,122 households have donated 841,570 m² of land (a value of VND 713 billion) to build roads and some social security projects. Moreover, Ho Chi Minh City has also built, dredged and reinforced 321 irrigation works (building 41.35 km and dredging, reinforcing 72,575 km). The total length of canal in the commune has reached 1,782 km (increase 359 km compared to the year 2011). Besides, the city has built, upgraded and repaired 133 schools meeting national standards; up to now in 56 rural construction communes, there have been 434 schools at all levels, of which, 100% of communes have kindergartens and primary schools, 98.3% of communes have a junior high school and 36.2% of communes have high schools; removed 2,797 temporary, dilapidated houses.

The city has built 38 new communal cultural and sport centers; built and upgraded 356 new hamlet offices in combination with cultural gatherings, amusement parks with an investment fund of over 957 billion VND. Up to now, 39.7% of communes have had communal cultural houses (there was only 13.8% in 2011); of which, Can Gio district has 100% of communes having communal cultural houses, Nha Be district is 66.7%, Hoc Mon district is 45.4%, Binh Chanh district is 26.7% and Cu Chi district is 20%. Additionally, 99.7% of hamlets have a hamlet culture house; 92.3% of the hamlets are recognized as cultural hamlets; Furthermore, 56.9% of communes have communal sports grounds, 44.8% of communes have communal libraries and 100% of communes have legal bookcases [4, p. 22].

The system of health stations in suburban districts has continued to develop in both quantity and quality. The contingent of doctors and facilities for medical examination and treatment to serve the people has also been strengthened and enhanced. Thanks to the investment of the city, 100% of communes have communal health stations and 100% of communes meet the national health criteria (it was 93.1% in 2011), of which, 93.1% of health stations are solidly built. The total number of doctors in health stations is

61 people, meeting the requirement that each health station has 01 doctor. The number of medical staff of each health station has also been increased, including: 1.1 doctors; 4.5 nurses; 1.4 midwives; 0.9 pharmacists and 0.2 prescription clerk. The grassroots health system continues to be expanded to hamlets to meet the needs of people's health care: 87.4% of hamlets have medical staff, of which Binh Chanh district reaches 100% of the hamlets with medical staff, Cu Chi district is 88.2%, Hoc Mon district is 87.3%, Can Gio district is 60.7% and Nha Be district 57.7% [4, p. 20]. The rate of people participating in health insurance in 5 new rural construction districts reaches 92.83% [7, p. 27].

Due to the impact of the urbanization process, the agricultural land area of Ho Chi Minh City decreased by about 900 ha/year on average, the average number of agricultural - forestry - fishery households decreased by 6.38%/year. However, thanks to the policy of economic restructuring, urban agriculture, high-tech agriculture construction associated with the new rural construction, the average agricultural production value per unit area not only does not decrease, but also tends to increase rapidly: The value of agricultural production per 1 ha of cultivated land/year has steadily increased over the years, from VND 63 million/ha in 2005 to VND 158.2 million/ha in 2010, VND 375 million/ha in 2015 and VND 375 million/ha in 2015 and it will increase to VND 600 million/ha by 2020 [6].

The material and spiritual life of the rural population of Ho Chi Minh City have been improved. Average income/person /month at current prices in rural areas has been continuously improved and increased: In 2008, it was VND 1.31 million/person/month (average VND 15.73 million/person/year), in 2012 it was VND 2.73 million/person/month (average VND 32.76 million/person/year), in 2015 it reached VND 3.31 million/person/month (average VND 39.72 million/person/year) and in 2019 it increased to VND 5.258 million/person/month (average VND 63.096 million/person/year), it was 4.01 times higher than 2008. The income gap between urban and rural areas is increasingly narrowed: if the average income per capita in rural areas of the city in 2008 was 55.5% of that in urban areas, it was 66.5% in 2010, it was 71.9% in 2015 and it is 72.57% in 2019 [3]. The number of poor households in the city also fell sharply: In 2010, the rate of poor households with average income of VND 12 million/person/year in the city was 5.77%; In 2013, it reduced to 1.15% (averagely, each year reduce 1.54% of poor households) and by the end of 2013, the city had no poor households in the national poverty line [8, p. 109]. The city has completed the poverty reduction target for the period of 2014 - 2015 with the criteria for poor households with per capita income of VND 16 million/person/year or less and the near-poor household of VND 16 - 21 million/person/year, regardless of inner city and suburban area, one-year ahead of schedule. Up to now, the remaining number of poor households in 56 communes with new rural construction has been 445 poor households with an average income of VND 21 million/person/year or less (accounting for 0.1%/total households) [3].

3. Conclusion

The achieved results after 10 years of implementing the policy of a new rural construction have accelerated agricultural and rural industrialization and modernization in Ho Chi

Minh City, thus showing that the Party's policy of a new rural construction has been correct, consistent with the reality of Vietnam and has brought a better life for rural people. Ho Chi Minh City has increased investment in building and completing the system of socio-economic infrastructure in a synchronous and modern way in rural areas; thus, to step-by-step narrow the gap in the socio-economic infrastructure system, the level of development as well as the enjoyment level of the material and spiritual life of the people between urban and rural areas. The development of the socio-economic infrastructure system not only contributes to promoting the development of agricultural production, but also contributes to changing the face of the city's rural areas in a spacious and modern direction, step by step meet the daily-life and production needs of the people. The development gap between urban and rural areas has been increasingly shortened. The income as well as the material and spiritual life of the rural residents of Ho Chi Minh City has been increasingly improved.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

About the Author

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