A Comparative Study on the Self-help Approach in Rural Development between Vietnam’s New Rural Development and Korea’s Saemaul Undong

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Vietnam’s “Doi Moi”, initiated in 1986, translated to high economic growth and rapid urbanization for the country, but also widened the gap between rural and urban areas. Vietnam’s National Target Program on New Rural Development for 2010-2020 was aimed at developing the rural economy and improving the living standards of rural people, but after five years the urban-rural gap remains substantial. Two of the main reasons are the lack of investment capital and lack of effective ways to mobilize community involvement. In contrast, during the 1970s, rural areas in Korea experienced huge improvements under the “Saemaul Undong” movement. The program’s success at promoting sustainable development in Korea’s rural areas has inspired rural programs in other developing countries. In this paper, we compare and contrast the two movements to provide explanations for the different results between the two countries. Based on this analysis, and policy implications stemming from it, we recommend resource mobilization strategies to change villagers’ attitude and increase their involvement in Vietnam’s rural development movement, aligning with the inclusivity principle “people know, people discuss, people do and people check”.

Keywords: Village, Rural, Rural Economics, Comparative Country Studies, Development

JEL classification: O2, O18, O57

* This Working Paper has won the first prize of the KOICA Development Research Award 2014-15, a research competition held on the theme of the ‘Relevance of Korean Development Experience in Developing Countries’. The competition was administered by the Global Development Network and funded by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). We would like to express our thanks for the comments on the earlier version of this paper, disseminated as a GDN working paper, as well as for the other useful comments and suggestions.
I. INTRODUCTION

Rural development has always interested policymakers, scientists and experts in both developing and developed countries. Since the introduction of Vietnam’s Doi Moi policy in 1986, Vietnam has witnessed high economic growth accompanied by rapid urbanization. According to the General Statistics Office of Vietnam (GSO, 1990 and GSO, 2010), however, the percentage of total Vietnamese living in rural areas decreased from 80.7% to only 69.5% in 2010—about 0.8 percentage points per year. This has raised significant concerns about the pace of improvements in living standards in rural Vietnam. In 2010, the average income of rural people was approximately USD $80, two times lower than that of urban inhabitants, while the poverty rate in rural areas was 17.4%, four times higher compared with urban areas (GSO, 2011). Additionally, rural people in Vietnam have limited access to adequate infrastructure and high-technology farming methods, and human resource quality remains low. These have been barriers to improving quality of life in rural areas.

The Government of Vietnam’s National Target Program on New Rural Development (NRD) for 2010-2020 is one of 16 National Target Programs. Mr. Le Huy Ngo, Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), initiated NRD, which aims to develop Vietnam’s rural economy and improve the living standards of rural people. After nearly five years, NRD has improved quality of living for rural people by some measures. According to GSO (2014), the average income of rural people increased 1.9 times compared to 2010, and the rate of poor households decreased 1.65% per year during 2010-2014 to 10.1%. In addition, the program has upgraded infrastructure with more than five thousand construction sites nationwide. However, the gap between the program’s targets and actual outcomes is wide. Two main reasons are the lack of investment capital and the ineffective mobilization of community involvement, problems common to many developing countries.

Capital allocated for NRD programs from 2011-2014, of about USD 23 billion, represented 25% of the total capital allocated for the program. Loans make up the biggest part, accounting for 57.2% of total capital, with community contributions totaling only 10% (MARD, 2015). We found that a large number of rural people have not even heard about NRD, implying that external resources play a significant role in NRD implementation. Rural inhabitants should have ownership of
NRD, according to the slogan of the program: “People know, People discuss, People do, People monitor for the benefit of rural people themselves”. This is similar to the slogan of the Saemaul Undong movement (SU) in Korea, where the slogan “Diligence, Self-help and Collaboration” encouraged people to participate proactively in rural development.

One way to foster the success of the NRD program is to better mobilize internal resources, especially community contributions, because there is little room for mobilizing resources from the state budget due to a high budget deficit and public debt. Currently, the budget deficit is above 5.7% of GDP, higher than the planned objective of 5% of GDP; public debt has increased quickly to 61.4% in 2015 (Vietnam National Assembly, 2015). The trend will further continue, driving the top concern of the Vietnamese government. Capital mobilization from the private and foreign direct investment (FDI) sectors will face many difficulties due to high risk, as well as the low and slow returns from agriculture and rural development investment. Meanwhile, resources within households have not been effectively utilized. Moreover, the household saving rate has been relatively high, at 14.4% GDP in the period 2011-2015 (Vietnam National Assembly, 2015) and according to the Central Institute for Economic Management (2012), about 60% of rural households have their own savings fund. Therefore, in the case of Vietnam, one solution is to mobilize community contribution for the successful implementation of the NRD movement.

This study compares and evaluates the Saemaul Undong, launched in Korea in the early 1970s, to Vietnam’s NRD. Based on the research, we recommend policies to improve the proactive contribution of villagers to rural development in Vietnam.

We chose the Saemaul Undong because of its success in mobilizing community participation to bring about revolutionary change in Korean village life. In addition, we see a number of socio-economic similarities between Vietnam in 2010 and Korea in the 1970s: Vietnam’s GDP per capita reached nearly US$ 1,800 in 2012, about the same level as Korea’s in 1979, while literacy rates in Korea reached 90% in the late 1950s, similar to Vietnam’s above 90% in 2011 (GSO, 2012).

However, the main difference between the two countries is in policy priorities. From the outset, all Korean government policies under the administration of President Park directed the Korean economy away from import substitution and toward export-oriented industrialization. Moreover, President Park paid preferable attention on agriculture policies to improve the living standards of rural people.
In contrast, the Vietnamese government considers both agriculture and industry as strategic sectors; however, policies for agriculture development have not lived up to their importance in Vietnam’s sustainable development.

This paper consists of five sections: I) Introduction, II) Theoretical Approach and Review of Literature, III) Methodology, IV) Comparison of NRD and SU, V) Conclusion.

II. THEORETICAL AND LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Theoretical review

The first use of the term “community development” was in 1948 during a British Colonial Office conference in Cambridge on Development of African Initiatives (HoldCroft, 1978). Rural development approaches have experienced many changes since then. Two main approaches to community participation emerged: one approach focuses on external assistance, while the other focuses on resources within a community.

External approach: The external, or “Need-Based Community Development,” approach evaluates problems within a community and then seeks to attract external resources to meet needs. This approach has led to significant consequences: communities began depending on external resources, dampening local effort to find solutions, and suppressing community problem-solving capacity (McKnight and Kretzmann, 1996; Green and Goltting, 2010). It also has negative effects on local community leadership decisions. Instead of encouraging people and utilizing internal resources in the community, local leaders highlight or even exaggerate village problems and deficiencies to get resources from outsiders. This weakens neighbor-to-neighbor support links, replaced by linkage to experts, social workers and funders. This approach can never lead to serious change in community development.

Internal approach: The most popular internal approach is “Asset-based Community Development” (ABCD), an alternative to the needs-based approach. Kretzmann and McKnight first mentioned the approach in 1993 in their book Building Communities from the Inside Out: Asset-Based Community Development. In contrast with the external approach, ABCD points out that a community can drive development through identifying and mobilizing available assets, and then creating local economic opportunities. These assets can come in various forms,
including individual and community talent, skills, and even social relationships. ABCD looks at brighter, positive, and optimistic aspects rather than at problems. The approach focuses on fostering development through community resources rather than by external resources. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) also proposed a series of basic steps to motivate community participation: 1) collect successful stories, 2) organize a core group, 3) map the capacities and assets of individuals, associations and local institutions, 4) build a community vision and plan, 5) mobilize and link assets for economic-socio development and leveraging activities and resources from outside the community. The main challenges in the ABCD approach are how to motivate domestic processes to prevent dependence on outside resources; how to motivate and include community-wide participation, including women and poorest people; and how to improve community leadership.

Another popular internal approach targeting the poor is Community-Driven Development (CDD), which comes from the World Bank and has been under Community-Based Development (CBD) projects in which communities have direct control over main project decisions, management of investment funds and supervision. According to ADB (2006), CDD projects have five possible defining characteristics related to the project cycle, namely community focus, participatory planning and design, community control of resources, community involvement in implementation, and community-based monitoring and evaluation. According to Mansuri and Rao (2003) and ADB (2006), the benefits that CDD brings are various. This approach promotes equity and inclusiveness, efficiency, and good governance (greater transparency and accountability in allocation and use of resources). Moreover, the allocation of development funds meets the demand of the poor in a manner that places more emphasis on the process of empowering poor people (Coirolo et al., 2001; Narayan and Petesch, 2002). In the latter half of the 1990s, CDD was one of the fastest-growing mechanisms for development assistance and investment lending in various development organizations. However, there remain several strong criticisms of the CDD approach. Mansuri and Rao (2003) found several qualitative evidence to indicate the limitations of the CDD approach in practice, specifically (i) poverty reduction could be limited due to information gaps or concerns of political economy. Several CDD projects have been not well targeted to the poor; (ii) many projects have not shown a clear creation of effective community infrastructure or improvement of welfare outcomes; (iii) the sustainability of CDD crucially depends on external agents, which requires an institutional
environment and accountable leaders. In addition, the approach attracted some criticisms from ADB (2006). ADB divided these criticisms into three categories, namely conceptual, practical, and institutional. Conceptually, CDD includes complex contextual concepts like “community,” “empowerment,” “participation,” and “social capital,” with an absence of careful interpretation, which can crowd out the poorest communities. In practice, these limitations include the challenge of scaling up CDD, the limits to targeting by political interference, the subproject cycle being too short for sufficient empowerment. Institutionally, key criticisms indicate that CDD projects require higher costs of preparation; it is difficult to monitor safeguard and fiduciary compliance; and prior economic analysis for the project is impossible. In sum, the implementation of the CDD approach requires careful and flexible planning.

The Saemaul Undong (SU), or the New Village Movement which started in Korea during the 1970s, is a typical and successful example that applies the CDD approach. Its greatest strength is the voluntary participation of most rural villagers in Korea. A set of rules that contributed to the social participatory aspects of SU are institutionalized coordination between the government and civilian sectors, empowerment of women, the Saemaul education system encouraging self-improvement through voluntary participation, and the endorsement of favorable national policies for rural development (Han, 2012; Kim, 2012; UNDP, 2015). SU not only provides policy makers and practitioners with background knowledge of the SU and its application, but more importantly, it showcases experiences of the CDD project and provides useful lessons for ongoing CDD projects in many developing economies in Asia and Africa. Moreover, the UNDP (2015) has considered SU as an “Inclusive and Sustainable New Communities” model to update, integrate and scale up factors of SU’s application into an exemplary systematic approach for development cooperation. The model highlights the concept of communities out of scope of rural areas to urban ones. This model tackles the challenges that communities face in the process of fast urbanization when young people in villages tend to emigrate to urban areas for job opportunities, hence resulting in urban congestion and the further contraction of rural areas.

2. Literature review

Researchers have studied community mobilization in Korea intensively. The
Saemaul Undong (SU)-known as the “recipe for Korean rural development”-is a special model because of its unique features and the spillover effects that its success story has on developing countries.

1) Studies on resource mobilization under a tures and ea intensively

Korea government launched the Saemaul Undong as a New Village Movement in 1970, when rural areas lagged in comparison with the development of the country as a whole. One of the key successes of SU was that it planted the seed of the “self-help spirit” or “can-do spirit”. The outstanding achievements of SU must credit some external factors, especially the leadership and efficient organization of the Korean government. In general, the SU model integrated external and internal rural community development approaches, utilizing creative innovations. SU avoided the flaws of the external approach by refraining from heavy dependence on resources from outside, and villages had to perform well to receive continued support. We explore factors that contributed to the SU “miracle” below.

First, strong leadership was important, especially in the first phase of SU. Many analyses show that the implementation of the national campaign depended heavily on the dictatorial leadership of President Park (Han, 2004; Kwon, 2010; Yoon and Mudida, 2015). Han (2012) highlighted the decisive role of village leaders in the success of SU in the 1970s, especially these leaders were unpaid for what they did. This included the strict conditions of the SU programs which stipulated that the government would only support villages that display a willingness to help themselves (Jwa, 2015).

Second, the proactive and voluntary involvement of each village and individual played an important role. As highlighted by President Park Chung Hee “Unless the residents have a desire to help themselves change their own lives, there will be no change even if they wait 5000 years. If the village residents seek, right away, to change their lives, with just a little government support, they can change their lives in 2-3 years” (Han, 2012). This represented a huge change in perspective since, up to the 1960s, the many foreign experts that had visited rural villages in Korea had characterized villagers as lazy and helpless (Jwa, 2015).

Third, efficient implementation made a significant contribution toward results. Simple goals and directions targeted rural people, and the SU units were kept as
small as possible. A village unit of about 460 people each independently decided how to implement each project. As a result, throughout the 1970s, community contribution gradually increased until it began to outweigh government support by the end of the SU period. SU utilizes the advantages of the internal approach by focusing on resources within the community. Rural people created wealth and happiness for themselves, and by themselves, eagerly and proactively.

Fourth, SU created competition among villages by following a differentiated support principle (Jwa, 2015) by “rewarding high performance and penalizing low performance”. In 1970, the initial year of the movement, the government supported each of the nation’s 33,267 rural villages with 335 bags of cement to carry out projects with the participation of rural people. However, in 1972, government support only went to 16,600 villages with better performance in the first year of implementation (Kim, 2013). Moreover, from 1973, the government divided villages into three groups based on performance, providing preferential support to more successful villages (Douglas, 2013; Jwa and Yoon, 2012; Chung, 2009; Kim, 2009; Kim, 2005; Ministry of Home Affairs of Korea, 1980). This prevented moral hazard, creating a strong atmosphere of competition and incentives among villages.

Fifth, preparations before launching SU helped fit the program into the Korean context. Two important reforms facilitated favorable conditions for the implementation of SU: 1) comprehensive land reform from 1948-1951 and the 1949 New Land Reform Act (Yoon and Mudida, 2015; Reed, 2010; Lee, 1995; Wade and Kim, 1978), and 2) heavy government investment in human capital, which the government accelerated in the 1960s (Reed, 2010).

SU’s success has created spillover effects in many countries. Persuaded by the SU success story, some Korean universities have opened SU-related departments. Many developing countries send students and officials to Korea to learn about SU, and Asian, African and Latin American countries have applied lessons from the SU model. Myanmar and Korea signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on cooperation for the launching of the Saemaul Undong in August 2013. Korea will support Myanmar in establishing the Myanmar Saemaul Undong Academy, to educate leaders and professionals. The government of Lao is gearing up for an integrated rural development project applying SU’s participatory

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1 Korean Statistical Information Service(KOSIS), 2016
approach, concentrating on improving the income of households by providing villagers with information on agriculture technology and agribusiness models, and building an SMU Training Center. Cambodia and Korea launched an inception ceremony for the “Self-Supporting Rural Development Project with Saemaul Undong’s Participatory Approach” in 2015. Cambodia will also establish an SU Training Center in Kampong Speu Province for central and local government officials, village leaders and rural people to enhance their capacity on leadership and agriculture techniques. The Democratic Republic of the Congo established its 1,075-member “Congo Saemaul Undong Center” in 2004 in Kinshasa, the country’s capital. Uganda and Tanzania also initiated an SU movement in 2009 after representatives from both countries visited Korea’s SU Center. Vietnam has implemented some Saemaul Projects, such as the Cow Bank Project in three villages from 2002 to 2007, and the Saemaul Project for Developing Agriculture Value-Chains in two villages in Ninh Thuan Province during 2014-2017. Inspired and persuaded by the SU stories, we choose the SU approach as a better way to motivate Vietnamese rural people to improve living standards.

2) Studies on resource mobilization for NRD

Most studies only focus on evaluating the achievements and drawbacks of Vietnam’s NRD, overlooking obstacles limiting the implementation of NRD. None of these studies evaluated SU approaches for suitability in rural development in Vietnam. Some studies mentioned capital and community mobilization to develop agriculture, help farmers, and improve rural areas, but they concentrate on specific provinces or regions (Tien Dinh Nguyen, 2012; Ngoc Luan Nguyen, 2012; Duc Thanh Nguyen, 2008). Tien Dinh Nguyen studied the theoretical background and proposed policies for mobilizing domestic help from people living in the mountainous North Vietnam. Ngoc Luan Nguyen researched experiences in mobilizing community resources to build new rural areas. Duc Thanh Nguyen analyzed factors affecting investment in agriculture. Other studies concentrate on investment on agricultural production, but these studies did not assess mobilization of internal resources or participation by people.
III. METHODOLOGY

In this research, we apply multimethod research as follows:

- **Survey research:** We implemented a small survey to get more ideas from people and leaders of communes about mobilizing community involvement for NRD. (Appendix 1)
  
  We constructed two types of questionnaires: One type for commune people, and the other type for leaders of the commune. A total of 60 questions cover the comprehensive aspects of NRD. The sample size consists of 200 people, including 50 leaders and 150 people.
  
  The questionnaire for people includes five main parts: opinions, contribution of money and land, two parts covering monitoring & evaluation of NRD implementation, and the last part covering issues related to policy implications.
  
  The questionnaire for leaders covers three main parts: the first two on how leaders can encourage and persuade people to participate and contribute to NRD, and the final part asking leaders to give advice on solutions.
  
  We surveyed some communes in the North and some provinces in the South to broaden the understanding of NRD. In the North, we talked with and interviewed people and leaders in Phu Dien, Xuan Dinh, Thanh Tri, Bat Trang and Xuan Duong communes. In the South, we surveyed areas such as Long Hoa, Ham Ninh, Cua Can, Thanh An and Condao.
  
  We implemented the survey across three months from October to December 2013. It was found that the characteristics of respondents in the survey were in general similar with that of the rural people nationwide. For example, male and female respondents accounted for respectively 46% and 54% of the total, approximate to the sex ratio of the rural population in Vietnam.² The average age was about 42 years. The average income of respondents was about VND 24 million, equivalent to that of people living in the rural area.³ We also interviewed people who engaged in many kinds of economic activities, which were also popular jobs in rural areas in Vietnam at that time such as:

² According to GSO (2014), the sex ratio (male/female) of the rural population is 49%/51%.
³ According to the Report on “Implementation Results of the National Target Program on New Rural Development up to June 2015”, the average income of rural people is about VND 24.4 million.
farmers, people working in social associations, teachers, businesspersons, officers, freelancers, and homemakers.

- Expert method: discussions with Vietnamese experts, including officers in the NRD Central Steering Committee and Korean experts from the KDI school of Public Policy and Management, helped us gain a comprehensive understanding of NRD and SU.
- Analysis and synthesis method: to analyze theoretical background and practice on resource mobilization for implementing NRD and SU.
- Comparison method: We used comparative country studies to identify similarities and differences in resource mobilization between SU and NRD.
- Descriptive method: Analyzing data from NRD official reports and studies on SU.

IV. THE DEVELOPMENT OF NRD AND SU

People cited similarities between Vietnam and Korea at the onset of the NRD program.\(^4\) The ultimate goal of both SU and NRD is to raise quality of life and well-being for rural people, thus narrowing the urban-rural gap. However, the two projects achieved different outcomes. NRD’s goals are difficult to achieve due to the ineffectiveness of community participation. By contrast, effective community-based mobilization played an extremely important role in SU’s success. Comparison between NRD and SU in terms of self-help mechanisms sheds light on the differences between the two programs.

1. General overview of NRD

General objectives of NRD target not only rural people directly, but also other fields of national development. The Vietnamese government considers NRD, with 9,000 rural communes nationwide (2010 to 2020\(^5\)), as part of its overall socio-economic, political, and security and defense programs. The general objectives of NRD are to:

\(^4\) The Korean government implemented SU in the 1970s, while the Vietnamese government rolled out NRD in the 2010s.

\(^5\) The Prime Minister’s Decision No.800/QD-TTg dated June 4, 2010.
- Build a new countryside with gradually modern socio-economic infrastructure, rational economic structure and forms of production organization.
- Associate agriculture with the quick development of industries and services, and rural with urban development planning.
- Assure a democratic and stable rural community deeply imbued with a national cultural identity.
- Protect the eco-environment and maintain security and order.
- Raise the quality of life in rural areas under socialist orientation.\(^6\)

NRD includes 11 groups of activities to achieve these goals. In addition, the NRD Central Steering Committee assesses the achievements of the activities based on a national set of 19 criteria.\(^7\) To receive recognition as a new commune, a commune must complete these 19 criteria.

Figure 1: The 11 Activity Groups of the New Rural Development Program

Source: Minh Tien Nguyen. 2013. National Targeted Program on New Rural Development. <http://www.ngocentre.org.vn/webfm_send/3366> (accessed March 10, 2014)

\(^6\) In Vietnam, socialist orientations of the market economy include: 1) the fulfillment of the objective of a “prosperous people, strong country, democracy, equity and civilization”; 2) development of the economy with different forms of ownership and economic sectors, where the state economy plays the decisive role, and the state economy together with the collective economy serve as a foundation for the national economy.

\(^7\) The Prime Minister’s Decision No.491/QD-TTG dated April 16, 2009 on the national set of criteria on new rural development ranks 11 communes in the pilot program for new rural development.
2. General overview of SU

In 1970, the Park Chung Hee government in Korea initiated the New Village Remodeling Movement as the national community-based program for rural areas. Then in 1972, the government changed the name of the movement to SU and declared the SU policy to be of highest priority. The clear and direct goals of SU were to increase income for villagers. This movement also aimed to modernize infrastructure, reforest mountainous areas and improve the rural environment for rural people and rural community (Han et al., 2013; Chung, 2009). Moreover, it emphasized changing the attitudes of rural people based on the basic spirit of “We can do it. We will do it”. Government aid would be useful only if rural people endeavored to improve their living standards by themselves and in cooperation with others in their community. The three central social values of SU were diligence, self-help, and cooperation, with additional government support and assistance (Chung, 2009).

3. Main directions and implementation

1) Economic direction

Both movements aimed to increase income and reduce poverty in rural areas. However, the study shows the difference in economic direction between NRD and SU. Vietnam’s implementation of NRD between 2011 and 2020 (under Resolution No 26/NQ-TW) aims to achieve national economic goals on “agriculture, farmers and rural areas”. Currently, the agriculture sector accounts for about 20% of GDP and 50% of jobs in Vietnam. Additionally, the sector plays a very important role in food security. Thus, the main NRD focus is to improve economic infrastructure and organization in the agricultural sector to help it to catch up with the industrial and service sectors.

Meanwhile, during the Park Chung Hee era, Korea’s economy shifted from import substitution to export-oriented industrialization and development of heavy industry. The Korean government initiated SU to narrow the wide income gap that stemmed from industrialization policies, and set it as the highest policy priority.

8 Resolution No. 26/NQ-TW dated August 5, 2008 of the 7th Congress, the Party Central Committee (Xth) about “agriculture, farmers and rural areas”.
aimed at improving income for villagers and achieving better life in rural areas. From 1973, Korea started to embark upon constructing SU factories to create a favorable working environment for workers. Moreover, SU factories not only contributed to export promotion, but also created the foundation for building industrial complexes in the agriculture sector (Chung, 2009).

2) Social direction

All people in communities involved in the two movements have equal chances to enjoy social benefits, such as health and education. Villagers should play a central role, but rural people have difficulty understanding NRD goals, and are not encouraged to participate in the movement. A large number of interviewees in our survey said they were unfamiliar with words such as “social infrastructure,” “modernized,” or “socialist orientation,” especially in the case of uneducated people. Moreover, they do not understand how the program would benefit their lives.

In contrast, the goals of SU were specific and easy to understand, using words such as “community,” “members,” and “we.” Rural people understood how the movement related to them personally, and they understood their roles and benefits from the movement. This helped them take part in the movement proactively. The SU movement was, in other words, socially inclusive.

3) Targets

The Vietnam Government identified 19 national criteria to assess a new rural commune (Table 1). NRD has two phases of targets: by 2015, about 20% of all communes should achieve all rural criteria, and by 2020, 50% of communes should achieve all criteria. However, these 19 wide-ranging criteria are difficult to follow, and some criteria do not reflect the current needs, desires, and situation of rural people. This wastes resources, and makes people reluctant to get involved in NRD. One controversial criteria, for instance, stipulates that each commune must have at least one marketplace, but each region has its own marketplace style. In the Red River Delta, people often go to marketplace on certain days of the lunar month; in mountainous areas, villagers buy and sell only on weekends; or in the Mekong Delta, people trade on floating markets. It is essential that NRD adjust its criteria to cover these geographic differences.
Table 1: The National Set of Criteria on New Rural Development

| No | Name of criteria                                      |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------|
| I.  | PLANNING                                              |
| 1  | Planning and implementation of planning               |
| II. | ECONOMIC-SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE                        |
| 2  | Communications information                           |
| 3   | Irrigation                                            |
| 4   | Electricity                                           |
| 5   | Schools                                               |
| 6   | Cultural facilities and infrastructure                |
| 7   | Rural markets                                         |
| 8   | Post office                                           |
| 9   | Residential houses                                    |
| III. | ECONOMICS ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION ORGANIZATION     |
| 10  | Income                                               |
| 11  | Households poverty                                   |
| 12  | Labor structure                                       |
| 13  | Types of production organizations                    |
| IV. | CULTURE-SOCIAL ISSUES-ENVIRONMENT                     |
| 14  | Education                                            |
| 15  | Healthcare                                           |
| 16  | Cultural lives                                       |
| 17  | Environment                                          |
| V.  | POLITICAL SYSTEM                                      |
| 18  | Political-social organization system                  |
| 19  | Social security                                       |

Source: Decision No. 491/QD-TTg on approving the National Criteria for New Rural Development by the Prime Minister, dated April 16, 2009.

SU, meanwhile, had three stages: in the formation stage from 1971 to 1973, the government classified about 31% of villages as “basic,” 57% as “self-help,” and 12% as “self-reliant.” Village classification depended on ten criteria (Table 3) concentrating mainly on infrastructure, income, and cooperation. This was a helpful and transparent way to track and “score” progress and contribution by each village, creating competition among villages in Korea. In the self-help development stage from 1974 to 1976, about 54% of villages fell in the “self-help” category, while 45% had become “self-reliant.” In the independent stage from 1977 to 1981, nearly 100% of villages had become “self-sufficient.”
Table 2: Criteria for Village Classification

| Project             | Criteria                                      | Self-help village          | Self-reliant village       |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Farm roads       | Completion of village roads                   | Completion of main road to village |
|                     | Improvement of village roads                 | Construction of bridge less than 20 meters |
| 2. Housing          | Roof renovation for 70% of village houses    | Roof renovation for 80% of village houses |
| environment         | Embankment of creeks                          | Fence-remodeling for 80% of village houses |
| 3. Farming base     | Farmland irrigation: over 70%                | Farmland irrigation: over 85% |
|                     | Reclamation of streams in villages            | Reclamation of streams surrounding villages |
| 4. Cooperative      | Must have one or more of the following:      | Must have two or more of the following: |
| life                | town hall, warehouse, workshop                | town hall, warehouse, work shop |
|                     | Total assets in village fund must be over:   | Total assets in village fund must be over: |
|                     | KRW 500,000                                  | KRW 1,000,000              |
| 5. Income project   | Must have one or more community               | Creation of non-farming income project |
|                     | income creation project                       |                           |
|                     | Average annual income per household:         | Average annual income per household: |
|                     | over KRW 800,000                              | over KRW 1,400,000         |

Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs. “Ten-year History of Saemaul Undong” (data volume) 1980. pp. 23-24.

4) Basic implementing unit

In Vietnam, NRD execution follows the top-down administrative hierarchy country system (central government → province → district → commune). The commune is the lowest planning and budgeting unit under the provincial level and district level, as well as a basic unit of NRD. Each commune includes from five to ten villages and has about 6,700 people (GSO, 2014). A commune in Vietnam is similar to ‘myon,’ ‘up’ and a village is similar to ‘ri’ in Korea. Since residents in each commune do not share the same interests, implementation of NRD at the commune level makes it difficult to harmonise benefits and allocate resources effectively among these villages.

The SU implementation network was quite different (the central government → large cities, provinces → small cities, counties → up, myon → ri, village). The
Korean government chose the village as the key unit of community involvement. Rural villages were traditional units for familiarity, mutual help and cooperation. Thus, the government used this understanding of the roots of society to encourage each individual to participate in the development of their own community.

5) The implementing agency

In Vietnam, the Central Steering Committee directs the NRD. The head of the Committee is a standing Deputy Prime Minister, its standing deputy head is the Minister of MARD, and remaining members are ministers of concerned ministries. Moreover, MARD, the program’s standing body, assists the Central Steering Committee to inspect and supervise program implementation through other ministries and local agencies. However, MARD does not control the administrative network, and it does not have power to force local agencies to follow NRD requirements.

In Korea, the government created the Saemaul Central Promotion Council to maintain implementation along the hierarchy of the administration network. The head of the council was the Minister of Home Affairs, and members were the deputy ministers of 22 related departments. The Korean government chose the Ministry of Home Affairs instead of the Ministry of Agriculture to organize and implement SU, because it had more power to control local administrative systems (Looney, 2012). This facilitated the successful coordination of SU policies.

4. Achievements

1) General achievements

Up until June of 2015, about 860 communes in Vietnam achieved all 19 criteria, accounting for only 9.7% of the total communes, while 1,195 communes achieved from 15 to 18 criteria, nearly 13.4%. Exactly 6,844 communes, or 76.9%, achieved fewer than 14 criteria. Vietnam is not likely to reach its goal of having 20% and 50% of communes with full 19 criteria by 2015 and 2020, respectively.
Table 3: Implementation of National Criteria up to June 2015

| Number of criteria achieved | Number of communes | Percentage of communes to total communes (%) |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 1                           | 19                 | 860                                         | 9.7                                         |
| 2                           | 15-18              | 1,195                                       | 13.4                                        |
| 3                           | 10-14              | 3,190                                       | 35.8                                        |
| 4                           | 5-9                | 2,940                                       | 33.1                                        |
| 5                           | <5                 | 714                                         | 8                                           |

Source: Central Steering Committee of the National Target Program on New Rural Development. 2015. Report on “Implementation Results of the National Target Program on New Rural Development up to June 2015” Hanoi. (in Vietnamese)

SU made a significant shift from “basic” to “self-help” and then to “self-reliant” villages in the first stage. In 1972, about 18,515 underdeveloped (basic) villages accounted for 53% of total villages in Korea. However, in 1974, the number of basic villages dropped considerably to 6,165 villages, only 18%. During the same period, the number of self-help villages increased from 40% to 62% and self-reliant villages from 7% to 20%. This suggests that SU contributed to improving the living standards of rural people.

Table 4: Village Development Results

(Unit: 1,000, %)

| Year | Total       | Basic Village | Self-help village | Self-reliant Village |
|------|-------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1972 | 34,665 (100)| 18,415 (53)   | 13,943 (40)       | 2,307 (7)            |
| 1973 | 34,665 (100)| 10,656 (31)   | 19,769 (57)       | 4,246 (12)           |
| 1974 | 34,665 (100)| 6,165 (18)    | 21,500 (62)       | 7,000 (20)           |

Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs. Ten-year History of Saemaul Undong (data volume) 1980. pp. 22.

2) Improvement of infrastructure

Infrastructure development is the first priority of NRD. After four years, many communes have achieved targets on post office and electricity implementation. However, fewer communes have achieved targets on schools, transportation, and culture sites. To sum up, these results fall far short of goals to bring modern socio-economic infrastructure to Vietnam’s rural areas, especially underdeveloped social infrastructure.
Table 5: Achievements of Infrastructure Criteria

(Unit: %)

| Achievement          | %  |
|----------------------|----|
| Post office          | 87.5|
| Electricity          | 77.5|
| Marketplace          | 49.9|
| Irrigation           | 48.7|
| School               | 31.9|
| Transportation       | 25.1|
| Culture site         | 21.7|

Source: Central Steering Committee of the National Target Program on New Rural Development. 2015. Report on Implementation Results of the National Target Program on New Rural Development up to June 2015. Hanoi. (in Vietnamese)

Improvement of infrastructure undeniably brings more opportunities for rural people and improves their lives. Our analysis of survey data identified key findings about the effects of infrastructure enhancement. About 82% of interviewees said that “improved transportation and irrigation systems positively impacted their lives”, while 69% of respondents agreed with the positive effect of having a marketplace. In addition, more than half of the respondents confirmed that “a better electricity grid and water supply system positively impacted their lives”. Interviewees also said they were willing to contribute to NRD when they could see real benefits for them, their family, and their commune.

Figure 2: Positive Impact of Infrastructure (%)

Source: Survey conducted by authors
However, the development of rural infrastructure also brings some negative effects. In particular, 23% of respondents said that the school system does not meet their requirements in both quantity and quality. In addition, 24% of the comments implied that “the infrastructure of power grids does not guarantee technical standards”, leading to the degradation and insecurity of rural power grids. About 23% of respondents said, “the construction works polluted the environment, especially regarding air pollution.”

![Figure 3: Negative Impact of Infrastructure Development (%)](chart)

In contrast, the remarkable and tangible achievements of SU infrastructure development are clear. In the first stage, people played an active role in enlarging roads and paths in rural areas. In 1972, villagers built 21,634 kilometers (km) of roads under SU, which reached 89% of the target. In 1973, SU broadened 10,862 km of village paths, surpassing the target by 10%. Furthermore, housing improvement projects achieved impressive results. From 1971 to 1973, people replaced about 899,000 thatched roofs with tin or slate covering. These infrastructure improvements supported villagers with more comfortable access and more opportunities to create a better environment, leading to meaningful increases in household income and the long-term improvement of villagers’ well-being.

3) Improvement of living standards

In Vietnam, GSO (2014) reported that rural monthly average income per capita increased about 1.9 times, and the poverty rate decreased from 17.4% to 10.8%
between 2010 and 2014. In 2014, the gap between urban and rural income was cut by nearly half. In addition, 44.5% of communes reached the government income criteria, and 36.4% of communes met the government poverty criteria (MARD, 2015). Some surveys also confirmed improvement of income in rural areas: 56 communes in Ho Chi Minh City enjoyed higher income thanks to the survey on NRD. In our survey, 69% of interviewees stated that NRD positively influenced their income because of more job opportunities, better transportation, and easier communication.

In SU, however, the impact on boosting rural outcome is larger compared to NRD. Income per farm household in Korea increased nearly three-fold by the end of SU’s Stage 1, even surpassing that of urban worker households in 1974. Urban-rural income disparity decreased, with the ratio of household income in rural areas to urban ones improving from 67.1% in 1970 to 104.7% in 1974. Moreover, the absolute rural poverty rate decreased from 27.9% in 1970 to 10.8% in 1978 (Park, 2009). Some research questioned how much SU was responsible for these improvements, arguing that heavy rice subsidies not directly linked to SU (Park and Han, 1999) should be given credit. Nonetheless, SU undeniably brought many opportunities to rural people through income-raising projects. In a survey by Brandt and Lee (1981) in Korea, about 80% of respondents in rural areas said their standard of living was better in 1976 than in 1971.

4) Involvement of community

As of June 2015, capital mobilization from community and government budgets (including central and local governments) for NRD account for 10% and 28.8% of total capital, respectively. Loans (credit) account for the largest part, about 57.2%, implying that the program does not mobilize enthusiastic rural participation, and depends heavily on external resources.

Additionally, our survey confirmed that many villagers did not give much attention to NRD. Our team had many deep and straightforward conversations with rural people and leaders. More than 80% of respondents reported that they did not want to contribute land because it is their most valuable asset, and the key means of making a living. In addition, 45% of interviewees were not ready to

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9 Absolute poverty was defined as a monthly household income below KRW 17,000 per rural household.
contribute workdays. While 86% of respondents contributed money, they often said that this was because commune leaders forced villagers to do so. Notably, 95% of officials interviewed said that people did not contribute money for NRD. Nearly 86% of people did not have any information about their contribution, reflecting lack of transparency. As a result, people gradually lost confidence and motivation to contribute to the program.

Figure 4: Investment Contribution to NRD and SU (%)

Source: Central Steering Committee of the National Target Program on New Rural Development. 2015. Report on Implementation Results of the National Target Program on New Rural Development up to June 2015. Hanoi. (in Vietnamese)

In contrast, SU attracted the active and voluntary participation of villagers. During 1971-1974, participants per village increased by 14.3 times, from 216 participants per village to 3,082, while community funds invested grew from 66% of total investment to 78.3% (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1980). Average labor days contributed per household were 19 days in 1973, reflecting the availability of very important volunteer labor to construct village roads, fix drinking water systems, and other activities. In fact, the number of workdays could be underestimated because it did not include labor days needed for replacing thatched roofs with cement tiles (Park, 1998).
5. Key determinants affecting resource mobilization by self-help approach between NRD and SU

Implementing SU is more efficient than NRD, from the process of selecting general goals and targets to choosing the basic unit of implementation. The SU implementation process attracted proactive participation from rural people. People understood their role and benefits from SU. Other key factors also contributed significantly to the success of SU, compared to NRD.

1) The role of leadership

NRD regularly organizes national meetings to discuss program results, but most participants have been leaders in related ministries and provinces. NRD has paid less attention to the “voice” of rural people. In addition, by 2014 only 13% of rural districts had established NRD coordination offices and most communes lack specified officers in charge of NRD (Central Steering Committee, 2015). According to our survey, commune leaders did not frequently discuss NRD with people, reflected in the fact that 60% of respondents said they did not believe in commune leaders and were not proactively involved in NRD. This implies weakening NRD leadership.

President Park Chung Hee was a pioneer and supervised SU strictly. He spent 9% of his inaugural speech promoting SU and discussing development policies for this program. Every month, the President chaired Cabinet meetings to address and coordinate problems of SU. Moreover, he presided over the Monthly Economic Trends Report Meeting, in which ministers, policy makers and local leaders of SU in random villages participated to report two successful outcomes of the movement. The monthly meetings created opportunities to share information, experiences and challenges at the national level (Kim, 2013). The President and ministers also often visited villages without notice. During his term, the President visited approximately 3,000 villages countrywide, where he listened to the opinions of villagers, and enhanced peoples’ belief in their leaders. SU leaders, voted in by villagers as trusted people, also played an important role, and male leaders worked in equal relationships with female leaders. These leaders were independent from political and administrative systems in rural areas and did not receive any material support. They often organized meetings to discuss and make decisions regarding SU.
projects, giving powerful recognition to the opinions of villagers (Eom, 2011; Kim, 2012).

2) Active role of rural people

a. Opinion contributor

NRD does not regulate cooperation between commune leaders and villagers. First and foremost, NRD should consider sharing opinions on aspects of the movement. Currently, many people do not know, do not discuss, and do not contribute opinions regarding NRD. According to our survey, while most commune officials said that rural people did contribute opinions to NRD, rural people did not agree. We present some highlighted findings below:

About 75% of respondents said that they have not expressed their opinions about master plan formulation, and 63% said they had not expressed opinions on planning implementation. Meanwhile, 100% of officials said that rural people had contributed their ideas.

Figure 5: Opinion Contribution to Master Plan (%)

About 92% and 90% of rural residents said they had not discussed irrigation work and water suppliers with commune leaders, respectively. Identifying a large disparity, 85% of commune officials said in our survey that they had received ideas from villagers in these two areas.

In SU, government and villagers co-existed in an institutionalized relationship
(Kim, 2012). Village meetings were vibrant and active. At meetings, villagers raised their voices on projects and how to implement them in their village. Minutes of village assembly meetings recorded who spoke, when and what. Based on this input, village assemblies made every important decision on new projects and the management of village assets with the signatures of all participants (Rho, 2014; Han et al., 2013). The fact that village SU leaders were willing to listen made villagers feel accepted and valued. Importantly, village SU leaders organized many informal meetings, such as drinking, luncheon, or dinner meetings with rural residents (Han, 2012). According to a large Korea Rural Economic Institute survey, 67% of respondents said they took part in all village meetings, while 28% answered that they often attended (Boyer and Ahn, 1991).

Figure 6: Opinion Contribution to Irrigation Work and Water Suppliers (%)

![Bar chart showing opinion contributions to irrigation work and water supplier work](image)

Source: Survey conducted by authors

b. Supervisor

Each commune in Vietnam has a board that supervises the monitoring and evaluation of NRD community-based results. The boards include 9 members selected from the community, meaning that some villagers are responsible for the work. In our survey, about 95% of commune leaders responded that rural people were involved in monitoring and evaluating NRD, but only 43% of rural residents agreed. Many people said they had not received any information about monitoring activities.

Meanwhile, evaluation was the critical factor in the overall success of the SU
movement. This work included monitoring and evaluating government assistance; the level of villagers' contribution, input, output; and the timeframe of projects. SU leaders and village leaders presented the project statement of accounts to village assemblies to emphasize transparency and accountability (Han et al., 2013). Besides, local leaders often organized weekly or monthly meetings with villagers to report on progress and results of projects (Eom, 2011).

3) Competitive system

In Vietnam, NRD expects rural people to be full “owners” of the program, and to participate fully and actively. However, capital mobilization does not reflect this. According to Decision No.800/QD-TTg, direct community contribution accounts for only 10% of total capital for the program, funds from the state budget (central and local governments) make up 40%, and loans/credits and funds mobilized from enterprises make up the remainder of capital. Moreover, poor communes would prefer to receive financial assistance from the central budget, and the government did not promote competition among communes. Thus, many communities and villagers display a passive and dependent attitude on government support, and are less motivated by, and feel less responsible for, NRD. A survey in 11 key NRD communes conducted by Ngoc Luan Nguyen (2012) proved that dependent attitudes were the biggest factor preventing villager contribution. Our survey results show that people are more voluntary and motivated to contribute to the NRD when they believe that the program brings practical benefits for them, their family, and their commune. These benefits can come from economic activities that improve and sustain their income, or can come in the form of access to healthcare, education, and other infrastructure-based services, like schools, supermarkets, and sanitation. More than 50% of people said they would be more willing to contribute to NRD if they can access better and faster healthcare and education. Nearly 40% of them said that they contribute because they expect the program to create jobs and increase their income and living standards.
Table 6: Factors that Affect People in Contributing to their Village
(1: least impact; 5: strongest impact) (Unit: %)

| Factors                                      | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
|----------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Bring benefits to family:                    |    |    |    |    |    |
| - Job creation                               | 13 | 38 | 38 |    |    |
| - Income increase                            |    | 33 | 44 |    |    |
| - Better and faster access to healthcare service |    | 25 | 58 |    |    |
| - Better and faster access to education service |    | 33 | 50 |    |    |
| Confidence in leaders of commune/village     |    | 20 | 60 |    |    |
| Clear instruction of leader                  |    | 25 | 58 |    |    |
| Warm concern of leaders of commune/village   |    | 30 | 50 |    |    |
| The impact of association                    |    | 11 | 44 |    |    |
| Material encouragement                       | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 |    |
| Spiritual encouragement                      |    |    |    |    | 50 |

Source: Authors

Meanwhile, the Korean government's SU system made use of the villagers' competitive spirit for monetary and economic gains, and social recognition. Villages with better results were first to receive support. This avoided equal support and made villages compete (Goh, 2010; Kim, 2013). As one example, in the initial stage of SU, the government provided 355 packs of cement to all villages with the only requirement being that they must use the cement to benefit the entire village. In the next stage, the government classified rural villages into three categories on the basis of community mobilization achievements: 1) basic, 2) self-help, and 3) self-reliant village. This classification helped create fair competition among villages for government support. In the cement example above, for instance, the government selected 16,000 successful villages (half of the total) to grant additional support of 500 sacks of cement and a ton of iron bars. Higher performers received more support, and non-performers received no further support. By the end of the movement, 100% of villages became self-reliant, an increase from only 12% of total villages in 1971.
Table 7: Government Support for Villages during the Period of 1971-1978

| Projects & support plan | Basic village | Self-help village | Self-reliant village |
|-------------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Basic support           | - Saemaul Cultivation (cement/iron bars) | - Saemaul Cultivation (cement/iron bars) | - National territory beautification |
|                         | - Farm road + rooftop                   | - Farm road + rooftop                   | - Maintenance of small river |
| Additional support      | - National territory beautification    | - Support fund for each village more than KRW 500 thousand | - Support fund for each village more than KRW 1 million |
|                         | - Maintenance of small river           |                                 | |
|                         | - Support fund for each village more than KRW 1 million |                                 | |
| Preferential support    | - Infrastructure construction          | - Infrastructure construction          | - Infrastructure construction |
|                         | - Culture/welfare                      | - Culture/welfare                      | - Culture/welfare |
|                         | - Income increase                      | - Income increase                      | - Income increase |
|                         | - Cooperative farming                  | - Cooperative farming                  | - Cooperative farming |

Source: Chung, K. J. 2009. Experiences and Lessons from Korea’s Saemaul Undong in the 1970s. Seoul: Korea Development Institute.

4) Transparency

Officials do not often disseminate information about NRD community contributions. It is difficult to find formal statistics on how many people participate in the program, and how much land, labor, and money they contribute. Authorities do not publish statistics on village contributions. Our survey showed that about 82% of respondents said they had not seen announcements related to their contributions. The lack of transparency opens opportunities for leakage and corruption of the type documented in Quang Minh, Quang Thang, Quang Long, Quang Thanh (Quang Ninh province) communes (Thanh Duy. 2014). This hampers community belief and constrains NRD development.

Meanwhile, it is easy to access information about rural participation in SU. One government criterion tallied total village funds contributed, which played an important role in making it easy to check results and encourage a “self-help” spirit. Transparency was an important factor in shaping good SU governance (Eom, 2011).

10 Thanh Duy. 2014. (Four Commune Leaders Found Guilty of Embezzling Public Funds for New Rural Development Movement). tienphong.vn. <http://www.tienphong.vn/Phap-Luat/bon-chu- tich-xa -tham-o-tien-nong-thon-moi-689664.tpo> (accessed April 15, 2014)
5) Promotion

In Vietnam, although authorities promoted NRD in diverse ways—from mass media to commune-level bulletin boards—these methods are rigid and ineffective. When our research team interviewed people in different social strata, especially the poor and uneducated, most reported that they had never heard of NRD. Even when people know about it, they do not understand the nature of the program. However, when we asked whether they contributed money, construction materials, or workdays for infrastructure construction at their village, most answered “yes”. This means that promotion has not drawn rural peoples’ attention to NRD. Consequently, a number of people think that rural development is only about infrastructure. According to rural people, the most effective way of promotion is direct talk and discussions between leaders and villagers.

In SU’s publicity campaign, in contrast, the Korean government established the Saemaul Broadcasting Center in 1972. By the next year, Korea had two other broadcasting companies promoting the SU movement. From 1971 to 1980, people watched 66 public films about SU (Kim, 2012). Everyday at 5:45 AM, when villagers woke, they would hear the broadcast of the energetic “Song of Saemaul”. All public buildings hung a three-leafed SU flag representing the three values of SU spirit: diligence, self-help, and cooperation. The publicity campaign succeeded in delivering information to villagers, and encouraged them to participate in SU.

V. CONCLUSION

Vietnam’s NRD has improved the living standards of people in rural areas. However, external assistance is not stable, and NRD is not likely to achieve prosperity and modernization for Vietnam’s rural communities. Therefore, NRD must apply a self-help approach for rural people to contribute more proactively to NRD.

Inspired by the successful Korean SU self-help model, we compared SU to NRD in their respective initial stages: NRD from 2011 to 2014 and SU from 1971 to 1974. We also surveyed people in North and South Vietnam to understand NRD issues and to identify practical policy options for the ongoing implementation of NRD.

Vietnam’s NRD and Korea’s SU both specify rural people as the owner of
these respective programs. However, NRD has not achieved the significant success of SU. The wide-ranging goals and targets of NRD—from economic to social and political issues—confuse rural people, who do not understand the program and its goals. In contrast, rural people understood SU’s direct goal of income increase to achieve a better life with the specific “diligence, self-help and cooperation” motto.

After the first stage of implementation, Vietnam’s government classified 860 communes as new rural communes, below 50% of the target. At the same stage, SU had more than 7,000 developed villages, above 50% of the target. Moreover, villagers contribute about 10% of total investment in NRD, compared with the 78% from Korean villagers in SU. This is clear evidence of how community involvement was much more vibrant in SU, compared to NRD.

We can draw some useful lessons for NRD in terms of villager resource mobilization:

- NRD requires strong political will from top-level leaders, as well as effective grassroots leadership. Leaders at all levels must organize and direct villagers to perform successful rural development. Leaders who display self-discipline, patience, and strong faith can encourage villagers’ trust in the program. For human resources, authorities should administer an entry exam to identify outstanding leaders who can have an influence on other leaders and people.
- The Vietnamese Government should revamp the administrative system to place villages as a key administrative unit rather than the commune.
- NRD should also revise and set clear goals and targets to help rural people. This would help rural people understand and consider NRD as a movement for themselves.
- It is also necessary to invest capital efficiently to meet peoples’ demand and priorities. Villagers should know and discuss details related to each project in their village, and people expect to know how officials are using villager contributions.
- Villagers must participate actively, and leaders must solicit their opinions. Local leaders should organize frequent meetings to discuss project progress and results. These will encourage proactive villager involvement in NRD, and increase their belief in the movement.
- Government should establish a system that promotes competition between communes/villages, motivates independence from government support, and increases villager sense of responsibility for NRD success. Government actions
should comply with the principle of “supporting the commune with better performance result first”. The government can classify villages into four categories, such as “good”, “medium”, “weak”, and “poor”. Based on this performance classification, the government can allocate support and budget for each commune.

- In order to support the government’s fight against corruption, it is essential for people to receive detailed information regarding the use of villager financial contributions and enhanced transparency. Therefore, government should ensure disclosure of, and access to, NRD information, especially related to villagers’ economic contribution. The NRD website, national and local media (newspapers, radio broadcasting system, etc.), or bulletin boards of each village can display public information.

- Finally, simplified and improved promotion can attract rural peoples’ involvement, including from the poorest, most uneducated Vietnamese. Vietnam should replace complicated and abstract terms (for example, “social infrastructure”, “modernized”, “socialist orientation”, and “master plan”) with language that people can understand and remember. Promotion requires commune leaders’ expertise and patience.
Appendix 1: Basic Nature of the Survey

### A. DESIGN OF QUESTIONNAIRE

| Type                  | Unit       | Total | Note                                                                 |
|-----------------------|------------|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Type of objects     |            | 2     | - Commune people                                                      |
|                       |            |       | - Leaders                                                            |
| 2 Type of questionnaire |           | 2     | - Commune people                                                      |
|                       |            |       | - Leaders                                                            |
| 3 Number of respondents |          |       |                                                                      |
|                       | People     | 200   |                                                                      |
| - Commune people      | People     | 150   |                                                                      |
| - Leaders             | People     | 50    |                                                                      |
| 4 Number of question  | Question   | 60    |                                                                      |
| - Commune people      | Question   | 30    |                                                                      |
|                       |            |       | (1) information of respondent: 4                                     |
|                       |            |       | (2) opinion contribution: 4                                           |
|                       |            |       | (3) contribution by money and land: 9                                  |
|                       |            |       | (4) monitor of NRD implementation: 3                                   |
|                       |            |       | (5) evaluation of NRD implementation: 2                                |
|                       |            |       | (6) policy implications: 8                                             |
| - Leaders             | Question   | 30    |                                                                      |
|                       |            |       | (1) information of respondent: 6                                     |
|                       |            |       | (2) activities of propaganda and training: 5                          |
|                       |            |       | (3) resource mobilization for NRD: 10                                  |
|                       |            |       | (4) monitor of NRD implementation: 3                                   |
|                       |            |       | (5) policy recommendations: 6                                          |
| 5 Coverage of survey  | Commune    | 5     |                                                                      |
| - The South           | Commune    | 5     | Long Hoa, Ham Ninh, Cua Can, Thanh An and Condao                       |
| - The North           | Commune    | 5     | Phu Dien, Xuan Dinh, Thanh Tri, Bat Trang and Xuan Duong              |
| 6 Time of survey      | Month      | 3     | From October to December 2013                                         |

### B. SURVEY RESULTS

| 7 Gender               | %          |       |                                                                      |
| - Male                 | %          | 46    |                                                                      |
| - Female               | %          | 54    |                                                                      |
| 8 Average age          | Year       | 42    |                                                                      |
| 9 Average income       | VND 1 mil. | 24    |                                                                      |
| 10 Job of respondents  |            |       | Farmers, people working in social associations, teachers, businesspersons, officers, freelancers and housewives. |

Source: Authors
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