

Economic Management and the Development Strategy Institute. On the international side participants included Ambassadors and Aid Counselors from a wide variety of countries, Resident Heads of the ADB, World Bank and IMF, a variety of NGOs and a team of eminent international experts to facilitate the dialogue. This second Round Table Consultation was extremely rich in content and helped to further develop a more common understanding of some of the more difficult issues still needing resolution in order to further define the country's strategic directions. A half-day technical session was also held between the Strategy Preparatory Group and the team of eminent international experts.

3. Current status and plans

11. The proceedings of the second Round Table Consultation will be sent to senior officials in the Party, Government and Strategy Preparatory Group to help further develop the ten year socio-economic strategy in the run-up to the Party Congress tentatively scheduled for end-March 2001. It is furthermore planned that a third high level Round Table Consultation on the strategy between the Government and the international community would take place in late February or early March 2001 just prior to the Party Congress.

4. Long term Vision

12. The subject of the partnership, being the Ten Year Socio-Economic Development Strategy, is all encompassing, and includes the participation of most if not all line ministries as well as most of the international community. As such no attempts have been made to institutionalize the partnership, but rather to create opportunities for as broad a participation in the strategy formulation process as possible. On one side using existing partnership frameworks and communication channels, on the other side through the organization of specific events in which the strategy formulation process is opened up for contributions from interested development partners.

13. This formulation process is expected to be finalized in early 2001 with the adoption of the ten year socio-economic development strategy by the Party Congress marking the start of the Strategy's implementation. As indicated above, the efforts to realize a substantive consultative strategy formulation process were first to enhance the quality of the strategy by ensuring international experiences and lessons learned in development were taken into account. Secondly, but of equal importance, is the broad consultative process aimed at developing a common understanding and shared vision among all development partners for the coming ten years, essential for a well-coordinated donor response in the implementation phase.

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the social aspects of rural development, whilst a separate research group would concentrate on the financial aspects of international economic integration. The research outcomes were recorded in draft reports in early 2000, which have been extensively discussed in various rounds of technical workshops, whilst being subjected to in-depth peer reviews. Many experts, representing line ministries, national and international research institutes, multi- and bilateral donors as well as the NGO community in Vietnam, contributed to this process. In addition, the National Committee for the Advancement of Women had provided substantial inputs concerning gender aspects of the strategy. Hence the partnership, though not formally institutionalized, broadened substantially.

7. Incorporating the many suggestions received resulted in well developed drafts of the six research papers in May 2000, which formed the basis for the first high level Round Table Consultation meeting on 9 June 2000. This very unique consultation provided the first opportunity for a direct dialogue between the Strategy Preparatory Group and senior representatives of the International Donor and NGO community. The meeting, consisting of four sessions corresponding to the four research areas, was co-chaired by senior Government officials among which was Minister Tran Xuan Gia of MPI, and the heads of mission of the World Bank, ADB and the Embassies of Sweden and Australia. Ambassadors from a wide variety of countries offered their own country experiences and related suggestions in the various sessions. Furthermore, technical contributions were made by various members of the Strategy Preparation Group and relevant international organizations such as IFC, IMF and UNIDO. The Round Table was closed by Minister Gia who expressed great appreciation for the research and consultation process, whilst emphasizing the Government's desire to continue such a process for further enriching the strategy.

8. In response to the issues raised during the roundtable meeting, further research was undertaken to come up with additional practical recommendations and principles for the implementation of specific parts of the strategy related to private sector development, trade liberalization, IT development and off-farm employment generation. This research work also took into account on-going work towards the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and was aimed at giving more depth to the on-going consultation process.

9. In July 2000, the Government circulated the first draft of the overall strategy among party members on all levels for comments and contributions. In follow-up to MPI Minister Tran Xuan Gia's closing statement at the roundtable meeting in June, the Government also released the draft strategy paper through UNDP for consultation with the international donor community. Using established partnership systems, in particular the Monthly Donor Group Forum organized by UNDP, the donor community reviewed the draft strategy paper with the President of the Development Strategy Institute in order to develop a common understanding of the fundamental issues and strategic directions outlined in the document.

10. On 21 November, a second high level Round Table Consultation was convened with the Strategy Preparatory Group, a wide variety of senior Vietnamese officials and the international donor and NGO community. This second Round Table was led on the Government side by His Excellency Nguyen Tan Dung, First Deputy Prime Minister, His Excellency Nguyen Khanh, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Head of the Political Report Preparatory Committee, Minister Tran Xuan Gia of MPI, and the heads of all of Viet Nam's key research institutes including the Prime Minister's Research and Advisory Group, the Central Institute of

THE SOCIO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (2001 - 2010)

1. Background

1. The Government of Viet Nam has been in the process of preparing the country's new Ten Year Socio-Economic Development Strategy for the period 2001-2010 and Five Year Development Plan 2001 – 2005 to be discussed and approved at the 9th National Party Congress tentatively scheduled for the end of the first quarter of 2001. This new development strategy will be aimed at mapping out the broad strategic directions, and the key policy and institutional reforms needed for Viet Nam to capitalize on emerging opportunities and meet emerging challenges over the coming five and ten years. Development objectives include high and sustainable economic growth, further international economic integration, industrialization and modernization, more knowledge-based development and a further substantial reduction of poverty.

2. In this context, the Minister of Planning & Investment requested in early 1999 that UNDP assist in strategic background research needed to support the Government in the formulation of the strategy as well as the co-ordination and mobilization of related inputs from the international donor community. UNDP subsequently mobilized technical and financial assistance from a number of other development partners, particularly AusAID, Swedish SIDA, and UNIDO.

3. In addition to strategic background research, a series of technical workshops and high level round table consultations with Viet Nam's key development partners was initiated to share ideas and suggestions for the new strategy, and to develop a common understanding and shared vision for the future development of Viet Nam.

4. The results of this assistance along with the sectoral strategies as prepared by the various line ministries will then be consolidated into an overall strategy paper. The drafting of this overall strategy is the responsibility of the Strategy Preparatory Group (SPG), headed by the Prime Minister. The Development Strategy Institute (DSI) of MPI acts as a facilitator and secretariat for the Strategy Preparatory Group.

5. During the latter half of 1999 and the first half of 2000, strategic policy-based research was carried out in four broad areas critical to Viet Nam's future development:

- Role of State and the Market
- Globalization and International Economic Integration
- Rural Development and Job Creation
- Science & Technology for Industrialization, Modernization and Knowledge-based Development

2. Past achievements

6. In August 1999 six research groups, combining national and international expertise, started working on strategy papers in the four key areas for which assistance had been requested. In addition to the four broad research areas outlined above, special attention was also devoted to