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CÔNG THÔNG TIN ĐIỆN TỬ ỦY BAN DÂN TỘC

Decision No.135/1998/QĐ-TTg of July 31,1998 to approve the program on socio-economic development in mountainous, deep-lying and remote communes with special difficulties

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THE PRIME MINISTER

- Pursuant to the Law on Organization of the Government of September 30, 1992;
- Pursuant to Resolution No. 4/1998/NQ-CP of the Government at its March 1998 regular meeting;
- At the proposals of the Minister-Chairman of the Committee for Ethnic Minorities and Mountainous Areas, the Minister of Planning and Investment, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs and the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development;

DECIDES:

Article I.- To approve the program on the socio- economic development in mountainous. deep-lying and remote communes, with special difficulties, with the Committee for Ethnic Minorities and Mountainous - Areas acting as its standing body, to assist, the Government in directing tile program implementation, which includes the following contents:

I. OBJECTIVES

1. General objective:

To quickly improve the material and spiritual life of the ethnic minority people in mountainous, deep-lying and remote communes with special difficulties: create conditions for these areas to overcome poverty, backwardness and under-development and integrate themselves into the overall national development, thus contributing to the maintenance of social order and safety, national security and defense.

2. Specific objectives:

a/ For the 1998-2000 period:

- There will be basically no households suffering from chronic hunger, with the number of poor households to be reduced by 4-5% annually.
- To initially supply the inhabitants with water for their daily life, attract the majority of school-age children into schools; to be able to control a number of dangerous diseases, to build roads to the centers of commune dusters in service of the people's life and economic activities: to help the majority of people to enjoy cultural performances and communication services.

b/ For the 2000-2005 period

- To reduce the percentage of poor households in communes with special difficulties to 25% by year 2005.

- To ensure the supply of sufficient water for the inhabitants daily life; attract over 70% of school-age children into schools to provide a great majority, of inhabitants with production experiences, scientific, cultural and social knowledge so that they can take initiative in applying such experiences and knowledge to their production and life; to be able to control most of dangerous social diseases: to build roads to the centers of commune clusters for motorized vehicles and in service of the people's daily life and economic activities; to boost the development of rural markets.

II- DIRECTING PRINCIPLES

- 1.** The socio-economic development in mountainous, deep-lying and remote communes with special difficulties must be, first of all, based on the promotion of the internal resources of every household and the community-based assistance and at the same time with the active support of the State in order to tap local land and labor resources as well as the natural, and socio-economic conditions in the areas, create new changes in the people 's production as well as material and spiritual life.
- 2.** The State shall create a legal environment and adopt socio-economic development policies, give priority to the allocation of the State budget, funding of the programs and projects located in the areas and capital sources donated by foreign countries and international organizations to communes with special difficulties.
- 3.** There should be comprehensive measures for implementing the program, first of all concentrating on the agricultural and forestial development building rural infrastructure and at the same time boosting the educational, medical, cultural and social development in the areas.
- 4.** The provinces and cities directly under the Central Government, the ministries and branches shall have to assist the communes covered by the program; socio - economic organizations, people's armed forces, socio-professional organizations, enterprises and the people of all strata throughout the country as well as overseas Vietnamese... are encouraged to make active contributions to and support the program implementation.

III. SCOPE OF THE PROGRAM

- 1.** The Central Government shall select 1,000 out of 1,715 communes facing difficulties (the list of these communes is enclosed herewith) of the districts with special difficulties so as to concentrate investment under this program. The remaining communes shall receive priority investment through various national target programs and other development projects and programs.
- 2.** The program shall be implemented from 1998 to 2005.

IV. TASKS OF THE PROGRAM

- 1.** To make a planning on the population re-distribution in places where it is so necessary, step by step rationally organize the daily life of the inhabitants in mountainous and rural villages and hamlets in areas where conditions permit, particularly in border and island communes, create conditions for the inhabitants to quickly, stabilize their production and life.
- 2.** To boost agricultural production and forestry in association with products processing and marketing so as to tap local natural resources and utilize the local labor force, create more opportunities of employment and income generation, stabilize the inhabitants' life and gradually, develop goods production.
- 3.** To develop the rural infrastructure in line with the production planning and the population re-distribution planning, first of all, the communications system; the drinking water supply systems; and

the power-supply systems in areas where conditions permit, including mini hydro-electric power stations.

4. To plan and build centers of commune clusters, focusing on the investment in building medical and educational establishments, commercial centers, handicraft and cottage-industrial establishments, production and service establishments, radio and television networks.

5. To train cadres for mountainous and rural communes and villages, help grassroots cadres to raise their administrative and economic management abilities in order to meet the local socio-economic development requirements.

Article 2. - Some major policies

1. Land policy:

The presidents of the provincial people's Committees shall direct the assignment of land and forests and the granting of land tenure certificates in association with the sedentarization and development of new economic zones, creating conditions for the people to have access to land for production and stabilize their life.

a/ Farmers' households in mountainous areas where there areas forest protection and planting projects shall be contracted to protect and zone off areas for forest regeneration in combination with additional plantings, be assigned land for planting protection and/or production forests under Decision N0. 661/1998/QĐ-TTg of July 29, 1998 of the Prime Minister on the "objectives, tasks, policies and organization of the implementation of the Project to plant five million hectares of new forests". The land area quotas to be assigned under contracts shall depend on the specific conditions of each locality, and be decided by the provincial People 's Committees.

b/ In areas where farmers have no land or too little land for agricultural and/or forestall production, the following solutions may, be applied;

- In provinces where land is still left waste and can be reclaimed for the development of agricultural and/or forestall production, the State shall support the investment in the land reclamation and the assignment of such land to inhabitants for production.

- To assign State-run and military agricultural farms and/or afforestation/logging camps based in the localities to receive landless people nomadic people and assign land to them under contracts for production.

- The provincial People's Committees shall adopt policies to encourage non-State agricultural and forestall organizations to receive and offer jobs to poor farmers' households.

The State shall earmark some investment capital for the expansion of several new economic zones, chiefly for receiving poor farmers' households who come to carry out production therein, including those in the Long Xuyen Quadrangle, the Central Highlands, Binh Thuan and other areas with conditions. To assign the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to assume the prime responsibility together with the Ministry of Planning and Investment and the Ministry of Defense for coordinating with the concerned provincial People's Committees in expeditiously performing this task.

2. Investment and credit policies:

a/ To give priority to investment in building infrastructure in service of agricultural and forestall

production. In places where irrigation works can help develop wet rice cultivation, the State shall allocate the budget capital to support the investment in building irrigation works. In a number of highland areas with special difficulties where there is no wet rice field, the State shall provide funding for developing terraced fields; helping the inhabitants to have conditions for on-the-spot food production.

b/ The State shall subsidize prices and transport freights of goods essential for the production and life of farmers' households living in communes with special difficulties according to Decree N0.20/1998/ND-CP of March 31, 1998 of the Government.

c/ Households which are assigned land and/or forests for growing industrial plants, fruit trees, specialty trees, herbal plants and forestall production shall enjoy the policy- stipulated by the Prime Minister in his Decision No. 661/1998/QĐ-TTg of July 29, 1998 on the "objectives, tasks, policy and organization of the implementation of the Project to plant five million hectares of new forests".

d/ The national target programs and relevant programs within the areas should give priority to investment in this program. The households covered by this program shall be given priority to borrow capital from the bank for the poor and other preferential credit sources for production development.

e/ The presidents of the People's Committees of the provinces covered by this program shall concentrate on directing and mobilizing various local resources for the program implementation. Apart from the source of investment capital for the overall development of the whole region, the State shall also give financial support for performing the following tasks.

- Building of the centers of commune clusters which shall be financed by the capital source of the national program on hunger elimination and poverty alleviation.

- Development of the traffic network: each district shall be provide explosives, cement, steel and iron for building subterranean passage, bridges, culverts as well as food for the construction of ruml roads.

- Construction of power projects: in areas where conditions permit, the State shall support the investment in building the electric transmission lines to the centers of commune clusters according to the planning and the investment capability in each period. In areas where conditions permit the construction of mini-hydro-electric projects, the State shall support the inhabitants part of the expenditures and lend credits for development investment.

- In places where exit difficulties in the drinking water supply: the State shall support part of expenditures for building a number of water supply points suitable to the population distribution planning.

g/ The State encourages the establishment of inter-family terms or groups for mutual assistance in production and daily life, and efficient use of rural credit sources.

h/ The people in communes with special difficulties shall enjoy, free health-care and medical treatment at State medical establishments under Decree No. 95-CP of August 27, 1994 of the Government.

3. Human resource development policies:

a/ The State shall allocate funding for the training and fostering of cadres for mountainous and rural communes, villages and hamlets so as to raise their capability of organization and direction production management, administrative management and the capability of managing and using rural credit sources to meet the local socio-economic development requirements.

b/ Pupils in communes with special difficulties who go to school shall be provided with textbooks

stationery and exempt from school fees.

c/ In each of communes with special difficulties under the program, several farmers' households which achieve good production results shall be selected for training in skills to conduct the agricultural and forestall production promotion work in the localities and enjoy allowances from the funding for agricultural and forestall promotion work.

d/ The State shall allocate funding for opening job training courses for ethnic minority children so as to tap local potentials, develop non-agricultural production and business lines for the purpose of income generation and improvement of the living standards.

4. Tasks of various levels and branches and support and contributions of individuals and organizations inside and outside the country for the program implementation.

- The steering committee for the program implementation shall discuss in detail with the provinces and cities directly under the Central Government where conditions permit, which, in the intimate future are Ha Noi, Hai Phong, Quang Ninh, Ho Chi Minh City, Dong Nai, Ba Ria - Vung Tau, Da Nang and Khanh Hoa, and assign them to directly assist a number of communes targeted by the program. focusing on such contents as giving financial support for the infrastructure construction, mobilizing their local cadres to visit and assist these communes...

- To assign each ministry or branch at the central level to assist a number of communes and at the same time assign each of State enterprises in the branch to assist a number of communes. The ministries, branches and enterprises shall work out plans to save their expenditures and mobilize voluntary contributions from their employees and workers so as to have funding to support these communes.

- To assign the Ministry of Defense to build new economic zones in areas where condition permit. sponsor and receive about 100,000 households to settle down in waste land areas, border and island areas.

- The State shall encourage socio-political organizations, socio-professional organizations and people of all strata throughout the country as well as overseas Vietnamese to support and assist the implementation of this program.

5. Tax policies

Trading in agricultural and forestall products and goods catering for production and life of the inhabitants in communes with special difficulties shall be entitled to preferential tax policies as stipulated in Decree No. 20/1998/ND-CP of March 31, 1998 of the Government and other tax policies which promote investment in accordance with current regulations.

Article 3.- Capital sources and their use

1. The investment capital for implementing the program shall be mobilized from the following sources;

- The State budget capital (including the capital donated by foreign governments and international organizations).

- Credit loans.

- Capital mobilized from organizations and population communities,

2. To assign the Ministry of Planning and Investment to assume the prime responsibility and coordinate with the Ministry of Finance, the State Bank of Vietnam, the Committee for Ethnic Minorities and Mountainous Areas and concerned ministries and branches in working out solutions to balance various capital sources in annual plans before submitting them to the Government for decision and making investment in different projects to implement the program.

Article 4- Organization of implementation

1. The Central Steering Committee for the "Program on the socio-economic Development in mountainous, deep-lying and remote communes with special difficulties" shall direct the ministries and functional branches to implement the program according to their respective functions and tasks and direct the provincial boards for the program implementation and management to formulate specific projects then submit them to the competent branches and levels for evaluation and approval according to current regulations, and make annual plans and organize the effective implementation of these projects in the provinces.

2. The annual plans on the program implementation shall be drawn up by the program implementation shall be drawn up by the provincial People's Committees as a separate part of the socio-economic development plans of the provinces and submitted to the Government, the Ministry of Finance, the concerned ministries and branches and the Central Steering Committee for the Program on the socio-economic development in mountainous, deep-lying and remote communes with special difficulties shall base themselves on their respective functions and tasks to submit to the Prime Minister for decision the investment capital allocated for the program, which shall be included separately in the annual plans of the localities and managed and used by localities for the right purpose and target beneficiaries and in conformity with the plans so as to ensure the effective implementation of the program.

Article 5. This Decision takes effect 15 days after its signing.

The head of the Steering Committee for the Program on the socio-economic development in mountainous, deep-lying and remote communes with special difficulties, the ministers, the heads of the ministerial-level agencies, the heads of the agencies attached to the Government and the presidents of the People's Committees of the provinces and cities directly under the Government shall have to implement this Decision.

**Prime Minister
Phan Van Khai**

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