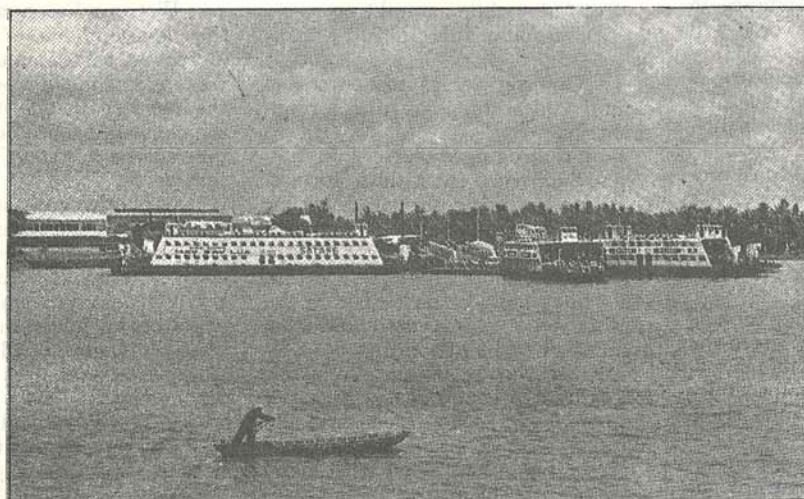


# DEVELOPING OCCUPATIONS AND SERVICES IN VIETNAMESE RURAL AREAS TODAY

## 1. Outline of occupations and services in rural areas

Since the country implemented the Party's *đổi mới* policy, especially the Resolution of the fifth conference of the Party's executive committee "Continue Socio-economic Reformation and Development in Rural Areas", occupations and services in the countryside have step by step restored and developed, occupational villages and communes have been established in various forms and sizes. The past surveys showed the following features:

- Strong points:
- + Traditional



handicraft villages have resumed and grown in many areas throughout the country, become economic centers and produced significant effects on the restructuring of economy and labor of that area in the direction of industrialization and modernization.

+ The structure of occupations and services in rural areas is diverse, along with the restoration

of hundreds of traditional occupational villages such as textile, embroidery, art handicraft, forging, making conic hats...numerous new occupations have taken shape such as processing agro-products, husking rice, mechanical engineering, transport and repair services...all have good contribution to production and life.

+ The scope of occupations and services in rural areas increasingly expanded and developed with the establishment of occupational villages and communes...

+ The development of occupations and services has changed the relation between industry and agriculture, feature and level of farming production, given rise to the need of using machinery and liberated rural labor.

+ Many rural economic sectors have actively taken part in the development of occupations and services, in which the foundation of development was households...

- Shortcomings:

+ Rural occupations and services

were still of too small size, progressed slowly and unevenly and their scope was narrow. So they did not yet attract much redundant labor and make proper labor division. As a result, potentials and resources have not been tapped to turn out valuable goods.

+ Rural occupations and services still have low level of technique, equipment and technology. Most of products were thus of low quality and mainly sold in rural markets where purchasing power was limited, this caused slow turnover of capital use and curbed production and business.

+ The development of rural occupations and services was spontane-

ous; the Government and relevant branches did not have effective assistance and guidance; the system of commodity distribution was not available.

+ The progress of rural occupations and services was still lacking in necessary conditions and policies such as information about markets, training courses for rural youth, capital, clear protection policies for home made goods, incentives to enable enterprises to do long-term business in rural areas, proper attention of levels and branches from central to local governments to the rural production and business.

## 2. Direction and measures to improve occupations and services in rural areas

- Direction:

Diversify occupations with various technical levels and organizational scale in accordance with characteristic and condition of each area to attract as much redundant labor as possible. Pay attention to main contents as follows:

+ Set up processing establishments in combination with materials areas, appropriate size and technology; meet the requirement of raising goods quality, lowering prices and satisfy the market demand in line with items and materials.

+ Develop medium- and small-size processing industries to make semi-finished products, preserve materials and process goods for local consumption and plants in big cities.

+ Establish key industries for export and gradually gain a niche in domestic and foreign markets; make comprehensive investments to increase export earnings

with the aim to import materials and machinery for farming production and industrialization of the countryside.

+ Improve traditional occupations and create new ones including handicraft, industries producing consumer goods, exports; exploiting and processing non-farming materials...

+ Increase services in terms of quantity and quality to meet requirements of production and life.

+ Develop sectors of building socio-economic infrastructure, step by step civilize and modernize rural areas.

- Measures:



+ Make an uniform and suitable plan of high feasibility on development of occupations and services, regard it as the best way to create jobs and increase incomes in rural areas. Step by step restructure occupations, plants, animals to overcome big imbalance between labor and capital goods; redundant labor and low incomes; farming production and processing; goods transport and consumption...At the same time, link the restoration and expansion of traditional occupations with the creation of new occupations in the basic direction such as: using local materials with simple technique; employing numerous laborers; meeting requirements of local production and life; expanding cooperation and joint venture with other localities; and building medium- and small-size businesses.

+ Create favorable environment for businesses and combine rural markets with domestic and foreign ones. At first, surpass the obstacles to sales of agro-products, supply timely information about markets, prices and items to help farmers with planting, breeding, producing and doing business most effectively. On the other hand, create local consumer markets such as building food export companies, animal food processing establishments and so on. Thereby encourage everyone to produce more and more agro-products and other consumer goods. Avoid traders' lowering of prices of farmers' products.

+ Develop medium- and small-size enterprises in rural areas with the aim to create many jobs, settle redundancy in agriculture and tap rural resources. Medium- and small-size businesses in rural areas still have too small capital, backward technique and poor facilities and a great distance from big markets. Most of them were lacking in capital and operated perfunctorily...Therefore, the Government as well as local authorities should settle fundamental issues such as: encouraging rural businesses to develop in various forms and scopes; financing; investing in infrastructure; developing rural markets and giving training courses in skill, management and technology to workers...

+ Combine the development of occupations and services with that of farming and industrial production. Build establishments producing manual tools for agriculture, processing agro-products; provide necessary services for farming such as fertilizer, insecticide, machinery repair, transport. On the other hand, rural occupations and services cannot progress fast if they are separated from the



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industrial development. Consequently, localities should establish satellite businesses for plants of the big cities with a view to taking their own advantages of labor and materials.

+ Enhance the program "rural credit", create and accumulate capital from many sources, firstly from households. Give tax cut to farmers who make handicrafts with the aim to encourage them in their business. At the same time, local governments should make favorable policies to attract investors. On the other hand, make the best use of humanity aids for socio-economic development by in-

creasing occupations and services. Thereby set up specialized areas which produce farming and non-farming commodities with a view to making proper labor division.

+ Make appropriate policies on training, stimulate technology transfer, consultancy in the development of occupations and services. Due to low living standard and educational level, most of family businesses still faced with many difficulties in approaching market mechanism, applying new technologies, organizing the process of production and business...As a result, the Government and relevant authorities should open training courses to help laborers have jobs and earn high incomes. Concurrently, the Government should soon make policies and regulations to encourage organizations and individuals to transfer technology to farmers and help them initiate and implement projects of developing occupations and services.

+ Build infrastructure in the countryside such as networks of transport and communications, power and so on. This is an important precondition for the development of rural occupations and services. Poor infrastructure is putting big obstacles to the development of occupations and services in the countryside. It increases prices of commodities, reduces competitiveness, and limits capacity of marketing, and applying new technologies as well.

#### Reference:

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