

1. Flood in the Mekong Delta is a natural and cyclic event. It actually brings benefits to the delta such as reducing soil aluminous degree, helping balance the ecological environment, fertilizing soil and increasing crop productivity. However, it also causes adverse socio-economic effects on the inhabitants in the Mekong Delta, especially serious damages in the high flood seasons. The development of project on building plastic houses and bridges has important meanings in terms of economics, politics and society. They will help the people reduce losses and soon stabilize life after the flood season.

air-filled floats (0.75m³ each) which can keep a weight of 1.5 tonnes afloat, and both are placed at a distance of 2 meters. These floats can be manufactured with a larger volume from 1 to 2 m³ each to lift a higher weight. They are very suitable to plastic houses because their structure is lighter than other materials.

- Plastic houses have to create convenient accommodation in line with social development, and are easy to fix and remove. They have also to facilitate living habits of the Mekong Delta.

- These houses can be expanded when needed and fixed in all

bamboo to be replaced. When implementing this project, the plastic sector should give attention to the following features:

- They are used for walkers, bicycles, motorcycles, so their width is only 0.5 to 2 meters.

- They have to secure basic technical specifications for easy installation.

- They have to withstand severe natural conditions including rain, sunlight, aluminous water and flood.

- They must be light and compact for easy transportation of materials and can be installed in dif-

CONSTRUCTION OF PLASTIC HOUSES AND BRIDGES IN THE MEKONG DELTA

by MEcon. NGUYỄN MINH TUẤN

The HCMC People's Committee and the Service of Science, Technology and Environment in collaboration with the city Plastic Association have gathered plastic manufacturers and experts in the Construction Association, the HCMC Technology University and Economics University to implement the project.

Through research and investigation, we see when realizing the project of building plastic houses for the Mekong Delta, the plastic sector should pay attention to the following issues:

- Prices of plastic houses for the Mekong Delta must be low in accordance with the residents' income and living standard. At the same time, there are many kinds of houses with different prices for their selection.

- Plastic houses can withstand floods. When necessary, they can become floating houses. Recently, the Union of Biochemical Technology Production (under the National Center for Natural Science and Technology) has tested successfully the model "anti-flood houses." Houses can be buoyed up by PVC, PE

kinds of terrain.

- They must have different designs in accordance with the people's habits and tastes. At present, many companies have introduced various kinds of plastic houses with different materials in French, American, Malaysian, Singaporean styles. They are sold for VND6.5 -33 million. In our opinion, these kinds of houses and prices are appropriate to the people's income and living standard.

The demand for plastic houses will be very high in future. According to a survey in some provinces, in the flood area, the solidified houses account for only 20%. In the Cà Mau Province alone, the provincial government has suggested the HCMC to build 1,000 plastic houses for charity. As a result, this model has been accepted in the Mekong Delta.

2. In addition to plastic houses, plastic bridges which are waterproof, light, easy to fix and remove, constructed fast, and durable may replace wooden and bamboo bridges in the Mekong Delta. According to statistics, there are 350,000 to 400,000 bridges made of wood and

ferent kinds of terrain.

3. There should be integrated measures to implement the project building plastic houses and bridges as follows:

- The Government should determine the strategy for developing the plastic house and bridge project based on collaboration between the plastic sector and others, research institutes and provincial authorities in the Mekong Delta.

- The plastic sector needs close cooperation between manufacturers with research institutes and universities in the project implementation.

- The plastic sector is required to provide materials in line with technical specifications. At the same time, it has to enhance marketing activities on plastic houses and bridges such as exhibition, introduction, and trial installation in the Mekong Delta.

- There should be collaboration between the plastic sector and banks to give soft loans for buying plastic houses. Local governments should offset a part of its budget for carrying out the project. ■