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## Human development in Vietnam: Realities and prospects

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### ABSTRACT

Humans are both the target and the driving force behind the socio-economic development of each country in all times. Therefore, during the process of leading the revolution, Vietnam always considers people as the most precious capital, the goal and the driving force of the revolution, as the decisive factor for the success or failure of the revolution, especially in the process of international integration with a new comprehensive and profound awareness of both theory and practice in all fields, awareness of the position and role of human is also becoming more complete and profound. Vietnam always puts people at the center of the development process, that is the object, target and driving force of all socio-economic activities. Currently, Vietnam has become a low-middle income country and has reaped many achievements in human development. However, the reality still has many limitations and weaknesses, requiring the Government to have appropriate solutions and policies to promote human development that meet the requirements of sustainable development in Vietnam in the coming time.

**Keywords:** Human, sustainable development, Viet Nam.

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### Introduction

In the development process of human history, one of the factors that have a decisive role for the existence and development of society is human, human resource. This has been V.I. Lenin, affirms: "The leading production force of all humanity is the employee, the worker" (Lenin, 2005). Therefore, it can be said that human development aims to develop perfect intellectual, skill, ethical, spiritual, and physical values to become employees with the necessary competencies and qualities. Meeting the requirements of rapid and sustainable socio-economic development of each country is a fundamental and urgent task. Recognizing that problem, in the revolution, Vietnam has identified: "People are the center of development strategy, at the same time, are development subjects" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2011).

During more than 30 years of reform, Vietnam has made important achievements in human development that meet the country's sustainable development requirements. However, besides the achievements, there are shortcomings and shortcomings in building and developing people, requires the Government to have appropriate solutions and policies to promote human development in Vietnam to meet the country's sustainable development in the coming time.

## **Methods**

*Purpose:* Assessing human development in Vietnam by analyzing achievements in recent years compared to other Southeast Asian countries, as well as the issues posed to human development satisfying Vietnam's sustainable development needs, thereby requiring the Government to have appropriate solutions and policies to promote human development in Vietnam to meet the country's sustainable development requirements in the coming time.

*Methodology:* A systematic approach is used to analyze the situation of human development in Vietnam. The advantages and outcomes achieved for the Vietnamese human development meeting sustainable development requirements is assessed and described with the help of objective data from officially published and statistical sources.

*Main Findings:* Human development in Vietnam in recent years has been highly appreciated by the international community, because in the process of socio-economic development, Vietnam always considers people the most precious capital, the goal and driving force of the revolution, especially in the process of international integration with a new comprehensive and profound awareness of both theory and practice in all fields, awareness of the position and role of the person is also more complete and profound. Vietnam always puts people at the center of the development process, as the object, target and driving force of all socio-economic activities. Currently, Vietnam has become a low-middle-income country and has reaped many achievements in human development. However, the reality has many limitations and weaknesses, requiring the Government to have appropriate solutions and policies to promote human development in Vietnam to meet the requirements of sustainable development of the country in the coming time.

*Applications:* The research results can be used to make recommendations for human development policy making to meet the requirements of sustainable development in Vietnam in the coming time.

*Novelty/Originality:* The study has looked at the problems posed to human development, meeting the requirements of sustainable development in Vietnam, and then proposed a number of policy recommendations to develop Vietnamese people to meet the country's sustainable development requirements.

## **Results and discussions**

### **Opinion on Vietnamese human development**

According to Marx, the degree to which society creates people, people also create society at that level. In the Communist Party Manifesto, C. Marx and F. Engels predicted that: the future society will be a union, in which the freedom of each person is the condition for the

freedom of all. They are a product of history, at the same time also a contributor to historical creation and it is in the process of national construction that new people will appear and full-grown.

Inheriting the theoretical achievements of Marxism-Leninism about man and man-building, Ho Chi Minh affirmed: "To have socialism, first of all, it is necessary to have socialist people" (Ho, 2011). Considering people both the goal and the driving force of the revolution, of social development as a consistent thought throughout the life of Ho Chi Minh's revolutionary activities. According to Ho Chi Minh, building people is to pay attention to all aspects of life, from material to spirit. People must eat well, dress warmly, and receive education; enjoy freedom, happiness and full development. These opinions have always been creatively applied by our Party in the process of human construction and development in the renovation period and consistently expressed in the Documents.

Platform Country building in transition to socialism (Complement and Development 2011) affirmed: "People are the center of the development strategy, and at the same time, the subject of development. Respect and protect human rights, associate human rights with the rights and interests of the nation, the country and the people's ownership. Caring for building Vietnamese people rich in patriotism, sense of ownership and civic responsibility; have good knowledge, good health, and good labor; live with culture, gratitude; have a genuine international spirit" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2011).

Central Resolution 9, session XI on the construction and development of Vietnamese culture and people defines specific goals: Care for the comprehensive development of Vietnamese people, focusing on fostering patriotism, national pride, morality, lifestyle and personality; make changes in awareness, sense of respect for the law, All Vietnamese people have a deep understanding, pride, and honor national history and culture... There are solutions to overcome the limitations of Vietnamese people. Regarding the current Vietnamese human values orientation, the Resolution clearly states the qualities: patriotism, compassion, gratitude, honesty, solidarity, industriousness, creativity.

Political report submitted to the XII Congress of the Party emphasized: "Building a fully developed Vietnamese person must become a development goal. Conclusion and building a system of cultural values and human standards of Vietnam in the period of industrialization, modernization and international integration; creating environment and conditions for personality, ethical, intellectual, creative capacity, physical, spiritual, social responsibility, civic obligations, sense of law observance" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2016).

Thus, the thought about human development of the Party and State of Vietnam is shown in the following contents: Human is both the subject and the target, the driving force of the development process. Therefore, human development is an important content of a revolutionary career with goals: building Vietnamese people to develop comprehensively on

the basis of inheriting, promoting traditional values, fostering new values; overcoming the limitations of Vietnamese traditional people, meeting the renovation requirements, suitable to each stage of national development; Vietnamese people building is a process closely linked to the processes of economic development, culture, education - training, health care and environmental protection, social security implementation.

### **Human development meets the requirements of sustainable development in Vietnam**

After more than 30 years of renovation, Vietnamese human development has made positive changes, achieving many results. Although the economic growth rate is not yet high, the Government of Vietnam is still interested in implementing social policies, improving people's lives, showing:

*The Human Development Index (HDI) goes up:* Vietnam's HDI has increased significantly after more than 30 years of reform, from 0.439 (1990) to 0.559 (1995), 0.687 (2000), 0.714 (2005), 0.718 (2006,) 0.725 (2007) and 0.752 (2009). Since 2010, the method of calculating the HDI index of UNDP has changed: i) Knowledge index: replace criteria for adult literacy rate with average years of schooling and expected number of years of schooling; ii) Income index: replace the criterion of GDP per capita with GNI per capita. According to this new calculation, the HDI of most countries has decreased and Vietnam is no exception. Thus, regardless of how, Vietnam's HDI still tends to increase. The average growth rate of Vietnam in the period 1990-2018 was 1.36%, while that of Thailand was 1.03%, Indonesia was 1.07%, the Philippines was 0.67% and Malaysia was 0.8% (UNDP, 2020).

Vietnam's HDI ranking is also on the rise. In 2010, Vietnam ranked 128/187 countries in the world, 33/47 countries with average HDI. In 2014, Vietnam rose to 116/188 countries and ranked 10/38 countries in the group of countries with average HDI. By 2018, Vietnam had risen to 02/37 countries in the group of countries with the average HDI and HDI ranked 118 out of 189 countries in the world (UNDP, 2020). Vietnam only needs an additional 0.007 points to be upgraded to High Human Development and is ranked among the 40 developing countries that have achieved greater progress than expected in human development in recent years.

*The component indexes of HDI have increased quite rapidly:* Health index: increased from 67.6 years in 1980 to 75.3 years in 2018. The number of hospital beds increased from 192.3 thousand beds in 1990 to 308.4 thousand beds in 2018, and corresponding to the number of doctors increased from 31 thousand to 84.8 thousand. (General Statistics Office, 2019:814). Income index: GNI per capita increased from 850 USD in 1990 to 6,220 USD in 2018 (PPP calculation). Knowledge index: Expected years of schooling increased from 7.8 years (1990) to 12.7 years (2018) and the average years of schooling increased from 4.0 years (1990), to 8,2 years (2018) (UNDP, 2020).

*Increasing the number of localities with very high, high, medium high HDI and rapidly decreasing the number of localities with medium, low, and low HDI:* In 1999, only Ba Ria-Vung Tau province was in the group with very high HDI ( $HDI > 0.80$ ), by 2012, Ho Chi Minh City and Da Nang were added. In 2004, the country had 2 provinces in the group with high HDI ( $0.75 < HDI < 0.80$ ), Ho Chi Minh City and Da Nang, by 2012 there were 12 provinces and cities in this group.

The increase in the number of provinces and cities in the group with high average HDI ( $0.70 < HDI < 0.75$ ) is also very significant. In 1999 there were only 4 provinces and cities, in 2004 this number was 7 and in 2012 it increased to 35 provinces and cities. Therefore, by 2012, Vietnam had 50/63 provinces and cities in the group with high average HDI or higher.

The number of provinces in the low HDI group ( $HDI < 0.50$ ), the medium-low group ( $0.50 < HDI < 0.60$ ) and the medium group ( $0.60 < HDI < 0.70$ ) has decreased fast. In 2004, there were 53 provinces and cities in the above groups, by 2012, there were no provinces in the low HDI, 1 province in the low medium HDI group and 11 provinces in the medium HDI group (in 2004 it was 47) (UNDP, 2016).

*Increase the proportion of the population in the high and middle income groups, and reduce the proportion of the poor and near poor:* Proportion of population in the high income group in 2004 was 3.4%, in 2012 increased to 7.0%; the upper middle class group increased from 2.7% in 2004 to 6.7% in 2012; the lower middle class group increased rapidly from 28.4% in 2004 to 47.8% in 2012. The proportions of the poor and near-poor population gradually decreased, from 26.7% and 38.8% in 2004 to 12.4% and 26.1% in 2012, respectively. In 2018, Vietnam had 13% of the population in the middle class by world standards. This class is growing rapidly, growing by more than 20% between 2010 and 2017. From 2014 to 2018, an average of 1.5 million Vietnamese people joined the global middle class each year (Nhu, 2018). The proportion of the poor declined rapidly from 58% (1993) to 28.9% (2002) and 5.8% (2016). The rate of multidimensional poor households also decreased rapidly from 9.2% (in 2016) to 7.8% (in 2017), 6.8% (year 2018) and is estimated to be about 3.73 - 4.23% (year 2019).

*The gender gap index has made great progress:* According to UNDP Human Development Report 2019, Vietnam's gender inequality index is 0.314, ranking 68/189 countries in the world. Compared to other countries in the ASEAN region, Vietnam is second only to Singapore (corresponding figures are 0.065; 11/189 and Malaysia are 0.274, 58/189) and above Thailand (0.377; 84/189); Philippines (0.425; 98/189); Indonesia (0.451; 103/189); Laos (0.463; 110/189) and Cambodia (0.474; 114/189) (UNDP, 2020).

The proportion of female National Assembly deputies has continuously increased from 17.7% in the 1987-1992 term to 18.84% in the 1992-1997 term, to 26.2% in the 1997-2002 term and to 27.3% in the 2002 term- 2007. The 2007-2011 term decreased slightly to 25.8%

(ranked 31st in the world), the 2011-2016 term was 24.4% (the 2nd highest in the region and 43rd in the world). The proportion of women in People's Councils at provincial level is 25.2%, at district level is 24.6%, at commune level is 21.7%. In 2018, the proportion of women participating in the National Assembly was 26.7%, while that of Thailand was 5.3%; Malaysia 15.8%; Indonesia 19.8%, Cambodia 19.3%, Myanmar 10.2% (UNDP, 2020).

*Social security achieved many good results.* In the process of socio-economic development, our Party and State pay great attention to people, especially the poor, and are considered as one of the typical countries in the international public opinion that present the millennium goals on hunger eradication and poverty reduction. According to national standards, the percentage of poor households has decreased from 30% in 1992 to 5.8% in 2016; According to the multidimensional poverty line, the poverty rate has decreased from 14.2% (2010) to 6.8% (2019), particularly in poor districts, it has decreased by 4% (General Statistics Office, 2020). According to the Government's report on the results of implementing the 2017 socio-economic development plan; socio-economic development plan in 2018, up to now, most of social policy beneficiaries, children under 6, the poor, ethnic minorities in disadvantaged areas have had health insurance. International; issuing health insurance cards for over 34.3 million people, supporting the purchase of health insurance cards for over 15.1 million people. The political determination in the struggle to reduce poverty of our Party and State has created conditions for all people to enjoy the fruits of economic growth, thereby rising out of poverty, improving their material and fine lives.

In the process of development and integration, Vietnam implementing social insurance is one of the key tasks of the socio-economic development process, ensuring the rights and obligations of millions of workers. dynamic. With the high economic growth rate, it has contributed to the expansion of social insurance participants. The social insurance system is completed with increasingly abundant content and forms, in order to share and provide practical assistance to people participating in social insurance. Subjects participating in social insurance increased steadily every year, as of October 31, 2019, the total number of people participating in compulsory social insurance was 14,915 million, reaching 97.5% of the plan.

The above results show the efforts of the Government of Vietnam in giving priority to the comprehensive human development ensure the necessary conditions for each person to have favorable opportunities in accessing educational, medical, cultural, social services and essential issues that best ensure the best value of human rights.. Assessing the successes in building and developing people 30 years of renovation, the Communist Party of Vietnam emphasized: "Performing the task of building people to meet the requirements of the period of industrialization, modernization and international integration has had important changes: Associate the task of building culture and people with the task of national construction and development; building cultural environment with building people; initially forming new human values with qualities of social responsibility, civic awareness, democracy, initiative, creativity, aspiration to rise" (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2016). These are general

assessments of Vietnam's human development to meet the requirements of sustainable development, showing progress in human care and development. The formation of the generation of Vietnamese people with personality and intelligence is an important foundation to promote the development of economic, political, social, security and defense fields.

### **Some problems posed to human development that meet the requirements of sustainable development in Vietnam**

*Competitiveness and labor productivity are still limited.* If taking a scale of 10, the quality of human resources in Vietnam is only 3.79 points, ranked 11/12 Asian countries participating in the World Bank's ranking (UNDP, 2016). Vietnam's average labor productivity is only half that of ASEAN countries, 10 times lower than Indonesia, 30 times in Thailand, and 135 times Japan, making Vietnam's competitiveness index on the international arena decline continuously last year (Nhu, 2018). This is a big challenge as we integrate more and more deeply.

*Viet Nam's human development achievements have tended to slow down in recent years.* The growth rate of Vietnam's HDI index in the period 1990-2018 continuously decreased (1990 - 2000: 1.99%/year, 2000-2010: 1.23%/year, 2010-2018: 0.74%/year) and average 1.36%/year, lower than that of some countries in the region in the same period such as Laos (1.49% / year), Cambodia (1.49% / year), Myanmar (1.85% / year), China (1.48%/ year) (Tri, 2020). In the ASEAN region, in 1995, Vietnam's HDI ranked 7/10 in 2000 and 2003 ranked 6th out of 10, from 2005 to 2018 it fell to 7/11 (just above Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar and East Timor).

*Vietnam's improvement in the ranking of HDI has been slower than that of some regional countries.* From 1980 up to now, Vietnam's HDI has had certain improvements, but its rankings have not changed much. In 1980, Vietnam's HDI was slightly higher than China and equivalent to Thailand, but in 2014 China was classified into the group of countries with high HDI (0.727, ranked 90/188), Thailand also similar (0.726, rated 93/188); while Vietnam is still in the group with an average HDI (0.676, ranked 116/188) (The, 2016). In 2018, Thailand rose to the top of the group of countries with high HDI index (0.765, ranked 77/198), China reached 0.758, ranked 85/189; while Vietnam is only at the top of the group of countries with the average HDI (0.693, ranked 118/189, 41 levels behind Thailand and 33 levels) (UNDP, 2020).

*Social Security has a lot of improvement, but has not met the needs of the people.* Poverty reduction still has limitations, such as unsustainable poverty reduction, the highest risk of falling back into poverty is in the ethnic minority and remote areas. The most remote area is ethnic minorities (some districts and communes account for up to 50%) (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2016: 86). The greater the difference in living and cultural enjoyment between the urban and suburban people; The rich-poor gap tends to increase rapidly, however, according

to the General Statistics Office (2019), Group 1 (20% of the lowest-income people) is about 40,5 USD/month, Group 5 (20% of people) has the highest income) is 405 USD/month. The income gap coefficient between group 1 and group 5 tends to widen by 10 times (In 1995 it was 6.99 times, in 2006 it was 8.4 times, in 2013 it was 9.55 times) (Tri, 2020). This shows that the average income in Vietnam between the richest and the poorest groups has not improved, but tends to increase due to unequal sharing of opportunities and achievements of economic growth, which is beneficial for the group who already have a better life. These limitations have been identified by our Party: “The risk of falling back into poverty is still high; rich-poor gap between regions and population groups is large. The percentage of poor and near-poor households in remote areas, especially among ethnic minorities is still high (up to 50% in some districts and communes). A number of policies on social security and poverty reduction are overlapping, inconsistent, not effective and not encouraging the poor to rise out of poverty” (Communist Party of Vietnam, 2016).

Social insurance still faces challenges with the rate of participation in social insurance accounts for less than 1/3 of the labor force; The rate of participation in unemployment insurance is also quite low. Laborers in the formal sector have social insurance. The coverage of social insurance is low, though it has improved in recent years. According to statistics of Vietnam Social Insurance, in 2011 there were 10.2 million people participating in social insurance, in 2017 there were 13.8 million people participating in, in 2019 there were 14.5 million people participating. However, the rate of social insurance coverage is only about a quarter of the labor force aged 15 and over, according to GSO, although the coverage has increased from 20.3% in 2011 to 41.1% in 2019. This means that a large part of the labor force has not yet participated in social insurance and will not benefit from current and future social insurance after reaching retirement age. Moreover, the number of people participating in voluntary social insurance accounts for only a very small percentage of the total number of employees participating in social insurance. After 10 years of implementing the voluntary social insurance policy, only about 300,000 people participated. Meanwhile, the informal sector now has about 40 million employees. This shows that the employees are not aware of the benefits of participating in voluntary social insurance, voluntary social insurance is not attractive enough or the employees can't afford to pay social insurance voluntarily.

*In addition, the crime situation in the youth age is complicated and tends to increase.* According to a summary of the authorities, in the 2000s and earlier, the age when students and students committed acts of theft, disturbing public order, intentionally causing non-dangerous injuries, the In recent years, the nature and extent of crime are more dangerous, violations are diverse and complex. In particular, there is a segment of teenagers, students and students participating in criminal gangs and gangs that use violence with the nature of thugs, causing serious consequences. In Hanoi, from 2008 to 2011, it discovered and handled 968 people in the age group who violated the law. In 2011, 110 subjects were discovered and handled (Women Leadership Development, 2020). High crime rates among adolescents and adolescents, of which many cases of brutal acts cause particularly serious consequences. The



criminals are younger and younger and the offense is also more serious. That is the challenge that needs to be solved in the coming time.

### **Some solutions for human development that meet the requirements of sustainable development in Vietnam**

From the above analysis, to promote human development and gradually narrow the human development gap between Vietnam and advanced countries in the region and in the world, the Government should pay attention to these major solutions:

*First*, implementing inclusive growth policies. As required by harmonized growth model, policies need to be perfected in two directions: (i) Make all classes of the population in society participate in the economic growth process to benefit directly from the growth results; (ii) Done in time the redistribution of growth results among population strata, regions and regions of the country to create a positive and equitable move in social progress for people the redistribution of growth results among population strata, regions and regions of the country to create a positive and equitable move in social progress for people.

In this direction, it is necessary to pay attention to a number of policies to create equal opportunities for people to participate in economic growth: strongly develop the connecting infrastructure system, especially the transport and information systems between key regions, attract investment to remote and remote areas - where labor is supplied, eliminate isolation potential for currently underdeveloped regions; Harmonious combination of redistribution through rational regulation of income among the population classes with the construction and consolidation of a multi-tier social security system. In the current specific situation of Vietnam, the objects of social security are very diverse, so it is necessary to build, consolidate and increasingly consolidate the multi-tier social security policy system; Increase the provision of educational, health and social services in remote areas so that they have the knowledge or skills to participate directly in income generation.

*Second*, improve the policy of distributing the results of economic growth to the areas related to people: (i) Using the achievement of economic growth to improve aspects related to human and social development. The process of economic growth must be controlled regularly and closely by social development indicators, of which the focus is on hunger eradication, poverty reduction, social equity, job creation, and related to comprehensive human development (such as education, health, physical education - sports, culture - art); (ii) The economic growth policies associated with creating increasingly fair conditions for all people about development opportunities. This involves implementing policies that enable all people to participate in the realization of economic growth; implement policies to fully utilized and ensure that all have the opportunity to participate in economic processes that generate growth; (iii) Achievement of economic growth is always associated with improving living standards for the masses, through policies of income redistribution and redistribution. A

human growth model requires the effective use of two modes of income distribution: functional income distribution, That is, the income of each person is determined on the basis of the amount and quality of the resources that they contribute to the generation of income for the economy; income redistribution, in the direct form (taxes, subsidies) and indirectly (through the policy of access to public services) to contribute to regulating income among the population strata of the society; (iv) Promote the development, adjustment and improvement of social security mechanisms and policies, specifically: The Party and State need to drastically incorporate multidimensional poverty reduction goals into the content of the national socio-economic development strategy. Direct provinces and cities to develop detailed plans for annual poverty reduction programs and policies according to a specific roadmap with practical solutions, close to the assistance needs of the poor in specific conditions of the province or city, avoid burning phase; classify poor and near poor households objectively and accurately to have appropriate support measures.

*Third*, building a more inclusive and fairer social security system. This group of policies will help all citizens have access to job opportunities, while contributing to growth, while benefiting more from growth, thereby reducing poverty sustainably. Under current conditions, the Government needs to develop a social insurance system, increase the coverage of social insurance, health insurance and unemployment insurance. Currently, except for health insurance, coverage of social insurance and unemployment insurance is still low and mainly in the formal economic sector. The informal economic sector with a large number of employees in our country is largely not participating in social insurance. Promote the socialization of health, establishment of public-private partnership form of medical examination and treatment facilities and hospital management model as public enterprises; speed up the implementation of all vietnamese people health insurance. Encourage and support creative ideas, promote innovation and development, especially in the fields of economy, society, science - technology, culture and art.... Social development management must focus on building a rational social development model, focusing on low-income social strata on the basis of constantly improving people's lives.

*Fourthly*, renew, develop education and training in the direction of renewing curriculum content, teaching methods, educational management combining tradition with modernity, expanding international cooperation, attaching importance to and promote the role of family education. Improving quality and expanding health service delivery and education are pivotal to inclusive growth and transition to a prosperous economy. This group of policies focuses on building human capacity, providing opportunities for people to fulfill their full potential.

At the same time, fostering and educating human values for human through enhancing artistic education, enhancing the capacity of people to perceive aesthetics, especially young people and teenagers. Promote the role of literature - art in fostering human soul and emotion. Ensuring the right to enjoy and create culture of each people and of the community.

### **Conclusions**

Over the past years, the Government of Vietnam has mobilized all sources to build and develop people to meet the needs of sustainable development with practical achievements, contributing to ensuring human rights in the development process. However, the process of human development in Vietnam also poses many challenges, requiring Vietnam to synchronously implement the above solutions to improve the effectiveness of Vietnamese human development to meet the demand for sustainable development of the country, contribute to the realization of the goal of "rich people, strong country, democracy, justice and civilization".

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### **Conflict of interest**

The authors declare that they have no competing interests

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