

VIETNAM:

**MONITORING & EVALUATION OF THE
COMPREHENSIVE POVERTY REDUCTION
AND GROWTH STRATEGY (C-PRGS)**

AND

**THE NATIONAL TARGET PROGRAM ON
POVERTY REDUCTION AND EMPLOYMENT
(HEPR: PROGRAM 143)**

The Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (C-PRGS)

- ✓ Vietnam's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), was approved by the Prime Minister in May 2002, followed the production of an interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (iPRSP)

The Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (C-PRGS),

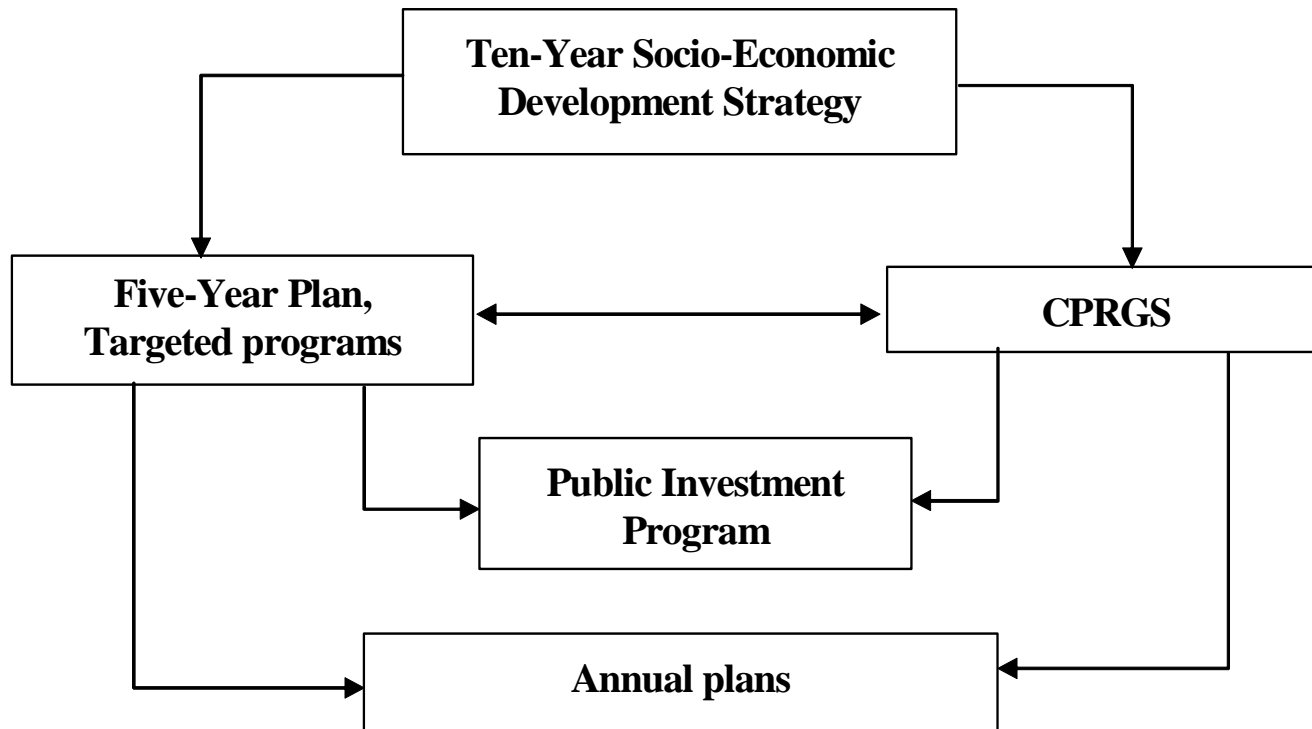
The C-PRGS is:

- **integrated part** of the National, Sectoral and Provincial 10-Year Socio-Economic Development Strategy (2001- 2010), 5-Year Socio-Economic Development Plan (2001-2005) and Annual Socio- Economic Development Plan.
- **a document that elaborates** all general objectives, institutional arrangements, policies and solutions of the 10-Year Strategy and 5-Year Plan **into detailed specific action plans.**

The Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (C-PRGS),

- **an action plan** that translates the Government's Ten-Year Socio-economic Development Strategy, Five-Year Socio-economic Development Plan as well as other sectoral policies into **specific concrete measures** with **well-defined road maps** to realize economic growth and poverty reduction objectives.
- has an important role in knitting together the components of the sectoral strategies **by giving them a poverty focus**

The links between the Government's national plans and strategies and the C-PRGS



National Target Program for Poverty Reduction and Employment (Program No. 143)

- **Since 1998, the First National Hunger Eradication and Poverty Reduction (HEPR)** was introduced and implemented by **Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA)**
- For the period 2001-2005, the issue of employment was included and the program was renamed National Target Program for Poverty Reduction and Employment (Program No. 143).

The National Hunger Eradication and Poverty Reduction and Employment Program 143 (01-05)

- **The targets** are: poor households and communes (more than 2000 communes)
- **The coverage:** 18 specific assisting programs and projects focusing on health, education, infrastructure, legal.... needs of the poor HH and communes.
- **Objectives** to be achieved by 2005:
 - Chronic hunger is basically eliminated;
 - The national poverty incidence is reduced to below 10%;
 - Poor communes are adequately provided with basic infrastructure;
 - 1.4- 1.5 million jobs are created annually;
 - The unemployment rate in urban areas reduces to below 6%, working time in rural areas increases to 80%.
- In essence, the HEPR, with its focus on poverty reduction goals, is now **one of the basic components of C-PRGS.**

The Millennium Development Goals

- Attempts to localize the MDGs to reflect Vietnam's national challenges and the government's development plans have become known **as the Vietnam Developments Goals (VDGs)**.
- These have been turned into 24 objectives with 16 groups of specific targets (4 groups of economic targets, 12 groups of social and poverty reduction targets).

The Millennium Development Goals

- Try and align **the cycle for achievement of the MDGs with the five- and ten-year cycles** of the Vietnamese planning.
- In certain instances, the VDGs have “raised the bar” where Vietnam’s performance has been better than expected under the MDGs
- **Other issues** were also included in the MDGs, such as empowerment, governance, vulnerability and ethnic minority development.

2. What is being Monitored

The C-PRGS states that the monitoring of the strategy will focus on **three key areas:**

- Monitoring and evaluating the **effectiveness of economic growth and poverty reduction;**
- Progress made in **resource mobilization and implementation;**
- Assessment of **impact** of policies and programs **on poverty reduction and the poor.**

National Poverty Indicators

- **Rate of poor households** on the poverty line based on:
 - + international standards (food and general poverty lines)
 - + national standards.
- **Number of households who escape from poverty**
- **Poverty Depth indexes:** Poverty gap, square gap.
- **Poverty inequality:**
 - + Share of poorest quintile in total consumption.
 - + GINI coefficient

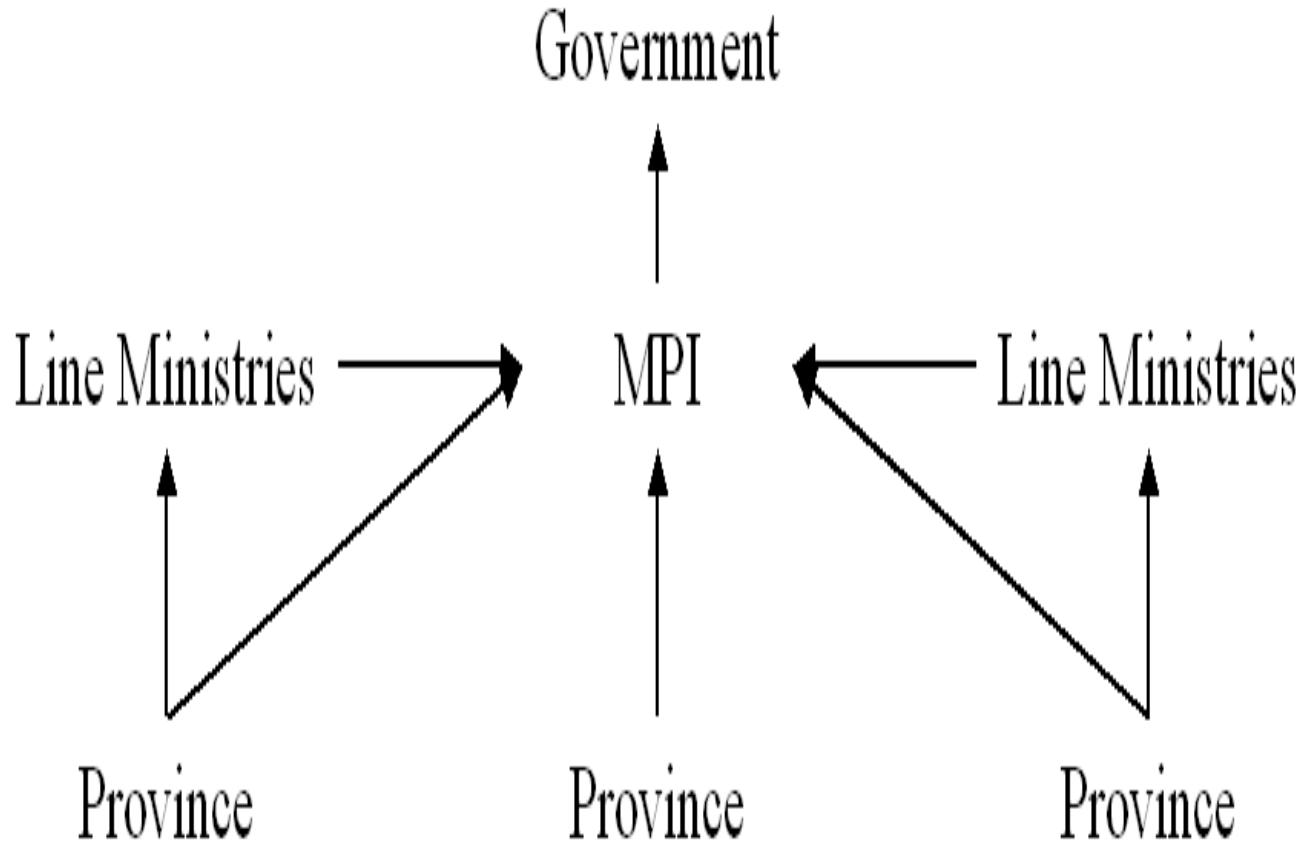
Who is to do the Monitoring?

- The implementation of the C-PRGS is organized in a centralized manner with close coordination among governmental agencies.
- **A Steering Committee** for the C-PRGS is to be established to help the Prime Minister in providing guidance on implementation and to organize the monitoring and evaluation of progress.

Who is to do the Monitoring?

- **The Line Ministries:**
 - + Using the administrative method of reporting by the lower level to the top
 - + Tracking intermediate and input indicators.
- **GSO; MOLISA and provinces**
 - Using data from different surveys to monitor

Chart of Monitoring and Reporting on C-PRGS



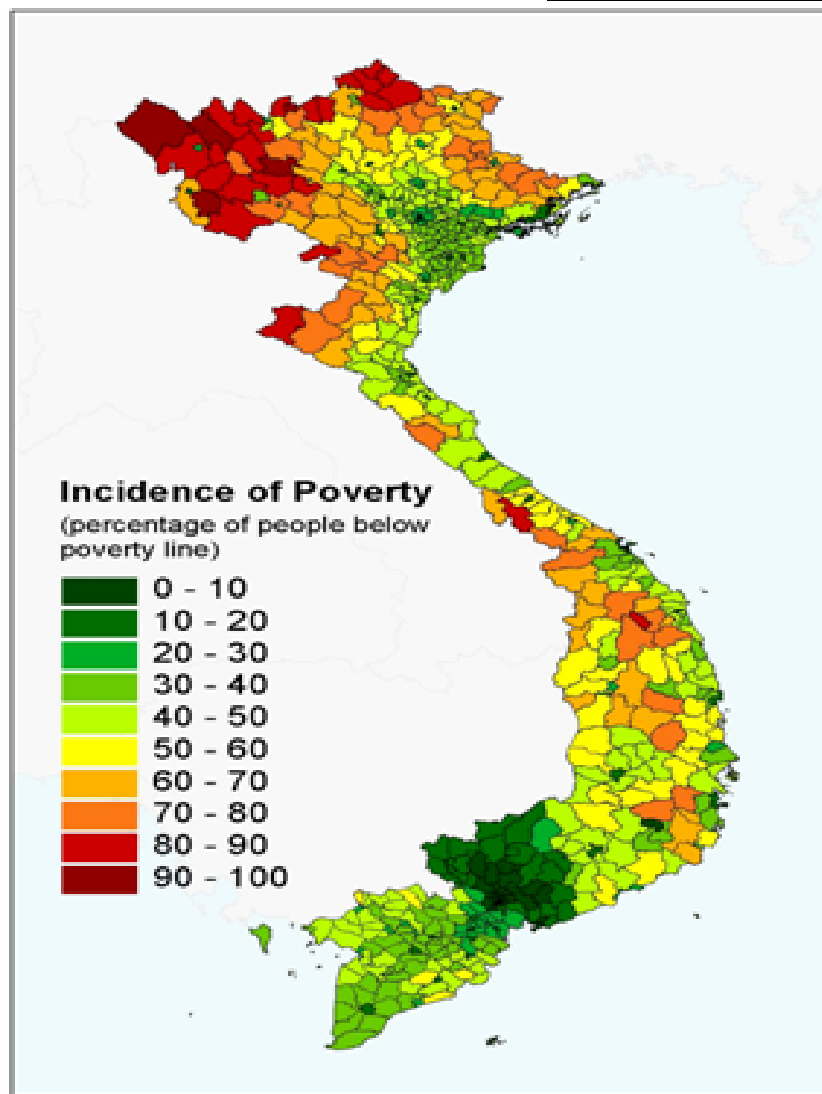
Sources of information for monitoring

- ***Vietnam Living Standards Surveys - VLSS*** conducted on a bi-annual basis by the General Statistics Office (GSO).
- Combine fixed and alternate modules to provide data for **measuring household expenditures** and monitoring some key social indicators (including brief sections on, amongst others, education, health, access to infrastructure services and employment).

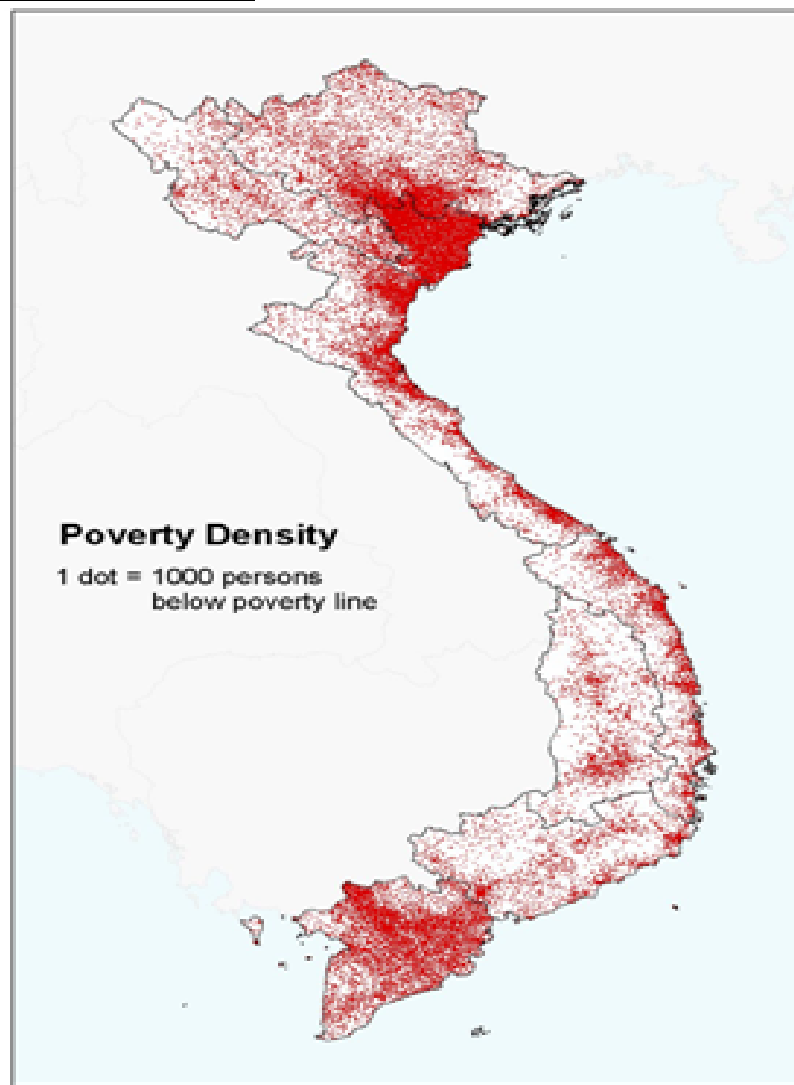
Sources of information for monitoring

- Sample surveys:
 - VLSS 1992-1993: 4,000 HHs
 - VLSS 1997-1998: 6,000 HHs
 - VLSS 2002 : 75,000 HHs
 - VLSS 2004: is now being preparing

Poverty rate and poverty density, VLSS 2002



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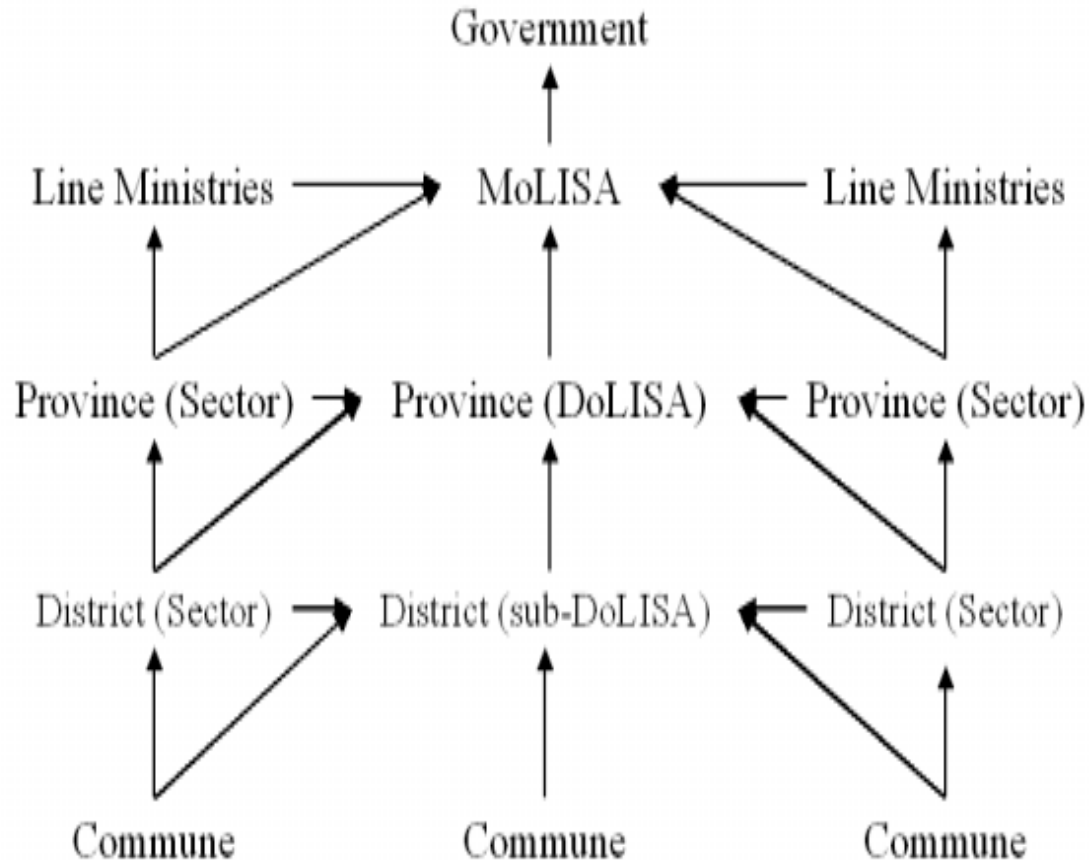
Participatory Poverty Assessments at commune levels

- These had been carried out in 1999.
- Annually carried out by MOLISA and its provincial departments (DOLISA) with involvement of mass agencies
- Cover all low income HHs at all communes
- **Aims to identify and create a list of poor households and communes**, eligible for support from the National Targeted Poverty Reduction Program (HEPR) and other policies.
- It also serves as the basis for provinces to monitor and evaluate poverty developments and implement policies to support the poor.

Participatory Poverty Assessments at commune levels

- MOLISA has also **worked with GTZ to initiate Poverty Weather Stations** to allow a more accurate and timely evaluation of poverty developments) and study of income and expenditure developments at household level.
- Drawing on initial results, MOLISA, in cooperation with GSO and GTZ plans to set up **six pilot poverty weather stations in six economic zones with a total sample of 1,000 households.**
- The selected households shall be observed on a daily basis with the participation of local staff and collaborators at communal level who have been trained on writing and consolidating weekly and monthly reports. The provinces and MoLISA will consolidate and process reports on a quarterly basis.

Chart of the Monitoring and Evaluation Process under Program 143



Community based indicators

- Percentage of poorest communes with **car accessible roads** leading to commune centre.
- Percentage of poor communes with **small-scale irrigation** works.
- Percentage of poor communes with **health stations**.
- Percentage of poor communes with **primary schools**, kindergartens and infant schools.
- Percentage of poor commune-clusters with **junior-secondary schools**.
- Percentage of poor communes with **markets or inter-commune markets**.
- Percentage of poor communes with **cultural model post offices**.
- Percentage of communes with **electricity stations**.

Household based indicators (146 indicators)

- Percentage of poor HHs receiving health card exemption
- Percentage of poor HHs receiving education exemption .
- Percentage of poor HHs having access to credit systems
- Percentage of poor HHs having access to clean water

Issues of monitoring

The National Poverty Line and other Poverty Lines

- Vietnam has witnessed the development of **a number of different poverty lines (from different data recorded)**, which has at times led to confusion over which one to follow.
- The first of these is the ***national poverty line*** issued by MoLISA with the mandate of the Government.
- Adopted since 1993 and revised three times to adjust to the current socio-economic developments in the country, as well as to changes in income and expenditure of households.

The National Poverty Line

- The current poverty line:
 - + 80,000 VND (\$ US 5.5 per month per persons) for mountainous areas
 - + 100 ,000 VND (\$ US 6.5) for rural areas
 - + 150,000 VND (\$ US 10) for urban areas
- However, Government **allows provinces and cities to raise this poverty line** to fit their respective circumstances, provided the local poverty incidence must be lower than the national level; .

The International Poverty Line

- The second poverty line, is a **food-based poverty line or a general poverty line**
- Food poverty line: average 2,100 Kcal daily calorie intake per capita. People whose expenditures are lower than the minimum level to meet this need are considered poor in terms of food.
- **Total poverty line** is to add the costs of non-food to the minimum expenditures.
- Uses data from the Living Standards Measurement Surveys conducted by the General Statistics Office (GSO) in 1992-3 and 1997-8 and research materials produced by World Bank
- **Being neither the standard adopted by the Vietnam government at local level, nor recognized as a legal basis for monitoring and evaluation**, such poverty data remain however a reference guide for a number of agencies to facilitate comparative research and analysis between Vietnam and elsewhere.

Monitoring issues

- The adoption of different poverty **lines occasionally results in different interpretations** of progress in poverty reduction.
- One example of this is differences in opinions concerning the pace of poverty reduction for the period 1998-2002. Based on the **general poverty line**, the level of poverty in Vietnam fell from 38% to almost 29% in 2002.
- Yet based on the **national poverty line**, since poverty lines have changed over the time, so can not tracked over the time. In 2002, poverty rate was 14%.
- Although different poverty lines are adopted for different purposes. For the moment, the national poverty line is still in use to meet the requirements of the Vietnamese government. **In the long term, however, the establishment of a standardized poverty line based on internationally accepted standards is recommended for purposes of uniformity.**

Monitoring issues

2. Problems of monitoring poverty **at middle levels are still in debate**
3. Lacks **a clear distinction** between impact, outcomes, outputs, and inputs and their corresponding monitoring frequency at all levels
A similar shortcoming was also identified in earlier work carried out on **localizing the Millennium Development Goals** (MDGs).

Monitoring issues

4. The Line Ministry Monitoring Systems:

The **issue of capacity building and resource** to track intermediate and input indicators. and analysis skills

- Line Ministry Monitoring Systems **need streamlining and improvement** before they become capable of tracking intermediate and input indicators.

5. Participatory Poverty Assessments at commune levels

- The potential of using the ***Participatory Poverty Assessments*** that received so many plaudits in the formulation of the strategy is gaining more ground and acceptance. **There is however a need to streamline, adapt and simplify them for the local levels to use them without outside support.**
- The information collected mainly based on income of HHs, **not taking into account other dimensions of poverty.** It has subjective and politically influenced.
- **Can not do impact assessment and monitoring** because of inconsistency of the data over the time and across communes.
- **The involvement of independent research organizations** (NGOs, universities, etc.) in collecting, analyzing, assessing the present situation and trends with respect to economic growth and poverty. are limited
- It is reasonable to expect that with support from international NGOs and the donor community, especially in capacity-building, these will find their way back into the monitoring system.

How monitoring to be improved

- **Streamline many poverty measurements** and to use more effectively at different levels
- Choosing national and international accepted set of **indicators at different levels**
- **Quantity and quality of data** (using HH surveys, mapping and poverty assessment at different levels)
- Attention must be given to **involving all stakeholders** in the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the strategy, including greater public access to data. This implies that attention will need to be paid
- **Capacity building** for relevant agencies to collect, analysis and disseminate information
- Involvement of **independent agencies** (universities, NGOs, research institutions)

How monitoring to be improved

- Use of poverty indicators in formulating strategies and **policies and budget funding and disbursement.**
- Monitoring of poverty developments should take place not only at macro level but also at micro (household) level.
- This *is the actual requirement of government agencies,* as it helps design **pro-active measures to impact on program beneficiaries** and improve the quality of their lives, including the poorest of the poor and the community in general.
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Donor Involvement in C-PRGS

Monitoring – Roles and Challenges

- Government of Vietnam **welcomes** the participation of specialists, domestic and international organizations, which include donors, NGOs, social and professional organizations at the local and community level, etc. **in the preparation and implementation of the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy.**
- From international organizations, any cooperation which addresses the real needs of government agencies in Vietnam in this field is highly appreciated.
- **MOLISA is ready to cooperate** with and receive support from donors, international organizations, ministries, and provinces in Vietnam in order to further improve the quality of Poverty reduction strategies and poverty monitoring **through innovative approaches and tools.**

Donor Involvement in C-PRGS Monitoring – Roles and Challenges

In particular, the focus should be on:

- Improving the **quality of collected information** at communal, district, provincial, and central levels;
- **Participatory evaluation approaches;**
- **Topical and multi-purpose surveys;**
- The establishment of **Poverty Weather Stations** to monitor poverty developments;
- The preparation of **poverty monitoring reports at province level;**
- The **use of appropriate analysis methods and tools** to evaluate the impact of C-PRGS and HEPR

**Thank you for
your attention**