

*Speech by Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Dr. Cao Duc Phat
at the Scaling-up Program Regional Conference
for Joint Japan World Bank Graduate Scholarship Program (JJ/WBGSP)
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Human Capacity and the Development of Vietnam Agriculture and Rural Sector

*Chairman,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

First of all, allow me to express my deep gratitude to the organizers for inviting me to attend this Scaling-up Program Regional Conference for Joint Japan World Bank Graduate Scholarship Program (JJ/WBGSP). I wish the conference great success.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Vietnam's agriculture and rural development play an important role in the country's overall Socio-economic development. The sector employs 23 million workers or about 55% of total labor force, contributes 18% of GDP and over 17% the country export income. In the past 20 years, Vietnam agriculture and rural development have obtained significant results, helping the country to overcome economic difficulties, maintain social stability, and forming a solid foundation for industrialization and modernization process.

These achievements are made possible thanks partly to the Ministry's policies of human resource development, including training farmers, skillful technical workers, and scientists.

By the end of the year 2005, the Ministry's institutes and universities have a total of 7276 scientists, in which 506 Ph.D., 818 Masters. They are creative, dynamic, flexible and quick in approaching advanced technologies.

However, sector's human resource is now remaining some problems, as following:

- Low percentage of trained laborers, for rural area it's only 13.2%. Quality of training is limited.
- The shortage of the top scientists, managers and skillful workers, especially in some important areas such as bio-technology, post-harvest technology, market economics and management...;
- Uneven distribution and low usage of existing capacity, high concentration of well-trained personnel in the urban areas.

Besides, the young scientists of MARD lack foreign languages skills particularly English, which pose great difficulties for them in enriching their knowledge of new technology and international integration.

In order to attain well-trained personnel, MARD is conducting training at 37 universities and schools. In the year 2005, they have trained 82 Ph. D, 270 masters, 3105 bachelors and 40597 workers .

Along with domestic graduate training, in the past years, we have also sent 190 Ph.D. students, 349 masters students and 26 post-doctorate students to study abroad. Among them, there were 134 persons were trained under the Scholarship Program 322 of the Government and scholarships. The main were trained thanks to international support (Monbukagakush Fellowship, ASEAN Youth Fellowship, JIKA and JJ/WBGSP).

Many well-trained people are holding key positions at institutes, universities and government departments. Their contributions to training, studying, state governing and production managing are positive and important for rural industrialization and modernization.

On the occasion of this workshop, I would like to thank the World Bank and Government of Japan and many International Organizations for having been assisting us to train experts on different fields. Those experts have advantage to access advanced technology so they bring into full play in their work and contribute to agricultural development at home.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Moving towards new period, Vietnam agriculture confronts many challenges and has to continue:

1. Maintaining high development index in order to create further jobs, increase farmer income, achieve targets of hunger eradication and poverty reduction;
2. Enhancing agriculture competitiveness, prepare the sector for participating effectively in international integration after WTO accession.

In order to overcome challenges and achieve the objectives we intend:

1. Continue policy reform;
2. Increase R&D;
3. Develop further Human resource;
4. Invest for Infrastructure.
5. Carry on the administration reform.

Among them, Human resource development plays a key role. In which, training for farmers, technical workers and experts are all important.

By the year 2010, 1 million workers have to be trained annually. In the next coming years, annually MARD's institutes, universities will need to have additionally 100 Ph.D., 400 Masters and greater number for the sector. Our training system has to train for 10,000 bachelors and 50,000 workers annually for Agriculture, Forestry and Water resources management in the whole country. Priority areas for training are: Biotechnology, Agronomy, Livestock and animal health, Forestry, Water resources management and hydraulics construction, Post harvest technology, Market economics and management.

In order to fulfill our training plan, we intend to restructure and enhance available training system, reform policy, increase training quality.

Beside our efforts, We welcome any international support for our human capacity building. We do hope to receive further and effective support from the World Bank and Government of Japan for human capability building.

Thank you very much for your attention./.