

The Inadequacies of the System of Documents and Policies to Implement Decision No. 79/2005/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister¹

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Abstract: This paper analyzes the shortcomings in the system of documents and policies promulgated by ministries, agencies and Northwest provinces in all fields of agriculture, forestry, industry and trade, culture and society, science and technology, etc.

Based on that, the article points out the need to synchronize, but not overlap the strategic tasks to ministries and public agencies in order to ensure the comprehensive development goals for Northwest region.

Keywords: Shortcomings in the system of documents, policies, Decision No. 79.

1. Introduction

On July 1, 2004, the Politburo Committee has promulgated Resolution No. 37/NQ/TW on orientations for socio-economic development and assurance of defense and security in the Northern midland and mountainous region up to 2010 (Resolution No. 37 for short).

To implement Resolution No. 37, the Prime Minister's Decision No. 79/2005/QĐ-TTg of April 15, 2005 has promulgated the Government's Action Plan to implement the Political Bureau's Resolution No. 37-NQ/TW of July 1, 2004, on orientations for socio-economic development and assurance of defense and security in the northern midland and mountainous region up to 2010 (Decision No. 79 for short) [1].

This paper analyzes the system of documents and policies promulgated by ministries, agencies and Northwest provinces, to find out the shortcomings in the formulation of documents and policies to implement Decision No. 79/2005/QĐ-TTg.

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2. The inadequacies of the system of documents and policies promulgated by ministries, agencies to implement Decision No. 79

2.1. Inadequacies in the field of agriculture and forestry

Decision No. 79 has tasked the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Ministry of Fisheries to implement missions related to the assigned fields of the two ministries and to assist the Prime Minister in the state management, in which notable task is building the project to develop specialized cultivation areas that focus on producing commodity crop and cattle breeding, forestry development project, and water conservation development project linked to hydroelectricity in the Northern midlands and mountainous region to the year 2020, submitted to the Government in the second quarter of 2006. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development along with the People's Committee of the Northern midlands and mountainous provinces are responsible of building the project "Protecting and Restoring Protection Forests in Da River Valley", submitted to the Government in the fourth quarter of 2005.

However, in reality, those missions have not been implemented on time and not followed the right requirements.

2.2. Inadequacies in the field of industry and trade

Ministry of Industry & Trade (MOIT) still had delays in promulgating legal document as required by Decision No. 79/2005/QĐ-TTg such as planning of the overall development of the industrialists in the Northern midlands and mountainous region to the year 2020, planning of the development of industry and handicraft in the Vietnam-China border, etc. These are important tasks that need to be promulgated in order to become oriented for the development of industry and trade in the region but these

tasks has not been completed by MOIT on time in the second quarter of 2006 as required.

MOIT has not been submitted the concrete policies with specific characteristic to develop industry and trade at the Northern midlands and mountainous region but only integrated into the overall policy of the central agency such as the development policy for industrial promotion activities. Moreover, even in the policies for the Northern midlands and mountainous region, MOIT has not been brought out the priorities policy and specific solutions for the area.

Because of these limitations, *Conclusion No 26-KL/TW dated on 02/08/2012 of Politburo Committee* also showed the reason why the implementation results of the objectives and tasks on socio-economic development and assurance of defense and security are not commensurate with the potential as well as the important and urgent requirements of the region: "There are five important objectives which proposed by the Resolution has not yet reached; failing to create a fundamental change, an important breakthrough for the rapid and sustainable development of the whole region. The economic scale is still small, economic growth is not sustainable, low cohesion, mainly raw products, and efficiency is not high. The planning work and planning management are still weak; so far the regional planning has not been built and approved. Socio-economic infrastructure is still weak; many projects were implemented slower than the requirements" [2].

2.3. Inadequacies in the field of labor

Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) still had delays in promulgating legal document as required by Decision No. 79/2005/QĐ-TTg such as the formulation, adjustments, and supplement of network planning for vocational training institutions, including vocational training for ethnic minority youths, training facilities for vocational teachers in the Northern midlands and mountainous region, planning of treatment

facilities, detoxification and rehabilitation of behavior, personality, health and capacity to work for drug addicts in the Northern midlands and mountainous region, sustainable poverty reduction schemes.

MOLISA has not been able to submit the concrete policies with specific characteristics to develop the network of vocational training institutions, treatment facilities, and detoxification and rehabilitation of behavior, personality, health and capacity to work for drug addicts in the Northern midlands and mountainous region.

In addition, perhaps the major limitation of MOLISA policies for the Northern midlands and mountainous region is that the Ministry has not yet promulgated the development policy for high quality human resources for the region. Up until 2013, the Ministry began to have specific policies on the development of educational institutions, professional training in the regions, not concentrated on synchronous investment to form key vocations, to train workers with higher skills.

2.4. *Inadequacies in the field of culture – society*

Decision No. 79 tasked the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and the Ministry of Information and Communications to implement missions related to the assigned fields of the two ministries and to assist the Prime Minister in the state management:

- Ministry of Information and Communications: formulating investment schemes to repair, restore the important revolutionary relics and historic-cultural monuments in the Northern midlands and mountainous region; implementation plan of the conservation and development of culture of ethnic minorities, eliminating the backward practices in the Northern midlands and mountainous region, submitted to the Government in the third quarter of 2005.

But in fact, there is no agency that has promulgated *“Investment schemes to repair,*

restore the important revolutionary relics and historic-cultural monuments in the Northern midlands and mountainous region” as assigned in Decision No. 79. There is only Regulation for preservation, renovation and restoration of historic-cultural monuments and landmarks for general application, but not specific to the Northern midlands and mountainous region.

- Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism: implementation plan of the conservation and development of culture of ethnic minorities, eliminating the backward practices in the Northern midlands and mountainous region

In the database of legal document, there is no document about *“Implementation plan of the conservation and development of culture of ethnic minorities, eliminating the backward practices in the Northern midlands and mountainous region”* that was promulgated by Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism as assigned in Decision No. 79.

2.5. *Inadequacies in the field of science and technology*

Decision No. 79 tasked the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST): formulating scheme of *“Innovation and modernization of technology in the mining industry, preservation and processing of agricultural and forestry products”*, and project *“Application of science – technology in the development of the special crops and main products”*, submitted to the Government in the third quarter of 2005. But both the schemes above were not promulgated. At the same time, MOST has not built three schemes as required by Decision No. 79/2005/QĐ-TTg and not promulgated any specific documents on special preferential mechanisms and policies to encourage investment in research and technology transfer at the Northern midlands and mountainous region. Because of this, the local area in the Northern midlands and mountainous region has not promoted maximum efficiency of the potentials and strengths of the region. The support programs for application and

technology transfer of science and technology to serve socio-economic development in the rural and mountainous were only in small scale of each locality, but did not have any comprehensive survey about the Northern midlands and mountainous region and was not designed for research to deploy comprehensive project for the whole region associated with comparable conditions of nature and society. That means MOST did not have the coordination with ministries to plan a development/investment roadmap for the support programs for application and technology transfer of science and technology to serve socio-economic of each specific region.

MOST also has not built the mechanisms that bring coordinated nature between subjects in the operation of science and technology to promote socio-economic in the regions. The realities of agricultural development and rural economy in the Northwest require forming quickly the large-scale commodity production that has competitive forces and high quality products. The Ministry also lacks of the necessary mechanisms on the conditions for organization. Scientists propose the needs to participate in research projects and technology transfer in science and technology.

3. The inadequacies of the system of documents and policies promulgated by the provincial authorities to implement Decision No. 79

3.1. General assessment of the difficulties

Information and communication of the provinces on the Decision No. 79 are not good. Most of the Departments did not receive the documents of Decision No 79/2005/QĐ-TTg. Besides, the guidance documents that departments received from the center existed in the form of decision or official documents related to the deployed missions in Decision No. 79, but did not write Decision No. 79 in the basis part. This led to the difficulties in identifying and evaluating the results of

formulating the provincial policy documents under Decision No. 79.

Provinces' People's Committees and departments lack of proactivity in promulgating policies of socio-economic development which can bring breakthrough for the province, especially the lack of science and technology policies. The formulation of documents and policies in the period of 2005-2010 of provinces still relies mainly on instructions from superiors.

3.2. Specific assessment of the difficulties in some areas

Owing to the fact that some ministries do not complete the tasks as requested in Decision No. 79, these tasks will not be deployed at the provincial level.

Field of Investment

The implementation of preferential policies for encouraging investment, attracting foreign investment funds such as ODA/FDI still meets many difficulties, especially in attracting investment into the planned industrial zones and clusters, attracting investment into some potential and advantageous industrial sectors such as development of small and medium hydropower, agricultural and forestry products processing, and the development of forest economy. The main reasons come from natural and social conditions as well as poor infrastructure. In addition, there are still some existing obstacles and shortcomings in the mechanisms and policies that are hard to be solved in a short time, especially in investment for the development of hydropower.

Field of Forest Economy

In some regions, areas of forest and forest land has been allocated but not yet been granted Certificate of Land Use Right (red book), especially in some localities of Dien Bien and Lai Chau provinces, several areas were assigned to households mainly on paper, books, while people do not really know the forest plot or land plot where they are assigned, as well as the conditions of those plots. On the other hand,

when forests and lands are allocated to owners to manage, there is no detailed planning options or appropriate policy mechanism attached, leading to ineffective land use and forest use.

Field of Agriculture and Rural Development

The quality of planning activities is not high, especially the forecasts of market demand for products are often inaccurate; therefore the establishment and implementation processes of investment projects are very difficult. Government policies are not synchronized; there are some issued policies that have not been put into practice yet, so it is not a strong incentive for the production and consumption of products. Educational level and the ability to acquire science and technology knowledge into practice are not high; the transition from traditional manufacturing to product manufacturing still faces many difficulties. The scale of production and the competitiveness of local businesses are limited. Climate change will lead to the risk of drought, water shortage for highland, calamity and diseases will be tougher.

Field of education and training

According to Decision No. 85/2010/QĐ-TTg dated on 21/12/2010 of the Prime Minister on the issuance of some policies to support semi-boarding ethnic secondary schools and students [3], the government will invest for infrastructure of boarding high schools. However, the Government has not allocated funds to implement, so many schools still lacks boarding rooms, kitchens, canteens, sanitary facilities to serve boarding students.

Welfare – social policy

There are remaining gaps and overlaps in the policies, especially the group policies that relate to life and production support for the poor. Those policies should be reviewed and revised. The ideas of dependence on government and not want to get rid of poverty still exist in many places, especially in ethnic minority areas, remote and border areas. Health care and medical treatment for people do not

meet the requirements. Rural areas and remote regions still lack full team of doctors and nurses.

In recent years, the government and provinces have many investment and supporting policies for poor districts and poor communes, but the central capital is still low and do not meet the investment needs for economic – social development; hence infrastructure is still weak and asynchronous, especially in transport, power, communications.

Poverty reduction policies continue to invest in the districts and communes that have high poverty rates and poor infrastructure, but the programs and projects for poverty reduction mostly focused on investment for building infrastructure; investment for the restructuring of plants and animals is small and inefficient; a number of mechanisms, policies and measures to help reduce poverty are not really appropriate, the organization carries out many shortcomings, and is still on budget subsidies, leading to the idea of dependence on government and has not created motivation for the poor to escape from poverty.

Field of Medicine

The highlands have difficult natural conditions, large area, unfavorable transport system, tough climate and weather, prevalence of abnormal diseases; limited social conditions of ethnic minorities, high poverty rate, and people's living standard are still low. Training of health workers is one area of concern, but the supporting resources for training of doctors, pharmacists are limited, therefore the addition of staff on demand is not active. There are no mechanisms or policies for recruiting, attracting, and motivating highly qualified human resources in health sector to stabilize local medical staff. Conditions of the mountainous provinces combined with limited investment resources, especially in the time of drastic reduction of public finance expenditures, make investment demand exceeds local capabilities. Funding for the national target program in health sector remains low.

Construction of communes requires many high development indicators in order to meet the national criteria in health sector at a new phase. There are still backward practices, weak communication services, undeveloped family planning in grassroots level, and investment resources for the population work remain low.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The enactment of policies to implement Decision No. 79 still has its shortcomings based on this paper.

Regarding the development of the Northwest, Conclusion No. 26-KL/TW pointed out that the goal of economic development until 2020 is still *"promoting rational and effective exploitation of potential and strength in development of rural, forestry, fisheries, hydropower, mining, tourism and gate economy"*; the main tasks to achieve the objective of economic development is *"focusing on promoting high-tech and modern applications, increasing technology content, reducing the export proportion of primary and unprocessed products; forming some key products that have brands in both domestic and international markets with high competitiveness in the field of electricity, fertilizer, chemical, metallurgy, pharmaceuticals, agricultural and forest products; advancing resource-saving and safety in the production and protection of ecological environment"* [4].

To achieve this, the Government needs to promulgate strategic tasks synchronously to Ministries and Departments because otherwise the comprehensive development of the target will not be ensured. As an example, in the policies for economical – social development of border communes in Northern midlands and mountainous, according to Decision No. 79/2005/QĐ-TTg, the Ministry of Industry and Trade is assigned for formulating the planning of the development of industry – handicraft industry in Vietnamese - China border until 2010 while the Ministry of Agriculture and

Rural Development is not assigned for formulating the planning of inhabitants stabilization in Vietnam – China border, but Vietnam – Laos border instead. As a result, when the Ministry of Industry and Trade issued *Decision No. 805 / QĐ-BCT dated on 23/01/2014 approved the Master plan for industrial and trade development in Vietnam - China border until 2020, with a vision up to the year 2030*, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has not yet issued the plan for inhabitants stabilization in Vietnam – China border. In contrast, in the process of performing the tasks in accordance with Decision No. 79/2005/QĐ-TTg, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has proposed the submission of 2721 / BNN-HTX dated on October 3, 2007 to the Prime Minister for approving the *Plan of inhabitants stabilization in mountainous regions of Northern midlands and mountainous, Vietnam - Laos border until 2015* in Decision No. 49/2008/QĐ-TTg dated on 22/04/2008, but the Ministry of Industry and Trade has not enacted the *Plan for industrial and trade development in Vietnam – Laos border*.

In addition, it is necessary to review the tasks assigned to Ministries carefully in order to ensure that there is no overlapping tasks. In Decision No 79/2005/QĐ-TTg, the task assigned to the Ministry of Trade and Industry, which is *"collaborating with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and localities to formulate an investment and development program; call for investment sources outside government funds for the construction of hydropower/thermal power projects in the region"*, is not appropriate because this task belongs to the responsibility and authority of the Ministry of Planning and Investment in localities.

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Những bất cập của hệ thống văn bản, chính sách để thực thi Quyết định 79/2005/QĐ-TTg của Thủ tướng Chính phủ

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Tóm tắt: Bài viết phân tích những bất cập trong hệ thống văn bản, chính sách do các Bộ, ngành và các tỉnh vùng Tây Bắc ban hành trên tất cả các lĩnh vực nông, lâm nghiệp; công thương; văn hóa và xã hội; khoa học và công nghệ. Qua đó, bài viết chỉ ra sự cần thiết phải đồng bộ hóa, nhưng không chồng chéo các nhiệm vụ chiến lược tới các Bộ, ban, ngành để đảm bảo được mục tiêu phát triển toàn diện vùng Tây Bắc.

Từ khóa: Bất cập trong hệ thống văn bản, chính sách, Quyết định 79.