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**IMPACT EVALUATION THE SUPPORTIVE PROGRAM OF  
SUSTAINABLE POVERTY REDUCTION  
IN THE PERIOD 2009-2014  
A CASE OF BAC AI DISTRICT, NINH THUAN PROVINCE,  
VIETNAM**

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## Abstract

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Keywords	Poverty, poor households, poverty reduction program, and impact evaluation

The main purpose of this thesis is to evaluate the impact of the Supportive Program of Sustainable Poverty Reduction under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP dated December 27, 2008 (SPSPR) carried out at Bac Ai poor district, Ninh Thuan province, Vietnam during the period 2009-2014. It is clearly known that this poverty reduction program has not been assessed the impact evaluation yet. Within the framework of this thesis, on the one hand, the study did a survey on thirty correspondents form provincial, district and commune organizations in Ninh Thuan province. Based on the correspondents' feedbacks, the study applied qualitative research method to analyze and verify the program's impact on poor households. On the other hand, the author collected 2005-2014 period data and relevant documents approved by the provincial and district authorities related to Bac Ai district's poverty reduction program. Those used quantitative research method to fortify the research results convincingly.

In addition to assessing the effectiveness and impact of the seven poverty reduction policies on poor people in Bac Ai district, the study also analyzes strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats from practice and current poverty reduction policies to draw on findings and recommendations which will be taken into consideration for improvement on the poverty reduction program for Bac Ai district in the next phase.

Last but not least, the final target of the study is truly to contribute research outcomes to the local authorities and local poor inhabitants for action to fight against long-lasting poverty in Bac Ai district. Afterwards, the poor themselves have to get out of poverty and rise to a medium and affluent life sustainable. At the same time, Bac Ai district will enhance its state management capacity in the field of poverty reduction and persuade the poor to raise their responsibility for escaping poverty so as to make Bac Ai's socio-economic development become better.

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## Abbreviations

AEA	The American Evaluation Association
DOLISA	Department of Labour - Invalids and Social Affairs
FAO	The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Products
GSO	General Statistics Office of Vietnam
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
Lao PDR	The Lao People's Democratic Republic
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour - Invalids and Social Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPC	Ninh Thuan People's Committee
NTP	National Target Program
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PCI	Per Capita Income
PRF II	The second phase of the Poverty Reduction Fund Project
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEDP	Socio-economic development plan
SPSPR	Supportive Program of Sustainable Poverty Reduction
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
U.S.	The United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
VND	Vietnamese Dong
WB	World Bank

# CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

## 1 Research background

Poverty as a social phenomenon has been a problem at every step of civilization. Although the portion of poor people in society fluctuates in comparison to other times, poverty always remained as a problem. From the past to the present, all over the world, hunger and poverty is one of the global problems. However, fighting poverty and hunger is considered not only the top political goal for each period of socio-economic development but also the great lasting challenge for eliminating it for developing countries as well. The reality is that a country where poverty persists will surely grow very slowly compared to other countries. Recently, The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has promulgated a number of poverty data in the world as follows:

FAO estimates that about 795 million people of 7.3 billion people all over the world were suffering from chronic malnourishment in 2014-2016. -- The vast majority of hungry people live in developing regions, which saw a 42% reduction in the prevalence of undernourished people between 1990–92 and 2012–14. -- As the most populous region in the world, Asia is home to two out of three of the world's undernourished people<sup>1</sup>.

Therefore, hunger and poverty in Vietnam is no exception. Now, let us have a look at the long history of Vietnam. After the August 1945 Revolution, during the early days of national independence [September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1945], Ho Chi Minh - President of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam - identified poverty as an “enemy”, like illiteracy and foreign invaders. The President appealed the whole Vietnamese's efforts to help labourers escape from misery and distress, ensuring that “everyone has enough food, clothing and access to education” (Đào, Nguyễn, & Hà, 2000). During the two prolonged wars of resistance of Vietnam, emulation movements on excellent production and raising productivity, and “fields of five-tone rice output” models became popular and widely responded to by the people and the army, with specific actions to defend the nation, develop the economy, and stabilize people's lives.

Since the Independence Day, over seven decades of reconstruction, innovation and development of the country, especially during the renewal process, hunger eradication and poverty reduction continued to be confirmed as a major policy, long-term objective, and specific task of the

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<sup>1</sup> World Hunger, Poverty Facts, Statistics 2016. (n.d.).

country's socio-economic development. Especially, the hunger eradication and poverty reduction target has been first identified as an important legal basis at the 5<sup>th</sup> Plenum of the Party Central Committee in 1992. From the 8<sup>th</sup> National Party Congress in 1996, the hunger eradication and poverty reduction task was redefined as one of the key tasks of the 5-year socio-economic development plan in the 1996-2000 period onwards. On those stages, the greatest target of hunger eradication and poverty reduction was to enhance material and spiritual life for the poor. At the same time, poverty reduction outcomes will help to narrow the gap in living standards between rural and urban areas, between ethnic minority groups and other population groups.

September 2000 marked a historical moment at Millennium Summit when 189 member states of the United Nations (UN) [including Vietnam] signed the Millennium Declaration. Vietnam certified commitments to a new global partnership for poverty eradication, development and protecting the environment. The Millennium Development Goals<sup>2</sup> (MDGs) constitute the primary international framework for the measurement and monitoring development progress of member states by 2015. One of the goals, halving extreme poverty and hunger rates, has galvanized unprecedented efforts in catering to the needs of the world's poorest groups and promoting inclusive and sustainable development.

Since signing the Millennium Declaration, Vietnam steadfastly upheld these commitments and made the task of realizing the Development Goals by 2015 one of the top priorities despite encountering many challenges and hardships. The country has proven its resilience and resourcefulness by successfully weathering the economic hardship in the global context and maintaining positive progress in socio-economic development and poverty reduction. Alongside economic development, Vietnam paid special attention and allocated resources significantly to poverty reduction<sup>3</sup>.

These efforts and commitments brought remarkable results on poverty reduction. Over the past

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<sup>2</sup> 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.  
2. Achieve universal primary education.  
3. Promote gender equality and empower women.  
4. Reduce child mortality.  
5. Improve maternal health.  
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.  
7. Ensure environmental sustainability.  
8. Develop a global partnership for development.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.vn.undp.org/content/dam/vietnam/docs/Publications/Bao%20cao%20TIENG%20ANH%20-%20MDG%202015\\_trinh%20TTCP.pdf](http://www.vn.undp.org/content/dam/vietnam/docs/Publications/Bao%20cao%20TIENG%20ANH%20-%20MDG%202015_trinh%20TTCP.pdf)

fifteen years, expenditure-based poverty rate fell dramatically from 17.0% in 2000 to 5.97% in 2014<sup>4</sup>. As a result, Vietnam has transformed itself from one of the poorest countries in the world to a middle-income nation.

Also, in this stage, although the economy was more stable and poverty rates declined significantly, poverty in mountainous and remote areas as well as between ethnic groups and population groups remained high. In addition, inequality in income and socio-economic development amongst different geographic areas, and the impact of climate change, extreme weather events, and rising sea levels have been increasingly affecting the livelihoods of the poor. In order to mobilize a variety of public and private resources for the poorest districts to restrict the rich-and-poor gap in the country, the Government on December 27, 2008, issued the SPSPR for 61 poor districts [Currently are 64 poor districts due to the adjustment process of administrative boundaries in poor districts and establishing new districts], creating drastic changes in the material and spiritual lives of the poor and ethnic minority people in poor districts so that by 2020 they will have living conditions equal to other districts in the region.

At that time, at the beginning of 2009, Bac Ai district, which was re-established on January 01<sup>st</sup> 2001, was one of the 61 poorest districts in the country benefited the SPSPR. It is also a mountainous district with a populous ethnic minority to the northwest of Ninh Thuan province. The natural conditions there are not favourable. The harsh climate, natural disasters, and drought often occur annually. Economic starting point was low and small. Socio-economic infrastructure was poor and asynchronous. Bac Ai district has 9 communes and 38 particularly difficult villages. In 2009, the population is 24,233 inhabitants with 5,134 households, mostly the Raglai ethnic group (over 95.0%). Poverty household rates were still at a high proportion 53.86%, [approximately 2,765 poor households, 13,051 poor people] compared with the average of the province (13.27%).

In the period 2009-2014, Bac Ai implemented the SPSPR. After a 6-year program implementation, Bac Ai district attained some significant achievements in several fields such as the decrease proportion of poverty households from 53.86% in 2009 to 29.83% in 2014 [approximately decline 24.03%, equivalent to decline 815 poor households, 4,262 poor inhabitants]; enhancement of the accessibility of health care and education services for the poor; improvement on the poor living conditions through vocational training, employment, labour

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<sup>4</sup> General Statistics Office of Vietnam

export, concessional loans to the poor to raise incomes; synchronized technical infrastructure; etc. Although there were some constraints in the implementation of the program, Bac Ai socio-economic development changed positively due to the SPSPR. There is a need of this program evaluation. Therefore, this study will focus on evaluating thoroughly the impact connotation of the SPSPR through supportive policies applied to poor people in Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP in the period 2009-2014.

## **2 Literature review and theoretical framework**

Over the past few years, the issue of evaluation has become the focus of public policy. It is highly mandatory to evaluate the impact of policies implemented whether effectively or not. How do these policies affect the development of a region, a province or a country? Evaluation accountability must become a mandatory part of implemented policies, it will not be "let's see what we have done" but from the beginning of this work, it must be identified as "an integral part of the policy". Policy evaluations must adhere to certain principles and criteria. Within the scope of this thesis research on policy assessment of poverty reduction, it is necessary to constitute literature review and theoretical frameworks for the definition of evaluation, program evaluation, and impact assessment; the concept of poverty, poverty reduction, poverty reduction in the world and poverty reduction in Vietnam; and the relationship between poverty reduction and sustainable development.

### **2.1 Program evaluation**

#### ***2.1.1 Evaluation definition***

What is evaluation? According to the American Evaluation Association (AEA), evaluation is a systematic process to determine merit, worth, value or significance. According to Gertler, et al. (2011), evaluations are periodic, objective assessments of a planned, ongoing, or completed project, program, or policy. Evaluations are used to answer specific questions, often related to design, implementation, or results.

The same as AEA in some extent, According to Scriven (1991), evaluation refers to the process of determining the merit, worth, or value of something. Besides that, Vedung (2010) argues that, "evaluation is minimally defined as careful retrospective assessment of public-sector interventions, organization, content, implementation and outputs or outcomes, which is intended to play a role in future practical situations".

Having a common viewpoint of assessment, Rossi and Freeman (1985) described that

"evaluation research is the systematic application of social research procedures in assessing the conceptualization and design, implementation, and utility of social intervention programs. In other words, evaluation research involves the use of social research methodologies to judge and to improve the planning, monitoring, effectiveness, and efficiency of health, education, welfare, and other human service programs". "Evaluation is a systematic process for an organization to obtain information on its activities, its impacts, and the effectiveness of its work. So that it can improve its activities and describe its work."<sup>5</sup>

### ***2.1.2 Program evaluation***

A program evaluation has to be designed to be appropriate for the specific program being evaluated. For instance, health programs aim to make people healthier and prevent disease. School programs strive to increase student learning. Employment training programs try to help the unemployed get jobs. Homelessness initiatives work to get people off the streets and into safe housing. Community development programs plan initiatives to increase prosperity among those in poverty. Poverty reduction programs focus on outcomes that will benefit the poor [*the poor enhance their living standard to escape poverty sustainably*]. For each kind of program, an evaluation would gather and analyze data about that program's effectiveness. In practice, program evaluation answers questions such as: To what extent does the program achieve its goals? How can it be improved? Should it continue? Are the results worth what the program costs? Program evaluators gather and analyze data about what programs are doing and accomplishing to answer these kinds of questions.

Program evaluation has been defined as "judging the worth or merit of something or the product of the process" (Scriven, 1991). Guskey (2000) updated this definition stating that "evaluation is a systematic process used to determine the merit or worth of a specific program, curriculum, or strategy in a specific context".

"Programme evaluation is the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgments about the program, improve program effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future programming" (Patton, 1997, p. 23).

"Programme evaluation is the use of social research procedures to systematically investigate the effectiveness of social intervention programs that is adapted to their political and

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<sup>5</sup> Source: The Manager's Guide to Program Evaluation, Page 3.

organizational environments and designed to inform social action in ways that improve social conditions” (Rossi, et al., 1999, p.4).

Scriven (1991) emphasizes that "the utility of evaluation when he talks about the “two arms” of evaluation - the collection of evaluation information and the valuing of that information using values and standards applied by those interested in the program".

According to Boulmetis and Dutwin (2014), "program evaluation is the process of collecting and analyzing data in a systematic way to determine whether the objectives have been achieved or are achieved at any rate".

"A program evaluation typically examines achievement of program objectives in the context of other aspects of program performance or in the context in which it occurs"<sup>6</sup> (GAO, 2011, p. 1). It is typically more in-depth examination of program performance and context allows for an overall assessment of whether the program works and identification of adjustments that may improve its results (Sussan, 2005).

Through these above definitions, it is understood that program evaluation is carried out to determine whether inputs and resources have been used effectively as well as outputs and outcomes have been reached as predefined. It means that program evaluation will provide program/policy makers, managers, and related stakeholders with useful information about effectiveness and impacts of the program. Furthermore, it also helps decision makers determine reasons for success or failures of the program in order that they make necessary adjustments to improve the program.

### ***2.1.3 Impact evaluation***

"What is impact assessment? Impact assessment is a set of logical steps to be followed when you prepare policy proposals. It is a process that prepares evidence for political decision-makers on the advantages and disadvantages of possible policy options by assessing their potential impacts" (EC, 2009, p. 4).

Impact evaluation assesses the changes that can be attributed to a particular intervention, such as a project, program or policy, both the intended ones, as well as ideally the unintended ones. In contrast to outcome monitoring, which examines whether targets have been achieved, impact evaluation is structured to answer the question: how would outcomes such as participants’ well-

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<sup>6</sup> Source: <http://www.gao.gov/special.pubs/gg98026.pdf>.

being have changed if the intervention had not been undertaken? This involves counterfactual analysis, that is, “a comparison between what actually happened and what would have happened in the absence of the intervention”. Impact evaluations seek to answer cause-and-effect questions. In other words, they look for the changes in outcome that are directly attributable to a program<sup>7</sup>.

Sussan (2005) denotes that impact evaluation is a form of outcome evaluation that assesses the net effect of a program by comparing program outcomes with an estimate of what would have happened in the absence of the program. This form of evaluation is employed when external factors are known to influence the program outcomes, in order to isolate the program contribution to achievement of its objectives.

According to Gertler, et al. (2011), impact evaluation is one of many approaches that support evidence-based policy, including monitoring and other types of evaluation.

"Impact evaluation is intended to determine more broadly whether the program had the desired effects on individuals, households, and institutions and whether those effects are attributable to the program intervention. Impact evaluations can also explore unintended consequences, whether positive or negative, on beneficiaries" (Baker, 2000, p. 1).

## **2.2 Poverty reduction and sustainable development**

### ***2.2.1 The poor and poverty definition***

Who are the poor? According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), this question is relevant for different levels of society: individual, household, community, district, regional, and so on. What is poverty? OECD defines that the concept of poverty includes different dimensions of deprivation. In general, it is the inability of people to meet economic, social and other standards of well-being.

The definition of poverty has evolved over the past decade together with international knowledge about the nature of poverty and its determinants. In 1990, the World Development Report expanded the traditional income-based definition of poverty to further include capabilities such as health, education, and nutrition. The 1995 World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen and the Millennium Development Goals both assumed that

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<sup>7</sup> *Evaluation Definition: What is Evaluation?* - *EvaluationWiki*. (n.d.). Retrieved from [http://www.evaluationwiki.org/index.php/Evaluation\\_Definition:\\_What\\_is\\_Evaluation%3F#Impact\\_Evaluations](http://www.evaluationwiki.org/index.php/Evaluation_Definition:_What_is_Evaluation%3F#Impact_Evaluations)

poverty is multidimensional. Similarly, the World Bank has defined poverty as unacceptable human deprivation in terms of economic opportunity, education, health and nutrition, as well as lack of empowerment and security.

The UN defines that poverty is fundamentally the inability of having choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a school or clinic to go to, not having the land on which to grow one's food or a job to earn one's living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living in marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation.

Furthermore, the WB defines extreme poverty as living on \$1.25 or less per day. We know that this amount of money is not enough to meet people's basic needs for survival. Right now, there are more than a billion people living like this: living with hunger, without safe drinking water, and out of the reach of vital healthcare or education.

Evie (2000) supposes that poverty is multi-dimensional, extending beyond low levels of income and including dimensions such as: lack of opportunity, low capabilities, low level of security, and lack of power. According to Ngo Thang Loi (2009), we have to understand poverty under different aspects. For the narrow sense, the poverty is understood as a lack of essential conditions of life (also known as physical poverty or income poverty). However, poverty should be understood in a broader sense from the perspective of integral human development, poverty means in terms of the angle is the elimination of opportunities and choices most basic to comprehensive development man (also known as general poverty or human poverty).

Although there are different viewpoints of poverty, fundamentally, the most common points of poverty are that people are insufficient food to eat; inability to reach the minimum living standard needs; and the most vulnerable in society.

### ***2.2.2 Poverty reduction***

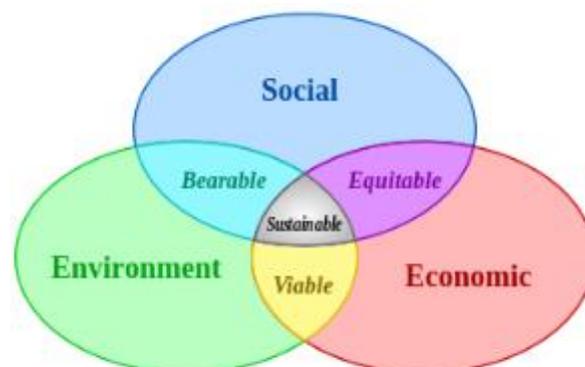
According to Owen Barder (2009), "poverty reduction has other dimensions including enabling the poor to live better lives through long-term, redistribution transfers while their country is developing. -- Poverty reduction is defined as a permanent reduction in the global poverty headcount through economic growth has contributed both to poor program selection and poor

program design and implementation". However, H.I. Latifee (2003) says that "poverty alleviation does not only mean meeting basic food and non-food requirements but also exercising political rights and enjoying political freedom".

### ***2.2.3 Sustainable development***

According to the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) defines that sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of needs, in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs<sup>8</sup>.

Besides that, it is impossible to talk about sustainable development without mentioning the definition of the UN because this has been the most comprehensive concept on this issue so far. This organization shows that sustainable development must ensure stable economic growth in harmony with social progress and equality, reasonable exploitation and use of resources, protection and improvement of habitat environment. This opinion of the United Nation contains three important contents including social, environmental and economic aspects. It can be understood that sustainable development is created by the sustainability of economy, society and environment. Economic sustainability is the selection of a reasonable growth rate based on an appropriate and effective economic structure whereas social sustainability focuses on social progress and human development. Environmental sustainability means rational exploitation of natural resources, protection, and prevention of environmental pollution. In conclusion, sustainable development can only be achieved if we gain the three above-mentioned purposes.



*Figure 1: Scheme of sustainable development: at the confluence of three constituent parts. (2006)*  
Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equity\\_\(economics\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equity_(economics)).

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.un-documents.net/ocf-02.htm>

According to B. Hopwood (2005), "sustainable development has many different meanings. In broad terms, the concept of sustainable development is an attempt to combine growing concerns about a range of environmental issues with socio-economic issues". Kates, et al. (2016) argues that sustainable development reduces poverty through financial (among other things, a balanced budget), environmental (living conditions) and social means (including equality of income).

In general, deriving from the above perspective, it is obvious to comment that there have been a close relationship between sustainable development and poverty reduction relevant to sustainable environmental and socio-economic development at present and in the future for the present and future generations.

#### ***2.2.4 Global poverty***

As of 2016, the WB has estimated that there were 896 million poor people in developing countries who lived on \$1.90 a day or less. This compares with 1.95 billion poor people in 1990, and 1.99 billion poor people in 1981. This means that 12.7% of people in the developing world lived at or below \$1.90 a day in 2011, down from 37% in 1990 and 44% in 1981. This compares with the FAO estimate above of 791 million people living in chronic malnourishment in developing countries.

According to the WB, in 1820, 75% of humanity lived on less than \$1.0 a day, while in 2001, only about 20% do. In the period 1996-2015, It is hard to believe but the proportion of the world living on less than \$1.25 a day has halved in just 19 years. Between 1996 and 2015, the number of people living in extreme poverty fell from 30.4% to 9.6% of the world's total population. It is a massive step forward.

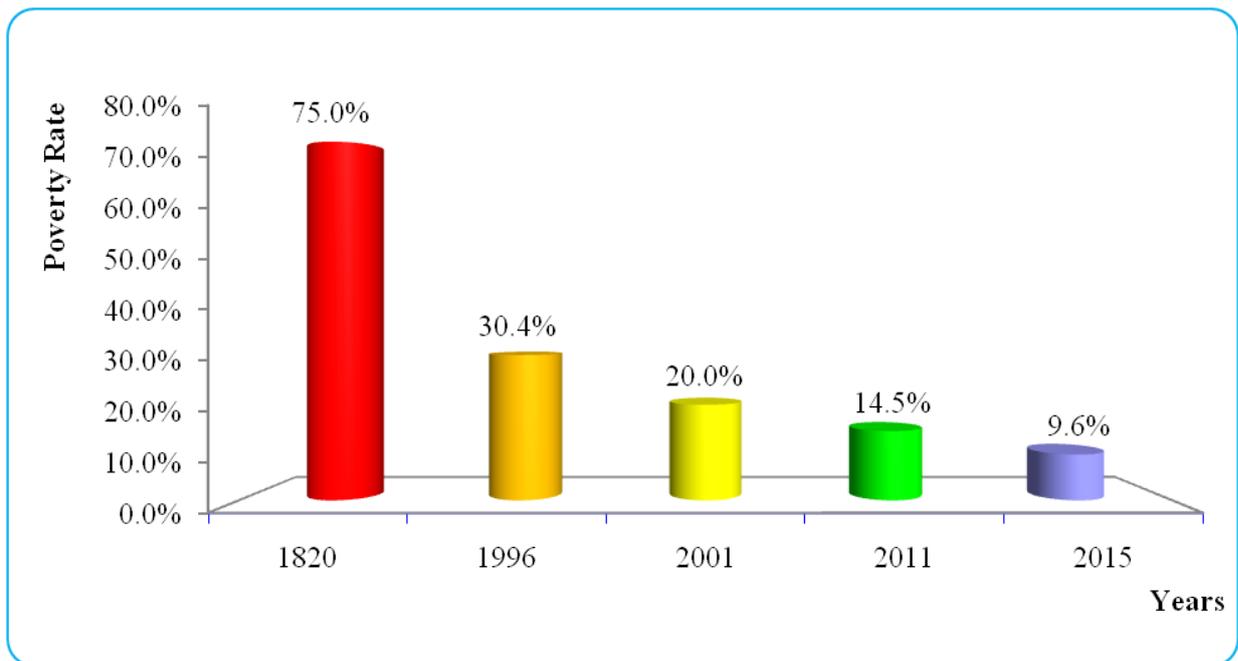


Figure 2. Percentage of the world's population living on less than \$1.25 a day  
 Source: The World Bank's data. Graphic by the author.

According to World Hunger, poverty is the principal cause of hunger. The causes of poverty include poor people's lack of resources, unequal income distribution in the world and within specific countries, conflict, and hunger itself. According to Victoria, "hunger is also a cause of poverty, and thus of hunger. By causing poor health, small body size, low levels of energy, and reductions in mental functioning, hunger can lead to even greater poverty by reducing people's ability to work and learn, thus leading to even greater hunger" (Victoria et al., 2008).

World Bank estimates poverty in six continents. Today, Africa is the continent with the most populous countries in the world living in extreme poverty. The breakdown by continent is as follows: 383 million in Africa, 327 million in Asia, 19 million in South America, 13 million in North America, 2.5 million in Oceania and 0.7 million in Europe.

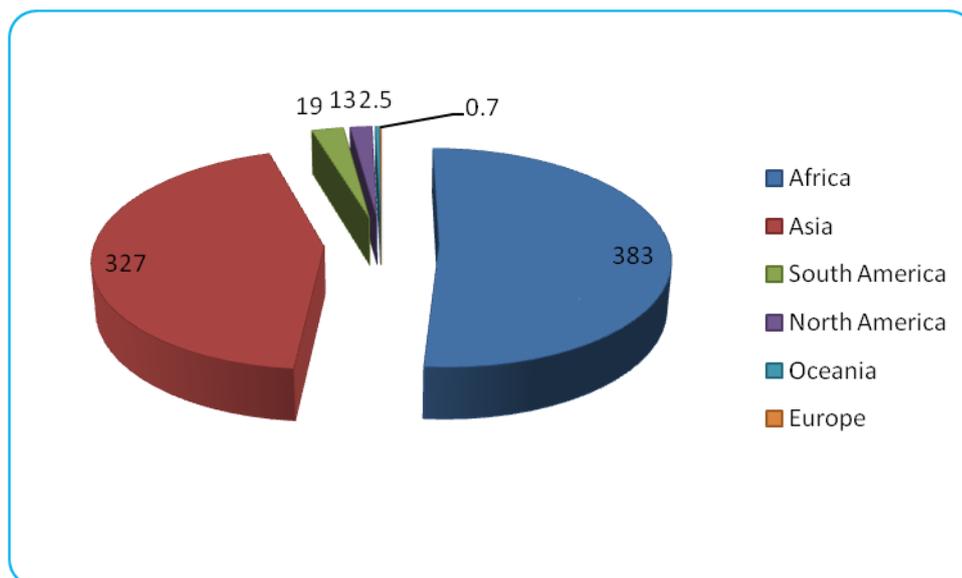


Figure 3. People living in extreme poverty in six continents  
 Source: The World Bank's data. Graphic by the author.

### 2.2.5 Vietnam poverty

Poverty is a global issue as well as a problem for all the nations. In Vietnam, poverty has been declined outstandingly but remains widespread in remote and mountainous areas and in ethnic minority communities. Core poverty is underpinned by a lack of multidimensional access and engagement in Vietnam's growing economy. These groups also suffer from inadequate living conditions, limited multidimensional access to public services as well as low educational attainment<sup>9</sup>. To measure physical poverty, it is important to define the poverty line. The poverty line is a relative measure, which changes according to the socio-economic development conditions during a five-year-period of time. The poverty line is an important milestone to assess the income poverty. For example:

Vietnam's poverty line for the stage 2001-2004 as follows: Rural areas: households with an average monthly income of less than or equal VND 100,000/person/month (VND 1,2 million/person/year). Urban areas: households with an average monthly income of less than or equal VND 150,000/person/month (less than VND 1,8 million /person/year).

Vietnam's poverty line for the stage 2005-2009 as follows: Rural areas: households with an average monthly income of less than or equal VND 200,000/person/month

<sup>9</sup> Retrieved October 18, 2017, from [https://vietnam.oxfam.org/sites/vietnam.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/Vietnam%20Inequality%20Report\\_ENG.pdf](https://vietnam.oxfam.org/sites/vietnam.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/Vietnam%20Inequality%20Report_ENG.pdf)

(VND 2,4 million/person/year). Urban areas: households with an average monthly income of less than or equal VND 260,000/person/month (less than VND 3,12 million/person/year).

Vietnam's poverty line in the period 2010-2014 as follows: Rural areas: households with an average monthly income of less than or equal VND 400,000/person/month (VND 4,8 million /person/year). Urban areas: households with an average monthly income of less than or equal VND 500,000/person/month (less than VND 6 million/person/year).

Five-year stages	Rural area poverty line	Urban area poverty line
2001-2004	VND 100,000	VND 150,000
2005-2009	VND 200,000	VND 260,000
2010-2014	VND 400,000	VND 500,000

*Table 1. The poverty line of Vietnam through 3 stages 2001-2004, 2005-2009 and 2010-2014*

*Source: Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of Vietnam.*

Table 1 shows that the rural area poverty line for 2005-2009 is double that of the 2001-2004. The poverty line for 2010-2014 is four times higher than that of the 2001-2004 and doubles the 2005-2009 poverty line. Whereas, in the urban area poverty line column, the 2005-2009 poverty line increases 1.7 times higher than that of the 2001-2004. The poverty line for 2010-2014 is over 3.3 times higher than that of the 2001-2004 and nearly doubles the 2005-2009 poverty line. If making comparison between the urban area poverty line and the rural area poverty line in three stages, it illustrates that the urban area poverty line is higher than the rural area poverty line from 1.5 times down to 1.3 times and 1.25 times in the 2001-2004, 2005-2009 and 2010-2014 periods respectively. This proves that the poverty line has been significantly increased over the five-year period, which means that people's living standard has been little by little improved and the poor-rich gap between rural areas and urban regions has been gradually narrowed.

Based on the poverty line and poverty surveys from 2002 to 2014, the poverty rate of Vietnam is illustrated as follows:

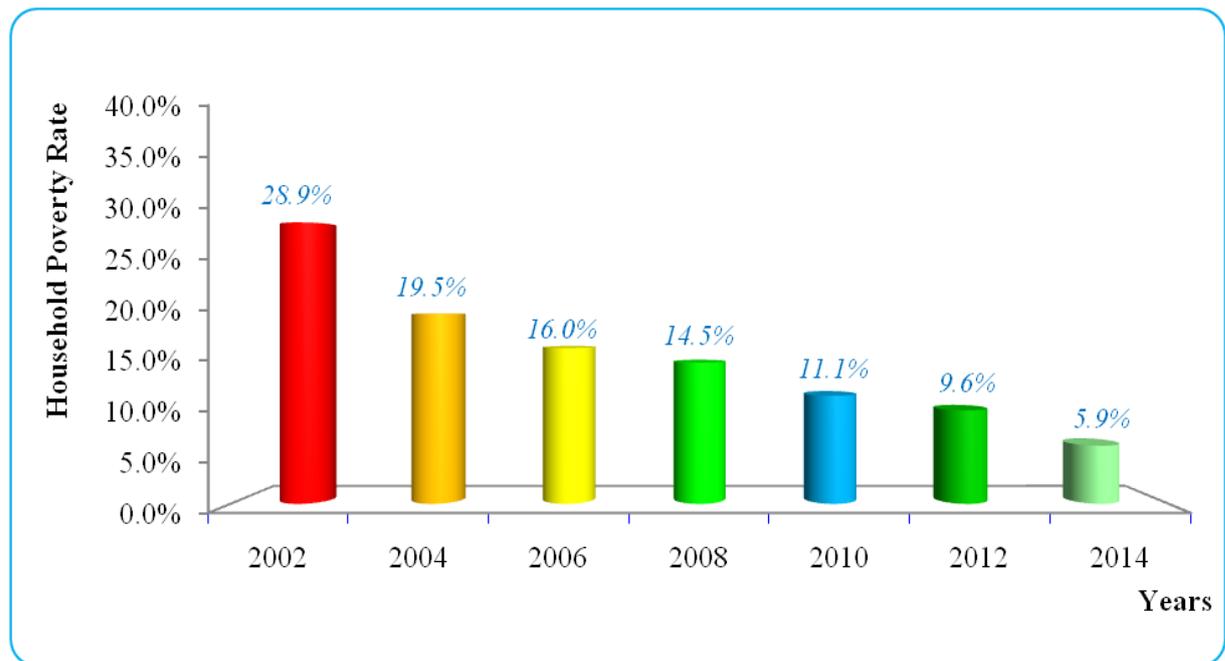


Figure 4. The poverty rate of Vietnam from 2002 to 2014

Source: Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of Vietnam. Graphic by the author.

### 3 Research statement

There is a considerable amount of research on program or policy impact evaluation. This study will analyze and evaluate thoroughly the program's impact connotation. Since the SPSPR in Bac Ai district was implemented for poor rural communes so as to contribute to hunger eradication, poverty reduction inception, there have been many scientific studies on these issues in many respects, angles and various scope, including research topics and specific articles related to each locality. There are some of the following resemble research topics in Vietnam and in other countries in South East Asia such as:

First, "Vietnam is one of the eleven Southeast Asian countries, located on the Indochina peninsula in Southeast Asia with total area of 310,060 km<sup>2</sup>. It has a long land boundary of 4,550 km, bordering China to the North, Laos and Cambodia to the West, and Eastern Sea of Pacific Ocean to the East. The current population of Vietnam is 95,802,477 people on October 18, 2017 according to the latest data from the UN"<sup>10</sup>.

Vietnam's development achievement over the past 30 years was remarkable. Economic and political reforms under Đổi Mới in 1986 have spurred rapid economic growth and development and transformed Vietnam from one of the world's poorest nations to a lower middle-income

<sup>10</sup> Retrieved October 18, 2017, from <https://danso.org/viet-nam/>

country. Accordingly, growth has been equitable with a dramatic reduction in poverty. In 1993, over half of the inhabitants lived on less than \$1.90 a day. Today, the percentage of extreme poverty has fallen to 3.0%. More than 40 million people escaped poverty over two decades. However development challenges and limitations will remain for Vietnam. Poverty gains are fragile. Especially the poor in rural areas and among ethnic minorities are vulnerable to falling back into poverty.

Taking the impact assessment of Program 135 Phase II through two phases as an example. The program impact evaluation from the beginning of 2007 and the end of 2012 was the first assessment of an important poverty reduction program of the Government, focusing on different ethnic minorities in remote mountainous areas in Vietnam. This program impact evaluation is applied a scientific and technical procedure and achieving high standards. The research was conducted in 400 communes [of which 266 beneficiary communes and 134 control communes] of 42 provinces in the whole country which was funded by the Finnish Government, UNDP Vietnam and Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs.

The first and last surveys were designed and implemented with the experience gained from the population living standard survey. That is why they provided a comprehensive range of information to measure the impact of Programme 135 Phase II. These programs and policies have increased the opportunities for poor households to benefit from improved economic development and to help them improve their livelihoods and increase their chances of escaping poverty. However, there is a very important question: What are the effects of these programs on the expected outcomes? There is no answer yet. The reason is that the data were collected for impact analysis was too limited. In designing the program there was no prior plans for impact assessment. The programs did not have the baseline and end-of-term surveys to collect the information necessary for evaluating the impact of the Program. Therefore, the impact assessment is mainly based on the qualitative method and thus questions such as "How much does the program contribute to the poverty rate and how much does it contribute to the rate of increase income of poor households? The answers have not been found correctly.

The main objective of this assessment is to measure the impact of the program on the expected outcomes, mainly based on poverty indicators, income, conditional agricultural production, housing, and public service accessibility. Therefore, this assessment was a pre-and post-program impact assessment using a randomized controlled trial with an equivalent control group.

In order to secure the facilities for the impact evaluation of Program 135 Phase II, the study conducted sampling design of 134 control communes and 266 beneficiary communes, and selected 6,000 surveyed households from 400 communes and designed the questionnaires for the survey. The researchers randomly selected 20 households from the list of all households in each selected village. Among them, they continued selecting 15 households out of 20 households randomly for official interview to ensure that the survey covers 6,000 households. The remaining households [5 households/each village] were used as the reserve for replacement in cases that initially selected households were not available for the official interview for any reason. The household questionnaire collected information on many aspects of household socio-economic conditions such as demography, migration, education, health, agriculture, food production, non-agricultural, self-employment, borrowing and lending and saving, insurance and property.

The research developed a model of impact assessment, data collection and analysis methodology that can be used to measure the impact of the program as well as to measure the progress achieved in relation to poverty reduction and socio-economic situation of ethnic minority communities and their participation in Program 135 Phase II. Specifically, quantitative methods with econometric models for linking result variables with explanatory variables and applying appropriate estimation methods to iterative data were applied to analyzed data.

Last but not least, through analyzing to make comments on the aspects of the Program 135 Phase II, the impact of the Program has shown that surveys, data analysis and evaluation are fundamental, comprehensive, objective, scientific, practical and reliable for ethnic minorities in the poorest and most difficult areas to benefit the Program 135 phase II. The research developed a model of impact assessment and data collection and analysis methodology so that they were used to measure the program impact as well as to measure the achievements on poverty reduction and socio-economic situation of ethnic minority. In addition, large and well-designed data were also a reliable quantitative dataset based on the basis for designing and evaluating the progress, effectiveness and impact of the poverty reduction programs. Furthermore, it is important that the Impact Assessment of the Phase II Program 135 was considered as the first government program to adopt a systematic and professional impact assessment process. This process meets the highest professional standards, not only benefiting Program 135 Phase II, but also a testament to the value added and good lessons for the upcoming government programs.

Second, The Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) is also one of the 11 Southeast

Asian nations with total area of 236,800 km<sup>2</sup>. Geographically, it has the North borders on China, the Northwest borders with Myanmar, the Southwest borders with Thailand, the South borders with Cambodia and the East borders with Vietnam. The current population is 6,886,464 people on October 18, 2017, according to the latest data from the UN<sup>11</sup>.

There has been an Impact Evaluation on Poverty Reduction Fund Project Phase II conducted between September 2012 and October 2015 after 36 months of implementation. It has been supported by the WB, Indochina Research Ltd, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and the Australian Agency for International Development.

According to Voss (2016), Lao PDR has made significant progress in reducing poverty and increasing access to services over the past 20 years. Poverty has declined steadily: from 46% in 1993 to 23.2% in 2012/2013. However, Lao PDR remains one of the poorest countries in the region with an estimated per capita income of US\$1,660 in 2015 and is classified by the UN as a lower-middle-income country [the same as Vietnam]. The Government of Lao PDR prioritized and articulated its poverty reduction strategy in the 2004 National Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy, which identified forty seven districts as priority areas for poverty reduction interventions. The second phase of the Poverty Reduction Fund Project (PRF II) contributed to the Government's poverty reduction agenda by focusing on reducing poverty in relatively remote and inaccessible areas through financing investments in small infrastructure that facilitate poor communities' access to basic services and markets as well as contributing to strengthening citizens' engagement and voice in local development. The development objective of this project is to improve the access to and the utilization of basic infrastructure and services for the targeted poor communities. Before that, the PRF I, implemented from 2002 to 2011, had a successful track record in delivering services in remote areas quickly and at scale. The PRF I provided support to approximately 2,185 communities in 8 out of 17 provinces and 30 out of 144 districts, including 23 priority poverty districts (out of 45).

The PRF II expanded the first phase of the program to four new provinces (Phongsaly, Oudomxay, Luang Prabang, and Attapeu), completing an additional 1,426 subprojects, including 479 in water and sanitation (34%); 451 in the education sector (33%); 284 in roads and bridges (20%); 134 in agriculture, forestry, and energy (9%); and 78 in the health sector (5%).

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<sup>11</sup> Retrieved October 18, 2017, from <https://danso.org/lao/>

The PRF II Impact Evaluation uses a randomized treatment assignment designed to provide accurate and unbiased estimates of program impact. Participation in the PRF II impact evaluation was assigned randomly by kumban, the unit of project implementation. Forty-four kumbans were selected to participate in the evaluation, across 11 districts in 4 provinces. In each of the 11 districts, 2 treatment and 2 control kumbans were selected randomly for a total of 22 treatment and 22 control kumbans. Within each kumban, 100 households were surveyed randomly, stratified by village to ensure complete geographic coverage, for a total target sample of 4,400 households. Data collection occurred in two stages, consisting of two quantitative survey rounds and two qualitative studies. The was designed to complement the quantitative research design to determine the key factors influencing outcomes between PRF and control locations and the ways in which the PRF II is a driver of impacts. The results of the qualitative study are incorporated with the results from the quantitative survey. Since then, the main findings and evidence-based recommendations were derived from analyzing data and indicators such as roads, markets, water, schools, community engagement, participation in village meetings, satisfaction with services and planning. And, impact evaluation was determined using a difference-in-differences approach: before and after project implementation with and without project implementation.

#### **4 Research purpose and research question**

The main research question is to evaluate the impact of the SPSPR in Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP in the period 2009-2014. Furthermore, the research also aims at evaluating the seven groups of policies connected to the program, including: (i) the policy of supporting manufacture and job creation; (ii) the policy of education and vocational training; (iii) the policy of supporting labour export; (iv) the policy of supporting health care; (v) the policy of supporting houses; (vi) the policy of preferential credit loans; and (vii) the policy of infrastructure investment.

For each policy, the research focuses on analyzing two aspects, including:

(a) The access of poor households to policies related to the poverty reduction; the study demonstrates the effectiveness and the easy-to-access ability of poor households to the poverty reduction program's information. On that basis, the poor understand their rights and responsibilities when engaging in the poverty reduction program.

b) The impact of supportive policies of the poverty reduction program to poor households;

Reviewing on this aspect, the study demonstrates and evaluates the validity and the effectiveness of the poverty reduction program that supports the poor increase income, improve their life, and escape the poor situation. However, the most important thing is that through this poverty reduction program the poor raise their awareness, know how to do business, share their experiences with the community, and strive to enrich plausibly.

## **5 Study scope**

Space: Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province, Vietnam.

Duration: From 2009 until 2014.

## **6 Structure of the thesis**

The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is to introduce about research background, literature review and theoretical framework, research statement, research purpose and research question, study scope and structure of the thesis. Specifically, this chapter presents literature review and theoretical framework which covers the definitions of evaluation, program evaluation, impact evaluation, poverty, poverty reduction and sustainable growth. Furthermore, in the research statement, there are some illustrations of program evaluation implemented such as the impact evaluation of Program 135 Phase II in Vietnam and the PRF II Impact Evaluation in Lao PDR that correlate with the SPSPR in Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP in the period 2009-2014.

Chapter two provides detailed information on the research methodologies of the impact assessments such as qualitative research method, quantitative research method. These methods are applied to answer the research question, to describe how data, documents and materials collected and their valid and reliable sources. Besides that, the SWOT analysis is also presented to aim at assessing seven policies related to the SPSPR in Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP in the period 2009-2014.

Simultaneously, the SWOT analysis is necessary to fortify evidence for drawing conclusions, findings and recommendations in the chapter five. Furthermore, limitations of the chosen research methods are mentioned in this chapter.

Chapter three provides an overview of the SPSPR implemented in Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP in the period 2009-2014, at the same time, introduces basically the seven main supportive policy groups related to the SPSPR.

Chapter four analyzes and evaluates the impact of the SPSPR through the seven main supportive policy groups on poor households.

The last chapter is to provide conclusions, findings, policy recommendations, and limitations. Especially, conclusion and recommendations derived from findings and data analysis of this research.

## **CHAPTER TWO – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This review is the type of the impact assessment on prior and after the SPSPR by doing survey method. The main objective of this assessment is to measure the impact of the supportive program to the expected results, mainly based on poverty indicators, income, agricultural production, employment, housing, accessibility to health and education services, and accessibility to preferential loans. The thesis analyses the living conditions in all aspects of ethnic minorities in poor communes of Bac Ai district, at the same time, assesses the achievements and limitations of the SPSPR in Bac Ai district in the period 2009-2014.

In order to evaluate the impact of the SPSPR, this research will carry out a survey for detailed information about the impact assessment on the SPSPR by sending thirty questionnaires via for provincial, district and commune officers who are working for or relevant to the SPSPR conducted in Bac Ai district between 2009 and 2014.

The research methodologies of impact assessment applied to the two mentioned aspects are:

- (a) The access of poor households to policies related to the SPSPR: The quantitative research methodology is applied to analyse original baseline data collected from Ninh Thuan Province People's Committee's Bac Ai poor household investigations at three points of time (first, at the end of 2005 when the SPSPR had not been implemented; second, at the end of 2009 when the SPSPR started; and finally, at the end of 2014 when the SPSPR finished the first phase). The data collected are used to make some comparisons prior and after the SPSPR conducted in Bac Ai district. The comparative statistics are the increase or/and decrease percentages of poor households, poor households' income, labour export, children participating in primary and secondary education, poor households' access to health services, rural infrastructure system, and so on.

(b) The impact of supportive policies of the poverty reduction program to poor households: To analyze, demonstrate, and evaluate the impact of supportive policies of the poverty reduction program to poor households, the author collects documentary and statistical sources from Bac Ai district and some provincial agencies.

c) Besides that, it is necessary to do a survey [using qualitative research method] to accomplish the evidence to ensure objective and honest research results. Therefore, I design questionnaires for provincial, district and commune officers who work for Ninh Thuan Province People's Committee, Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of Ninh Thuan and Office of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of Bac Ai, Communes People's Committee, and etc.

In these cases, the author combines both qualitative research methodology related to point b) and quantitative research methodology to draw limitations and recommendations to improve the policies and programs related to poverty reduction in the next stage.

## **1 Qualitative research method**

"Research design of this thesis is a case study, which is one of the major types of qualitative research design" (Hancock, 1998). A popular method of qualitative research is the case study (Yin, 2003) which examines in depth "purposive samples" to better understand a phenomenon. Qualitative research, on the other hand, inquires deeply into specific experiences, with the intention of describing and exploring meaning through text, narrative, or visual-based data, by developing themes exclusive to that set of participants (Corrine., Glesne, 2011).

The focus of this study is specific on Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province, Vietnam. The research method used for this research is qualitative research method because it is a type of scientific research. According to Mack, "qualitative research method seeks answers to a question, systematically uses a predefined set of procedures to answer the question, collects evidence, produces findings that were not determined in advance and rich data, and produces findings that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study" (Mack et al., 2005).

Furthermore, the target of this thesis is to seek reasons for the research gap and to recommend solutions to support the SPSPR in the next stage. These solutions and recommendations are

subjective and non-quantitative.

### **1.1 Design of qualitative questionnaire**

The questionnaire conducted in this study was done relying on purposive sampling, which is one of the most sampling strategies according to reselected criteria relevant to a particular research question. Moreover, purposive sample sizes are often determined on the basis of theoretical saturation (Mack et al., 2005, p5). Especially, the questionnaire was designed with twenty-two questions in order to clarify specific information of the SPSPR.

### **1.2 Qualitative research objects, validity and reliability**

The objects that the researcher aims at doing survey are provincial, district and commune officers who have been working for the SPSPR conducted in Bac Ai district. There consists of thirty state organizations to which were sent the questionnaires via post from the end of April, 2017. There are 12 provincial level agencies, 9 district level agencies, and 9 commune level agencies.

First, twelve provincial level agencies are Ninh Thuan People's Committee, Ninh Thuan People's Committee Office, Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Department of Education and Training, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Department of Health, Department of Internal Affairs, Department of Planning and Investment, Board for Ethnic Affairs, Ninh Thuan Bank for Social Policies, Ninh Thuan Social Insurance, and Department of Construction.

Second, nine district level agencies are Bac Ai District People's Committee, Bac Ai District People's Committee Office, Division of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Division of Education and Training, Division of Ethnic, Division of Agriculture, Division of Economic and Infrastructure, Division of Health, and Bac Ai Bank for Social Policies.

Third, nine commune agencies are Phuoc Thanh Commune People's Committee, Phuoc Thang Commune People's Committee, Phuoc Hoa Commune People's Committee, Phuoc Tien Commune People's Committee, Phuoc Binh Commune People's Committee, Phuoc Dai Commune People's Committee, Phuoc Chinh Commune People's Committee, Phuoc Tan Commune People's Committee, Phuoc Trung Commune People's Committee. All nine communes and their poor households in Bac Ai district are beneficial objects from the SPSPR between 2009 and 2014.

All feedback information provided by those organizations has been committed to keep in top confidentiality.

Below is the Bac Ai district map where nine communes taken by questionnaire survey.

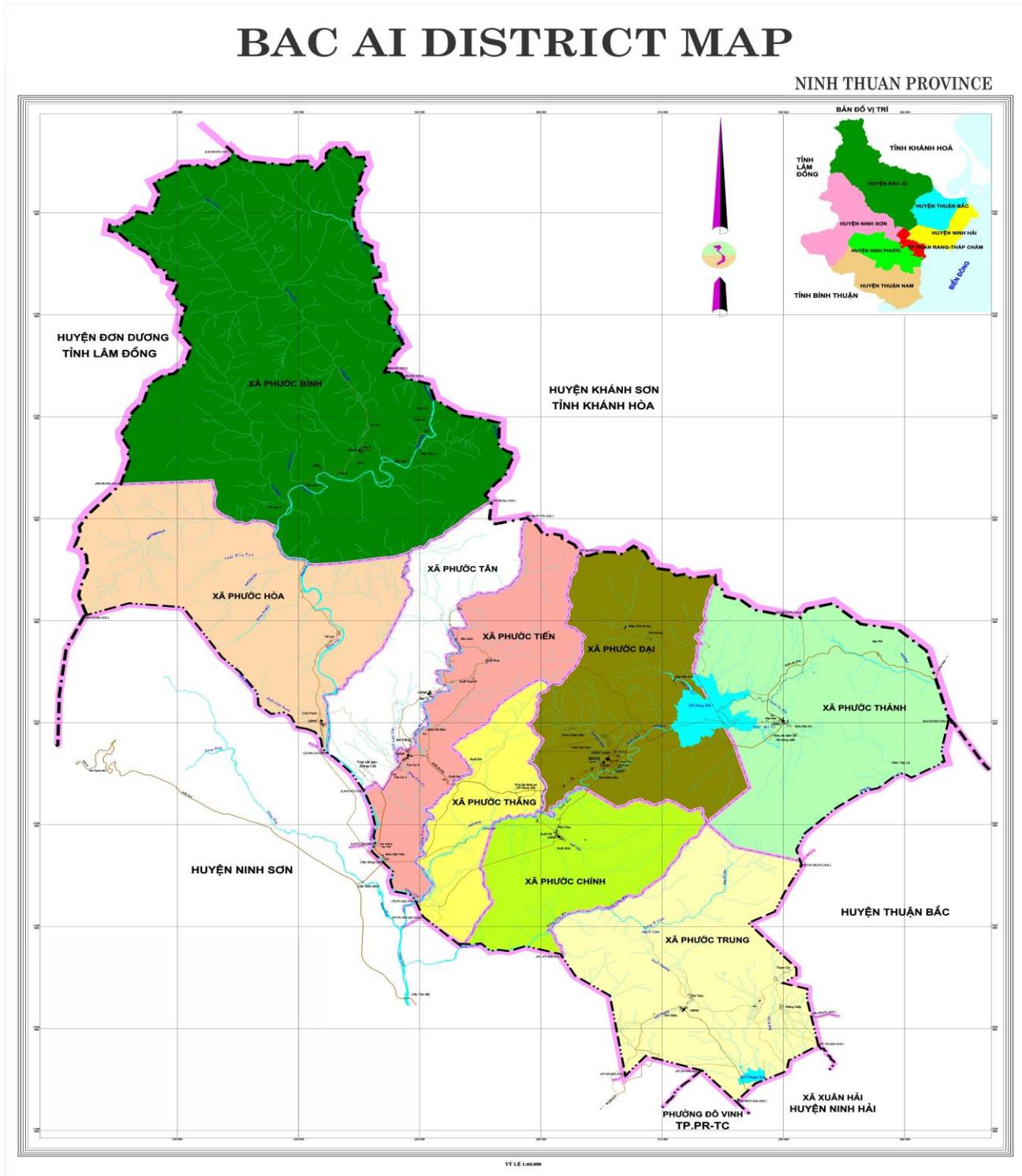


Figure 5. Nine communes in Bac Ai district taken for the questionnaire survey (coloured arrays).

Source: *Ninh Thuan People's Committee.*

In addition, as it is a qualitative research, the method of documentary data collection was applied to collect data from some provincial and district organizations relevant to the SPSPR. Documentary data collection is to understand the current status of the SPSPR in the period from 2009 to 2014 as well as prior the SPSPR implemented in Bac Ai district. On the one hand, legal trusted data were collected from Ninh Thuan People's Committee's sources of documents. This comprehensive data source includes Bac Ai District Poverty Reduction Plan for the period 2009-2014, the Report on the Implementation of the SPSPR under the Government's Resolution 30a/2008/NQ-CP for the period 2009-2014 in Bac Ai district, and some other reliable relevant documents. On the other hand, in order to assure objectivity and honesty when conducting the research, analyzing qualitative data and evaluating the SPSPR's impacts, other authenticated documentary sources were collected from other state management organizations in Ninh Thuan province like Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Department of Education and Training, Department of Health, Department of Internal Affairs, Department of Planning and Investment, Ninh Thuan Bank for Social Policies. Simultaneously, other authenticated documentary sources related to the SPSPR were collected from Bac Ai District People's Committee, Division of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, and Division of Education and Training worth referring for this thesis.

Both questionnaire survey data and documentary data sources are necessary and valuable to fortify the findings and to draw the conclusions, limitations and recommendations.

Last but not least, thirty questionnaires were conducted to collect data for the thesis. All of the participants finished and sent questionnaires back. After having their permission with clear notices of purposes and reasons for the thesis research, qualitative data were processed to analyze and synthesize. Names of those people who gave feedback were not mentioned to avoid misunderstandings because they were asked to give their subjective opinions about the effectiveness of the existing policies and mechanisms. Finally, the thesis used information collected from the SPSPR in Bac Ai district as a case study. And of course, citations and quotes in this thesis must be followed mandatory regulations.

### **1.3 Data analysis**

In order to analyze questionnaire data and documents, materials, the researcher apply some typical analysis methods: qualitative research method and document analysis method.

First, the qualitative analysis is based on information providers' opinions and assessments with a comparison between supply sources of information<sup>12</sup>, or comments from local government authorities, experts and policy beneficiaries. This assessment indicates whether the policy has been applied, whether there is any difficulty in implementing it, what impact it has on it, how it impacts on it. In the qualitative analysis, the case study methodology is used to analyze the specific cases to illustrate the policy impact at the study sites.

Second, documentary analysis is a type of qualitative research in which documents are reviewed by the analyst to assess an appraisal theme<sup>13</sup>. Document analysis method is used to analyze legal documents, policy documents on poverty reduction in order to identify missing issues and shortcomings.

#### **1.4 Limitations**

There are some major disadvantages and constraints arising in doing qualitative research: Firstly, in the process of implementation, the researcher was inevitably limited, especially, in collecting and accessing to some final reports on the implementation of some support policies of the Poverty Reduction Program before 2009 from the poor communes of Bac Ai district because of the lack of systematic informative storage and of the change in staff working on poverty reduction. Secondly, in the questionnaire survey, although it is convenient for respondents because they have time to think for answering the questions carefully and can answer in their spare time, the researcher spent more time waiting for the respondents' replying. Finally, with the first intention to initially interview poor households and households who escaping from poverty to gather objective information from the beneficiaries, but in the end the researcher could not conduct any interviews due to language barrier between the author and the local people, or not making appointments because they were away home to earn their living in the forest or on high mountains, and some other objective reasons such as difficult roads and severe weather. However, these shortcomings do not significantly affect the results of qualitative data collection because the missing information has been provided by Bac Ai District People's Committee and Ninh Thuan People's Committee then.

## **2 Quantitative research method**

"In natural sciences and social sciences, quantitative research is the systematic empirical

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<sup>12</sup> Retrieve October 28, 2017 from <https://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/statdesc.php>.

<sup>13</sup> Retrieve October 28, 2017 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Documentary\\_analysis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Documentary_analysis).

investigation of observable phenomena via statistical, mathematical or computational techniques. The objective of quantitative research is to develop and employ mathematical models, theories and hypotheses pertaining to phenomena. The process of measurement is central to quantitative research because it provides the fundamental connection between empirical observation and mathematical expression of quantitative relationships. Quantitative data is any data that is in numerical form such as statistics, percentages, etc". (Given, Lisa M. 2008).

## **2.1 Quantitative data collection, validity and reliability**

According to Cleverism, "data collection is described as the “process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer queries, stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes". At the same time, Cleverism defines "quantitative data are data that deal with quantities, values or numbers, making them measurable. Thus, they are usually expressed in numerical form, such as length, size, amount, price, and even duration. The usage of statistics is to generate and subsequently analyze this type of data add credence or credibility to it, so that quantitative data is overall seen as more reliable and objective"<sup>14</sup>.

According to the British Library, "quantitative data is typically collected and recorded systematically, so that it can be analysed within a computer database, as well as tables and graphs to uncover large-scale trends and patterns that support theories and arguments"<sup>15</sup>.

Derived from these above perspectives, therefore, data plays an extreme crucial role in doing research, serving as their respective starting points. That is why, in all of these data analyzing processes that involve the usage of information and knowledge, one of the very first steps is data collection. Without data, in this thesis, there will not be anything to convert into useful information that will prove findings, derive conclusion and suggest policy recommendations.

In this thesis, to ensure that the quantitative data is reliable, objective and accurate, the researcher collected the published annual statistics related to the SPSPR from a number of state agencies in Bac Ai district and in Ninh Thuan province as follow (Table 2). High quality and valid, reliable data will then be processed, resulting to high quality information to demonstrate

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<sup>14</sup> Retrieve October 28, 2017 from <https://www.cleverism.com/qualitative-and-quantitative-data-collection-methods/>

<sup>15</sup> Retrieve October 28, 2017 from <https://www.bl.uk/business-and-ip-centre/articles/how-to-collect-quantitative-data>

whether the SPSPR in Bac Ai district is effective or not.

Types of statistic data	Duration needed	State agencies provided
Population and poverty reduction	The end of 2005 and From 2009 to 2014	Ninh Thuan Statistical Office, Ninh Thuan People's Committee and Bac Ai District People's Committee.
Manufacture and job creation	The end of 2005 and From 2009 to 2014	Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
Educational and vocational training	The end of 2005 and From 2009 to 2014	Department of Education and Training
Labour export	From 2009 to 2014	Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
Health care	From 2000 to 2014	Department of Health
Housing subsidy	From 2008 to 2013	Department of Construction
Preferential loans	From 2006 to 2014	Ninh Thuan Bank for Social Policies
Infrastructure investment	From 2006 to 2014	Department of Planning and Investment

*Table 2. Types of statistic data collected from a number of state agencies in Ninh Thuan.*

After collecting quantitative data from those above state agencies, the researcher asked them for their permission with clear notices of purposes and reasons for the thesis research only.

## **2.2 Data analysis**

Quantitative data analysis focuses on descriptive and comparative statistics for the analysis of indicators reflecting the negative and positive effects of poverty reduction policy, indicating status and change under policy impact. Therefore, the before-and-after comparative method is used to analyze and compare basing on the system of indicators, comparison of changes of indicators before and after the implementation of policies. Furthermore, statistical descriptive analysis method is used to describe the application of policies in practice, constraints, needs, and helps to understand the logic of policy implementation in practice as well. The analysis also allows identifying the causes of the negative and positive effects of poverty reduction policies on the beneficiaries. Descriptive statistic is used to present quantitative descriptions in a manageable form. Descriptive statistic is used to simplify large amounts of data in a sensible way. Each descriptive statistic reduces lots of data into a simpler summary.

## 2.3 Limitations

There is no perfect method. Any method has its strengths and limitations. Therefore, when conducting a survey, the researcher usually applies various methods in compiling and processing data. Although various methods are quite different, they support each other a lot. In quantitative data analysis, the main disadvantage is that some quantitative data collected are heterogeneous on the year of implementation. For example, data on poor households, manufacture and job creation, educational and vocational training,... were collected from the end of 2005 to 2014, but data on labour export was in the period of 2009-2014 or housing subsidy was from 2008 to 2013. Heterogeneity of time also causes a few difficulties in making comparisons.

## 4 SWOT analysis

SWOT is an abbreviation formed from the four initial letters of the words: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. SWOT analysis can be accepted as the assessment of an organization's internal strengths and weaknesses, and its environments, opportunities, and threats. It is a general mechanism designed to be used in the fundamental phases of decision-making and as a precursor to strategic planning in various types of applications. SWOT analysis gives an overview of the problem, but does not propose the approaches to solve the problem or does not identify the targets of the problem.

Applying it to poverty alleviation, SWOT analysis helps to know the internal and external factors that hinder and may limit the implementation of the SPSPR in the period 2009-2014 in Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan provinve. Simultaneously, it also helps to fill necessary supplementations derived from limitations, recommendations, and shortcomings before/during the SPSPR conducted. Based on the questionnaire survey data, Table 3 and Table 4 below are illustrated some aspects of SWOT analysis of the SPSPR in the period 2009-2014 in Bai Ai district, Ninh Thuan provinve.

No	Strengths	Weaknesses
(1)	The political system from central to local cares for the poor	The resources for the poverty policy implementation are limited
(2)	The poverty reduction policy system is	Mechanisms for coordination,

No	Strengths	Weaknesses
	comprehensive from central to local	decentralization, accountability are unclear
(3)	Communities' and the poor awareness of poverty reduction has improved	Poverty reduction policies are overlapping, fragmented, and unsystematic
(4)	The living conditions of the poor have been improved significantly	The linkage between production, processing and consumption amongst poor households, scientists and enterprises is ineffective
(5)	Socio-economic infrastructure in the poor district and communes is invested	Poor ethnic people are so limited in qualifications and foreign languages that they are not eligible for labour export
(6)	Resources from private entrepreneurs and NGOs have been attracted	<i>Other weaknesses:</i> Severe weather conditions (famine) and low educational level of local citizens
(7)	Annual poor household rates have gradually declined	
(8)	Children at right-age attending school at all levels have considerably increased	
(9)	Quality of education, health care, social services, human resources, etc rise	
(10)	PCI increases	
(11)	Local government's socio-economic develops	
(12)	Narrowing the gaps of living standards between urban and rural	
(13)	<i>Other advantages:</i> Economic and cultural exchanges between mountainous and delta areas have been significantly expanded in recent years	

Table 3. Illustration some aspects of SWOT analysis of the SPSPR in the period 2009-2014.

No	Opportunities	Threats
(1)	Socio-economic infrastructure in poor districts and poor communes will be concentrated in line with new rural criteria	The results of poverty reduction have been unsustainable. The risk of falling into poverty again can occur at any time
(2)	Facilitating poor people to participate in poverty reduction program activities to increase their incomes through creating more jobs in order to promote the effectiveness of essential infrastructure investments, to reduce the risk of natural disaster, to adapt to climate change, and to get access to markets	Some poor households are always waiting for the Government subsidy, but they are not willing to do business to escape poverty
(3)	Improving the poor livelihoods and enhancing the quality of living conditions, ensuring to increase the PCI for poor households	The rich-poor gap among regions and groups has not been narrowed
(4)	Contributing to the achievement of the objective of economic growth, ensuring social security, especially in poor areas, creating conditions for the poor and poor households to access basic facilitate social services	Backward customs and illiteracy are barrier for those who do not want to approach progress, civilization and modern
(5)	Completing the goal of sustainable poverty reduction	Extreme weather conditions interfere with production development and poor household livelihoods. The poor are the most vulnerable members of our society
(6)	Improving capacity for implementation, transparency, accountability, supervision and evaluation of the poverty reduction program	<i>Other threats:</i> Getting married when underage, child marriage [below eighteen according to the Marriage and Family Law], and marriage between people of direct bloodline leading to degrading Raglai ethnic race.

No	Opportunities	Threats
(7)	<i>Other chances:</i> Ensuring gender equality, social justice and narrowing the development gap between mountainous and lowland areas	

Table 4. Illustration some aspects of SWOT analysis of the SPSPR in the period 2009-2014.

However, there are also some drawbacks of SWOT analysis. "SWOT analysis usually reflects a person's existing position and viewpoint, which can be misused to justify a previously decided course of action rather than used as a means to open up new possibilities. It is important to note that sometimes threats can also be viewed as opportunities, depending on the people or groups involved". There is a saying, "A pessimist is a person who sees a calamity in an opportunity, and an optimist is one who sees an opportunity in a calamity". (Radha and Dugger, 1995).

## CHAPTER THREE – RESULT ANALYSIS OF THE SPSPR IN BAC AI DISTRICT

### 1 Socio-economic situation of Bac Ai district between 2005 and 2014

In early 2009, Bac Ai district was one of the 61 poorest districts in Vietnam which benefited the SPSPR. Bac Ai district is a mountainous district with a populous ethnic minority of Raglai, accounting for 95,0% and located to the northwest of Ninh Thuan province. Bac Ai district has 9 administrative units at commune level, namely, Phuoc Thanh, Phuoc Thang, Phuoc Hoa, Phuoc Tien, Phuoc Binh, Phuoc Dai, Phuoc Chinh, Phuoc Tan, Phuoc Trung with 38 particularly difficult villages. Bac Ai district has 103,090.18 hectares of natural land in total, amongst them, forestry land is 81,231.01 ha, accounting for 79.07%; agricultural land is 12,346.86 hectares, accounting for 12.01%; degraded land is 9,512.31 hectares, accounting for 8.92%. Although the natural area is large (accounting for 30.5% of the area of Ninh Thuan province), the land which is mainly mountainous and degraded land is only used for agricultural production in the rainy season. In addition, in recent years, due to negative consequences of global climate change, the harsh climate, extreme drought and less rainfall had been prolonging since 2013 to 2016 that harmfully affected the Raglai's livelihood, production and food security to local people. Therefore, the Government granted rice to the poor people to stabilize their lives every year.

Regarding Bac Ai's population growth over the 2005-2014 period, its population had increased

steadily from 21,739 inhabitants in 2005 to 25,972 inhabitants in 2013, then rose dramatically up to 28,486 inhabitants in 2014, reached the highest point of the whole 10-year period.

Through analysis of Bac Ai's population statistics data, it is revealed that an annual steady increase in population will be one of the hinder challenges for implementing the SPSPR in Bac Ai poor district (Figure 6).

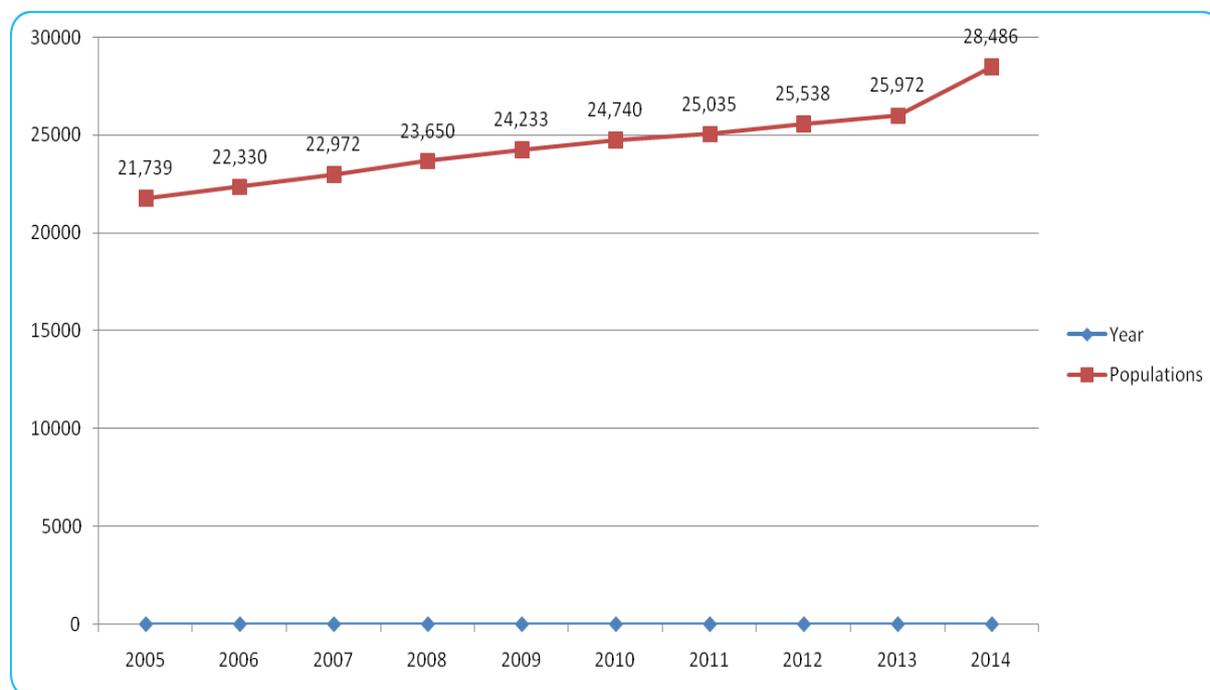


Figure 6. Bac Ai's population growth over the 2005-2014 period.

Source: Ninh Thuan Statistical Office, Ninh Thuan People's Committee and Bac Ai District People's Committee. Graphic by the author.

Though Bac Ai's socio-economic starting point was poor together with pressure on population increase and severe natural disasters, Bac Ai district has made great effort to archive a step-by-step steady development. Now, take a comparative example to illustrate the growth of Bac Ai district over the three important milestones 2005, 2009, and 2014.

In 2005, when the SPSPR was not implemented, the population was 21,739 inhabitants with 4,208 households. Poverty household rate was at the highest proportion 66.63%, [approximately 2,804 poor households, 14,484 poor people]. The Raglai's livelihood was very difficult. Agricultural production was obviously difficult due to dry weather and lack of irrigation water. Bac Ai's socio-economic situation was underdeveloped, and the technical infrastructure was not invested synchronously as well. Moreover, the education system was undeveloped and students' enrolment rates were low, etc. Such unfavorable factors have stymied the development of Bac Ai district for a long time.

In 2009, when the SPSPR was conducted in Bac Ai district, the population increased 24,233 inhabitants with 5,134 households. Poverty household rates declined slightly but were still at a high proportion 53.86%, [approximately 2,765 poor households]. The Raglai's livelihood remained difficult. However, with many supportive policies and specific mechanisms applied aiming at exploiting the potential benefits and advantages of Bac Ai mountainous district to develop the economy and improve the living standards of the Raglai's people, the local authorities applied the supportive programs of agricultural production tools, production land, preferential capital for poor households to change their living better. Since then, it helped to promote Bac Ai's socio-economic development in the area well-developed.

By the end of 2014, after the 6-year SPSPR implementation, Bac Ai district attained some significant achievements in several fields such as the proportion decrease of poverty households from 66.63% in 2005, down to 53.86% in 2009, and significant decline to 29.83% in 2014; enhancement of the accessibility of health care and education services for the poor; improvement on the poor living conditions through vocational training, employment, labour export, concessional loans to the poor to raise incomes; synchronized technical infrastructure; etc.

	<b>In 2005</b>	<b>In 2009</b>	<b>In 2014</b>
Inhabitants	21,739	24,233	28,486
Total households	4,208	5,134	6,536
<b>Percentage of poor households</b>	<b>66.63%</b>	<b>53.86%</b>	<b>29.83%</b>
Total poor households	2,804	2,756	1,950
Total poor citizens	14,484	13,051	8,789

*Table 5. Bac Ai's populations and poor households over the three milestones 2005, 2009, and 2014.*

Source: *Ninh Thuan Statistical Office, Ninh Thuan People's Committee and Bac Ai District People's Committee. Analysis and synthesis by the author.*

## **2 The Result Analysis of the SPSPR in Bac Ai District in 2009-2014**

The SPSPR which was first conducted in Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province in the period 2009-2014 was based on the SPSPR under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP issued December 27, 2008. According to the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP, the eligibility requirements for benefiting from the SPSPR is that these districts have a poverty rate of 50% or higher; are inhabited by populous ethnic minorities who are still difficult in

lives, at the same time, the socio-economic development situation slow and the rate of poor households is 3.5 times higher than the national average.

At the beginning of 2009, Bac Ai mountainous district, which had a poverty percentage of 53.86%, was one of 61 poorest districts over the whole country that benefited the SPSPR. On that basis, Ninh Thuan People's Committee issued Decision No. 100/2009/QĐ-UBND dated March 30, 2009 approving the SPSPR of No. 01/ĐA-UBND dated March 24, 2009 of Bac Ai District's People's Committee on socio-economic development to reduce poverty rapidly and sustainably in the 2009-2020 period. The SPSPR was divided into two phases: the first phase from 2009 to 2014, and the second one between 2015 and 2020. In this thesis, the author focuses only on analysis and evaluation of the implementation the SPSPR in Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province in the first term 2009-2014.

According to Ravallion (1992), the poverty line is based on indicators to meet basic human needs. Basic needs include food needs and non-food needs. As the economy growth, the share of demand for food decreases and non-food demand increases. The current poverty line in Vietnam is under construction based mainly on PCI. In the 2009-2014 period of implementation the SPSPR in Bac Ai district, the poverty line was applied by the two following stages:

First, Vietnam's poverty line for the stage 2005-2009 under the Decision No. 170/2005/QĐ-TTg dated July 8, 2005, as follows: Rural areas: households with an average monthly income of less than or equal VND 200,000 /person/month (VND 2,4 million/person/year). Urban areas: households with an average monthly income of less than or equal VND 260,000 /person/month (less than VND 3.12 million/person/year).

Second, Vietnam's poverty line for the period 2010-2015 under the Decision No. 09/2011/QĐ-TTg dated January 30, 2011, as follows: Rural areas: households with an average monthly income of less than or equal VND 400,000/person/month (VND 4,8 million/person/year). Urban areas: households with an average monthly income of less than or equal VND 500,000/person/month (less than VND 6,0 million/person/year).

Bac Ai is considered as a mountainous district so that it applied the poverty line of rural regions as in Box 1:

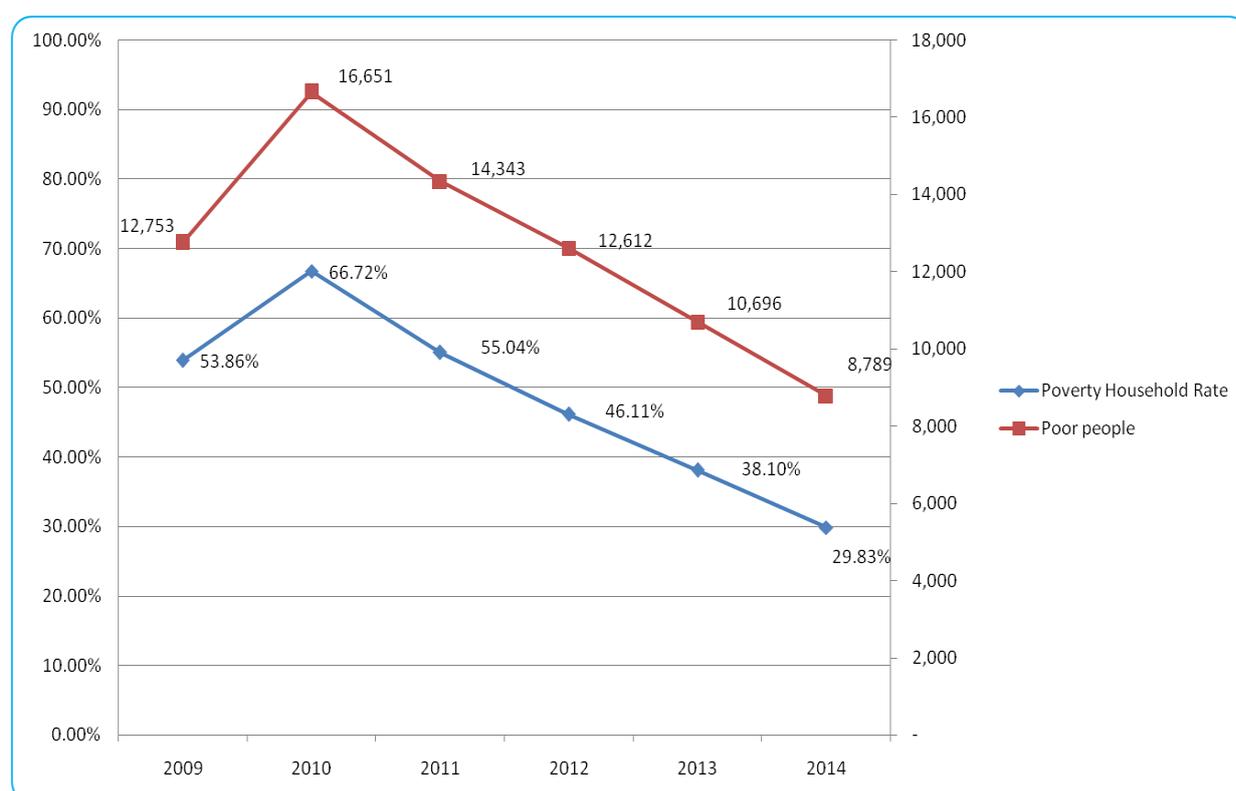
### Box 1: Vietnam's poverty line in Bac Ai district in the 2009-2014 period

**In 2009:** Rural areas: households with an average monthly income of less than or equal VND 200,000/person/month (VND 2,4 million/person/year)

**In 2010-2014:** Rural areas: households with an average monthly income of less than or equal VND 400,000/person/month (VND 4,8 million/person/year)

Looking at Box 1, it shows that in the period 2009-2014, there were two times raising the rural poverty standards in 2009 from VND 200,000/person/month [equivalent to VND 2,4 million/person/year] to double to VND 400,000/person/month [equivalent to VND 4,8 million/person/year] in 2010/2014. Although the national poverty line was lower than the world poverty line of US \$2/person/day, it proved that Vietnam had made great efforts to gradually raise the income standards of poor households close to the world level remarkably. At that moment, Vietnam's socio-economic development was very difficult and remained a lower-middle income country in the world.

In general, the SPSPR under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP issued December 27, 2008 in Bac Ai district started to implement in early 2009 and so far have achieved certain success in improving the income and enhancing the quality of life for poor households. Figure 7 demonstrates the poverty reduction results in Bac Ai district from 2009 to 2014 as follows:



*Figure 7. The poverty reduction results in Bac Ai district from 2009 to 2014.*

Source: *Ninh Thuan People's Committee and Bac Ai District People's Committee. Graphic by the author.*

Having a look at poverty household rate of Figure 7, the poverty household rate goes up significantly from 53.86% in 2009 up to 66.72% in 2010 due to applying the new poverty line of the 2010-2014 stage. As a result, the poverty household rate increases 12.86% equivalent to an increase of 3,898 poor people around one year [2009/2010]. However, totally, from 2010 to 2014, poverty household rate goes down gradually with an average rate of 9,22%. The poverty household rate annually decreases that demonstrates the great efforts of the Government at all levels during the period 2009-2014. As a consequence of the SPSPR in Bac Ai district during the 2009-2014 term, the poverty household proportion of 53.86% in 2009 slumped that of **29.83%** in 2014 with a dramatic decline percentage of 24.03%, which is equivalent to 815 poor households and 3,964 poor inhabitants. What an impressive result of poverty reduction!

In order to achieve an extraordinary result of poverty reduction, the SPSPR in Bac Ai district integrated the seven investment and supportive policies of the program under Resolution 30a of the Government as a complete schedule that pushes back hunger and poverty aiming at helping the poor to stabilize their lives and to get rich in the future. Over 6 years of implementation up to now, with proper development investment orientation, Bac Ai mountainous district developed significantly. The material and spiritual life of the Raglai people improved increasingly; many poor households who benefited from direct supportive policies escaped from poverty; local defence and security maintained steadily. Additionally, not only did Bac Ai district focus on supporting economic development but also policies such as education and vocational training to raise people's knowledge or health caring to enhance public health was interested in deploying right investment as well. Up to now, the kindergarten-to-high school system has been built basically in every commune and teachers have been arranged for all levels that ensure universal education for all people. Moreover, vocational training for rural workers is considered as a key task that Bac Ai district has implemented well-done to support skilled workers in seeking stable jobs in and outside the country to raise additional income for their family economy. Furthermore, temporary houses for poor households were eliminated with 983 new houses supported by construction. The allocation of land and forest to the contracted care households were completed with an area of over 18,700 hectares. Since then, on the one hand, Bac Ai district made initial changes in agricultural production, forestry, rural economy and improved people's living conditions by promoting agricultural development,

forest protection and socio-economic infrastructure development investment. The district, on the other hand, strengthens doing researches and transfers scientific and technological advances, creating a breakthrough in training human resources for future sustainable development.

From this section onwards, the seven investment and supportive policies that are taken analysis consideration below are the supportive policy to manufacture and job creation; the educational and vocational training supportive policy; the labour export policy; the health care supportive policy; the housing supportive policy; the credit supportive policy; and the infrastructure investment policy. Through analyzing the seven supportive policies, the author will evaluate the impact as well as the effectiveness of the SPSPR in Bac Ai in Chapter Four.

### **3 The Result Analysis of Poverty Reduction Supportive Policies Related to the SPSPR in Bac Ai district during the period 2009-2014**

#### **3.1 The supportive policy to manufacture and job creation**

##### **3.1.1 An overview of the manufacture and job creation supportive policy**

The objectives of this policy include two main points: (1) the supportive policy through forest protection, forest allocation and land allocation for afforestation, and (2) the supportive policy for production.

For the first policy - the supportive policy through forest protection, forest allocation and land allocation for afforestation - it is stated that poor households contract for forest protection are entitled VND 200,000/hectare/year. Besides that, poor households allocated with production forests and allocated land for production forests under planning shall benefit all products on the allocated and planted forest areas; be supported for the first time forest seedlings according to the process of afforestation; be subsidized 15 kg of rice per person/month while not self-sufficient food; be supported with VND 5 million/hectare/household to make use of land for food production in the areas under contracted forest protection. Furthermore, the state budget shall support 50% of the loan interest rate for production forests.

For the second policy - the supportive policy for production - poor households shall be supported VND 10 million/hectares for reclamation; VND 5 million/hectare for restoration; VND 10 million/hectares to improve terraced fields for production; be supported for the

purchase of seeds, fertilizers for plants conversion and high economic value animals; be given priority to hybrid rice and hybrid maize. In addition, the state budget shall support 50% of the loan interest rate for developing agricultural production, investing in processing establishments, preserving and consuming agricultural products. Moreover, the state budget shall support 100% of vaccine for dangerous disease treatment in cattle and poultry. On the other hand, for poor households who do not have livestock conditions have demand to develop small handicraft industry, the state budget shall give a loan of up to VND 5 million/household, with the interest rate of 0%.

### **3.1.2 Results of implementation of the manufacture and job creation supportive policy**

Through the implementation performance and data analysis of the manufacture and job creation supportive policy, the supportive policy through forest protection, forest allocation and land allocation for afforestation, it shows that 9 communes focused on allocating to 2,053 poor households for forest protection with the total area of 18,657.14 hectares. In addition, the Government supported 292 tons of rice for 1,276 poor households with 5,950 poor people during the time they took care of forest.

Regarding to the supportive policy for production, Bac Ai District's People Committee supported for reclamation, restoration and terrace with the areas of 2,417.73 hectares for 3,464 poor households (Of which, reclamation 670.83 hectares, restoration 742.75 hectares and creating terraced fields 1004.15 hectares). Up to the year 2014, the total cultivated area of Bac Ai district was 10,736 hectares, an increase of 2,252 hectares in comparison with 2008. Total food production reached 12,347 tons. Along with supporting for reclamation, rehabilitation of production land, the one-time support policy for breeding facilities, breeding grass for livestock and purchasing seeds and fertilizers for the conversion of high economic value plants and animals was also provided to 683 poor households. In addition, some other programs and projects implemented in Bac Ai district also supported 1,571 poor households to buy seeds, fertilizers, 903 breeding cows, 120 black pigs and 100% vaccination against dangerous diseases for cattle and poultry in the district. On the other hand, to develop agriculture in the right direction for the next coming years, Bac Ai district has planned the agricultural, forestry and fishery production areas and transformed the structure of plants and animals in 9 communes.

In general, the two above supportive policies for poor households under the SPSPR have

contributed to solving the living difficulties of contracted village communities, creating more jobs and increasing income. At the same time, from supportive policies to agricultural production, many poor households actively proliferated to increase crops, applied science and technology to agricultural production. As a result, most of poor households have stocked capital and seeds for re-investment in production, food preservation, epidemic prevention. Gradually, they have changed their farming practices initially to market and brought stable income for their families.

## **3.2 The educational and vocational training supportive policy**

### **3.2.1 An overview of the educational and vocational training supportive policy**

The educational and vocational training supportive policy is designed to improve the local people's intellectual level and vocational training to create jobs in ethnic minority areas in poor districts.

To begin with, the first content of the policy is to allocate adequate teachers for poor districts; to build public service accommodations for teachers who work in villages or communes in poor districts; to build boarding interlinear schools or semi-boarding interlinear schools for ethnic minority students in order to meet the requirement for training on-spot cadres for poor districts. Especially, this policy is to broaden the preferential training policy in the form of recruitment for ethnic minority students, with specialization in agriculture, forestry, healthcare, teacher training and legal assistance.

Next, the second content of the policy is to strengthen vocational training associated with job creation for employees by investing a general training establishment in each poor district. This vocational training establishment has rights to benefit preferential policies in order to construct a boarding dormitory for trainees to organize vocational training classes for farmers and labourers on agriculture, forestry, fishery, non-agricultural production to work in enterprises and export labour.

### **3.2.2 Results of implementation of educational and vocational training supportive policy**

First and foremost, it is objective to confirm that the educational supportive policy has made significant changes in Bac Ai district to enhance the local people's intellectual level during 6 years. Previously, 9 communes had initially only 33 schools in 2009 [1 boarding interlinear

school, 7 secondary schools, 16 primary schools, and 9 preschools], 6,120 students from preschool-to-highschool students, and 428 teachers. Until 2014, the numbers of schools, students and teachers increased impressively to 48 schools [2 boarding interlinear school, 9 semi-boarding interlinear schools, 9 secondary schools, 1 high school, 16 primary schools, and 11 preschools], 7,136 students from preschool-to-highschool students, and 691 teachers. An increase of schools, students, and teachers in the term 2009-2014 was sufficient to meet the demand of education in Bac Ai district. Table 6, 7 and 8 show the illustrations below:

Years	Numbers of schools							Total
	Nursery	Preschool school	Primary school	Secondary school	High school	Semi-boarding schools	Boarding schools	
2009	0	9	16	7	0	0	1	<b>33</b>
2010	1	10	16	7	1	0	1	<b>36</b>
2011	1	10	16	8	1	4	1	<b>41</b>
2012	1	10	16	9	1	6	2	<b>45</b>
2013	0	11	16	9	1	8	2	<b>47</b>
2014	0	11	16	9	1	9	2	<b>48</b>

Table 6. Bac Ai's school system development over the period 2009-2014.

Source: Bac Ai District People's Committee. Analysis and synthesis by the author.

Years	Numbers of preschool-to-highschool students				Total
	Kindergarten	Primary	Secondary	Highschool	
2009	1,370	3,505	941	304	<b>6,120</b>
2010	1,391	3,318	1,121	338	<b>6,168</b>
2011	1,520	3,411	1,218	418	<b>6,567</b>
2012	1,547	3,487	1,161	450	<b>6,645</b>
2013	1,747	3,260	1,295	467	<b>6,769</b>
2014	1,763	3,463	1,425	485	<b>7,136</b>

Table 7. Bac Ai's student growth over the period 2009-2014.

Source: Bac Ai District People's Committee. Analysis and synthesis by the author.

Years	Numbers of preschool-to-highschool teachers				
	Kindergarten	Primary	Secondary	Highschool	Total
2009	31	197	172	28	<b>428</b>
2010	91	317	180	25	<b>613</b>
2011	91	325	185	32	<b>633</b>
2012	90	329	185	32	<b>636</b>
2013	92	344	195	32	<b>663</b>
2014	150	310	197	34	<b>691</b>

Table 8. Bac Ai's teacher growth over the period 2009-2014.

Source: Bac Ai District People's Committee. Analysis and synthesis by the author.

In addition to investing in the development of the school system, teachers to attract all-level students to school, the central budget and the local budget of Ninh Thuan province have been allocated to purchase learning tools, books and notebooks for students going to school. At the same time, there is also another subsidy policy of 100% tuition fee and rice support for kindergarten-through-high school students attending schools.

In the period 2009-2014, the total investment capital for education is VND 85,651 billion.

Years	Investment funds for education						Total
	National Target Program	Government Bond Capital	Local Capital	Local Budget Balance	ODA, NGO Funds	Mobilized Capital	
2009	380	360	3,423	300	0	0	<b>4,463</b>
2010	3,723	1,750	1,740	500	4,500	0	<b>12,213</b>
2011	3,491	1,750	245	500	5,300	1,500	<b>12,786</b>
2012	2,593	6,563	110	200	5,500	1,438	<b>16,404</b>
2013	3,232	3,738	200	300	6,200	2,356	<b>16,026</b>
2014	3,569	2,869	300	2,000	10,500	4,521	<b>23,759</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,988</b>	<b>17,030</b>	<b>6,018</b>	<b>3,800</b>	<b>32,000</b>	<b>9,815</b>	<b>85,651</b>

Table 9. Investment funds for education development in Bac Ai district in the period 2009-2014.

Source: Department of Planning and investment. Analysis and synthesis by the author.

Secondly, regarding to the vocational training policy, by the end of 2014, Bac Ai district had not established a vocational training institution as planned. Instead, Bac Ai district focused on vocational training associated with creating employment at local for rural workers. In the last 6 years, Bac Ai district organized many vocational training courses for 9,799 labourers and created jobs for 6,115 labourers. The remaining skilled labourers employed themselves to earn their livings at locality. Short-term vocational training courses that were lasting from 3 to 6 months were mainly cultivation, animal husbandry, veterinary, construction and sewing. The advantages of this form of vocational training are that labourers are trained at their living places, are introduced for work at the local, and have a stable income. For instance, non-agricultural occupational trainees had more than 62.4% of employment, such as either building houses or working in local projects at the local with a stable income of VND 3-5 million/month. Some of them (22.6%), after being trained a skilled work, they employed themselves as small entrepreneurs supplying agricultural and livestock services to farmers in the area or purchasing agricultural, forestry and animal products from farmers for consumption in the market. Others went outside Bac Ai district to work as industrial sewing, construction,... accounting for nearly 15.0%.

In short, results of implementation of educational and vocational training supportive policy have been promoting Bac Ai district's social changes that contribute to enhance people's knowledge and to create preferable conditions for poor people to improve their living standards gradually.

### **3.3 The labour export policy**

#### **3.3.1 An overview of the labour export policy**

The objectives of this policy is to enhance the good quality of labourers and enlarge the number of labourers in the poor districts to participate in labour export market contributing to job creation, raising income and sustainable poverty reduction.

The labour export policy is designed to aim at supporting poor labourers for vocational training, foreign language training, cultural training, and orientation training for labour export in some countries Japan, Korea, Libya, Malaysia, Libya, Arabia Saudi,... (including meals, accommodation, travel, initial funding, procedural costs and preferential loans). Every year, the output target is to export on average about 30 employees in Bac Ai poor district to work abroad.

Policy beneficiaries are both poor households and ethnic minority households with a

primary or higher education level have been selected to participate in labour export activities. In case of their level of education has not met the requirements, they need to be trained more general education.

The contents of policies for labourers of poor households and ethnic minority people shall be provided with 100% vocational training and foreign language training. In addition, they also receive food allowance, living allowance of VND 40,000/person/day; accommodation of VND 200,000/person/month; personal expenses for workers of VND 40,000/person (uniforms, blankets, shoes ...) and travel from their residence to the place of training.

Furthermore, in case they are chosen to work abroad, they are supported for passport fees, visa fees, medical examination fees and judicial record fees.

### 3.3.2 Results of implementation of the labour export policy

Years	Planned targets	Outputs	Output percentage	Labour export to foreign markets			
				Korea	Japan	Malaysia	Arabia Saudi
2009	30	8	26.7%	2	2	4	0
2010	30	12	40.0%	7	2	3	0
2011	30	14	46.7%	5	1	8	0
2012	30	15	50.0%	6	3	6	0
2013	30	2	6.70%	1	0	1	0
2014	30	5	16.7%	1	1	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>31.1%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>2</b>

Table 10. Labour export outcomes in Bac Ai district in the period 2009-2014.

Source: Ninh Thuan's People Committee. Analysis and synthesis by the author.

Having a glance at Table 10, over the period 2009-2014, the output percentage reached at 31.1% out of 100%, equivalent to 56 export labourers out of 180 people planned targets. As a result, the general target have not finished as expected. On the other hand, Table 10 shows that labour export results from 50.0% in 2012 reached the lowest point of 6.7% in 2013 and then rose slightly up to 16.7% in 2014. The unsuccessful results of this policy have its own objective and subjective causes. The main objective causes are that labourers have limited

ability in using foreign languages, culture shock, and their working skills in the industrial environment is not satisfactory. Besides, the subjective causes are that employees are not ready to determine their previous goals before registering the labour force export market. However, it must be acknowledged that most of labour export cases earned high income and sent their family more than VND 2,5 billion to pay off loans for the Social Policy Bank.

### **3.4 The health care supportive policy**

#### **3.4.1 An overview of the health care supportive policy**

According to the Law on Health Insurance, in order to support poor households to reduce medical costs and ensure social security to help poor households escape poverty sustainability, Bac Ai district has been implementing the health care supportive policy by buying free health insurance for poor households. The state budget for purchasing health insurance cards for the poor is 100% of the value of the insurance card. Health care policy beneficiaries are poor households belonging to ethnic minorities living in areas with extremely difficult socio-economic conditions. The goal of the policy is that 100% of poor households have health insurance cards for annual medical examination and treatment every commune in Bac Ai district.

#### **3.4.2 Results of implementation of the health care supportive policy**

Bac Ai district has one medical center and nine commune health stations that provide medical examination and treatment for people, prevention of epidemics, implementation of national health programs, population and family plans, the program of food hygiene and safety, and communication and education program for local people in the district.

From 2009 to 2014, Bac Ai district has effectively maintained preventive medicine, especially prevention of foot-and-mouth disease in children, prevention of dengue fever, malaria and infectious diseases due to living habits of people, prevention of HIV/AIDS, and prevention of hypertension. Moreover, the village and commune health networks were expanded. Facilities were invested new and modern. All health stations have midwives or pediatric physicians. Additionally, there had also 68 female midwives who were arranged for village health services in disadvantaged villages. Qualified doctors, pharmacists and nurses ensure health care quality meeting the needs of medical examination and treatment on-the-spot healthcare for the local people.

In addition, the prevention of child malnutrition had many positive changes. In 2000, the proportion of underweight malnourished children was 37.3%, which gradually reduced to 25.5% in 2008. When implementing health care supportive policy in 2009, the percentage of child malnutrition declined down 24.4%, and by the end of 2014, this rate of that was only 18.9%. Although this child malnutrition rate was high compared to the average level of Ninh Thuan province, it was a remarkable result of perseverance and determination of Bac Ai district to reduce the percentage of underweight malnourished children.

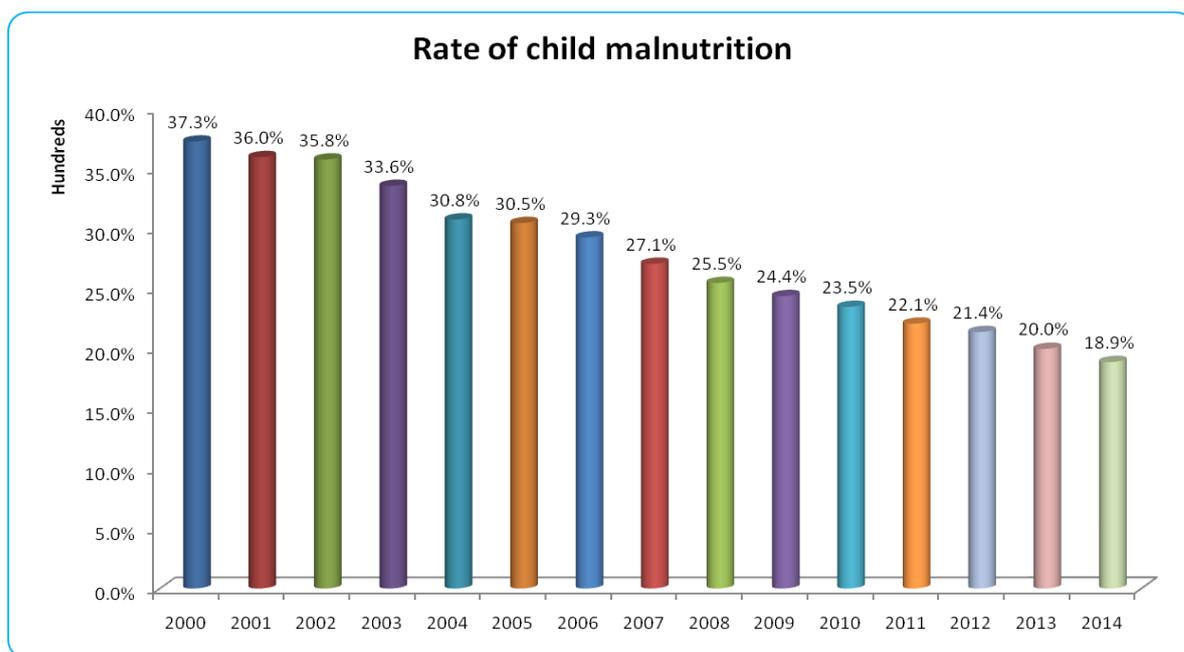


Figure 8. Underweight malnourished children in Bac Ai district from 2000 to 2014.

Source: Department of Health. Graphic by the author.

In regard to purchasing health insurance cards for the poor in 2009-2014, the state budget spent 100% of health insurance for 75,844 turns of poor people with a total cost of VND 48,191 billion.

In summary, the health care supportive policy of Bac Ai district has brought many practical benefits to poor people if they have illness. The purchase of health insurance with non-profit purposes for poor people is a form of insurance for poor people's health care. Health care insurance brings equity in health care for everyone, especially the poor and ethnic minorities living in remote areas. Therefore, the policy of supporting the poor to participate in health insurance is a good and effective contribution to implementing the social security policy.

### **3.5 The housing supportive policy**

#### **3.5.1 An overview of the housing supportive policy**

The housing supportive policy is established to focus on supporting to build houses for 2,756 poor households in Bac Ai district in the 2009-2014 period. The target of the policy is to ensure each poor household who will own a stable and safe house and gradually raise their living standards to contribute to sustainable hunger elimination and poverty reduction.

The principle of housing subsidy is that the State shall provide financial support in the form of capital loans [VND 8,4 million per house] for new construction or repair of houses with preferential interest rates, community assistance and households themselves organizing the construction of dwelling houses. After being supported, the households have to build new houses or repair and upgrade the existing houses, ensuring a minimum floor area of 24m<sup>2</sup>.

Households entitled to housing assistance (including new construction or repair and upgrading of dwelling houses) shall be granted certificates of land use rights and house ownership under the land legislation.

#### **3.5.2 Results of implementation of the housing supportive policy**

After 6 years of implementation of the housing supportive policy, 2,756 houses were built for poor households in Bac Ai district with total support state budget of VND 60,320 billion and total poor households' loan of VND 57,420 billion, accounting for 100% of the plan.

This policy has created good conditions for many poor households to have stable houses. At the same time, they developed their production and strove themselves to escape poverty, which contributed to the successful implementation of the SPSPR in Bac Ai district.

### **3.6 The credit supportive policy**

#### **3.6.1 An overview of the credit supportive policy**

Improving poor households' accessibility to preferential loans for production, business or accessibility to health care service and education service is a prerequisite for enhancing the poor living conditions, creating job opportunities for them to accumulate assets to escape poverty sustainably.

In the period of 2009-2014, Bac Ai district implemented many credit supportive policies to

ensure that poor households accessed to preferential loans, thus creating a basis for poor households to earn their livings and stabilize their incomes, gradually help them overcome poverty. In this period, Bac Ai Bank for Social Policy have provided preferential loans for the poor household under the following credit programs: Credit program for poor households, Credit program for employment, Credit program for disadvantaged students, Credit program for labour export, Credit program for households doing business in disadvantaged areas, and Credit program for home construction. The details of these credit programs are:

First of all, Credit program for poor households: The borrowers are poor households. Bank loan with low interest rates is about 0.275%/month. The maximum loan amount is VND 10 million. Bank loan is used for livestock, tree planting and trading. The maximum loan term is 3 years.

Secondly, Credit program for employment: Borrowers are poor households, poor households escaping from poverty, business households creating jobs. Bank loan with low interest rates is about 0.55%/month. The maximum loan amount is VND 50 million. Bank loan is used for cultivation, husbandry, trading. The maximum loan term is 5 years.

Thirdly, Credit program for disadvantaged students: Borrowers are students of poor households. Bank loan with low interest rates is about 0.55%/month. The maximum loan amount is VND 1,1 million/semester. Bank loan is used for studying expenses. The maximum loan duration is 2 times of study time at school.

Fourthly, Credit program for labour export: Borrowers are poor households or poor ethnic minority households. Bank loan with low interest rates is either 0.55%/month/poor household or 0.275%/month/poor ethnic minority household. Maximum loan amount is depending on the country of labour export. Bank loan is used for export expenses. The maximum loan term is equal to the duration of the export contract.

Fifthly, Credit program for households doing business in disadvantaged areas. Borrowers are households. Bank loan with low interest rates is about 0.75%/month. The maximum loan amount is VND 50 million/household. Bank loan is used for developing production and trading business which contribute to the implementation of agricultural and rural development programs equally economic growth among regions. The maximum loan is 12 months.

Finally, Credit program for home construction: Borrowers are homeless poor households. Bank loan with low interest rates is about 0.25%/month. The maximum loan amount is VND 25 million. Bank loan is used for home constructive expenditures. The maximum loan term is 15 years.

### 3.6.2 Results of implementation of the credit supportive policy

Through data analysis of six preferential credit programs of Bac Ai Bank for Social Policy from 2009 to 2014, it shows that:

Firstly, in Figure 9 of the first credit program for poor households, Bac Ai Bank for Social Policy lent 16,632 turns of poor households with total outstanding loans up to VND 209,310 billion between 2009 and 2014. In the first stage, there were about 2,655 that of poor households borrowing with total loans VND 27,709 billion. However, in the next three years 2010, 2011 and 2012, turns of poor households borrowing loans increased 3,051, 3,081 and 3,009 turns of poor households with total loans VND 34,573, 37,075 and 38,698 billion respectively. Suddenly, in 2013 and 2014, there was a massive decline of turns of poor households borrowing loans from 3,009 turns in 2012 down to 2,632 turns in 2013, and 2,204 turns in 2014 with total loans VND 36,815 and 34,440 billion respectively. It proved that turns of poor households borrowing loans gradually declined. As a result, poor households escaped poverty much more increased. In other words, the rate of poor households has decreased considerably.

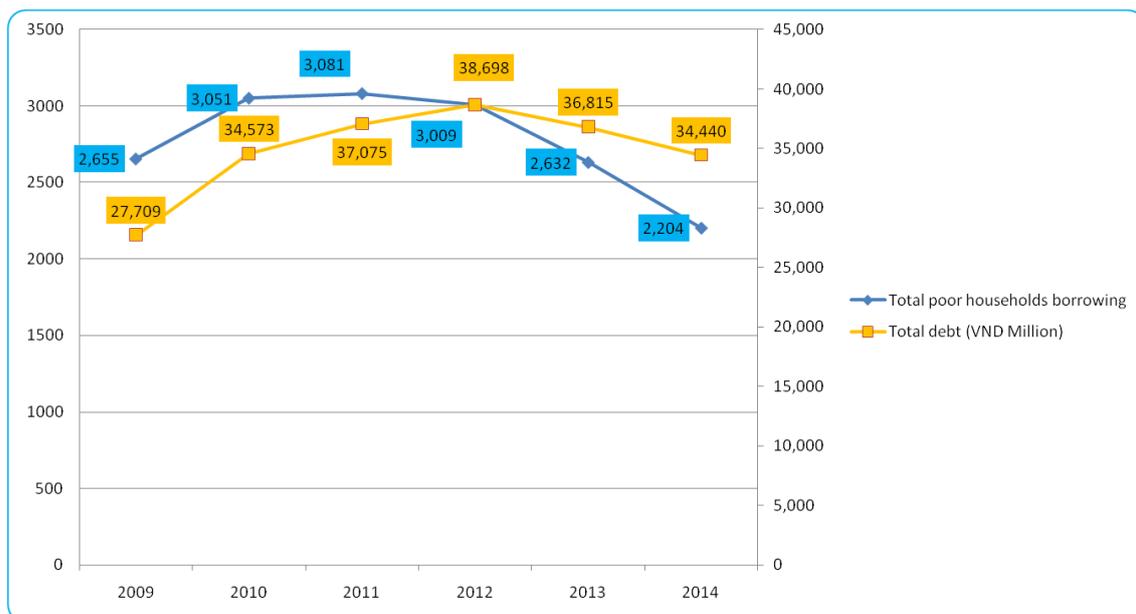


Figure 9. Results of Credit Program for poor households in Bac Ai district from 2009 to 2014.

Source: *Ninh Thuan Bank for Social Policies. Graphic by the author.*

Secondly, in Figure 10 of the credit program for employment, Bac Ai Bank for Social Policy lent 845 turns of poor households with total debt up to VND 13,141 billion during the period 2009 and 2014. At the beginning of 2009, the number of poor households who borrowed money from Bac Ai Bank for Social Policy was about 104 poor households. In the next three years, there were a significant increase in number of borrowers from 126 poor households in 2010 to 150 poor households in 2011, and then reached the highest point of 161 poor households in 2012. After that, between 2013 and 2014, number of borrowers went down 151 poor households, and then went slightly up to 153 poor households. In general, the number of poor households, poor households escaping from poverty, and business households who borrowed preferential loans to produce agriculture, to raise animals or to do business was still low.

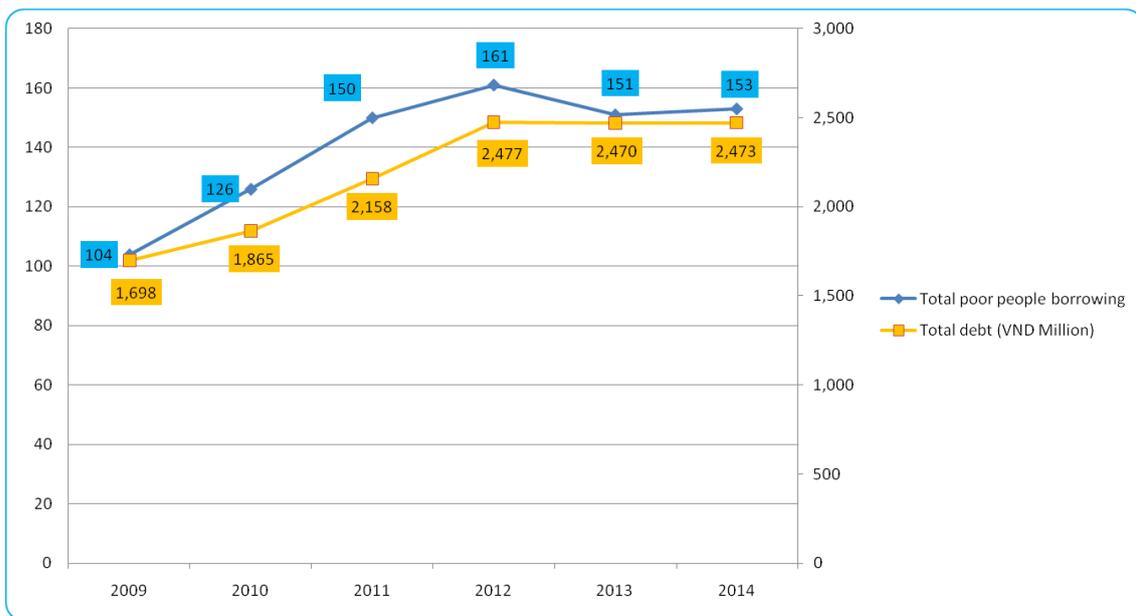


Figure 10. Results of Credit Program for employment in Bac Ai district from 2009 to 2014.

Source: *Ninh Thuan Bank for Social Policies. Graphic by the author.*

Thirdly, in Figure 13 of the credit program for disadvantaged students, Bac Ai Bank for Social Policy lent 900 turns of disadvantaged students in poor households with total debt up to VND 12,719 billion between 2009 and 2014. Especially, in the five years from 2009 to 2013, the number of poor students who borrowed money from Bac Ai Bank for Social Policy moved upwards continuously from 91 people with 902 million in 2009 reached a peak at 181 people with 2,810 billion in 2013. In 2014, there was a slightly decrease in the number of poor students (about 163 poor students with 2,706 billion). In summary, the

number of disadvantaged students in poor households borrowing preferential loans rocketed dramatically in the whole stage was positive situation. It proved that the education development policy has been made changes in improving poor people' awareness and knowledge. It was a favourable way to attract more students to attend general schools so as to get higher education for their future. Simultaneously, it was also a recommendatory way to attract graduated local students for local work to promote socio-economic development of the district.

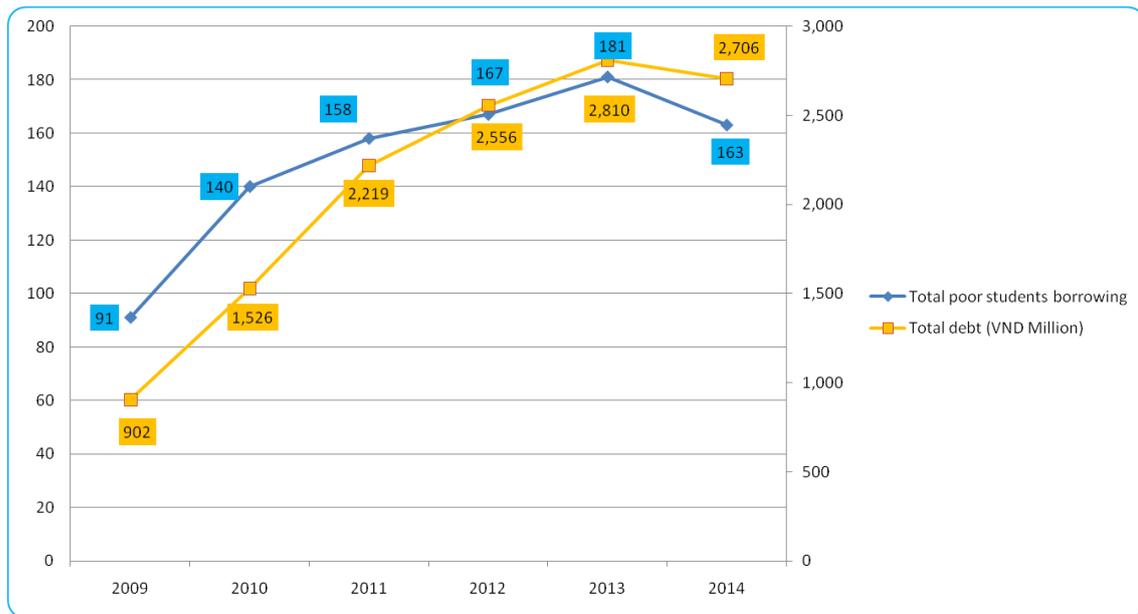


Figure 11. Results of Credit Program for disadvantaged students in Bac Ai from 2009 to 2014.

Source: Ninh Thuan Bank for Social Policies. Graphic by the author.

Fourthly, in Figure 12 of the credit program for labour export, Bac Ai Bank for Social Policy lent only 262 labourers in poor households with total debt up to VND 5,383 billion between 2009 and 2014. This was the loan program that had the lowest borrowers in all preferential loan programs. In reality, the number of borrowers was 262 labourers, but there were only 56 labourers who were selected to work abroad, accounting for 31.1% in the whole stage 2009-2014. At the same time, the trend of export labourers borrowing from preferential loan programs was declining from 2012 to 2014, respectively, 58, 47 and 27 labourers in poor households.

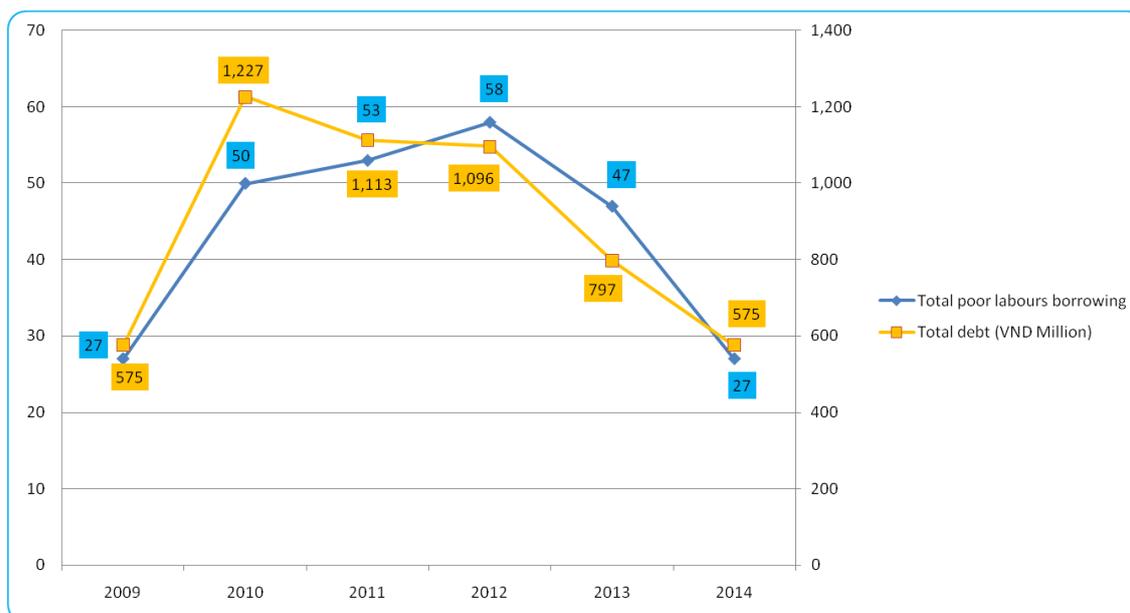
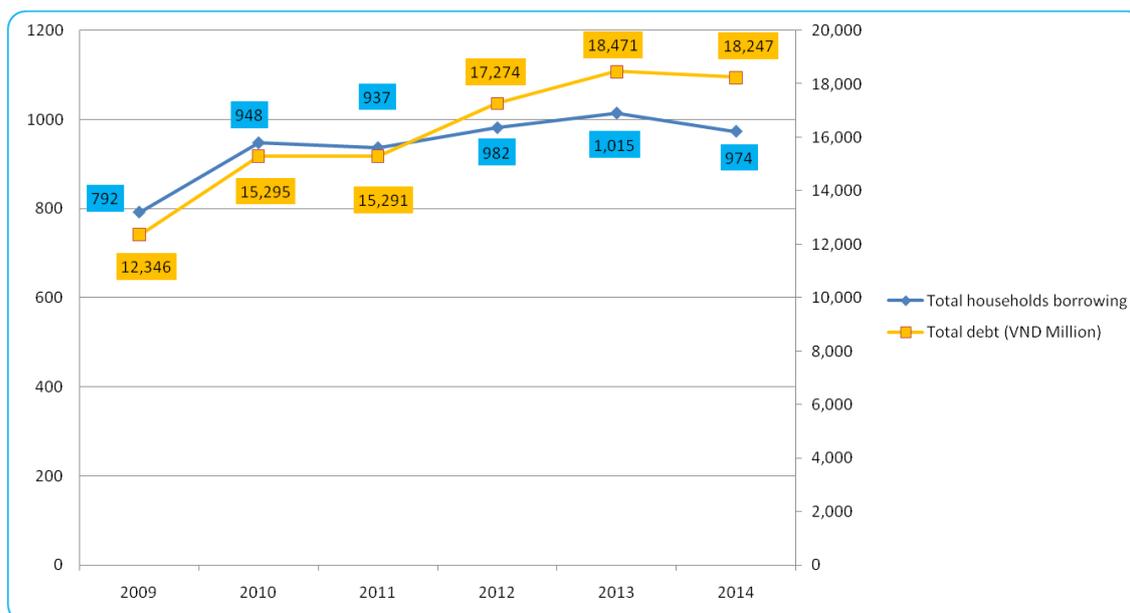


Figure 12. Results of Credit Program for labour export in Bac Ai district from 2009 to 2014.

Source: Ninh Thuan Bank for Social Policies. Graphic by the author.

Fifthly, in Figure 13 of the credit program for households doing businesses in disadvantaged areas, Bac Ai Bank for Social Policy lent 5,648 turns of households with total debt up to VND 96,949 billion during the period 2009 and 2014. The special feature of this credit program was that borrowers were extended and the tenor was short [12 months]. Provided that they lived in disadvantaged areas of the poor district and used capital for developing production and trading business. Therefore, the number of borrowers increased steadily every year from 792 households in 2009 to 1,015 households in 2013. However, in 2014, the number of borrowers decreased slightly down to 974 households. In summary, the credit program for households doing businesses in disadvantaged areas attracted many households to borrow preferential loan programs to develop production and do businesses. With preferential loans, households raised their stable income and improve their lives by investing properly in production and do businesses.



*Figure 13. Results of Credit Program for households doing businesses in Bac Ai from 2009 to 2014*  
 Source: Ninh Thuan Bank for Social Policies. Graphic by the author.

Finally, in Figure 14 of the credit program for home construction, Bac Ai Bank for Social Policy lent 7,181 poor households with total debt up to VND 57,420 billion during the period 2009 and 2014. In the three years of 2009-2011, the number of poor households borrowing money to build houses ranged from 892 to 921 households with outstanding loans ranging from VND 7,136 billion to VND 7,368 billion. Especially, in the two years 2012-2013, the number of poor households borrowing loans to build houses reached a peak at 1,501 poor households - an increase more than 1,6 times in 2009, then slightly went down to 1,467 poor households by 2014.

In short, the credit program for poor households borrowing preferential loan to build new houses attracted many poor households. With preferential loans, poor households built new houses for them to stabilize the place safely.

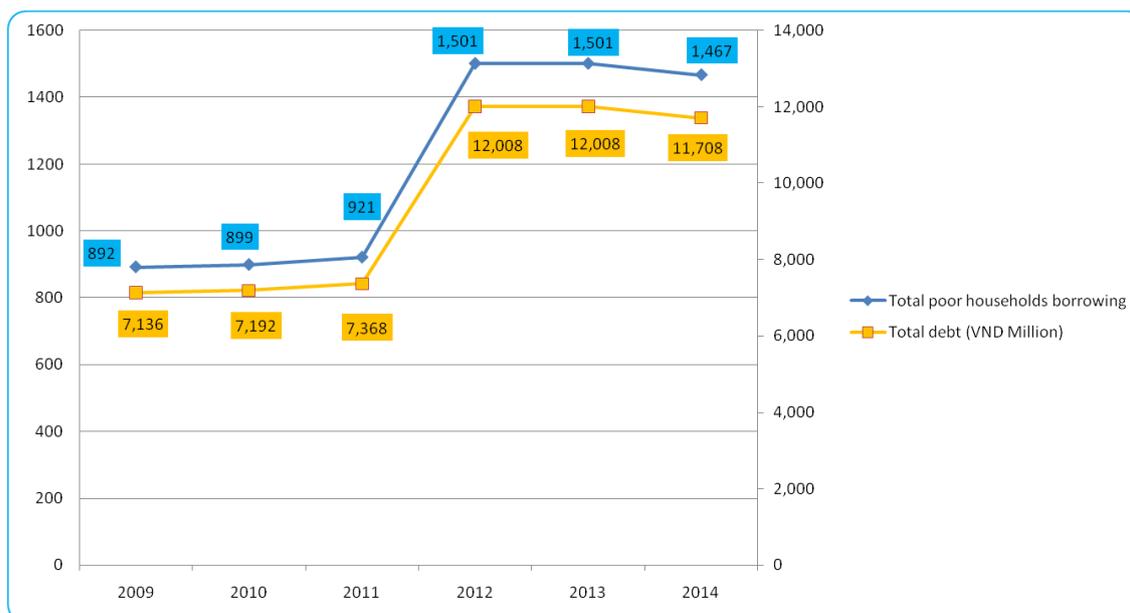


Figure 14. Results of Credit Program for home construction in Bac Ai district from 2009 to 2014.

Source: Ninh Thuan Bank for Social Policies. Graphic by the author.

### 3.7 The infrastructure investment policy

#### 3.7.1 An overview of the infrastructure investment policy

The infrastructure investment policy is instituted to prioritize resource allocations from local budgets, central budgets, government bond capitals, ODA, programs, projects that invest in socio-economic infrastructure works such as preschools, primary schools, secondary schools, high schools, boarding interlinear schools or semi-boarding interlinear schools, dormitories, general vocational training institutions, hospitals, preventive medical centers, drainage irrigation systems for agricultural production, clean water systems, road networks, electricity for production and people's life, markets, radio stations, and cultural houses.

#### 3.7.2 Results of implementation of the infrastructure investment policy

In the whole stage 2009-2014, total resource allocations which were invested in Bac Ai socio-economic infrastructure works were about VND 496.957 billion. Notably, the school system is well-invested to attract a large number of school-age students from kindergarten to high-school students attend schools. At the beginning of 2009, there were only 16 primary schools, 7 secondary schools, and 1 boarding interlinear school, but by the end of 2014, the number of schools increased as many as possible up to 48 schools (11 preschools, 16 primary schools, 9 secondary schools, 1 high school, 9 semi-boarding interlinear schools and 2 boarding interlinear schools). The rapid increase in schooling not only met the needs

of the local children's study, but also contributed to improvement of local people's knowledge in Bac Ai district as well. Besides, the system of commune health centers was well basically invested to meet the demand for medical examination and treatment for local people. Since then, initial health care for local people was better and diseases were strictly controlled. In addition, freshwater reservoirs and drainage irrigation systems were newly built to accumulate fresh water in rainy seasons as well as to release water for agricultural production and people daily lives. Before 2009, there was only Song Sat reservoir with a capacity of 69 million cubic meters. Up to now, Bac Ai district consists 4 reservoirs namely Song Sat, Tra Co, Cho Mo and Phuoc Nhon whose total capacity of over 120 million cubic meters. Fresh water is sufficient for people's daily life, agriculture production development, animal husbandry and hoarding during dry seasons. Furthermore, other technical infrastructures such as road networks, electricity suppliers, communication systems, radio stations, markets, and cultural houses were invested in 9 communes. In general, infrastructures were synchronously and comprehensively supplied in 9 communes promoting Bac Ai's socio-economic development sustainably.

In summary, Chapter III is a chapter on performance analysis of the SPSPR through seven supportive policies implemented in Bac Ai district during the period 2009-2014. The performance is an important foundation for the next chapter to assess the impact of the SPSPR on local people and Bac Ai district.

## **CHAPTER FOUR – IMPACT EVALUATION THE SPSPR IN BAC AI DISTRICT**

Sussan (2005) denotes that impact evaluation is a model of consequence evaluation that determines the net effectiveness of a program by comparing program outcomes with a measurement of what would have happened in the absence of the program. According to data analysis of questionnaire survey, there were 100% of respondents totally agreed that Bac Ai district's socio-economic situation prior 2009 was underdeveloped due to high poor household rates, low educational level of local citizens, unskilled workers and farmers, severe weather conditions, lack of scientific and technical cultivation and lack of technical infrastructure. In addition, there were 93.3% of them totally admitted that people had lack of land and capital for production. Furthermore, there were 83.3% of them come to terms with total agreement that a large number of children left schools early. Less than a fifth of those who responded (16.7%) indicated that a large number of children left schools early did not affect Bac Ai district's socio-economic situation. The evidence presented thus far supports

the idea that Bac Ai's poor household rate in 2008 was 66.93%. Moreover people's lives were very difficult because of constant drought and lack of water for agricultural production. Government subsidized rice and supplies to local people to overcome difficulties ahead. Furthermore, Bac Ai's socio-economic development is slow. Average income per capita of the poor household group was extremely low (VND 500,000 person/month). The proportion of children dropping out of school was so high that all 9 communes did not reach the standard of universal education at the right age in 2008. As a result, those factors directly influenced on Bac Ai's socio-economic development.

However, after implementation of the SPSPR in Bac Ai district from 2009 to 2014, the socio-economic development there changed significantly in comparison with 2009. This is exemplified in the work undertaken by analyzing the questionnaire survey data and statistic data between 2009 and 2014. For example, 100% of respondents totally agreed that Bac Ai's socio-economic development changed better than prior 2009 because of high educational level of local citizens, high rate of universal education (100% of school age children went to school and 9 communes reached the standard of universal education at the right age by 2014), scientific and technical cultivation support, low poor households rate and civilization and new cultural life development. Likewise, average income per capita of the poor household group was double in comparison with prior 2009 (VND 1,000,000 person/month). At the same time, over three quarters of respondents (above 76.7%) completely convinced that the seven sufficient support policies from the Government for local people, nine communes made great positive changes for Bac Ai district.

By the same token, basing on policy analysis results in Chapter III, the analysis of questionnaire survey data, related documents, literature review and theoretical framework, Chapter IV focuses on impact evaluation of the seven supportive policies which local people, nine communes and Bac Ai district benefited from the SPSPR. Since then, the SPSPR is evaluated for its effectiveness and impact during the six-year implementation period. In each policy, two aspects are concentrated to evaluate on how local people assessed to it and how the policy impacted on them.

## **1 Policy of supporting manufacture and job creation**

### **1.1 Policy accessibility**

According to the analysis of questionnaire survey data, poor households approached this

policy mainly by two ways. First, the local authority notified the policy directly to poor households, accounting for 50.0%. Second, through the monthly meeting, the village head declared the policy at the people's village meeting (50.0%). Most of poor households were guided by policy officers to learn about their responsibilities and rights when participating in implementing this policy. Besides, they were instructed how to access preferential credit capital from the social policy bank and how to make a living when joining in the policy. In general, poor households were highly aware of their responsibilities when they received the state supportive policy so that they did great effort to overcome poverty.

## **1.2 Policy impact**

Since the policy of supporting production and job creation came to life, there were 2,053 poor households assigned to forest protection with the total area of 18,657.14 hectares. Accordingly, the Government supported 292 tons of rice for 1,276 poor households with 5,950 poor people during the time they took care of forest. Analogously, there were 3,464 poor households supported for reclamation, restoration and terrace with the areas of 2,417.73 hectares.

As was mentioned in the previous chapter and the analysis of questionnaire survey data, the policy of supporting production and job creation had positive impact on poor households' lives as follow. Firstly, in short term, it was one of the best ways for poor households to solve their living difficulties in which they might create more jobs to increase income by managing and protecting forests. Secondly, they exploited natural advantages of forests by planting fruit trees and raising livestock and poultry. Thirdly, they not only protected forests but also planted more trees to cover the forest area as well. That was also the most effective way to limit land degradation, increase underneath water reserve and combat climate change.

Subsequently, on the one hand, the supportive policies of production and job creation for poor households under the SPSPR contributed to solving the living difficulties of contracted village communities, creating more jobs and increasing income. On the other hand, they attracted communities to join hands to preserve natural forests and minimize the impact of unpredictable climate change to their lives. Of course, the sooner they change their behaviour on nature, the more they benefit from it.

## **2 Policy of education and vocational training**

### **2.1 Policy accessibility**

In Bac Ai district, beneficiaries of the educational and vocational training supportive policy were school children, teachers, labourers and local authorities. In terms of school children, students who were from kindergarten ages to university ages attending schools were not only exempted from but also supported learning costs. With regard to teachers, they were paid twice as much as teachers in advantageous areas. Similarly, they were provided with drinking water, travelling cost and official housing every year. With respect to labourers, they received free vocational training and were offered new jobs. In the case of local authorities, nine communes were constructed complete school systems such as kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools, boarding interlinear schools or semi-boarding interlinear schools and high schools. In addition, community learning centers were built to meet the requirement for vocational training and universal education and illiteracy eradication. Besides, teachers are fully recruited for schools at all levels.

Resultantly, all beneficiaries had easy access to policies and understood their rights and responsibilities when taking part in the policy.

### **2.2 Policy impact**

In general, the educational and vocational training supportive policy was implemented effectively and had positive impact on social development in Bac Ai district. The evidence of policy effectiveness can be clearly analyzed in the following cases.

First and foremost, the number of schools at all levels increased from 33 schools in 2009 up to 48 schools in 2014. This was the very first important condition to attract a large number of school children to schools. Accordingly, there was a gradual increase in the number of preschool-to-highschool students from 6,120 students in 2009 to 7,136 students in 2014, accounting for 14.2%. Similarly, the number of teachers rose from 428 teachers to 691 teachers only in six years. Therefore, those decisive changes when carrying out the educational supportive policy in Bac Ai district had motivate impact on education development in the long run.

Second, regarding the supportive policy of vocational training, another evidence is that the number of poor labourers trained new jobs were 5,433 labourers, reaching 37.62% and that

of others found new jobs were 3.363 labourers, accounting for 20,71%. Previously, the percentage of poor labourers trained new jobs was only 15.24% and that of others found new jobs was approximately 11.0% in 2008.

Third, fund investment in the implementation of education and vocational training policies brought high efficiency. Thus, on average, the percentage of pupils attending school at all levels was high, accounting for 99.6% between 2009 and 2014. Next, nine communes completed the program of universal primary education by the year 2013. Besides, the system of schools and teaching equipments at all levels were invested synchronously for teaching and learning, which contributed to improvement of education quality. Since then, local people's awareness about learning increased significantly. In other words, this policy promoted to enhance the local people's intellectual level and awareness of learning. Also, it created basic foundation for training quality human resources for socio-economic development in Bac Ai district in the future.

In conclusion, the educational and vocational training supportive policy had positive effectiveness and excellent motivation impact on Bac Ai district's socio-economic development during the 2009-2014 period and in the future. In agreement with the analysis of questionnaire survey data, 100% of correspondents totally agreed that the educational and vocational training supportive policy had great positive impact on the poor perception as well as socio-economic development in Bac Ai district.

### **3 Policy of supporting labour export**

#### **3.1 Policy accessibility**

After 6 years implementing the labour export supportive policy, very few poor people participated in the labour export project. Accordingly, the target which was to export 30 poor employees for working abroad every year never reached the goal. The number of poor workers selected for labour export fluctuated dramatically, only reached the lowest point of 6.7% in 2013, but never exceeded 50.0%. However, not only might poor inhabitants access this policy, but they also did not have proficiency to perform it.

#### **3.2 Policy impact**

Initially, the policy objective was to improve the quality of labourers and increase the number of labourers in Bac Ai district to participate in labour export market. This was the

necessary way that helped poor labourers to raise income and improve their living.

Annually, the output target was to export on average about 30 employees in Bac Ai district to work abroad, but failed. There were three main ineffective causes of implementation of the labour export supportive policy in Bac Ai district such as: unskilled workers, foreign language barriers and culture shock.

First, regarding unskilled workers, most of poor labourers were mainly farmers or unskilled labourers. They often worked in the fields or did not work something related to technology. They were not familiar with how to work with modern machines in the factories or on the farm. Although, they were trained new careers only for three-or-six-month course, they, of course, rarely met the job requirements of foreign recruiters. The proportion of recruitment of skilled workers accepted were only 25.6% of recruitment candidates.

Second, with regard to foreign language barriers, most of poor workers expected to be chosen to work aboard, but they had troubles in communicating with native speakers in foreign countries. It is true that young labourers were interested in learning a new foreign language and ready to use it effectively in communication and for work. On the contrary, older labourers felt hard to learn a new foreign language. Naturally, poor young labourers who were chosen to work abroad had good proficiency in communication with native speakers in foreign countries. The percentage of recruitment of labourers who could communicate with native speakers accounted for only 12.1% of recruitment candidates.

Finally, as far as export labourers' culture shock is concerned, this is the consciousness of disorientation experienced by export labourers who are unexpectedly subjected to an unaccustomed culture or different lifestyle when working abroad. Approximately 10.0% of Raglai youths encountered this problem after being chosen to work abroad. Therefore, it took a long time for them to get acquainted with new environment and new culture to adapt and work in foreign country.

In summary, the labour export supportive policy implemented in Bac Ai district was inappropriate and inefficient because the labour export participants were inadequate in qualifications, occupational skills, language ability and culture knowledge restriction. As a result, in the whole stage 2009-2014, there were only 56 out of 180 poor labourers chosen to work abroad, accounting for 31.1%. According to the analysis of questionnaire survey data, 46.7% of correspondents answered that the policy had partly positive impact whilst 53.3% of that did not say anything.

## **4 Policy of supporting health care**

### **4.1 Policy accessibility**

In general, the health care supportive policy for the poor households was concerned at all levels. Health care management and payment methods were improved significantly. The health care policy through health insurance together with medical infrastructure development contributed to improve the quality of health services. Expanding coverage of health insurance with the state supportive policy increased people's accessibility to medical services, basically meeting the goal of ensuring wellbeing in health care for the poor.

### **4.2 Policy impact**

In the period 2009-2014, the percentage of poor people who bought medical insurance cards was 100%. Bac Ai district had effectively maintained preventive medicine and other disease prevention. In addition, the village and commune health networks were expanded. Modern medical equipment in commune medical centers was well-invested. Human resources for health such as doctors, pharmacists and nurses were well-qualified.

On the one hand, one of the most prominent accomplishments in the medical field was that prevention of child malnutrition. In 2000, the proportion of underweight malnourished children was 37.3%, however, the percentage of child malnutrition declined down 18.9% by the end of 2014. On the other hand, the percentage of poor people receiving health care was 100%. Especially, in the last 6 years, Bac Ai district had no disease occurred.

In summary, the health care supportive policy implemented in Bac Ai district brought many practical benefits to poor people. It had good impact on community health protection as well as equality in health care for everyone. Consequently, the policy of supporting the poor to participate in health insurance and medical care has positively effective contribution to implementing the social security policy. As reported by the analysis of questionnaire survey data, 100% of correspondents totally agreed that the health care supportive policy had totally positive impact on the poor health.

## **5 Policy of supporting houses**

### **5.1 Policy accessibility**

The World Bank Organization illustrates poverty is lack of shelter. Understanding poor households' difficulties when they did not have adequate condition to build new houses or

fix damaged houses to live, the Government promulgated the housing supportive policy for poor households. At the same time, through this policy, the Government mobilized the communities' resources to support poor households to stabilize their lives. Besides, the fund "For the poor" and preferential credit loans supported the poor to build new houses or repair their current houses better. In response to this humanitarian policy, most of the poor were fully supportive and excited at the Government's concern for their lives. As a result, the poor believed in their competence to overcome challenges to escape poverty.

## **5.2 Policy impact**

In the period 2009-2014, there were 2,756 houses built for 2,756 poor households in Bac Ai district, accounting for 100%. This policy accomplished its goal. The impact of the policy on the poor was of great significance on social aspect. Poor people were concerned and felt warm-hearted when receiving shares from the Government and community. According to the analysis of questionnaire survey data, 100% of correspondents totally agreed that the housing supportive policy had strongly positive influences on poor households' lives.

On the other hand, the housing supportive policy for the poor had a profoundly humanitarian impact on the poor motivation to escape poverty. The house is the home for family members to live happily. They cared for their children's education and future occupation. The fact that children's education that will help the youth generation change the perception of poverty so that they have motivation to learn so as to enrich themselves, their families and society.

## **6 Policy of preferential credit loans**

### **6.1 Policy accessibility**

According to survey results, there are three main feedback levels on people's accessibility to the preferential credit supportive policy. First, 76.7% of correspondents agreed that this policy was important. Second, 13.3% of that agreed that this policy was very important. Finally, 10.0% of that agreed that this policy was extremely important. Comprehensively, poor households accessed the preferential credit supportive policy fairly easy.

Basing on the analysis of borrower data of six preferential credit programs from Bac Ai Bank for Social Policy, it was clearly illustrated that the number of borrowers with total outstanding loans from five credit programs<sup>16</sup> were high, specifically with 31,206 turns of borrowers and total outstanding loan about VND 389,5 billion, except the Credit program for labour export

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<sup>16</sup> Credit program for poor households, Credit program for employment, Credit program for disadvantaged students, Credit program for households doing business in disadvantaged areas, and Credit program for home construction

with 262 borrowers and total outstanding loan approximately VND 5,3 billion.

Eventually, the analysis above demonstrates that the need for borrowing from preferential credit programs were so necessary that they attracted a large number of poor households to borrow money to develop production, increase income and improve their lives. It means that local people accessed to preferential credit loans conveniently.

## 6.2 Policy impact

In accordance with the analysis of questionnaire survey data, 96.7% of correspondents agreed that the preferential credit supportive policy had totally positive impact on the poor lives as well as socio-economic development in Bac Ai district. Only 3.3% of interviewers were certain that it had partly positive impact on the poor lives. Totally, 100% of contributors admitted that this policy had positive impact on the poor lives.

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
<b>1. Credit Program for poor households</b>							
Total number of households borrowing	2,655	3,051	3,081	3,009	2,632	2,204	<b>16,632</b>
Total debt (VND Billion)	27,709	34,573	37,075	38,698	36,815	34,440	<b>209,310</b>
<b>2. Credit Program for home construction</b>							
Total number of households borrowing	892	899	921	1,501	1,501	1,467	<b>7,181</b>
Total debt (VND Billion)	7,136	7,192	7,368	12,008	12,008	11,708	<b>57,420</b>
<b>3. Households doing business in disadvantaged areas</b>							
Total number of households borrowing	792	948	937	982	1,015	974	<b>5,648</b>
Total debt (VND Billion)	12,346	15,295	15,291	17,274	18,272	18,471	<b>96,949</b>
<b>4. Credit Program for disadvantaged students</b>							
Total number of households borrowing	91	140	158	167	181	163	<b>900</b>
Total debt (VND Billion)	902	1,526	2,219	2,556	2,810	2,706	<b>12,719</b>
<b>5. Credit Program for employment</b>							
Total poor people borrowing	104	126	150	161	151	153	<b>845</b>
Total debt (VND Billion)	1,698	1,865	2,158	2,477	2,470	2,473	<b>13,141</b>
<b>6. Credit Program for labour export</b>							
Total number of households borrowing	27	50	53	58	47	27	<b>262</b>
Total debt (VND Billion)	575	1,227	1,113	1,096	797	575	<b>5,383</b>
<b>Total (1+..+6)</b>							
Total number of households borrowing	3,769	4,266	4,363	4,896	4,512	4,014	<b>25,820</b>
Total debt (VND Billion)	50,366	61,678	65,224	74,109	73,172	70,373	<b>394,922</b>

*Table 11. Synthesis of preferential credit programs in Bac Ai district from 2009 to 2014.*

Source: *Ninh Thuan Bank for Social Policies. Graphic by the author.*

Table 11 reveals that there was an increase of number of household borrowers and their total debts from Credit Program 1 to 5 whereas Credit Program 6 got the lowest number of borrowers among all six preferential loan policies.

The most effective impact of the preferential credit programs is to give the poor "the fishing rod" to "fishing" for their living. In other words, it means that let us give the poor opportunities to rise out of poverty themselves. Once the poor know how to do business from the loans which they borrowed from Social Policy Bank, they will create their own livelihoods to pay interest and loans. The money which they accumulated will help them raise their children, create livelihoods again, and escape their poverty situation in a sustainable way.

## **7 Policy of infrastructure investment**

### **7.1 Policy accessibility**

The output products of this infrastructure investment policy were electricity supplier system, road networks, reservoirs, schools, health centers and clinics, communication systems, drainage irrigation systems for agricultural production, clean water systems, markets, television stations and so on. The infrastructure was invested quite synchronously with 100% of communes and 90% of hamlets. Bac Ai district had roads to commune centers and connected to hamlets. Besides, 100% of commune centers and villages had electricity for living and production. The infrastructure system was invested to create opportunities and advantages for people in travel, cultural exchange, commodity trade and agricultural production. The level of people accessibility to the policy was improved. 100% of local people satisfied with the significant changes of villages, communes and Bac Ai district.

### **7.2 Policy impact**

In agreement with the analysis of questionnaire survey data, 100% of correspondents totally agreed that the supportive policy of infrastructure investment had great positive impact on local people and authorities' demand, the poor lives and socio-economic development in Bac Ai district by two main reasons:

First, although the context of the national economy and Ninh Thuan province encountered

many difficulties ahead, central government and local authority gave priority to invest in Bac Ai poor district to implement specific policies with total resource allocations about VND 496.957 billion effectively.

Second, success of the policy implementation was to open up new opportunities for local people to access public services better and narrow the rich-poor gap between favourable areas and difficult regions faster. For example, children went to school at all levels were at high proportion. Trade opportunities between delta and mountain areas were wide open. Developing the radio and television system enhanced local people's awareness and guided them how to do businesses. Bringing new cultural light and knowledge pushed back backward customs to reach new cultural values. Applying science and technology to agricultural production raised productivity, saved cost and time effectively. Therefore, effectiveness of the policy impact was not only to change Bac Ai district's socio-economic development but also to bring Bac Ai district up to sustainable development.

In summary, it has been shown from Chapter IV that impact evaluation on performance of the seven supportive policies under the SPSPR implemented in Bac Ai district during the period 2009-2014 was highly effective. Accordingly, Bac Ai district's socio-economic changed significantly. The poverty rate considerably reduced. Per capita income increased gradually. Workers were trained and solved jobs. The infrastructure works were invested synchronously and effectively. Among these achievements, the greatest success of the SPSPR is that the poor awareness changes positively. They perceive that poverty and illiteracy are like a vicious circle clinging to them from generation to generation. If they do not study, do not work and just only wait for subsidies, they will never get out of poverty and backward conception, even lagging them behind the development of humanity. Certainly, they will abandon themselves behind the development. Because of that reason, though later than never, they provide opportunities for their children to learn and participate in programs and policies to create jobs for themselves to increase their incomes, stabilize their lives and move out of poverty. That is also the SPSPR's effectiveness and impact on poor people in Bac Ai district between 2009 and 2014. This conclusion is in line with the empirical results. Accordingly, 100% of correspondents totally agreed that the manufacture and job creation policy, the educational and vocational training policy, the health care policy, the housing policy and the infrastructure investment policy had totally positive impact to change poor households' lives, incomes and awareness as well as Bac Ai district's

and communes' socio-economic development. Next, 96.7% of interviewers totally agreed that the preferential credit policy had totally positive impact and 3.3% of of that agreed that this policy had partly positive impact. However, the labour export policy gave their feedback that 46.7% of contributors totally agreed this policy was totally positive impact and 53.3% of that agreed this policy was partly positive impact.

## **CHAPTER FIVE – CONCLUSIONS, FINDINGS, POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS**

### **1 Conclusions**

In general, to deal with the root of poverty, the Government not only provides adequate food for the poor to overcome immediate shortages, but also most importantly, creates favourable conditions and opportunities for the poor to change their thoughts and raise their awareness of poverty limitations. Since then, the poor will work on their own effort; create their own livelihoods to feed themselves and their families without social subsidies. As a result, the Vietnam Government's pro-poor targeting policies are well-suited. These policies include education development, vocational training, health care, employment support, preferential loans, labour export, housing, infrastructure investment. Those policies have been highly synthesized, correlated and complementary to help the poor (elderly, adults, youth and children) benefit. Among these policies, according to the authors, education development policy must be put in the top priority along with other supporting policies to invest in poor districts and poor communes. According to Nelson Mandela, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world"<sup>17</sup>. Regarding vocational training, Maimonides derived that "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime"<sup>18</sup>. They meant that education plays a crucial role and is a practical mean of reducing poverty. Educating children today so that they are comprehensively aware of poverty since then they are responsible for escaping poverty, enriching themselves, their families and society to change the world better in the future.

The poverty reduction program is effective. The poverty household rate declines annually. The poor households have opportunities to change their lives. Children go to school increasingly. High dropout rate drops significantly. Social security, grants, health care, education, and so on for poor households have been thoughtfully implemented. The poor

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<sup>17</sup> Retrieve November 1, 2017 from [https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/topics/topic\\_education.html](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/topics/topic_education.html)

<sup>18</sup> Retrieve November 1, 2017 from [https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/m/maimonides326751.html?src=t\\_education](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/m/maimonides326751.html?src=t_education).

have opportunities to access these policies to "*change their mind, change their way and change their lives*". Communes and rural villages are changing brighter day by day. The rich-and-poor gap is gradually narrowed. The opportunity to escape poverty is wide opened for the poor. The Government's investment policies for the poor are comprehensive and highly effective. Society handles the poor so that no one is left behind. Trade between mountainous and lowland areas was expanded. The exchange of goods is getting faster. Poor people know how to make a living out of poverty.

According to the questionnaire survey, 100% out of correspondents totally agreed that the strengths of the SPSPR are: First, the political system from central to local cared for the poor. Second, the poverty reduction policy system was comprehensive from central to local. Third, socio-economic infrastructure in Bac Ai district and nine communes was well-invested. Fourth, resources from private entrepreneurs and NGOs have been attracted. Fifth, annual poor household rates have gradually declined. Sixth, children at right-age attending school all levels have considerably increased. Seventh, quality of education, health care, social services, human resources have increased. Eighth, economic and cultural exchanges between mountainous and delta areas have been significantly expanded in recent years. Ninth, the living conditions of the poor have been improved significantly. Finally, PCI increases and the quality of living condition for the poor enhances much better. In addition, there were 76.7% out of correspondents totally agreed and 23.3% out of that partly agreed that the poor and communities awareness of poverty reduction has improved.

However, there were some weaknesses when the SPSPR was implemented in Bac Ai as follow: First, the resources for the poverty policy implementation are limited (96.7% totally agreed and 3.3% partly agreed). Second, mechanisms for coordination, decentralization, accountability are unclear (73.3% totally agreed, 23.3% partly agreed and 3.3% did not agree). Third, the linkage between production, processing and consumption amongst poor households, scientists and enterprises is ineffective (86.7% totally agreed and 13.3% partly agreed). Fourth, poor ethnic people are so limited in qualifications and foreign languages that they are not eligible for labour export (100% totally agreed). Finally, another objective weakness affects the SPSPR is that severe weather condition (famine) often occurs and causes harm to local people's production (100% totally agreed).

On the whole, to achieve the above results, it can be confirmed that the performance of the Government is extremely important in policy making to help poor people escape poverty.

The Government identified right direction when implementing the SPSPR in mountainous ethnic minorities. Poverty reduction in ethnic minority areas is a profoundly revolutionary cause, a long-term strategy, and an important program of action. Therefore, addressing the issue of poverty is not only to concern with demands for food, shelter and clothing for the poor, but also to best ensure basic needs of health care, education, vocational training, culture, information, travel and communication. At the same time, more attention should be paid to the position of the poor, the voices of the poor in policy formulation, the socio-economic development agenda, and the issues related to the poor and community. In practice, the poor are always one of the most vulnerable in society. Hence, poverty alleviation must be sustainable, against falling back to poverty even when there are risks at the family level (like people are sick or unemployment); or community-level risks such as natural disasters, widespread price fluctuations. The requirement is that the task of ensuring food security is very important for mountainous, remote and isolated areas.

## **2 Findings**

Through the study of documents, statistical data, questionnaire, SWOT analysis, the author draws the following findings:

*Firstly*, most poor ethnic minority people live in mountainous areas; their livelihoods are always attached to agriculture and forestry. In order to solve the problem of poverty, local authorities must first focus on developing agricultural production, forest allocation in association with forest development and ecological environment protection. For agricultural production, district and commune agricultural staffs have to choose cultivars suitable for land, climatic conditions, techniques of care and fertilizer, and provide direct guidance to villagers to produce agriculture products. By doing this, people will provide food security for their families not to be starved due to extreme weather conditions.

*Secondly*, language barriers will be one of the reasons that limit the Raglai's ability to escape poverty and enrich themselves and community. Raglai ethnic minorities, especially the elderly do not speak and understand much Vietnamese language, so it is difficult for them to access communication, learn new knowledge in business, not to abolish backward customs as well as not to accept the scientific and technical achievements of human society to improve the Raglai's livelihoods.

*Thirdly*, besides that, cousin marriage degrades the Raglai race and holds back human

development. Although there have been no official statistics on the number of married couples having the same bloodline, in fact that has occurred in some villages in Bac Ai district. That implies a lot of risk of physical and intellectual development for the next generation. In practice, the rate of malnourished children remains high. The children's ability to learn and gain knowledge is still limited.

*Finally*, inequality in income between Bac Ai district and other districts in Ninh Thuan province is possible. For example, in 2008, PCI in Bac Ai district was VND 576,000 whereas PCI in other districts were approximately VND 945,000, less than 0.6 times. In 2014, PCI in Bac Ai district increased to VND 1,861,000 whereas PCI in other districts were approximately VND 2,061,000, less than 0.9 times. As a result, after 6 years of the SPSPR in Bac Ai district, although real income increased 3.2 times higher than 2008, income inequality between Bac Ai district and other districts also rose 0.3 times.

### **3 Policy recommendations**

In addition to the success of the program, according to the survey results, there are some coming threats in the implementation of SPSPR that need to be supplemented and adjusted to make it better in the next phase. *First*, the results of poverty reduction have been unsustainable. The risk of falling into poverty again can occur at any time (43.3% of total agreement, 40.0% of incomplete agreement and 16.7% of disagreement). *Second*, some poor households are always waiting for the Government grant, but they are not willing to do business to escape poverty (53.3% of total agreement, 33.3% of incomplete agreement and 13.3% of disagreement). *Third*, backward customs and illiteracy are barrier for those who do not want to approach progress, civilization and modern (86.7% of total agreement, 13.3% of incomplete agreement). *Fourth*, income inequality between difficult regions and favourable regions increases. *Finally*, extreme weather condition interferes with production development and poor household livelihoods. The poor are the most vulnerable members of our society (100.0% of total agreement).

In the next phase, the goal of sustainable development of ethnic minority and mountainous areas to 2020 is to develop economy, society and environment. With these risks above, they might be classified into two risks of society (*unsustainable poverty reduction result and backward customs and illiteracy*), two risks of economy (*reliance on policy of some poor people and income inequality*), and one risk of environment (*extreme weather conditions*).

First of all, to reduce social risks, policy makers must pay attention to key solutions and priority policies on declining the rate of poor households, narrowing the gap in living standards among ethnic groups, raising people's education level and perception and enhancing local people's cultural and spiritual life. Therefore, the following policies must be maintained and supplemented to the SPSPR such as: Educational and vocational training policy and Health care policy. In addition, policy makers should formulate policies to preserve and promote cultural values to raise public awareness.

Secondly, to solve economic problems is mainly to deal with the poor livelihoods and to ensure stable economic growth on the basis of exploiting Bac Ai district's potential and strength. Besides, Bac Ai district gradually restructures plants and animals on the basis of efficient use and saving natural resources. At the same time, policy makers should adopt appropriate policies to narrow the income inequality gap.

Finally, to address risk of environment is to aim at minimizing negative effects of climate change and extreme weather on economic development, social security and natural environment protection. Environmental protection is an integral part of the development process. It is necessary to educate local people on protecting forests and planting more forests to increase forest cover. In addition, the Government continues investing in irrigation system from present reservoirs to develop agricultural production and livestock. In conclusion, when the environmental problem is well solved, the social security problem is solved as well, so that social issues are stabilized and strengthened.

Furthermore, the Government should promulgate a policy of encouraging non-state enterprises to participate in poverty reduction activities. The activities that private sector does well are for private participation. The areas that are difficult to privatize are the state sector will do. For example, the private sector can invest in developing agricultural production, formulating value chains in production and consumption of agricultural products, or education and training, etc. By mobilizing the whole society to participate in eradicating poverty reduction that will help socio-economic situation of Bac Ai district develop quickly and sustainably.

#### **4 Limitations**

Due to time limit of doing survey and in consideration of ability to collect the data relating to the research, the research scope just focused only on a case study on the SPSPR in Bac Ai

district, Ninh Thuan province. It was not highly a representative region in Vietnam. In this study, the researcher conducted questionnaire survey to participants who were working for state administrative agencies from province to district and were involved in or in charge of the SPSPR implemented in Bac Ai district. There was no questionnaire survey to the local poor people because of the researcher's language barrier. As a result, the results of the study were not reflected comprehensively in the SPSPR's beneficiaries. However, information was basically collected and analyzed to draw conclusion in this thesis mainly from the SPSPR's programs and reports by relevant state agencies. This research will be applied only in localities which have similarity in economic, cultural, social conditions and geographic features.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: The Questionnaire (None data)

#### **Questionnaire for provincial, district and commune officers who work for the poverty reduction program conducted in Bac Ai district under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP dated December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

In order to carry out a survey for more information about the impact assessment on the poverty reduction program conducted in Bac Ai district under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP dated December 27<sup>th</sup> 2008, would you please state your opinions on the following questions? I firmly commit that the information you provided is completely confidential. After completing this questionnaire, please send it back to me before 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2017. Thank you for your cooperation.

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Question 1:** *What is your ethnic?*

*(Only tick  in one box)*

- (1) Kinh
- (2) Cham
- (3) Raglai
- (4) Other (*Please write down*) \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 2:** *Which level of local authorities do you work for?*

*(Only tick  in one box)*

- (1) Provincial
- (2) District
- (3) Commune

**Question 3:** *What is your organization's/office's name?*

*(Write down your organization's/office's name in the box)*

**Question 4:** *Is your organization/office located in a city/district/commune?*

*(Only tick  in one box)*

- (1) City under province
- (2) District

(3) Commune

**Question 5:** *What are your organization/office in charge of?*

*(Tick  the appropriate box)*

- (1) State management of education and training
- (2) State management of vocational training
- (3) State management of health care
- (4) State management of employment and labour export
- (5) State management of social security
- (6) State management of planning and investment
- (7) State management of internal affairs
- (8) State management of finance
- (9) State management of agriculture and rural
- (10) State management of construction
- (11) State management of ethnic
- (12) State management of preferential loans
- (13) State management of economic, cultural, social, ... (commune level)
- (14) State management of economic, cultural, social, ... (district level)
- (15) State management of economic, cultural, social, ... (provincial level)

**Question 6:** *What is your position in your organization/office?*

*(Only tick  in one box)*

- (1) Head leader
- (2) Deputy
- (3) Expert
- (4) Other position

**Question 7:** *Which areas are you in charge of?*

*(Tick  the appropriate box)*

- (1) Poverty reduction
- (2) Education
- (3) Vocational training
- (4) Labour export
- (5) Employment introduction
- (6) Health care
- (7) Agriculture
- (8) Planning & investment

- (9) Preferential credit
- (10) Social housing
- (11) Human resources

**Question 8:** *How long have you been working for this field?*

*(Fill in the box with years)*

year(s)

**Question 9:** *What is your highest educational qualification?*

*(Only tick  in one box)*

- (1) Lower secondary school
- (2) Upper secondary school
- (3) Professional secondary school
- (4) College
- (5) University
- (6) Post-graduate

### **SPECIFIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAM**

**Question 10:** *Bac Ai district's socio-economic situation prior 2009 has been partly underdeveloped and the poverty reduction program aims to support development in the district. Underdevelopment may mean, for instance, that a district has high poor household rates, undeveloped education system, low enrollment rates, low level of economic productivity, low PCI, asynchronous technical infrastructure, etc.*

*What is your opinion, what are reasons for underdevelopment in Bac Ai district prior 2009?*

*(Only tick  in one box in each line)*

	<b>Underdevelopment reasons</b>	<b>Totally disagree</b>	<b>Partly disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(1)	Severe weather conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>					
(2)	Lack of land and capital for production	<input type="checkbox"/>					
(3)	Lack of scientific and technical cultivation	<input type="checkbox"/>					
(4)	Lack of technical infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>					
(5)	Few support policies from	<input type="checkbox"/>					

	<b>Underdevelopment reasons</b>	<b>Totally disagree</b>	<b>Partly disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
	the Government						
(6)	Low educational level of local citizens	<input type="checkbox"/>					
(7)	A large number of children left schools early	<input type="checkbox"/>					
(8)	High poor household rates	<input type="checkbox"/>					
(9)	Local people's dependency on Government subsidies	<input type="checkbox"/>					
(10)	Unskilled workers and farmers	<input type="checkbox"/>					
(11)	Shortage of qualified staffs at local level	<input type="checkbox"/>					
(12)	Local obsolete custom existence	<input type="checkbox"/>					

**Question 11:** *Please show your agreement on the following comments about Bac Ai district's socio-economic situation in 2014?*

*(Only tick  in one box in each line)*

	<b>The district has developed compared to the time before 2009 and during the development program 2009-2014, because of:</b>	<b>Totally disagree</b>	<b>Partly disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>
(1)	Good weather conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(2)	Enough land and capital for production	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(3)	Scientific and technical cultivation support	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(4)	Comprehensive technical infrastructure system	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(5)	Sufficient support policies from the Government	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	<b>The district has developed compared to the time before 2009 and during the development program 2009-2014, because of:</b>	<b>Totally disagree</b>	<b>Partly disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>
(6)	High educational level of local citizens	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(7)	High rates of universal education	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(8)	Low poor households rates	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(9)	Local people's independence and self-enrichment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(10)	Skilled workers and farmers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(11)	Professional qualified staffs at local level	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(12)	Eliminating local obsolete custom existence	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(13)	Civilization and new cultural life development	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**Question 12:** *Did the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP affect Bac Ai district's socio-economic situation from 2009 to 2014?*

*(Only tick  in one box)*

- (1) Totally positive impact
- (2) Partly positive impact
- (3) Neutral
- (4) Partly negative impact
- (5) Totally negative impact
- (6) Cannot say

**Question 13:** *How do you assess the importance of the supporting policies of the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP?*

*(Important degree is expressed in numbers from 1 to 6; with 1 is not important, 2 is less important, 3 is important, 4 is very important, 5 is extremely important, and 6 is cannot say).*

*(Please circle ONLY ONE appropriate number in each line)*

	<b>The supporting policies</b>	<b>Not important</b>	<b>Less important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>	<b>Extremely important</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>

	<b>The supporting policies</b>	<b>Not important</b>	<b>Less important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>	<b>Extremely important</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(1)	Manufacture and job creation						
(2)	Educational and vocational training						
(3)	Labour export						
(4)	Health care						
(5)	Housing						
(6)	Preferential credit						
(7)	Infrastructure investment						

**Question 14:** Which of the supporting policies did either poor households or poor communes benefit from the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP?

(Tick  in the appropriate box in each line)

	<b>The supporting policies</b>	<b>Poor households benefit</b>			<b>Poor communes benefit</b>
		<b>Much</b>	<b>To some extent</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	
(1)	Manufacture and job creation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2)	Educational and vocational training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3)	Labour export	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4)	Health care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5)	Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6)	Preferential credit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(7)	Infrastructure investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Question 15:** How did poor households get access to the supporting policies of the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP?

(Tick  in the appropriate box)

(1) By the Internet

- (2) By newspapers
  - (3) By radio
  - (4) By television
  - (5) By direct notification to poor households
  - (6) By declaration at the people's meeting
  - (7) By posting publicly at the commune headquarters
  - (8) By word-of-mouth
  - (9) The poor got access these policies themselves
  - (10) By other means (*Please write down*) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

**Question 16:** *Have the supporting policies impacted positively to change poor households' lives, incomes and awareness as well as Bac Ai district's and communes' socio-economic development?*

(Tick  in the appropriate box in each line)

	<b>The supporting policies</b>	<b>Totally positive impact</b>	<b>Partly positive impact</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Partly negative impact</b>	<b>Totally negative impact</b>
(1)	Manufacture and job creation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2)	Educational and vocational training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3)	Labour export	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4)	Health care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5)	Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6)	Preferential credit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(7)	Infrastructure investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Question 17:** *What are strengths to implement the supporting policies of the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP?*

(Tick  in the appropriate box in each line)

	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(1)	The political system from central to local cares for the poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(2)	The poverty reduction policy system is comprehensive from central to local	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3)	Community and the poor awareness of poverty reduction has improved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4)	The living conditions of the poor have been improved significantly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5)	Socio-economic infrastructure in the poor district and communes is invested	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6)	Resources from private entrepreneurs and NGOs have been attracted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(7)	Annual poor household rates have gradually declined	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(8)	Children at right-age attending school at all levels have considerably increased	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(9)	Quality of education, health care, social services, human resources, etc rise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(10)	PCI increases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(11)	Local government's socio-economic develops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(12)	Narrowing the gaps of living standards between urban and rural	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(13) Other advantages (*Please write down*) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 18:** *What are weaknesses to implement the supporting policies of the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP?*

(Tick  in the appropriate box in each line)

	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>

	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(1)	The resources for the poverty policy implementation are limited	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2)	Mechanisms for coordination, decentralization, accountability are unclear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3)	Poverty reduction policies are overlapping, fragmented, and unsystematic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4)	The linkage between production, processing and consumption amongst poor households, scientists and enterprises is ineffective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5)	Poor ethnic people are so limited in qualifications and foreign languages that they are not eligible for labour export	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(6) Other disadvantages (*Please write down*) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 19:** *What are opportunities to implement the supporting policies of the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP?*

(Tick  in the appropriate box in each line)

	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(1)	Socio-economic infrastructure in poor districts and poor communes will be concentrated in line with new rural criteria	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(2)	Facilitating poor people to participate in poverty reduction program activities to increase their incomes through creating more jobs in order to promote the effectiveness of essential infrastructure investments, to reduce the risk of natural disaster, to adapt to climate change, and to get access to markets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3)	Improving the poor livelihoods and enhancing the quality of living conditions, ensuring to increase the PCI for poor households	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4)	Contributing to the achievement of the objective of economic growth, ensuring social security, especially in poor areas, creating conditions for the poor and poor households to access basic facilitate social services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5)	Completing the goal of sustainable poverty reduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6)	Improving capacity for implementation, transparency, accountability, supervision and evaluation of the poverty reduction program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(7) Other chances (*Please write down*)

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**Question 20:** *What are threats to implement the supporting policies of the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP?*

(Tick  in the appropriate box in each line)

	<b>Threats</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
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	<b>Threats</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(1)	The results of poverty reduction have been unsustainable. The risk of falling into poverty again can occur at any time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2)	Some poor households are always waiting for the Government support, but they are not willing to do business to escape poverty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3)	The rich-poor gap among regions and groups has not been narrowed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4)	Backward customs and illiteracy are barrier for those who do not want to approach progress, civilization and modern	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5)	Extreme weather conditions interfere with production development and poor household livelihoods. The poor are the most vulnerable members of our society	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(6) Other threats (*Please write down*)

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**Question 21:** *What are suggested solutions to implement the supporting policies of the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP for the next stage?*

*(Tick  in the appropriate box in each line)*

	<b>Suggested solutions</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>

	<i>Suggested solutions</i>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(1)	To construct a number of natural fresh water reservoirs and irrigation systems to develop cultivation and husbandry; simultaneously to prevent floods and to improve the environment against climate change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2)	Local officials must be required to be agricultural expertise, to understand local people's culture, and to be ready to support poor households	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3)	To build a value chain for agricultural products by linking the poor production with businesses, scientists, distributors and consumers together	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(4) Your recommendations for improvement (*Please write down*)

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**Question 22:** *In general, do you think whether the poverty reduction program in Bac Ai district is effective or not?*

*Explain your reasons here:*

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**THANK YOU!**

## Appendix 2: The questionnaire (Synthetic data)

### Questionnaire for provincial, district and commune officers who work for the poverty reduction program conducted in Bac Ai district under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP dated December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2008

In order to carry out a survey for more information about the impact assessment on the poverty reduction program conducted in Bac Ai district under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP dated December 27<sup>th</sup> 2008, would you please state your opinions on the following questions? I firmly commit that the information you provided is completely confidential. After completing this questionnaire, please send it back to me before 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2017. Thank you for your cooperation.

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

##### Question 1: *What is your ethnic?*

(Only tick  in one box)

(1) Kinh	19	63.3%
(2) Cham	01	3.3%
(3) Raglai	10	33.3%
(4) Other ( <i>Please write down</i> ) _____		

##### Question 2: *Which level of local authorities do you work for?*

(Only tick  in one box)

(1) Provincial	12	40.0%
(2) District	9	30.0%
(3) Commune	9	30.0%

##### Question 3: *What is your organization's/office's name?*

(Write down your organization's/office's name in the box)

1. *Ninh Thuan People's Committee*
2. *Ninh Thuan People's Committee Office*
3. *Department of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs*
4. *Department of Education and Training*
5. *Department of Agriculture and Rural Development*
6. *Department of Health*

7. *Department of Internal Affairs*
8. *Department of Planning and Investment*
9. *Board for Ethnic Affairs*
10. *Ninh Thuan Bank for Social Policies*
11. *Ninh Thuan Social Insurance*
12. *Department of Construction*
13. *Bac Ai District People's Committee*
14. *Bac Ai District People's Committee Office*
15. *Division of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs*
16. *Division of Education and Training*
17. *Division of Ethnic*
18. *Division of Agriculture*
19. *Division of Economic and Infrastructure*
20. *Division of Health*
21. *Bac Ai Bank for Social Policies*
22. *Phuoc Thanh Commune People's Committee*
23. *Phuoc Thang Commune People's Committee*
24. *Phuoc Hoa Commune People's Committee*
25. *Phuoc Tien Commune People's Committee*
26. *Phuoc Binh Commune People's Committee*
27. *Phuoc Dai Commune People's Committee*
28. *Phuoc Chinh Commune People's Committee*
29. *Phuoc Tan Commune People's Committee*
30. *Phuoc Trung Commune People's Committee*

**Question 4:** *Is your organization/office located in a city/district/commune?*

*(Only tick  in one box)*

- |                         |    |       |
|-------------------------|----|-------|
| (1) City under province | 12 | 40.0% |
| (2) District            | 9  | 30.0% |
| (3) Commune             | 9  | 30.0% |

**Question 5:** *What are your organization/office in charge of?*

*(Tick  the appropriate box)*

- |  |   |      |
|--|---|------|
| (1) State management of education and training | 2 | 5.6% |
| (2) State management of vocational training    | 2 | 5.6% |
| (3) State management of health care            | 2 | 5.6% |

(4) State management of employment and labor export	2	5.6%
(5) State management of social security	4	11.1%
(6) State management of planning and investment	2	5.6%
(7) State management of internal affairs	1	2.8%
(8) State management of finance	0	0.0%
(9) State management of agriculture and rural	2	5.6%
(10) State management of construction	2	5.6%
(11) State management of ethnic	2	5.6%
(12) State management of preferential loans	2	5.6%
(13) State management of economic, cultural, social, ... (commune level)	9	25.0%
(14) State management of economic, cultural, social, ... (district level)	2	5.6%
(15) State management of economic, cultural, social, ... (provincial level)	2	5.6%

**Question 6:** *What is your position in your organization/office?*

*(Only tick  in one box)*

(1) Head leader	8	26.7%
(2) Deputy	18	60.0%
(3) Expert	4	13.3%
(4) Other position	0	0.0%

**Question 7:** *Which areas are you in charge of?*

*(Tick  the appropriate box)*

(1) Poverty reduction	17	15.0%
(2) Education	15	13.3%
(3) Vocational training	15	13.3%
(4) Labor export	15	13.3%
(5) Employment introduction	5	4.4%
(6) Health care	14	12.4%
(7) Agriculture	11	9.7%
(8) Planning & investment	11	9.7%
(9) Preferential credit	4	3.5%
(10) Social housing	3	2.7%
(11) Human resources	3	2.7%

**Question 8:** *How long have you been working for this field?*

*(Fill in the box with years)*

1.	Ninh Thuan People's Committee	25	years
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2.	<i>Ninh Thuan People's Committee Office</i>	7	years
3.	<i>Department of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs</i>	8	years
4.	<i>Department of Education and Training</i>	30	years
5.	<i>Department of Agriculture and Rural Development</i>	12	years
6.	<i>Department of Health</i>	15	years
7.	<i>Department of Internal Affairs</i>	17	years
8.	<i>Department of Planning and Investment</i>	5	years
9.	<i>Board for Ethnic Affairs</i>	16	years
10.	<i>Ninh Thuan Bank for Social Policies</i>	6	years
11.	<i>Ninh Thuan Social Insurance</i>	16	years
12.	<i>Department of Construction</i>	20	years
13.	<i>Bac Ai District People's Committee</i>	11	years
14.	<i>Bac Ai District People's Committee Office</i>	11	years
15.	<i>Division of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs</i>	10	years
16.	<i>Division of Education and Training</i>	15	years
17.	<i>Division of Ethnic</i>	10	years
18.	<i>Division of Agriculture</i>	11	years
19.	<i>Division of Economic and Infrastructure</i>	6	years
20.	<i>Division of Health</i>	6	years
21.	<i>Bac Ai Bank for Social Policies</i>	7	years
22.	<i>Phuoc Thanh Commune People's Committee</i>	9	years
23.	<i>Phuoc Thang Commune People's Committee</i>	10	years
24.	<i>Phuoc Hoa Commune People's Committee</i>	10	years
25.	<i>Phuoc Tien Commune People's Committee</i>	8	years
26.	<i>Phuoc Binh Commune People's Committee</i>	7	years
27.	<i>Phuoc Dai Commune People's Committee</i>	9	years
28.	<i>Phuoc Chinh Commune People's Committee</i>	9	years
29.	<i>Phuoc Tan Commune People's Committee</i>	10	years
30.	<i>Phuoc Trung Commune People's Committee</i>	8	years

**Question 9:** What is your highest educational qualification?

(Only tick  in one box)

(1) Lower secondary school	0	0.0%
(2) Upper secondary school	0	0.0%
(3) Professional secondary school	4	13.3%

(4) College	2	6.7%
(5) University	12	40.0%
(6) Post-graduate	12	40.0%

### SPECIFIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAM

**Question 10:** *Bac Ai district's socio-economic situation prior 2009 has been partly underdeveloped and the poverty reduction program aims to support development in the district. Underdevelopment may mean, for instance, that a district has high poor household rates, undeveloped education system, low enrollment rates, low level of economic productivity, low PCI, asynchronous technical infrastructure, etc.*

*What is your opinion, what are reasons for underdevelopment in Bac Ai district prior 2009?*

*(Only tick  in one box in each line)*

	<b>Underdevelopment reasons</b>	<b>Totally disagree</b>	<b>Partly disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(1)	Severe weather conditions	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(2)	Lack of land and capital for production	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	93.3%	0.0%
(3)	Lack of scientific and technical cultivation	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(4)	Lack of technical infrastructure	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(5)	Few support policies from the government	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	90.0%	0.0%
(6)	Low educational level of local citizens	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(7)	A large number of children left schools early	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	6.7%	83.3%	6.7%
(8)	High poor household rates	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(9)	Local people's dependency on Government subsidies	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(10)	Unskilled workers and	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%

	<b>Underdevelopment reasons</b>	<b>Totally disagree</b>	<b>Partly disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
	farmers						
(11)	Shortage of qualified staffs at local level	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	3.3%	93.3%	0.0%
(12)	Local obsolete custom existence	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%

**Question 11:** Please show your agreement on the following comments about Bac Ai district's socio-economic situation *in 2014*?

(Only tick  in one box in each line)

	<b>The district has developed compared to the time before 2009 and during the development program 2009-2014, because of:</b>	<b>Totally disagree</b>	<b>Partly disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>
(1)	Good weather conditions	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
(2)	Enough land and capital for production	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	10.0%	86.7%
(3)	Scientific and technical cultivation support	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
(4)	Comprehensive technical infrastructure system	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	23.3%	76.7%
(5)	Sufficient support policies from the government	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
(6)	High educational level of local citizens	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
(7)	High rates of universal education	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
(8)	Low poor households rates	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
(9)	Local people's independence and self-enrichment	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
(10)	Skilled workers and farmers	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	96.7%
(11)	Professional qualified staffs at local level	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

	<b>The district has developed compared to the time before 2009 and during the development program 2009-2014, because of:</b>	<b>Totally disagree</b>	<b>Partly disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>
(12)	Eliminating local obsolete custom existence	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	3.3%	93.3%
(13)	Civilization and new cultural life development	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

**Question 12:** *Did the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP affect Bac Ai district's socio-economic situation from 2009 to 2014?*

(Only tick  in one box)

(1) Totally positive impact	30	100%
(2) Partly positive impact	0	0%
(3) Neutral	0	0%
(4) Partly negative impact	0	0%
(5) Totally negative impact	0	0%
(6) Cannot say	0	0%

**Question 13:** *How do you assess the importance of the supporting policies of the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP?*

(Important degree is expressed in numbers from 1 to 6; with 1 is not important, 2 is less important, 3 is important, 4 is very important, 5 is extremely important, and 6 is cannot say).

(Please circle **ONLY ONE** appropriate number in each line)

	<b>The supporting policies</b>	<b>Not important</b>	<b>Less important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>	<b>Extremely important</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(1)	Manufacture and job creation	0.0%	0.0%	43.3%	43.3%	13.3%	0.0%
(2)	Educational and vocational training	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	70.0%	30.0%	0.0%
(3)	Labor export	0.0%	13.3%	20.0%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%
(4)	Health care	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	43.3%	56.7%	0.0%

	<b>The supporting policies</b>	<b>Not important</b>	<b>Less important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>	<b>Extremely important</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(5)	Housing	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	96.7%	0.0%
(6)	Preferential credit	0.0%	0.0%	76.7%	13.3%	10.0%	0.0%
(7)	Infrastructure investment	0.0%	3.3%	53.3%	16.7%	26.7%	0.0%

**Question 14:** Which of the supporting policies did either poor households or poor communes benefit from the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP? (Tick  in the appropriate box in each line)

	<b>The supporting policies</b>	<b>Poor households benefit</b>			<b>Poor communes benefit</b>
		<b>Much</b>	<b>To some extent</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	
(1)	Manufacture and job creation	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
(2)	Educational and vocational training	72.5%	2.5%	0.0%	25.0%
(3)	Labor export	6.7%	90.0%	3.3%	0.0%
(4)	Health care	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%
(5)	Housing	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%
(6)	Preferential credit	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
(7)	Infrastructure investment	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%

**Question 15:** How did poor households get access to the supporting policies of the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP?

(Tick  in the appropriate box)

(1) By the Internet	0	0.0%
(2) By newspapers	9	5.3%
(3) By radio	30	17.5%
(4) By television	30	17.5%
(5) By direct notification to the poor households	30	17.5%
(6) By declaration at the people's meeting	30	17.5%
(7) By posting publicly at the commune headquarters	30	17.5%
(8) By word-of-mouth	12	7.0%
(9) The poor got access these policies themselves	0	0.0%
(10) By other means (Please write down)	0	0.0%

**Question 16:** *Have the supporting policies impacted positively to change poor households' lives, incomes and awareness as well as Bac Ai district's and communes' socio-economic development?*

*(Tick  in the appropriate box in each line)*

	<b>The supporting policies</b>	<b>Totally positive impact</b>	<b>Partly positive impact</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Partly negative impact</b>	<b>Totally negative impact</b>
(1)	Manufacture and job creation	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
(2)	Educational and vocational training	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
(3)	Labor export		46.7%	53.3%	0.0%	0.0%
(4)	Health care	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
(5)	Housing	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
(6)	Preferential credit	96.7%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
(7)	Infrastructure investment	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

**Question 17:** *What are strengths to implement the supporting policies of the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP?*

*(Tick  in the appropriate box in each line)*

	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(1)	The political system from central to local cares for the poor	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(2)	The poverty reduction policy system is comprehensive from central to local	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(3)	Communities' and the poor's awareness of poverty reduction has improved	0.0%	23.3%	76.7%	0.0%
(4)	The living conditions of the poor have been improved significantly	0.0%	6.7%	93.3%	0.0%
(5)	Socio-economic infrastructure in the poor district and communes is invested	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(6)	Resources from private entrepreneurs and NGOs have been attracted	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%

	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(7)	Annual poor household rates have gradually declined	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(8)	Children at right-age attending school all levels have considerably increased	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(9)	Quality of education, health care, social services, human resources, etc rise	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(10)	PCI increases	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(11)	Local government's socio-economic develops				
(12)	Narrowing the gaps of living standards between urban and rural	0.0%	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%
(13)	Other advantages: <i>(Please write down)</i> <i>Economic and cultural exchanges between mountainous and delta areas have been significantly expanded in recent years</i>	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%

**Question 18:** *What are weaknesses to implement the supporting policies of the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP?*

*(Tick  in the appropriate box in each line)*

	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(1)	The resources for the poverty policy implementation are limited	0.0%	3.3%	96.7%	0.0%
(2)	Mechanisms for coordination, decentralization, accountability are unclear	3.3%	23.3%	73.3%	0.0%
(3)	Poverty reduction policies are overlapping, fragmented, and unsystematic	3.3%	33.3%	60.0%	3.3%
(4)	The linkage between production, processing and consumption amongst poor households, scientists and enterprises is ineffective	0.0%	13.3%	86.7%	0.0%

	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(5)	Poor ethnic people are so limited in qualifications and foreign languages that they are not eligible for labor export	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(6)	Other disadvantages: <i>(Please write down)</i> <i>Severe weather conditions (famine) and low educational level of local citizens</i>	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%

**Question 19:** *What are opportunities to implement the supporting policies of the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP?*

*(Tick  in the appropriate box in each line)*

	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(1)	Socio-economic infrastructure in poor districts and poor communes will be concentrated in line with new rural criteria	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(2)	Facilitating poor people to participate in poverty reduction program activities to increase their incomes through creating more jobs in order to promote the effectiveness of essential infrastructure investments, to reduce the risk of natural disaster, to adapt to climate change, and to get access to markets	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(3)	Improving the poor livelihoods and enhancing the quality of living conditions, ensuring to increase the PCI for poor households	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(4)	Contributing to the achievement of the objective of economic growth, ensuring social security, especially in poor areas, creating conditions for the poor and poor households to access basic facilitate social services	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%

	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(5)	Completing the goal of sustainable poverty reduction	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(6)	Improving capacity for implementation, transparency, accountability, supervision and evaluation of the poverty reduction program	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(7)	Other chances ( <i>Please write down</i> ) <i>Ensuring gender equality, social justice and narrowing the development gap between mountainous and lowland areas</i>	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%

**Question 20:** *What are threats to implement the supporting policies of the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP?*

(Tick  in the appropriate box in each line)

	<b>Threats</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(1)	The results of poverty reduction have been unsustainable. The risk of falling into poverty again can occur at any time	16.7%	40.0%	43.3%	0.0%
(2)	Some poor households are always waiting for the government support, but they are not willing to do business to escape poverty	13.3%	30.0%	53.3%	3.3%
(3)	The rich-poor gap among regions and groups has not been narrowed	93.3%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%
(4)	Backward customs and illiteracy are barrier for those who do not want to approach progress, civilization and modern	0.0%	13.3%	86.7%	0.0%

	<b>Threats</b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(5)	Extreme weather conditions interfere with production development and poor household livelihoods. The poor are the most vulnerable members of our society	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(6)	Other threats ( <i>Please write down</i> ) <i>None</i>				

**Question 21:** *What are suggested solutions to implement the supporting policies of the poverty reduction program under the Government's Resolution No. 30a/2008/NQ-CP for the next stage?*  
(Tick  in the appropriate box in each line)

	<b><i>Suggested solutions</i></b>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(1)	To construct a number of natural fresh water reservoirs and irrigation systems to develop cultivation and husbandry; simultaneously to prevent floods and to improve the environment against climate change	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
(2)	Local officials must be required to be agricultural expertise, to understand local people's culture, and to be ready to support poor households	0.0%	10.0%	90.0%	0.0%
(3)	To build a value chain for agricultural products by linking the poor production with businesses, scientists, distributors and consumers together	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%

	<i>Suggested solutions</i>	<b>Do not agree</b>	<b>Partly agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>	<b>Cannot say</b>
(4)	Your recommendations for improvement ( <i>Please write down</i> ) <i>Investing more budget for education to improve people's knowledge; investing in building commune health centers and training doctors to take care of people's health; and educate people how to earn their living by themselves to get out of poverty sustainably</i>	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%

**Question 22:** *In general, do you think whether the poverty reduction program in Bac Ai district is effective or not?*

*Explain your reasons here:*

- *The poverty reduction program is effective. The poverty household rate declines annually;*
- *The poor households have opportunities to change their life;*
- *Children go to school increasingly. High dropout rate drops significantly;*
- *Social security, grants, health care, education, etc for the poor households have been thoughtfully implemented;*
- *The poor: "Change their mind, change their style, change their life";*
- *Communes and rural villages are changing brighter day by day;*
- *The gap between the rich and the poor is narrowed, the opportunity to escape poverty is opened;*
- *The government's investment policies for the poor are comprehensive and highly effective;*
- *Society handles the poor so that no one is left behind;*
- *Trade between mountainous and lowland areas was expanded. The exchange of goods is getting faster;*
- *Poor people know how to make a living out of poverty .*

**THANK YOU!**

### Appendix 3: Qualitative Research Objects

**List of provincial, district and commune organizations that the author sent the questionnaires for the survey.**

Nº	Organization/Office	Number of questionnaires distributed	Address
1.	Ninh Thuan People's Committee	1	450, Thong Nhat street, My Huong ward, Phan Rang-Thap Cham city, Ninh Thuan province
2.	Ninh Thuan People's Committee Office	1	450, Thong Nhat street, My Huong ward, Phan Rang-Thap Cham city, Ninh Thuan province
3.	Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs	1	16/4 street, Phan Rang-Thap Cham city, Ninh Thuan province
4.	Department of Education and Training	1	18, Le Hong Phong street, My Huong ward, Phan Rang-Thap Cham city, Ninh Thuan province
5.	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	1	134, 21/8 street, Phu Ha ward, Phan Rang-Thap Cham city, Ninh Thuan province
6.	Department of Health	1	03, Le Hong Phong street, My Huong ward, Phan Rang-Thap Cham city, Ninh Thuan province
7.	Department of Internal Affairs	1	26A, Le Hong Phong street, My Huong ward, Phan Rang-Thap Cham city, Ninh Thuan province
8.	Department of Planning and Investment	1	57, 16/4 Street, Phan Rang-Thap Cham city, Ninh Thuan province
9.	Board for Ethnic Affairs	1	360, 21/8 street, Phuoc My ward, Phan Rang-Thap Cham city, Ninh Thuan province
10.	Ninh Thuan Bank for Social Policies	1	264, Thong Nhat street, Phu Ha ward, Phan Rang-Thap Cham city, Ninh Thuan province
11.	Ninh Thuan Social Insurance	1	24, 16/4 Street, My Hai ward, Phan Rang-Thap Cham city, Ninh Thuan province
12.	Department of Construction	1	178, 16/4 Street, My Hai ward, Phan Rang-Thap Cham city, Ninh Thuan province
13.	Bac Ai District People's Committee	1	Phuoc Dai commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
14.	Bac Ai District People's Committee Office	1	Phuoc Dai commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
15.	Division of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs	1	Phuoc Dai commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province

N <sup>o</sup>	Organization/Office	Number of questionnaires distributed	Address
16.	Division of Education and Training	1	Phuoc Dai commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
17.	Division of Ethnic	1	Phuoc Dai commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
18.	Division of Agriculture	1	Phuoc Dai commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
19.	Division of Economic and Infrastructure	1	Phuoc Dai commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
20.	Division of Health	1	Phuoc Dai commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
21.	Bac Ai Bank for Social Policies	1	Phuoc Dai commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
22.	Phuoc Thanh Commune People's Committee	1	Phuoc Thanh commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
23.	Phuoc Thang Commune People's Committee	1	Phuoc Thang commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
24.	Phuoc Hoa Commune People's Committee	1	Phuoc Hoa commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
25.	Phuoc Tien Commune People's Committee	1	Phuoc Tien commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
26.	Phuoc Binh Commune People's Committee	1	Phuoc Binh commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
27.	Phuoc Dai Commune People's Committee	1	Phuoc Dai commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
28.	Phuoc Chinh Commune People's Committee	1	Phuoc Chinh commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
29.	Phuoc Tan Commune People's Committee	1	Phuoc Tan commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
30.	Phuoc Trung Commune People's Committee	1	Phuoc Trung commune, Bac Ai district, Ninh Thuan province
<b>Total</b>		<b>30</b>	