

Sustainable Management of Natural
Resources in Central Vietnam

Implemented by **GFA**



German Technical Cooperation

REPORT

**MISSION ON ASSESSMENT SURVEY OF STATUS OF PRODUCER ASSOCIATIONS/
GROUPS OF APICULTURE, SERICULTURE AND PEPPER**

**Prepared by
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Dong Hoi, 8/2009

I. BACKGROUND

Within the framework of “supporting for income generation from off-farm activities” by the project “Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in Central Vietnam”, potential sub-sectors generating income for farmers in Quang Binh have been selected in the workshop on value chain analysis since 2005. These four sub-sectors selected by the project are: Apiculture, Sericulture, Pepper and Mushroom. The Value Chain methodology was applied by the project in analyzing and finding out supportive measures for these sub-sectors. The analysis indicated that to support value chains it is necessary to create horizontal linkages among producers, and then vertical linkages with supply and consumption stages.

That’s why the project supported and promoted the establishment of producer associations/ groups for these four sub-sectors.

- Two Apiculture Associations:

+ Tuyen Hoa Apiculture Association- formed in 7/2006

+ Minh Hoa Apiculture Association- formed in 7/2006

These apiculture associations were formed based on the consolidation and development of achievements of the Integrated Food Security Project in Quang Binh.

Sericulture sub-sector: Tuyen Hoa Sericulture Association was formed in 2006 with participation of households/ people practicing mulberry cultivation and silkworm rearing in Tuyen Hoa district.

- Pepper sub-sector: two pepper producer groups were formed in Sen Thuy and Thai Thuy in early 2008. These groups have come into the operation. Members of these groups are pepper households who have the potential of making pepper become a sub-sector which generates income with medium density in income of households in these two communes.

Producer associations/ groups supported by the project have come into operation and gained certain achievements, which support their members in developing sub-sectors and generating income. However, there appears difficulties and limitations affecting achievements of associations/ groups. The mission on survey on assessment of operational capacity of producers in the value chain promotion of associations/ groups is very necessary. The mission aims to find out the status, capacity, difficulties, limitations and lessons learnt, and then to have recommendations and solutions to help associations/ groups operate better and more sustainably.

II. OBJECTIVE

II.1 Overall objective

The survey mission has assessed the status and capacity of producers, associations/ groups of three value chains: Apiculture, Sericulture and Pepper. Based on this, to recommend solutions which are more suitable and close to practical conditions of each association/ group. The achieved results should represent three issues as follows:

1/ Role and effect of associations/ groups for members.

2/ Actual capacity of each association/ group compared to their designed mandates.

3/ Recommendations on solutions for better and more sustainable operation.

II.2 Specific objective

- + Collect information from different sources on issues relating to associations, focusing on members of executive boards and membership groups.
- + Carry out surveys on groups representing for farmers who participate and not participate in associations/groups on issues relating to associations, focusing on following issues:
 - Formation history of associations/ groups
 - Assessment on key features of associations on:
 - Association management capacity
 - Association resources
 - Association scope and frequency of operation
 - Association culture
 - Linkage among members
 - Services provided by associations
 - Representative benefit for members
 - Social activities
 - SWOT analysis of three associations/ groups
 - Recommendations on solution on improving role of associations to meet the demand and expectation of members.

III/ ORGANIZATION OF IMPLEMENTATION

III.1/ Personnel and task assignment

Labor Support and Training Centre (QTC) – take main responsibility for carrying out the survey

1/ Mr. Nguyen Huu Phuc – Team leader, take main responsibility for conducting the survey and writing the survey report

2/ Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Nghien – member

3/ Mr. Nguyen QuyKhiem - Member

SMNR – CV project

1/ Mrs. Hoang Thi Thanh Nga – Value Chain Officer, supervise all contents and activities of the survey

2/ Mr. Doan Ngoc Luong – support for organizational issues

III.2/ Survey actor, methodology and schedule:

III.2.1/ Actor and methodology

| No. | Actor | Methodology |
|-----|--------------------------------|---|
| 1 | - Members of associations | - Direct interview, survey - Survey by questionnaire - Group discussion |
| 2 | - Members outside associations | - Direct interview |
| 3 | - Association Executive Board | - Direct interview - Group discussion |
| 4 | - Local authorities | - Direct interview |

III.2.2/ Schedule

| Time | Actor | Location | Content/ methodology |
|-------------------|--|-----------|--|
| 28 - 31/7 | | Dong Hoi | Prepare survey content and plan |
| Morning 15/8 | - Executive Board of Tuyen Hoa Sericulture Association | Tuyen Hoa | - Interview members |
| Afternoon 15/8 | - Members in and outside of Tuyen Hoa Sericulture | Tuyen Hoa | - Interview members and survey production status |

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|
| | Association | | |
| Morning 16/8 | Executive Board of Tuyen Hoa Apiculture Association | Tuyen Hoa | Interview members |
| Afternoon 16/8 | Executive Board of Minh Hoa Apiculture Association | Minh Hoa | Interview members |
| | Members of Minh Hoa Apiculture Association | Minh Hoa | - Interview members and survey production status |
| Morning 17/8 | Executive Board and members of 2 Apiculture Association Tuyen Hoa and Minh Hoa | Project office in Tuyen Hoa | Group discussion |
| Afternoon 17/8 | Executive Board and members of Tuyen Hoa Sericulture Association | Project office in Tuyen Hoa | Group discussion |
| 18/8 | Local authority in districts of Tuyen Hoa and Minh Hoa | Tuyen Hoa, Minh Hoa | Interview on status of two associations |
| Morning 19/8 | Executive board of pepper group in Sen Thuy | Sen Thuy | Interview executive board and members and survey production status |
| | Pepper households outside pepper group in Sen Thuy | Sen Thuy | Interview and survey production status of pepper households |
| Afternoon 19/8 | Executive board and members of Pepper group in Thai Thuy | Thai Thuy | Interview executive board and members and survey production status |
| | Pepper households outside Pepper group in Thai Thuy | Thai Thuy | Interview and survey production status of pepper households |
| 20/8 | Executive board and members of two pepper groups in Sen Thuy and Thai Thuy | CPC Sen Thuy | Group discussion |
| | Mushroom group in Le Thuy | Le Thuy | Interview and survey |
| 25/8 | | Dong Hoi | Data aggregation and preparation of brief report to the team |
| 26/8 | Value Chain workshop | Dong Hoi | Report on status of associations and contribution to the workshop |
| 27 - 31/8 | | Dong Hoi | Survey report writing |

IV. SURVEY RESULT

IV.1 Characteristics and situation of associations

IV.1.1 Apiculture Association Tuyen Hoa and Minh Hoa

| STRENGTH | WEAKNESS |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All members have known beekeeping for a long time and been trained professionally - Supply basic inputs for members - Many members are pro-active and can be leaders of beekeeping - Current yield is consumed at quite high | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Production method of many households is not professional. - The association has not yet collected association fee from its sub-associations/ members |

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|--|---|
| <p>price in the locality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The association is quite pro-active in linking/ supplying inputs and supporting each other in product consumption - Through self-advertisement, the association helps consumers find that the quality of bee honey produced by them is not different from natural honey. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Breeding bee has not yet been produced by the association. - The association has not yet been pro-active in its operation. - The Executive Board and members still have deep thinking of Cooperative, so they are still dependant and are passive in their work as well as in the operation and business production |
| <p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Honey and pollen source is rich with big yield - Bee honey of two district has been well-known for a long time - Income/ profit from beekeeping is higher than other sectors in the locality - The local authority pays much attention and support the association - Thanks to the support of 2 projects, beekeeping is quite stable and is the basis for the formation and development of the association - Demand of honey consumption is high, especially bee honey produced in a natural way by the association | <p style="text-align: center;">THREAT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transportation is still difficult between localities - Selling price is much higher than that in the domestic and international market - If beekeeping is not practiced in a professional/ scientific, it easily gets risk and diseases. Therefore, new beekeepers are quickly discouraged - Beekeeping is supported by many projects but these projects have not yet cooperated with each other and not yet made use of achievements. The formation of 3 associations in the same commune leads to the overlapping and difficulty for the operation of associations. - The local authority of Minh Hoa district and some new communes have few activities/ specific action; only stopping at mobilization policy. |

IV.1.2 Tuyen Hoa Sericulture Association

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|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">STRENGTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Executive Board has willing spirit and is very enthusiastic - Purchasing enterprises support costs, partly meeting cost for organization at commune level - The association has come into the operation for only 2 years but its role and position has been asserted - Local people participate in many technical trainings and are supported with many materials and tools - The association is pro-active in its operation such as having the orientation of silkworm round and rearing crop for members, linking input supply enterprises and product consumption | <p style="text-align: center;">WEAKNESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Executive Board is lack of experience and mainly work out of their habit - The association has not yet collected association fee from members - Members are not yet industrious in comparison with the sub-sector requirement. Therefore, productivity and product quality is low, then leading to low income which does not meet their expectation. That's why they do other sub-sectors - Members have not yet had habit of technical application into production. They mainly produce based on their personal experience - The association scale is small, then it has no necessary role in the general Value Chain |
| <p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITY</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">THREAT</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The district supported policy and cost (5 million VND/ year) and provide direct support of cost for sericulture households - Have effective initial support from the project - Final product (silk cloth) is accepted in market at high price - Sub-sector potential (land, environment, labor source, etc) are available for the sub-sector development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Easily to get risk, diseases and natural calamity - Input (silkworm egg) depends on silkworm egg supply from China. The association and suppliers have not yet had possibility to solve this issues. - Market price depends much on the price change in the world - The scale is small and not stable in case of big changes (natural calamity, decreased price, etc). The subsector has possibly the risk of being lost. - Because Tuyen Hoa is the locality where there are many projects supporting materials, members of the association are not much proactive |
|---|---|

IV.1.3/ Pepper groups in Sen Thuy and Thai Thuy

| | |
|--|--|
| STRENGTH | WEAKNESS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members are enthusiastic and proactive - Members are very industrious because they are lack of jobs. - Farmers respect and welcome the support of the project - The executive board is enthusiastic in activities of groups. Most of members of the executive board are successful in pepper cultivation, thus they can be the factor promoting the development of pepper cultivation in the locality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As pepper cultivation has not been a professional subsector, income is low that farmers do not pay much attention to - Members and the Executive board have not yet known how to access external resources (capital borrowing, getting attention and support from the local authority) - Members of the executive board are lack of working experience |
| OPPORTUNITY | THREAT |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The locality has difficultly high income from forest or other business activities. Therefore, households are very interested in pepper cultivation as it offers them certain income. - Soil and weather condition is suitable for pepper cultivation - The locality is near one pepper trade and production center (Ho Xa - Quang Tri) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Since production scale is still small, the locality has not yet become a strong pepper production and consumption location in the market. - Input supply and product consumption mainly depend on consumers outside the province - Price can be changeable everyday - Not much attention paid by the local authority |

IV.1.4 Ideas from members of associations

Based on interviews of members, executive boards and local authorities, information relating to associations are collected as follows:

Members are usually informed about associations by 3 sources: announcement from local authorities (district, commune level); introduction from executive boards of associations; from members of associations.

The reasons of participating in associations/ groups are to: learn, share techniques and attend technical trainings on disease prevention and risk reduction during production and

business; support each other during the production and product consumption, create bigger strength for their sector, contribute to ensured product quality and set up their trade mark in the market. Then, develop the sector in a sustainable way; members get higher and more stable income.

Condition of participating in associations/ groups: interviewees agreed that it is not difficult to participate in associations; registration form is only minimum procedure of participation in associations.

For pepper groups in particular, many households would like to be its members. However, the issue that since old members contribute to the revolving credit fund, there are not yet ways to deal with proper interests between old and new members.

Benefits of participating in associations: 100% of interviewees agreed that they get practical benefits when participating in associations, specifically as follows:

+ Effects of associations:

- Associations are organizations which supply inputs and consume products
- Members get technical knowledge and increase productivity
- Members get market price and sell their products at high price
- Members get help from other members of associations and projects
- Members participate in organizations/ community activities, then have more strong solidarity
- Members participate in study tours in and outside province
- Members participate in borrowing credit
- Members have job for themselves and their family
- Manage product quality (bee honey)
- Associations have strong voice and produce high quantity of products
- Exchange tools and breeds
- Get more attention and support from local authorities and project

+Associations help develop the subsector:

100% of interviewees said that associations help develop quite strongly sub-sectors, and associations are ranked in order as follows:

1/ Pepper cultivation

2/ Beekeeping

3/ Sericulture (due to natural disaster and cheap selling price in 2008, the subsector is not highly appreciated).

For the pepper subsector, the average productivity before pepper groups formed is 1.6kg/pepper plant. The current productivity is 2.8 Kg/pepper plant (increase by 75%); The number of pepper plant increases over 60%. Pepper yield of new pepper gardens will increase by 180% compared to that in the time of pepper groups establishment.

In addition to the yield increase, the establishment of pepper groups helps the subsector develop in terms of following aspects:

- Input and output are more advantageous
- Pepper groups help the subsector generate major, stable and sustainable income for the locality.
- Pepper groups help the sub-sector develop in more long term and sustainable way
- Bring more jobs in leisure time, make use of labor force of households and provide other sub-products.
- Professional skills are gathered, discussed and drawn as lesson learnt, then disseminated widely for communities.
- The association is willing to help members in case of any difficulties occurring

IV.1.5 Ideas from Executive Boards of associations and representatives of local authorities on subsectors and associations

a/ Beekeeping

a1/ Advantage and disadvantage of beekeeping before the Apiculture Association establishment

| ADVANTAGE | DISADVANTAGE |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Since the locality is in the mountainous area, food source is very rich - Beekeeping has been practiced for a long time - Local authority pay attention with indicators and resolution - Consumption market is quite advantageous | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many diseases happens due to the fact that households have low knowledge of disease prevention and treatment -Have a complex about low-quality bee honey sold at cheap price. - A lot of imitation bee honey still occurs - Production is still in a scattered way and has no prestigious trade mark. - Lack of inputs and materials; no input suppliers. The subsector is practiced in a natural way with little intervention by households |

a2/ Current status of the association

- The executive board has enough capacity to well manage and operate the association.
- Beekeeping sub-associations have been formed in communes, providing linkage between input and output for members, supporting technical consulting, sharing materials, tools and breeding bees among members; Form sustainable communal fund with regulations and stable working schedule; The association can provide services out of its range, locality and province.
- Without the association, beekeepers will meet many difficulties in techniques, materials, breeding bees and product consumption.

a3/ Current status of beekeeping sector (Impacts on beekeeping)

| ADVANTAGE | DISADVANTAGE |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diseases are prevented and controlled according to techniques and experience - Input supply is active and stable - Limit mostly imitation bee honey in market because customers can buy true bee honey from the association, then imitation honey cannot be consumed and destroyed. - Customers do not discriminate between honey produced by beekeepers and natural honey (from forest). They understand that these two types of honey is the same thanks to the propaganda by the association. - Bee honey has become a big commodity product which is systematically and professionally in business by traders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farmers in some localities are not industrious enough to develop apiculture. Therefore, although the sub-sector generates high income, the development is not in the corresponding to current potential. - Trade mark of bee honey is not official but limited to the "reputation" of Tuyen Hoa and Minh Hoa bee honey |

b/ Sericulture

b1/ Status of sericulture before the establishment of the association

| ADVANTAGE | DISADVANTAGE |
|------------------|---------------------|
|------------------|---------------------|

| | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In spite of small and scattered scale, sericulture has had long tradition in the locality for a long time. - The local authority has development policy for the sub-sector - Some of farmers are very enthusiastic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diseases happen regularly, causing big damage to sericulture. Farmers prevent and treat diseases in a traditional way with low effectiveness. - Price is not stable; consumption market is difficult; enterprises just pay attention to short-term benefits but not to benefits and sustainability of the value chain. - Information on techniques, input and output is still limited - Do not have linkage among pepper farmers as well as linkage between input and output - The local authority pay attention but not yet have specific supports |
|--|---|

b2/ Status of Sericulture association

- The association is stable and carries out necessary activities; supplying input and output services for members
- The association represents for members and plays the intermediary role between members and enterprises supplying inputs and consuming products.
- Provide guidance and support in each silkworm rearing round.
- Households directly and indirectly use services provided by the association in each silkworm rearing round.
- Sericulture localities (communes) formed sericulture sub-associations which regularly operate and have stable and sustainable budget.
- It is asserted that if the association does not exist, sericulture can difficultly operates ; value chain cannot operates; and sericulture will have many difficulties.

b3/ Status of sericulture

| ADVANTAGE | DISADVANTAGE |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Created linkage among suppliers-producers-traders. This linkage operates quite equally and effectively - Sericulture has high effectiveness - Market information is updated in a timely way; input and output are stable - Technical application into silkworm rearing is higher - Cocoon quality and yield is higher. Thanks to this, selling price increases, then income from silkworm remarkably increases - Sericulture households have advantage thanks to the support from the locality and project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Production scale is still small and scattered. The sub-sector is not appreciated properly. - Many members have not yet applied new techniques of silkworm rearing. They practice silkworm rearing in a traditional way. Therefore, it is easy to get risk and low cocoon productivity, decreasing silk percentage - Finance capacity is weak. Members of the executive board are responsible for many works at the same time and lack of professional skills and management capacity |

c/ Pepper

c1/ Status of pepper cultivation before the establishment of pepper groups

| ADVANTAGE | DISADVANTAGE |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Soil condition is suitable with pepper cultivation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diseases happen regularly, causing big damage to pepper cultivation; farmers do |

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In spite of small and scattered scale, pepper cultivation has been practiced in the locality for a long time - A lot of labour force is available in the locality. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> not yet pay much attention or know but not much knowledge in pepper disease prevention and treatment - Price is not stable; production scale is small and scattered, then absolutely depend on market -Information on techniques, input and output is not mostly available. - Do not have linkage among pepper farmers as well as linkage between input and output - Lack of capital; farmers do not intend to do the professional investment - The local authority pay attention but not yet have specific supports |
|---|---|

c2/ Status of pepper groups

- Pepper groups are stable and organize necessary activities; start to supply input and output services for members.
- Pepper groups represent for its members in front of the local authority and other organizations.
- Pepper groups are operational very often and have stable sustainable finance
- Pepper group in Thai Thuy commune has formed its resolving credit fund, providing good support for its members.
- Pepper groups have not yet support members in getting loans in credit organizations and in banks.
- It is asserted that without pepper groups, it is difficult for pepper cultivation to be sustained like the way it does now; value chain cannot operates; and pepper cultivation will meet many difficulties.

c3/ Status of Pepper cultivation

| ADVANTAGE | DISADVANTAGE |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create linkage among suppliers-producers-traders, - Pepper cultivation has higher effectiveness - Members of pepper groups get basic techniques of pepper cultivation - Pepper farmers have the linkage each other, creating favorable condition for sharing techniques, production tools, pepper variety as well as good linkage for product consumption at high price. - Market information is quickly updated; input and output are stable. - Pepper farmers have advantage with the support from local authorities and project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pepper production is still small and scattered; Not much attention paid by the locality - Little investment capital; Members do not know where they can borrow capital - Financial capacity of groups is still weak; Members of the executive board work mainly based on their enthusiasm and feeling. |

IV.1.6 IMPACT OF THE ASSOCIATIONS TOWARDS THEIR MEMBERS AND THE SUB-SECTOR

After carrying out the survey, collecting, analyzing and evaluating information relating to status of associations of those sub-sectors in the locality, the impacts of the associations towards their members and sub-sectors can be seen as follows:

IV.1.6.1 Impact of the associations towards their members

- Members enhance their technical knowledge relating to the sub-sector through training courses organized by organization/project/local authority and through sharing experiences with other members; then, it help them to increase productivity and output and also to reduce risks during the production. Members have stable and reliable sources of input provision.
- Product consumption has received appropriate attention, which ensures prestige and sustainability. For example, in sericulture, the Association has successfully played an intermediary role between producers and enterprises in order to ensure rights of both members and enterprises (win-win situation), which is the basis for survival and sustainable development of the sub-sector
- Members in the Association discuss and support each others, which helps to have more successful production, to reduce production cost, to enhance productivity and production scope then to increase output. After being members of the Association, members develop the sub-sector with more income.
- The Association has become the point receiving supports from project/local authorities, etc. then hand over to members, which is a favorable condition for any supportive organizations to create more chances for members.
- On attending in Association, members have chances to participate in activities relating to credit and borrowing loan, however still at the level of internal credit. At the moment, the relationship with external credit organizations has not been set up widely
- Members have an official community to participate in; the community gradually received the recognition from society and local authorities, solidarity is created among members of the association

IV.1.6.2 Impact of the associations towards the sub-sector

- The thing that members have rather high and stable income helps them change their awareness towards the sub-sector. They used to consider the sub-sector as a secondary career, but now they consider it as the major career creating a high proportion of the total household income. It helps the sub-sector to pursue the position that is corresponding to the potential of the sub-sector.
- The Association control quality and prestige of the product, which helps to gradually locate the quality and prestige of products in the market and then price of the products is much higher and creates more income for members of the Association
- With the existence of the Association, a team of experts has been gathered to deliver technical consultancy when the members or the association face with difficulties or epidemic diseases. Then, proper solutions have been introduced to help the sub-sector solving difficulties, existing and developing.
- The following statement shows the full impact towards the sub-sector: **"Without Association, it is difficult for the sub-sector to survive and develop like the way it does now"**.

IV.1.7 EVALUATION FROM CONSULTANT DIRECTLY CARRYING OUT THE SURVEY

Based on information gathered in the survey, the consultant has the following evaluation regarding to the status of the associations:

IV.1.7.1 Achieved results

- Associations of apiculture and sericulture have set up their apparatus rather completely from the district level down to commune level with their complete regulations. For pepper, due to the fact that this sub-sector covers for a small area of the province, not province-wide, and also just received supports for a short period of time, the system at the moment completes at commune level with proper legal status (commune level).

- The Associations have successfully been the representatives of their members, searched and protected the rights of their members when working with partners: Input suppliers, traders, consumers, authorities, and projects. The associations are also the central point to receive supports from outsiders (local authorities, projects, etc.)
- Basically, the associations have contributed to help the sub-sectors exist and develop. Supportive services for production arrangement and for input-output connection are the basis to create a solid linkage between members and the associations, which help the associations develop in a sustainable way.
- Members in the association support each others in production and consuming products: support and share technical experiences; support on assets, tools, varieties; support on input provision, on production and on consumption; support on increasing product quality, building up product prestige – essential basis to create product brand name.

IV.1.7.2 Shortcomings

- Though the associations have managed to be active in activities, they still follow the sample of those traditional associations (still being passive and waiting for supports from outsiders, and not yet paying attention to bring into play their own internal strength and potentials). They haven't clearly identified their independent role and still be vaguely dependent to others. This can be seen more clearly when working with sub-associations.
- The relationship between associations and their sub-associations is not solid and strong and not regularly maintained as workload is not much, when they are in short of budget and conditions for transportation are still difficult.
- The attention of the local authorities has been reduced but the associations themselves are still in the passive position in the relationship with local authorities, which sometimes affect badly to the operation of the associations
- Objectives/milestones have been planned but have not been completed in time as planned and the associations have not achieved the expected outputs
- The capacity of the Association management Boards is still limited; most of the members of the Boards work based on their own enthusiasm and experiences.
- The operational budget is still not stable (not yet successful collect membership fees or fees from providing services).

V/ CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CONSULTANT

V.1/ Conclusions:

Through the process of surveying, collecting and analyzing information from associations of apiculture, sericulture, and pepper, the consultant has the following conclusions:

1/ Associations have set up their operational apparatus and have operated rather effectively. Associations of apiculture and sericulture have association at district level and sub-associations at commune level. Pepper clubs though having been set up recently with small scope have operated properly and in line with specific conditions of the sub-sector.

2/ Management Boards of the Associations have basically operated the associations, and have gradually got used to operating the association in line with regulations of market mechanism and connecting the rights and obligations of the associations with those of their members.

3/ Besides traditional activities of Vietnam's associations, the associations have connected links in the value chains (input provision – production – consumption), which is the basis to link members in the associations and help the associations to develop in a sustainable way.

4/ Through activities of providing services, associations have created essential benefits for members and supported the development of the sub-sectors and enhanced the solidarity

within the associations. The associations have contributed to the better situation in production and in creating commodity market for those products of the associations

5/ Associations represent the rights of members in the value chains, in the locality and when dealing with authorities, which helps to confirm and to expand the role and position of the associations/sub-sectors in the locality.

V.2/ Recommendations

1/ More supports towards members of the Management Boards to be proactive and active in activities of the associations, then the awareness later on spreads throughout the members to help them be proactive/self-decisive in their daily activities/obligations/rights. This is the first basis to help the associations exist and develop properly and sustainably.

2/ More support to current value links, expand new links for the associations; transfer methods of working and introduce consultants to support the associations

3/ Associations need to be active in their activities and protect rights of the associations/members in business and in other activities.

4/ Association need to be aware of their role in the value chains, implement properly in certain links of the whole value chains in order to ensure rights/obligations of associations/members as well as harmonizing their benefits with other relating links to create additional benefit to all links of the value chains. Regarding to this aspect, the association are able to contribute to the improvement of the products' quality, to ensure prestige of the products in the market, which in turn help to increase production and value then to increase turnover/income of the sub-sector in the locality and then spread to the other localities.

5/ Associations need to self-operate all of their activities during the time still having support from project to minimize the gap when the project ends and when the local authorities reduce their support towards the associations.

These are the contents of the consultant report on current status of the associations: Apiculture Associations in Tuyen Hoa-Minh Hoa districts, Tuyen Hoa Sericulture Association, pepper clubs in Sen Thuy – Thai Thuy communes. This report can be used as a reference for identifying follow-up activities of the project.

* **Attached documents:** The following attached documents are an integral part of the report:

- 1/ Survey sheets towards members of the associations
- 2/ Summary table gathering contributions in meetings of the Management Boards and members of the associations
- 3/ Term of reference of the consultant.

Dong Hoi, date 06/09/2009
Report prepared by

Nguyen Huu Phuc