

# **DETAILED PROJECT OUTLINE**

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT SUPPORTED BY THE UNITED NATIONS**

### **A. PROJECT INFORMATION**

1. **Project Title:** *“Strengthening capacity for human development policy making in Vietnam”*.
2. **Project Code:** 72200
3. **Name of the UN Agency Supporting the Project:** The United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
4. **Name of Line Agency National Partner:** Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS)
  - a. Address: No. 1 Lieu Giai Street, Ba Dinh District, Hanoi - Vietnam
  - b. Tel.: 62730408, Fax: 62730471
5. **Name of Agency proposing the Project:** Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences
  - a. Address: No. 1 Lieu Giai Street, Ba Dinh District, Hanoi – Vietnam
  - b. Tel. 62730408, Fax: 62730471
6. **National Implementing Partner:** Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences
  - a. Address: No. 1 Lieu Giai Street, Ba Dinh District, Hanoi – Vietnam
  - b. Tel. 62730408, Fax: 62730471
7. **Co-Implementing Partner** (tentative): General Statistics Office
8. **Estimated Project Duration:** 4.5 years since the date of effect
9. **Project Location:** Hanoi
10. **Total Project Budget (estimated): 2,525,000 USD of which:**
  - Total Grant ODA: 2,500,000 USD, of which:
    - \* Funding from UNDP TRAC: 1,000,000 USD
    - \* Funding from OPF and other sources: 1,500,000 USD
  - Counter-part funding: 500,000,000 VND (equivalent of 25,000 USD (in cash or in kind))
11. **ODA Provision Modality:** Grant

## **B. DETAILED PROJECT OUTLINE**

### **I. Project Context and Justification**

#### **1.a. Background, strategy and plan on socio-economic development in Vietnam**

The human development and people-centered development concepts have long been recognized in Viet Nam. Its key elements are included in the Vietnamese Constitution<sup>1</sup>, as well as in the national Socio-Economic Development Plans and Strategies in 2001-2010 and 2011-2020. The targets on improving human development indexes have been set side-by-side with other social and economic development targets and indicators in Viet Nam's Socio-Economic Development Strategies (SEDS) and Plans (SEDP) over the last decades. The SEDS (2011-2020) and SEDP (2011-2015) set the improvement in Viet Nam's HDI ranking and value as an important target; and 2010 Viet Nam's MDG report cites positive change in the Gender Development Index as a sign of progress towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.

The high political commitment to HD has played a key role in Vietnam's steady improvement in HDI over the past decades, especially during the early period of '*Doi Moi*'. Viet Nam's HDI increased from 0.407 in 1990 to 0.505 in 2000, and 0.572 in 2010<sup>2</sup>. Despite the improvements, however, Viet Nam is still in the lower end of the Medium Human Development group (its HDI ranked 113/162 in 2010), and the HDI improvement has slowed over the past decade<sup>3</sup>, according to the Human Development Report 2010. In addition, as the 2001 National Human Development Report (NHDR) and 2011 NHDR point out that, despite improvements in human development, the poorest provinces were still not able to catch up with the better-off provinces and the disparity between some regions and population groups (especially between Kinh/ Hoa and Ethnic minority in human development has been even widened).

Recognizing the trends and the imbalance between economic growth and social development, the SEDS 2011-2020 emphasizes much more the sustainability and quality of growth and reaffirms the human development approach. It states the commitment of the Government of Viet Nam to: "*Harmonize economic growth with social progress and equity;*

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<sup>1</sup> The 1992 Constitution, revised in 2001, sets out the State's responsibility to ensure and constantly foster "the people's rights as masters in all spheres, and realize the targets of building a prosperous life for its people, a strong country and an equitable, democratic and civilized society, ensuring the well-being, freedom and happiness of all citizens as well as conditions for their all-round development".

<sup>2</sup> These are the revised HDI taken from the 2010 Human Development Report. In this Report, HDI for the past years were recalculated using a revised formula. See more in 2010 Human Development Report.

<sup>3</sup> The average annual HDI growth rate was 1.24% over the 2000-2010 period, compared to 1.7% over the 1990-2010 period.

*improve constantly the quality of life for the people, develop vigorously culture, and promote democracy” and to “Enhance capacity and establish mechanisms for the people to exercise adequately their right as the master, especially direct democracy, so as to promote vigorously all creative capabilities and guarantee high-degree consensus in society, generating thereby a driving force for national development.”*

The challenge in the coming years is to realize the SEDS’s commitment to a more balanced and quality growth by applying the “people-centered/human development” approach consistently in formulation and implementation of concrete action plans and policies, taking into account the new challenges the “Middle Income” Viet Nam is facing, as the country deepens its integration into the global economy and as impacts of climate change intensify.

### **1.b. A brief situation of VASS development plan**

The Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS) is an agency under the Government of Vietnam, having the functions of conducting basic studies in social sciences; providing scientific evidence for formation of directions, strategies and policies for fast and sustainable development of the country with socialist orientations; and training high-quality human resource in social sciences, contributing to strengthening social sciences capacity in the country. VASS till present has employed a total staff of over 2000 persons who are working at the Office of VASS, 4 Functional/ Management Departments, 34 research Institutes (in social sciences, human sciences, regional development and international studies) and 7 other not-for-profit administrative units.

VASS orientations for development have been clearly stated in its Comprehensive Development Plan, which was approved by Prime Minister of Vietnam on 11<sup>th</sup> of April 2005, in view of developing VASS to become a strong and prestigious research and training center of the country and the world, contributing to developing Vietnam’s social sciences capable of discovering and projecting the development trends of Vietnam and the world; explaining with quality scientific evidences the theoretical and practical problems on sustainable development with socialist orientations in Vietnam for the goal of building Vietnam to become an industrial country by the year 2020.

In particular, the Decree 53/2008/ND-CP of the Government dated April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2008 has addressed the demand for strengthening VASS function of providing scientific evidences for the Party and State in policy formulation. Besides the function of basic studies, VASS has been requested to conduct studies that are specific, inter-disciplinary and highly practical to serve national development.

In the recent years, many projects and works of important significance to serve policy-making have been carried out by VASS, for example, in drafting Vietnam Human Development Report, Vietnam Poverty Report, 2011-2020 Socio-economic Development Strategy, in leading the implementation of many national programs to provide scientific

evidences and recommendations to Government plans, and in co-organizing policy advisory seminars with the National Assembly...

For better providing scientific foundations for the Party and State in policy-making in context of closer international integration with new challenges, VASS has been requested to enhance its apparatus and capacity, equip researchers with new research methods and projections, as well as new knowledge and skills. VASS key tasks in the short run and in the long run are to enhance the relations and develop regular channels for information exchange with the agencies among the Party, the Government and the National Assembly, for correctly identifying the issues/topics to be studied, strengthen the linkages with research institutions and universities at home and abroad, for sharing and complementing human resources with one another, further mobilizing international assistance to take best advantage of foreign resources and knowledge for successful fulfillment the tasks given.

### **1.c. Necessity of Project Proposal**

Being a middle-income country, Vietnam's priorities have been shifting from quantity to quality, with people-centered development toward sustainable, green and harmony growth. Under such conditions, VASS has placed its priorities on preparing for and ensuring the quality of researchers and trainers in a series of new areas, especially those relevant to human development. VASS has at the same time laid emphasis on strengthening its capacity as advisor and commentator to formulation of people-centered development policy, contributing to achieving the objectives set in 2011-2020 socio-economic development Strategy: *"by the year 2020, Vietnam's HDI to reach the high average group of countries in the world"*.<sup>4</sup> This proposed Project is aimed at helping VASS to: i) effectively enhance its human resource capacity; ii) expand relations with foreign partners that are well-known in the area of policy research with human development approach<sup>5</sup>; iii) carry out studies from the perspective of human development (including the national/country report on human development in the years to come) in order to provide scientific data, information and evidences to serve the making of policies and to tap up the potentiality of human resource in Vietnam; and iv) contribute to bringing human development approach and human development index to become a policy tool at all levels and sectors. It can be said that this proposed Project is completely appropriate to VASS, with effective contributions to realization/ achievement of VASS's strategy, vision, and plans on development in the years to come.

## **2. A brief of relevant programs and projects**

Under the support of the Party and Government, VASS has successfully implemented the following international cooperation projects that are relevant to this Project Proposal:

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<sup>4</sup> Cited from 2011-2020 SEDS Document

<sup>5</sup> Based on VASS efforts over the past years in developing cooperation relations with UNDP Human Development Report Office, Oxford University, IEAP

(i) Project *“Assistance to the 20 year Review of Doi Moi in Viet Nam”*, which was implemented by VASS under UNDP and SIDA (Sweden) sponsors, from late 2005 to Quarter III of 2008.

The main outcome of this Project were: i) high-level roundtable meetings organized; ii) 8 researches conducted and the book *“Some socio-economic issues after 20 years of Doi Moi in Vietnam”* published; iii) Exchanges of experiences through co-edition and printing of researches between Swedish and Vietnamese scientists made; iv) Support for Vietnam Museum of Ethnology in collection and organization of the Exhibition *“Life in Hanoi under the subsidy-based system”*; v) Edition and publication of a catalogue on the Exhibition *“Life in Hanoi under the subsidy-based system”* in English and Vietnamese; vi) Translation and publication of some books on economics, on human development reports which were written by international scientists into Vietnamese; vii) Pilot application of some IT management programs from England - MSP and Prince2 at 6 member institutes of VASS.

The Project was assessed to provide support to policy orientation research from different aspects of *Doi Moi* process in Vietnam; and to provide initial supports to enhance research management capacity. The Project, however, exposed some weaknesses, as related to management of complicated research projects, interests from policy makers to research findings, and research capacity as well as awareness of people-centered research model and human development approach.

The implementation of the Project *“Assistance to the 20 year Review of Doi Moi in Vietnam”* pointed out the necessity to combine the efforts of capacity building in three areas, including research management, human development research and policy-support research so as to make more comprehensive contributions to expanding and enhancing the impacts of social science researches in national policies making. These were the bases for UNDP to provide continuous support to Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences for implementation of a Project entitled ***“Support for Effective Policy Making Through the Development of Scientific Evidence Based Research”***.

(ii) The Project *“Support for Effective Policy Making Through the Development of Scientific Evidence Based Research”* was implemented by VASS under UNDP sponsor, from August 2008 to December 2011.

The Project was aimed at: i) Applying a modern, uniform and well-structured management model for implementation of research projects, based on worldwide recognized programme management standards; ii) Building a network of experts who are capable of conducting high-quality human development research projects, including the drafting of Vietnam National Human Development Report; iii) Enhancing the capacity of VASS researchers through creation and dissemination of scientific evidences for policy formulation at all government levels.

In reply to these objectives, the Project was divided into three components: Human

Development; Research Management; and Policy Support.

Practical results were made from project implementation: Completion of 2011 Human Development Report entitled with “Social services for human development”; Sum-up report on human development for 10 years (2001-2010) of Vietnam; Assistance to researchers to take part in training courses on human development methods at home and abroad; 1 field-trip to Brazil was organized in sharing of experiences on human development report-making and use of HDI in budget allocation and policy making; support for Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences to set up relations with UNDP Human Development Report Office; recommendations to VASS for building Scientific Management Regulation; dialogues and policy making consultancy held between VASS and UNDP experts; pilot implementation of IT infrastructure to serve communication; training courses provided to participants to enhance their writing skills to serve policy making...

Through the training courses and workshops, scientific seminars/ conferences, the Project contributed to building for VASS a group of key researchers, who were equipped with key knowledge, methods and approaches in accordance to world standards on human studies, research management and policy communication. In particular, the *2011 Human Development Report “Social Services for Human Development”* provided with information to timely serve National Assembly meetings, with specific analyses for identifying the problems to be addressed for sustainable and equitable development intensification.

The results of this Project reaffirm the necessity and importance of continuous studies on human development; increase of knowledge and awareness of human development and the role of people-centered approach in policy making; training of human development for researchers, graduate students and policy-makers; technological transfer for human development report-making; network of experts on human development, enhancing international cooperation relations for research experiences sharing and application of human development research outcomes, strengthening debates on human development policies, and applying information technology in dissemination of knowledge and documents, and discussion support.

This proposed Project will learn from the experiences and use the outcome of the Project “*Support for Effective Policy Making Through the Development of Scientific Evidence Based Research*” for successful implementation.

### **3. Lessons learned from national cooperation projects with UNDP:**

Through the implementation of cooperation projects with the UNDP, the following lessons can be withdrawn for successful implementation of this Project Proposal:

- (a) Support for policy making capacity and for policy researches must be closely connected with the demands from the reality and from policy makers in Vietnam. There should have appropriate mechanisms to assure project outputs (for enhancing

policy research capacity and results from these policy researches) will be used as input for development policy making in Vietnam. Only by doing so could the project make effective contributions to improving development policy through which to achieve the goal of Vietnam “*by 2020, Vietnam’s Human Development Index will reach the high average level of the world*”. For this goal, VASS should continue: i) strengthening its close relationships with policy making/ policy supervisory agencies of the Party, Government and National Assembly; ii) improving the mechanisms/ creating conditions for attracting policy makers to involve in identifying the demands and topics for policy research; iii) identifying appropriate channels (such as policy forums, policy debates and other policy support channels) to share/disseminate the research findings to policy makers, making them useful to policy formulation.

(b) For effective use of support from the Project to serve research and policy consultancy, VASS must build for its own sound research plans, policy debates and support, as the foundations for designing plans to use Project support for policy research.

(c) Support for enhancing capacity must stick with VASS’s functions and tasks, ensuring that support is appropriate and satisfactory to VASS demands, ensuring that support will be used in practice, institutionalized in VASS mechanism and organizational structure and, thus, will be sustainable, make effective and long-term contribution to improving human development policy-making capacity. For this target, positive efforts will be made by VASS to enhance its capacity, as the base to take advantage of UNDP’s support for capacity enhancement.

(d) Some lessons learned for effective project management include: (i) There should reach strong consensus right at the stage of project designing (and in project implementation) among stakeholders, in terms of viewpoint, concept, ideas, output, impact, and especially “the value added” from the project support and the best/ most feasible options for gaining these expected results; (ii) strong commitments from VASS to provide timely and suitable support, in particular in using Project results to serve VASS research programmes, policy consultancy, and capacity enhancement; (iii) as an implementing agency, VASS (an umbrella institution having many member research institutes and centers) needs to: (a) identify specific member institute(s) responsible for specific areas covered by the project, with specific actions to ensure specific results of the project, and (b) nominate (recruit) manager(s) of high capacity and knowledge; (iv) foreign experts/ advisers who are recruited must have deep understanding of Vietnam, be able to establish close relations/ cooperation with VASS experts for best use of international experience and knowledge; (v) there should have independent and objective mechanism to ensure quality of capacity enhancement actions, and especially for policy research, policy consultancy; (vi) dissemination of research results/ research findings must be continuously and timely right after the

background/ thematic studies are completed; and (vii) close and constant coordination/cooperation among the research institutes/ centers under VASS, between VASS and non-VASS organizations involving in UNDP projects, and other ODA management agencies of the Government of Vietnam. This is an important factor to project value and the best project realization.

#### **4. Major issues to be addressed in this Project Proposal:**

For achieving the goal “by the year 2020, Vietnam’s HDI to reach the high average level of the world”, while Vietnam is now a middle-income country and its priorities are shifting (i) from quantity growth to quality growth; (ii) people as the center of development; (iii) moving toward green, harmonious and sustainable development - many challenges have been arising, including the challenges in research capacity, policy advisory capacity, and human development policy-making capacity. The proposed Project is expected to address the following issues:

(a) The goal “by the year 2020, Vietnam’s HDI will reach the high average level of the world” has been set in Vietnam’s 2011–2020 SEDS and 2011-2015 SEDP. For this goal, the concepts, methods and approaches to human development must be applied closely and consistently in the reviews, assessments and in formation of specific development policies and plans by the Government, ministries and all levels. There has exposed limited awareness of human development concepts as well as limited capacity of policy researchers and policy makers in application of these concepts and methods in policy formulation.

(b) The demand for deep awareness of concepts, approaches and skills in policy research and building is urgent in the short term and in the long term, which requires Vietnam, like other developing countries to (a) build and develop units/centers specialized in human development research and training to serve policy formulation; (b) strengthen cooperation relations between these units with leading research and training organizations in the world; and (c) enhance dissemination / popularization of the latest concepts, definitions and approaches to human development as well as world experience in application of human research findings to policy makers at all levels.

(c) For the goal “by 2020, Vietnam’s HDI to reach the high average level of the world”, as stated in Vietnam’s 2011-2020 SEDS and 2011-2015 SEDP, the quantity and quality of information, database, and evidence-based studies must be enhanced toward human development approach to give strategic policy options aiming at human development as well as to serve policy review, evaluation and building of specific development plans by the Governments, ministries and provinces at all levels. In the meantime (a) for over the last 10 years, Vietnam had only 2 Human Development Reports; (b) few in-depth studies on human development, especially for application of human development methodologies and approaches to serve policy review, assessment



and building...; (c) limited dissemination/ popularization of research findings, human development reports to policy makers at all levels, sectors and provinces is limited; and (d) inadequate, not updated information, database to serve human development studies and human development index observation.

## **5. Target Groups of Project Proposal**

Direct beneficiaries of this proposed Project are VASS's member institutes, centers and researchers, particularly the Institute for Human Studies, Graduate Academy of Social Sciences and researchers who wish to go deeper into human development studies. At the same time, the Project is aimed at strengthening the linkage and capacity sharing with other strategy and policy institutes from different ministries, academic institutions and universities throughout the country. The Project is specially aimed at serving improvement/ deep awareness of concepts, approaches and skills to apply human development research findings in policy formulation by policy makers and policy advisors at all levels, sectors and provinces in Vietnam.

## **II. Rationale for selection of the UNDP**

### **1. Relevance of Project's content and objectives to the mandate and programme priorities of the supporting agency**

Human development and people-centered development are always the No.1 priority of the United Nations in general and of UNDP in particular.

This proposed Project is very practical, as one of the important priority in the One Plan 3 (OP3, 2012-2016) of UNDP and Common Country Programme Document, UNICEF and UNFPA, which was discussed and agreed with the Government of Vietnam. Specifically, this Project will contribute to:

**Outcome of OP3:** "By 2016, the core country organizations will complete building and observing the implementation of people-centered socio-economic development policies toward green development, ensuring the growth quality of a middle-income country"; and **Output target 1.1.2:** "Strategic options for development policies to be identified and reviewed by policy makers in view of comprehensive, equitable and people-centered development".

### **2. Reasons for the selection and comparative advantages of UNDP**

As the long and reliable partner of the Government of Vietnam, UNDP has been accompanying with Vietnam in process of economic renovation, from the stage of reconstruction after the war to transition to market economy with socialist orientation, economic integration, and now entering the stage of development as a middle-income country.

UNDP's neutrality and objectivity have made effective support for Vietnam, especially in the matters related to development policy research and consultancy, enhancing the national competitiveness in development policy formulation. This priority advantage can be seen clearly in UNDP's supports for designing of socio-economic development strategies, macro-economic policies, Project "Assistance to 20 year Review of Doi Moi in Vietnam", poverty reduction policy, public administrative reform, legislative reform, and in making human development reports 2001 and 2011...

UNDP is now focusing its support for policy research and consultancy projects of high quality, contributing to enhancing capacity of research and policy-making, pro-poor policy and institutional development policy, and sharing world experience and knowledge to serve policy formulation and implementation. These are the urgent areas of Vietnam today.

UNDP's comparative advantages are the result of its global network and linkages to have been created, with the sources of advisory/knowledge and international experiences in human development studies, including development capacity, tools, methods on policy research and policy-making on the basis of human development approach.

Capacity strengthening and research products toward human development approach are UNDP's absolute advantage. UNDP has built and provided support for human development approach and extended its experience for decades of development. One unique Unit has been set by UNDP, called the Office of Human Development Report<sup>6</sup> for organizing research, drafting or supporting the drafting of country human development reports and enhancing human development research capacity for researchers in the world. UNDP's leading experts, knowledge and experience are the important sources to help countries successfully implement activities of research doing, policy advisory and research capacity strengthening.

UNDP's priority has been so far also given to publication of Country Human Development Report of Vietnam, building capacity for researchers in all aspects of the human development model, such as basic concepts, methods and most important, sharing scientific messages and evidences to policy makers, contributing to creating strong foundations for policy making.

Based on UNDP's comparative advantages in assistance to developing South-South partnerships, through this Project, UNDP will continue supporting VASS to expand its relations with partners in research and training. For example, a partnership has been established between VASS with the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA) in Brazil. UNDP, with its very large network, can provide efficient assistance to VASS to develop and strengthen the existing relations and to build new ones in human development research and training.

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<sup>6</sup> For more information, see <http://hdr.undp.org/en/contacts/about/>

### **3. Conditions required by UNDP**

No other terms and conditions are applied by UNDP to the Project, except for the current the Harmonized Program and Project Management Guidelines (HPPMG) which were agreed between Vietnam and the UNDP.

## **III. Objectives and major indicators of the proposed Project**

### **Long-term objective**

The long-term objective of this proposed Project is to contribute to achieving the goal of “*Vietnam’s HDI to reach the high average level of the world by the year 2020*”, as stated in Vietnam’s 2011-2020 SEDS.

The Project will contribute to achieving *Outcome 1.1.* of the OP3: “By 2016, the core country organizations will complete building and observing the implementation of people-centered socio-economic development policies toward green development, ensuring the growth quality of a middle-income country”; and *Output 1.1.2:* “Strategic options for development policies to be identified and reviewed by policy makers in view of comprehensive, equitable and people-centered development”.

### **Short-term objectives:**

Output Target 1: Strategic policy options must base on human development vision, which is identified and supported by a series of background/thematic studies with strong scientific and quality evidences, and periodically published human development reports.

#### *Indicators:*

- 1.1 Number and quality of background thematic papers on topics identified as related to each NHDR overall subject and number of NHDR published.
- 1.2 Number and quality (participation of high-ranking policy makers and policy researchers, clear policy messages, depth and relevance of policy discussions) of policy dialogues/ debates and policy advocacy activities conducted based on the background studies and NHDRs.
- 1.3 Number and relevance (to Vietnam’s development issues/ agenda) of strategic policy options defined based on findings and recommendations of background studies and NHDRs and the degree to which the options are considered and used by policy makers in Vietnam in formulating development policies.

*Baselines:* Two NHDRs were published in 2001 and 2011, and 11 background research papers were produced for the 2011 NHDR.

Output Target 2: HD concept awareness increased and understanding deepened among policy makers and researchers in Vietnam. HD courses are institutionalized at VASS to

increase the abilities and skills in applying HD concepts and methodologies into policy making and assessment.

*Indicators:*

- 2.1 Number of VASS training courses on Human Development (concepts, methodologies and skills for applying HD concept) in policy research and making conducted, participants and level of their satisfaction
- 2.2 Number of participants in the above training courses (with at least 30% being women).
- 2.3 Number of applications of newly-obtained knowledge and skills by the course participants in policy research/assessments and policy making.

*Baselines:* the Human Development Major/Faculty under Graduate Academy of Social Sciences has been established, yet no courses on HD have been conducted so far. Only several VASS staff obtained hand-on experience in HD research. The concept of HD has been introduced to Vietnam but not used in policy research and policy advocacy. (*See more at Annex: Results and Resources Framework of Project*).

#### **IV. Main expected results, actions and estimated budget**

Below are the main results and actions of Project and estimated budget (see more at Appendix: Framework Outcome and Resources of Project, attached with the Project Proposal):

**(1) In Output Target 1:** Human development concept applied and advocated in strategic policy options, which are based on periodical National Human Development Reports NHDR and background research papers.

**Activity Result 1 – AR1:** Subject(s)/theme(s) for NHDR 2013, 2015 and 2017 identified and well elaborated in participatory and consultative manner

*Actions:*

- 1.1. Organize brainstorming stakeholders' workshops/ meetings organized to identify specific themes/ subjects of each NHDR, NHDR concept notes and detailed outlines.
- 1.2. Consultations with the UNDP Regional Center and UNDP HQs HDRO on the NHDR themes, concept notes and detailed outlines
- 1.3. Developing annotated concept notes finalized for NHDR with the agreed/selected theme(s).
- 1.4. Finalizing detailed outlines of 2013, 2015 and 2017 NHDR.

**AR2:** (2013, 2015 and 2017) NHDR related background/ thematic studies identified and well elaborated.

*Actions:*

- 2.1. Organize brainstorming stakeholders'/ technical workshops/ meetings to identify topics of related background/ thematic studies and the detailed concept notes/ TORs of background/ thematic studies.
- 2.2. Consultations with the UNDP Regional Center and UNDP HQs HDRO on the topics/detailed concept notes/TORs of related background/thematic studies.
- 2.3. Developing and approving list of topics of background/thematic studies.
- 2.4. Developing and finalizing outlines/TORs.

**AR3:** 2013, 2015 and 2017 NHDR related background/ thematic studies commissioned and conducted.

*Actions:*

- 3.1. Call for expressions of interest and making Long Term Arrangements for consultancy services for conducting NHDR related background/ thematic studies called for paper process and procured.
- 3.2. Selecting (from LTAs) best qualified research institutions/ consultants selected to conduct NHDR related specific background/ thematic studies.
- 3.3. Developing/establishing Joint UNDP-VASS mechanism for quality assurance for NHDR and related background/ thematic studies established
- 3.4. *Organizing technical training/workshops for national consultancy institutions (engaged in LTAs and selected for conducting for writers of background studies for NHDR) on HD concepts and methodologies organized.*
- 3.5. Organizing technical workshops held for quality assurance of the background studies, *with participation of international and national senior experts, from and outside UNDP and VASS.*
- 3.6. Preparing policy briefs and conducting prepared and policy dialogues conducted based on the results of background studies.

**AR4:** HD related indexes calculated and used for NHDRs, database of HD related indexes maintained/disseminated through websites of VASS and GSO and UN/UNDP.

*Actions:*

- 4.1. Establishing HD Indexes team established (experts from GSO, VASS and UNDP) and the team collecting and calculating HD Index Part in NHDRs (with remote support from a focal point in HDRO and RO) to take care of Index Part in NHDRs.
- 4.2. Organizing HD Indexes introduction sessions held (whenever HDRO updates, or in combination with training courses in Output Target 2, to researchers and media).

4.3. Providing Special training on indexes calculation and use/interpretation provided to VASS, GSO and other interested institutions staff (This action is on-the-job training when NHDR is produced).

**AR5:** 2013 and 2015 NHDR published.

*Actions:*

5.1. Recruitment of Senior International Technical Consultant recruited and the SITC to (i) supports the topic identification and elaboration as in AR1 and AR2, (ii) guides the background papers writing, and (iii) writes the main body/narrative report.

5.2. Conducting Peer reviews conducted (by UNDP Policy Advisors, UNDP international experts from regional center and HDRO and national senior researchers of VASS and other relevant policy agencies).

5.3. Final editing the NHDR assured.

5.4. NHDR Printing and disseminating NHDRs.

**AR6:** NHDR related policy dialogues/debates and advocacy activities (including based on the background/ thematic studies) planned and conducted.

*Actions:*

6.1. Conducting policy dialogues conducted on regular basis at VASS (could be as NHDR/HDR/background studies related stand-alone, or integrated with other relevant policy dialogues organized by VASS whenever applicable).

6.2. VASS/GSO HD experts attending sent to outside VASS important national policy dialogues, workshops to present and advocate for relevant HD concept application.

**AR7:** Lessons learned of producing NHDRs and conducting related policy dialogues / debates and advocacy drawn.

*Actions:*

7.1. Conducting Mid-term independent review of the process of producing NHDRs, conducting related policy dialogues/debates and advocacy, conducted in 2014.

7.2. Organize lesson learned sessions held after each NHDR release.

**AR8:** Plan for producing future (post 2016) NHDR prepared, based on the lessons learned, and adopted.

8.1. Final stocktaking and future planning workshop held

8.2. Developing and approving future (post 216) NHDR plan

**Estimated Budget for Output Target 1: US\$ 1,387,800**

(2) **In Output Target 2:** HD concept awareness increased and understanding deepened among policy makers and researchers in Vietnam. HD courses are institutionalized at VASS to increase the abilities and skills in applying HD concepts and methodologies into policy making and assessment.

**AR1:** VASS training courses on HD in policy research and making institutionalized and operational at Graduate Academy of Social Sciences (GASS).

*Actions:*

- 1.1. Conducting Survey of level of understanding and need assessment conducted for targeted groups (such as Post graduate students, policy researchers and policy makers)
- 1.2. Organizing study trips for developing curriculum, learning experience in conducting training of HD in other countries;
- 1.3. Designing HD training course designed with support from int. experts from Oxford, IPEA and/or by another center in the world having delivered similar courses.
- 1.4. Developing curriculum developed (with support from above institutions)
- 1.5. Organizing consultative sessions held on the design and curriculum structure and criteria of training programs
- 1.6. Trainers training including refresher training as necessary conducted and re-defined based on training assessments (in the country and overseas e.g. at Oxford).
- 1.7. Delivering training courses to targeted groups of participants on pilot basis and post course assessment conducted<sup>7</sup>;
- 1.8. Conducting regular training courses on HD conducted at VASS Academy of Social Sciences<sup>8</sup>;
- 1.9. Assessing and updating curriculum and training materials are assessed and updated periodically.

**AR2:** Partnerships between VASS and international HD research/training institutions established and functional (to support VASS work on HD training, research and HD promotion in Viet Nam).

*Actions:*

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<sup>7</sup> The project will cover the costs of (i) int. trainers/facilitators; (ii) operational costs such as reproduction of teaching and learning materials, refreshments and some allowances for the trainees.

<sup>8</sup> VASS will cover most of the costs (as per the targets), the project will only cover some scholarships for selected policy makers and researchers. The HD course to be offered by VASS (Academy of Social Sciences, Faculty of Human Development) will aim at the target group of post graduate student (as a credit course), policy researchers and makers.

2.1. Assigning VASS focal point for partnership building and developing partnership plan.

2.2. Making initial contacts of VASS with potential int. HD institutions, developing partnership MOUs.

2.3. UNDP providing further information, advices and facilitation services in partnership development.

2.4. International HD experts/ practitioners participating thematic events for partnership strengthening.

2.5. Organizing a HD study tours for high ranking delegations.

**AR3:** National network of HD researchers and practitioners established and coordinated by VASS.

3.1. Activating the e-forum on VASS website for HD dialogues and debates.

3.2. Establishing and maintaining and fostering HD researchers, advisors and trainers.

**AR4:** VASS plan for promoting HD in policy research and making in Viet Nam defined and implemented (policy research/ review and/or policy formulation applied the HD concepts, methodologies and skills and HD promotion events for policy makers in Viet Nam).

*Actions:*

4.1. Developing, reviewing and updating regularly the action plans made, regularly reviewed and updated.

4.2. UNDP-project supports (some additional technical and financial support) the implementation of the annually planned policy research/ review and/or policy formulation applied the HD by trained researchers and policy makers.

4.3. UNDP-project supports (technical and some financial assistance to event design and implementation) the implementation of the annually planned HD promotion events.

**AR5:** VASS mid-term and end of cycle stocktaking SEDP (2011-2015) from the HD lens as well as VASS recommendations for strategic options/ directions on people centered, equitable, inclusive and sustainable growth for consideration in formulation of SEDP (2016-2020) produced, disseminated and debated, serving the oversight functions of the Party and National Assembly.

*Actions:*

5.1. Developing detailed plan and/or concept notes for VASS mid-term and end of cycle stocktaking SEDP (2011-2015) from the HD lens.



5.2. Defining the ‘building blocks’ defined (mainly from existing and few new/ additional research) of VASS mid-term and end of cycle stocktaking SEDP (2011-2015) from the HD lens.

5.3. Developing detailed outlines of VASS mid-term and end of cycle stocktaking SEDP (2011-2015) from the HD lens.

5.4. Defining and conducting additional studies that are defined as necessary building blocks of VASS mid-term and end of cycle stocktaking SEDP (2011-2015) from the HD lens.

5.5. Drafting, organizing consultations and finalizing reports of VASS mid-term and end of cycle stocktaking SEDP (2011-2015) from the HD lens as well as VASS recommendations for strategic options/ directions on people centered, equitable, inclusive and sustainable growth for consideration in formulation of SEDP (2016-2020).

5.6. Organizing policy debates/ discussions based on above results and recommendations.

**Estimated budget for Output Target 2: US\$ 755,000**

**Estimated project management costs and GMS: US\$ 357,200**

**Total Budget estimated (excluding counterpart funding) for the Project (US\$)**

<b>Indicative budget</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>Total</b>
International experts	50,000	250,000	300,000	300,000	100,000	1,000,000
Domestic experts	20,000	100,000	150,000	150,000	50,000	470,000
Research, training, seminars, study tours to foreign countries...	20,000	150,000	100,000	150,000	80,000	500,000
Translation, publication,	5,000	30,000	15,000	30,000	10,000	90,000
PMU costs	63,600	63,600	45,600	45,600	45,600	264,000
Other expenses (auditing, bidding, UNDP management costs...)	34,000	34,000	34,000	34,000	20,000	156,000
<b>Total annual costs</b>	<b>230,000</b>	<b>735,000</b>	<b>935,000</b>	<b>830,000</b>	<b>380,000</b>	<b>2,500,000</b>

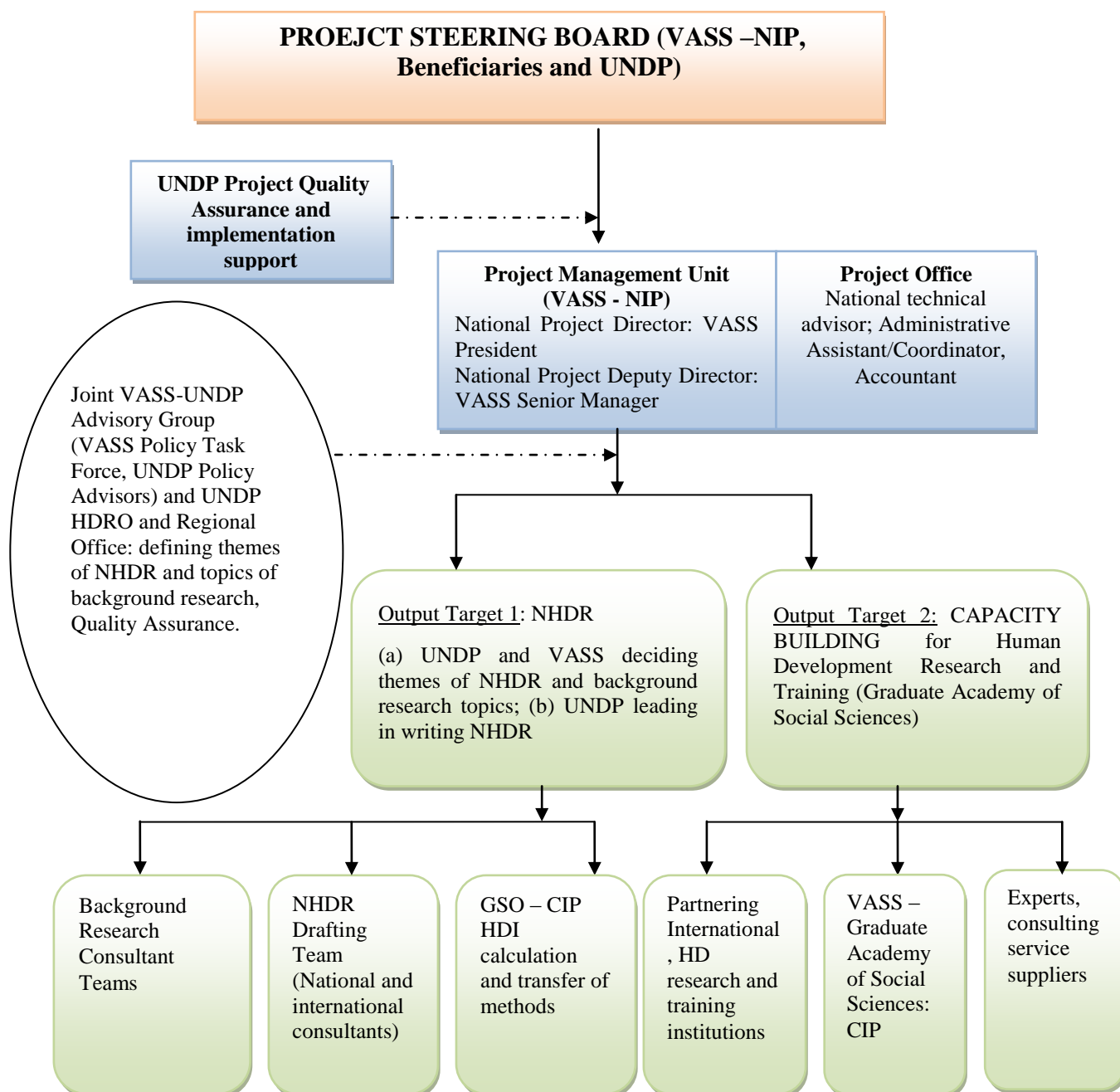
## **V. Funding Arrangement for the proposed Project**

1. For ODA Capital: non-refundable ODA from UNDP: 2,500,000 USD (in which 1,500,000 are deducted from UN One Plan).

2. For capital contributed by VASS: 500,000,000 VND, approximately equal to 25,000 USD extracted from VASS annual budget plan, in accordance to State Budget Law.

## VI. Management and Implementation Arrangements for the Proposed Project

### 1. Organizational Structure



2. Management and implementation arrangement, participatory agencies, responsibility and working mechanism/ relations among the agencies

The Project will be managed and implemented in accordance to (i) “National Implementer”; and (ii) HPPMG and Vietnam laws.

A Project Steering Board will be established, headed by President of VASS and UNDP Country Director, with participation of implementing agencies and project stakeholders. The Project Steering Board is responsible for determining directions for action and identifying annual Objectives/Plans/Budget of the Project.

VASS will play the role as the National Implementing Partner (NIP). VASS is responsible, before the Government of Vietnam and UNDP, for ensuring: (a) achievement of Project objectives and estimated impacts (contributing to improving Vietnam’s development policy toward human development approach); (b) effective Project implementation and management, effective utilization of national and UNDP resources for the Project; (c) well prepared for ready and timely contributions by the country (timely and strictly steering and monitoring of VASS leaders in project implementation and management, appointment of VASS experts to take part in project implementation and management, and other contribution – in kind and in cash) to support project implementation; and (d) sound coordination among related partners (among national organizations, international organizations having cooperation relations with VASS in research and training, with UNDP in particular in project implementation and management).

For realization, in accordance to HPPMG, a Project Management Unit (PMU) will be established by VASS. The President of VASS will be National Project Director, and one manager of VASS will be the Deputy Director. To support Project Director and Deputy Director and PMU, a Project Office will be established, and some positions to be hired, including 01 Project Manager; 01 Administrative Assistant/Coordinator; 01 Accountant and (in the first phase of Project implementation) one technical expert for the first 2 years. In addition, VASS will assign some other staff to support project implementation and management. Work description, professional requirements, responsibility and roles of these basic positions must follow HPPMG and other regulations stated in Circular 03/2007/TT-BKH<sup>9</sup>. To support PMU in purchasing goods and services for NIP, consultants from the Office of Tender Support under Ministry of Investment and Planning will be hired for planning and bidding packages, meeting the Procurement Regulations.

VASS (through the Scientific Management Department) will: (i) together with UNDP co-chair broad consultations for identifying the topics for Vietnam Human Development Reports; (ii) together with UNDP identify the topics, involve in purchasing research services and supervise the quality of the background/thematic studies (including data processing, relevant to human development indexes) for serving the drafting of Vietnam Human

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<sup>9</sup> Preferably candidates having working experience with UNDP project following HPPMG management, deep understanding of VASS and UNDP work, understanding of state management and policy planning system, with basic knowledge of project management principles, MSP and PRINCE2, MPI certificate of bidding practice, and familiar with Microsoft Sharepoint.

Development Report, assuring that the background/thematic studies and human development reports of Vietnam (a) to match with issues/contents for development of Vietnam; and (b) to well meet the demands for policy research and advocacy, and to support development policy making of Vietnam in general and of VASS in particular.

In addition, VASS (with support from PMU, Scientific Management Department and some other related institutes) will: (i) lead technical consulting actions, organize technical workshops and consult with related parties to identify specific themes and discuss TORs for thematic studies to serve Human Development Report drafting; (ii) lead the training activities for VASS researchers, as related to HDI indexes calculation; building database and publication. Reviews and/or experiences will be made at the end of every report-making stage, on thematic studies and drafting of Human Development Reports and other activities.

VASS (through its International Cooperation Department, Graduate Academy of Social Sciences) will (i) lead the implementation of actions to strengthen cooperation relations with international organizations in human development research and training, and; (ii) sustain the relations to serve project implementation and human development research and training by VASS.

VASS (as Project leader and implementer) will assign the Graduate Academy of Social Sciences as a co-implementing unit. The Graduate Academy of Social Sciences (under the support of the International Cooperation Department and the PMU) will be responsible for managing and implementing the activities and achieve the results of the Output Target 2, designed in the component/part on human development training; while the Institute of Human Studies (under the support of Scientific Management Department) will be responsible for applying the human development methods and approaches in policy formulation. VASS (with PMU's support) will be responsible for coordinating the participation of international and domestic organizations in this Project implementation.

The General Statistics Office (GSO) will also play the role as a co-implementing agency (through an agreement signed between VASS and GSO), and be responsible for: (i) collecting and processing database on human development to serve the drafting of human development reports within the Project framework; (ii) transferring techniques, methods to measure human development indexes to VASS researchers, and at the same time being invited to give lectures/ teach in the courses on these methods and techniques; (iii) cooperating and supporting VASS to update and publicize human development indexes of Vietnam, including at GSO and VASS websites.

The drafting of Vietnam Human Development Report will be led by the UNDP, as this is a special product of UNDP, which must meet global standards set by the UNDP development report Office. UNDP will be responsible for: (i) together VASS (through a VASS-UNDP joint group of experts on human development report) identifying the topics and contents for every individual human development report and other related thematic studies;

(ii) leading, with VASS participation, the purchase of consulting services for thematic studies and human development reports writing (including international technical experts responsible for drafting the human development report); (iii) together with VASS (through a joint group of consultants on human development report, monitoring the quality of consulting services for human development report drafting and other related thematic studies; (iv) organizing the drafting of human development report with participation of joint experts on human development report) and; (v) strong coordination between UNDP and VASS will be made to organize some events, such as announcement of human development report, policy debates or dialogues... UNDP will be responsible for working with the Regional Office and the Human Development Report Office (HDRO) to encourage their participation in identifying the topics, contents of the human development report and other thematic studies, report drafting and monitoring report quality. The Vietnam UNDP Office will play the role as monitor to project quality and provide support for VASS in project implementation and management if necessary and/or if requested by VASS.

International and domestic services will be provided through an open, transparent and competitive procurement process in accordance to HPPMG regulations for project implementation. Individual(s) or group(s) of experts in the institutes under VASS (excluding individual(s) or group(s) of experts from the Office of VASS and management Departments as supporting Units to VASS leadership, and those involved in TOR drafting and bidding for thematic studies implementation) can involve in bidding, for carrying out thematic studies and other consulting services related. For effective project implementation and time saving, such working contracts as Long Term Agreement (LTA), will be considered for application.

### **3. Mechanism for action plan formulation and budget management**

The mechanism for action plan formulation and budget management (following national modality) must base on HPPMG regulations and UN-EU cost norms. Specifically:

*The annual work plan and budget plan:* (i) The Annual Work Plan and budget will be prepared by the PMU, based on the work plans of the co-implementing agencies and the approved DPO framework; (ii) the draft annual work plans will be sent to UNDP for comments and improvement; (iii) the draft annual work plans will be appraised by a responsible unit, then submitted to Steering Board for approval; (iv) the Annual Work Plan will be signed by VASS and UNDP, and thus, will be the legislative foundation for project implementation of the year.

*The quarterly work plan and budget:* In accordance to HPPMG and UN-EU cost norms, based on the signed annual work plan and estimated work of the co-implementing agencies, PMU will sent its quarterly work plan to UNDP for comments and then be completed for approval by Project Director and UNDP.

The Project will be implemented in accordance to approved quarterly plans. Changes, if any, will be discussed and agreed with UNDP Office before implementation.

### *Financial Management:*

Financial management over project implementation, including the payment/ transfer of cash must follow HPPMG conditions. Financial management capacity will be assessed by VASS right at the beginning of project launching, for determining methods of cash transfer / payment from UNDP to VASS. Based on results and risks evaluations, such methods of cash transfer as: cash in advance by quarter, direct payment and/or payment through a third party... will be applied to all and/or specific activities of the Project. In such evaluations, VASS capacity will be assessed for identifying methods of tender, consulting services for specific activities of the Project. Before assessment, based on VASS previous results of project management and implementation under UNDP finance, methods of quarterly cash in advance and other purchases following HPPMG regulations will be applied.

### *Overseeing and monitoring of project implementation and report-making:*

Observation and monitoring of project implementation and report making will follow HPPMG. The approved Annual Work Plan as well as M&E Framework (with key results, baseline, output indicators, required data and means of data collection, etc.) will serve as the basis for monitoring and assessing the results of the project. The NIP will develop plan for monitoring and evaluation of the project in accordance to HPPMG. Key monitoring, overseeing, evaluation and reporting activities include:

At project result (target/output target) level: (i) Annual Review Meeting of the Project Board, with the annual progress (including: progress toward achieving the project's AWP results based on the set targets, indicators and baseline as well as the quality criteria, updates on issues and risks, implementation and management issues raised and recommended solutions) and financial reports of project to be provided by the NIP; (ii) Joint Review Missions and related reports of GACA-UNDP; (iii) final project review meeting will be conducted just before project end to review the overall achievement of project implementation, fulfillment of outputs/results of the project against its set objectives/targets, impacts or future impacts of the project, its relevance in the country context and management efficiency and lessons learned, the end of project progress report to be prepared and submitted by the IP will be used as input for the final project review meeting.

At project activity result/activity level: quarterly progress and financial reports of the NIP of project; NIP/PMU applying monitoring, overseeing and evaluating the quality of policy research products/TA and CB products of the service providers; quality assurance and monitoring activities of UNDP (including micro-assessments and/or spot checks as well as regular monitoring visits), etc.

### *Auditing:*

Like all other projects sponsored by UNDP following NIM, all the UNDP supports/activities to VASS, the implementing partner, will subject to annual independent auditing or to HACT, in accordance to UNDP regulations<sup>10</sup>.

## **VII. Preliminary analysis of project feasibility**

The proposed Project is mainly aimed at enhancing the capacity of human development research, training and application; drafting of Vietnam Human Development Report in order to attract policy concerns on emerging problems in Vietnam's development process, provide policy advice and recommendations to policy makers of the Party and Government of Vietnam, and at the same time, the solutions for achieving the national target: Vietnam's HDI to reach the high average level of the world by 2020.

The above-said objectives are not only suitable with the functions and tasks of VASS but also with VASS priorities and orientations for development in the mid-term and in the long term. So, VASS will commit to create the best conditions and mobilize to the maximum its sources for successful implementation of the project. VASS has till present employed a staff of over 2000 persons, among them over 1000 researchers, who are working at the Office of VASS, 4 functional/management departments, 34 research institutes (in social sciences, human sciences, international studies and regional development) and 7 other administrative not-for-profit organizations. In particular, the Institute of Human Studies and Graduate Academy of Social Sciences under VASS – the main stakeholders of the project to strengthen human development research capacity for VASS and Vietnam in general in the long run, bringing human development approach to become sustainable and to serve well the goal of sustainable and equitable development in Vietnam.

Through the implementation of Projects “*Assistance to the 20 year Review of Doi Moi in Vietnam*” (2005-2008) and “*Support for Effective Policy Making Through the Development of Scientific Evidence Based Research*” (2008-2011), VASS has had a core group of experts, developed relations with UNDP Human Development Report Office, established a mechanism for data provision and processing with GSO, and gained a lot of experience in communication to serve policy research..., creating favorable conditions for the coming activities of this Project Proposal.

VASS has developed close partnerships and experienced coordination with UNDP for implementation of large international cooperation projects. This proposed Project is once more opportunity for the two parties to develop the fine cooperation relations and tap up the strengths for the sake of development of Vietnam.

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<sup>10</sup> Depending on implementation of One UN HACT, auditing intervals can be made for all UN supports to VASS; and/or instead of auditing, HACT-based auditing mechanism will be applied by NIM.

In particular, as a governmental organization, VASS has the function of providing policy recommendations to the Party, Government, National Assembly and local governments as well. The strong relations between VASS and policy-making agencies will be the base for VASS to identify correct requirements for policy advice and scientific evidence for policy making by the Party and the Government.

### **Risks and Solutions for Risks Management**

<b>Risks</b>	<b>Possibility</b>	<b>Solutions for Risks Management</b>
Methods, approaches and training programs in human development are relatively new in Vietnam, which may need time to be officially accepted.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strengthening communication, dissemination and policy discussion based on human development studies and approaches.</li> <li>- VASS's commitment to put the training program in human development into official program of the Graduate Academy of Social Sciences (GASS).</li> </ul>
The Faculty of Human Development is planned to be established by GASS, yet its apparatus has not yet been complete so far.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VASS to facilitate the establishment of apparatus in accordance to plan.</li> </ul>
Application of enhanced capacity and studies/reports on human development into development policy making may not reach high consensus and practicality.	Medium	<p>Strengthening communication, encouragement and policy discussion based on human development-based studies, including training provided to policy makers, in terms of human development methods and approaches.</p> <p>Assuring agreement between human development themes and thematic studies with problems and requirements for policy making in Vietnam.</p> <p>Pilot applications of human development methods and approaches in specific research and policy advice.</p>
Lack of sound coordination between VASS and non-VASS units, between VASS and UNDP, ODA management agencies of Vietnam and international organizations in human development research and training.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- VASS to assign persons responsible for coordinating and offering specific mechanisms for strengthening participation, exchanges and dialogues between/among related agencies.</li> <li>- VASS to determine specific responsibilities and mechanisms of co-implementing agencies and project management units.</li> </ul>



## **VIII. Preliminary Analysis of Project's Benefits**

*Direct benefits of the Project on VASS:* Thanks to activities of training, seminar organization, study tours at home and abroad, study practice... VASS will have conditions to continue enhancing research capacity (quantitative and qualitative) toward human-centered approach.

Through process of National Human Development Report Drafting, VASS will be able to provide scientific evidences and policy recommendations to policy makers, contributing to fulfilling the tasks entrusted by the Party and Government of Vietnam.

Through Project implementation, VASS's network of collaborators will be further expanded; VASS's reputation will be strengthened, which in turn will create conditions/opportunity for VASS to win more research contracts and to successfully implement Decree 115 of the Government.

*Impacts of the proposed Project on social equity, gender and environment:* Capacity building in the area of social sciences research, in particular in preparation and production of Vietnam Human Development Report, will help provide the Government of Vietnam with reliable and objective information of Vietnam's development context. The provision of evidence-based analyses of social, gender, economic, political and environmental areas will enable the Government to make sound decisions and policies in order to address the equity gaps in these areas.

*Sustainability of the proposed Project:* The sustainability of the proposed Project lies within its comprehensive approach to capacity building through the implementation of three components/ groups of work. The proposed Project will develop capacity in the direction of combining learning with practice, accruing knowledge and experience to build framework training programs and methods on human development researchers/experts. The Project will promote long-term and sustainable approach to expanding the role of social science research on policy development in Vietnam.

*Hanoi, ....., 2012*

**PRESIDENT**

**VIETNAM ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**Nguyen Xuan Thang**