



Viet Nam Farmer's Union

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Report on promotion and protection of human rights in Viet Nam under the 3rd cycle of Universal Periodic Review of the United Nations' Human Rights Council

I. Introduction to the Viet Nam Farmer's Union

The Viet Nam Farmer's Union (VFU) is an political-social organization for the farmer class. VFU, formerly the Red Farmer's Union, was established on October 14, 1930. The Viet Nam Farmer's Union is the center and the core element of the farmer movement and the new rural building programme.

The Union's purpose is to unite farmers, build a strong farmer class in all aspects with a view to ensuring industrialization and the modernization of agriculture and rural areas. VFU gradually continues to reform in terms of working agenda and operation in order to build a stronger Union, enhance representativeness, promote the right to ownership, protect the legitimate rights and interests of members and farmers.

The Viet Nam Farmer's Union has the following functions and tasks:

Function

- Gathering, mobilizing and educating members, farmers to promote their right to ownership, enhance capacities in all aspects.
- Representing the farmer class to participate in the development of the country.

- Protecting the legitimate rights and interests of farmers; organizing service activities to support farmers in production, business activities and daily livelihood.

Mission

- Informing members and farmers on the implementation of policies and laws of the State as well as resolutions of the Union.

- Supporting farmers' participation in the new rural building programme as well as in the country's socio-economic, cultural development.

- Taking care of material and spiritual life of members and farmers; directly implementing and coordinating the implementation of programs and projects on economic, cultural and social development in rural areas; guiding development of collective economic forms in agriculture in rural areas; organizing service activities, consultations, vocational training, science and technology instruction activities to better productivity, living standards and environment protection.

- Gathering large numbers of farmers into the Union to build a strong Union organization in all aspects; training staffs to meet the requirements and tasks in order to serve the country's industrialization and modernization goals.

- Engaging in building a transparent and strong government; participating in monitoring and social feedback processes; participating in mechanisms and policies building for the development of agriculture, farmers and rural areas; timely reflecting the aspirations of farmers to the State; protecting the legitimate rights and interests of members and farmers; contributing to building the great people unity bloc, maintaining political security, social order and safety; fighting against bureaucracy, corruption and social evils.

- Expanding external relation activities in line with the state's policies; enhancing cooperation, exchange, experiences learning, scientific and technical advances, promoting Vietnamese agricultural products and culture with farmers organizations, international organizations, governmental and non-governmental organizations in the region and in the world.

II. Achievements in promoting and protecting human rights in the Union's system

In order to protect the legitimate rights and interests of members, farmers, the Standing Central Committee of the Union has instructed associations at all levels to organize activities of the Union and the nationwide farmer movements, with results since 2017 as follows:

1. Mobilizing farmers to join the Union's organization:

Building and consolidating the Union has been paid regular attention according to the guidelines and resolutions of the state. The functions, tasks and actual situation of the Union satisfy more and more the requirements of the Union and the farmer movement mission during new situation. All levels of the Union have preliminarily reviewed the implementation of Resolution No. 06-NQ/HNDTW dated 19/7/2010 of the Central Executive Committee of Viet Nam Farmer's Union (Session V) to continue building a strong organization in all levels; the Central Executive Committee issued the Conclusion on the continued implementation of Resolution 06-NQ /HNDTW; develop and implement Project 24 - M/HNDTW, dated 23/6/2016 on building sub-associations, professional associations, up to now, the Union has built 295 pilot models in 62 provinces and cities.

The method of mobilizing members, farmers has been improved with many innovations in terms of diversity, quality, efficiency, linking promotion and advocacy with practical care for farmers interest. All levels are always interested in members development, mobilizing farmers to join the Union, so in the past 5 years 1,950,345 new members has been admitted nationwide, up 5% compared with the target at the 6th Congress Resolution, now the number of members nationwide is 10,207,929.

Solutions to improve members quality was paid attention in terms of political awareness, organization and living, labor production, business services, health and social skills.

2. Ensure human rights through economic and social development movements.

On average, there are 6.2 million households registered for the emulation movement on “Good production and business, together enrich life and sustainable poverty reduction”. Farmer households taking part in this emulation at all levels have helped over 790.000 poor household with agricultural commodities, working days and consumption of product with the estimate value of 15.000 billion VND; created jobs for 11 million labours and lifted 200 farmer household out of poverty.

Implementing the emulation of “Everyone develops the new rural areas”, farmers has voluntarily donated 10.000 billion VND, 29 million working days, 6 million m² of land; repaired and upgraded 847.000km of interior field canals and 678.000 km of countryside roads. VFU branches also communicated and encouraged farmers and members to protect the environment to adapt climate change and has established over 11.000 models to protect the countryside environment.

3. Ensure human rights through communication, education, support and legal advice, including human rights related laws, for farmers

At the moment, legal knowledge of members of VFU and farmers, especially those in remote areas, is limited. Through communication, education, support and legal advice, VFU has helped members and farmers approach laws to satisfy their rightful needs. Farmers were informed, helped to understand policies and law of the State, implemented the important function of VFU is to protect legitimate rights and interests of members and farmers.

VFU branches at all level has trained legal staffs who will communicate and inform laws to members and farmers and serve as mediators to resolve dispute between farmers at grassroots level. VFU branches has informed members and farmers of laws through various ways such as legal information sessions, establishment of “Farmers and law” Club, law study contests, law information handbook...

In the last 2 years, The Central Branch of VFU in coordination with VFU provincial branches has established 5 models of “Farmers’ participation in communication, information and mobilization to implement laws” in Nghe An, Quang Nam, Binh Thuan, Dong Thap, Gia Lai provinces; established and maintained 31 models of “VFU participation in meeting with people, resolving

complaints in accordance with the Regulation on local democracy and supervising and giving critic to society”; established 31 “Farmers and law” club. Every year in “Law day”, every VFU branches throughout the countries use many ways of communication from radios, TVs, banners, articles... to introduce laws to all members and farmers. Members and farmers has responded actively in these activities.

In addition, VFU branches promoted and expanded ways of legal advice for members and farmers as follows: direct advising, advising through documents on demand of members and farmers, through the website of VFU and VFU’s newspaper, mobile legal advice and support to members and farmers in remote areas, areas with ethnic minorities, beneficiaries of social welfare. VFU branches in several provinces and cities such as Lam Dong, Thanh Hoa, Hai Duong, Hung Yen, Vinh Phuc, Ha Noi, Long An, An Giang, Ba Ria – Vung Tau have established Legal advice centers for members, farmers, ethnic minorities, beneficiaries of social welfare.

All these legal communication, education, advice and support of VFUs have raised legal awareness and awareness to obey the laws of members and farmers, protect their legitimate rights and interests in accordance with the 2013 Constitution and laws of Viet Nam.

4. To ensure human rights in the implementation of social welfare and children protection, care and education policies of Vietnam Farmer Union

Over the past years, the Central Branch of VFU has directed the contribution of 17 documents regarding comments on the draft circulars, decrees and decisions of the Government on the implementation of the Law on Children, Law on Safety and Health, Law on Social Insurance, Law on Traffic; Law on Population; Law on Elders; Law on Gender equality; Law on Health Insurance and poverty reduction issues....

VFU has actively implemented social welfare and child protection, care and education policies. The results are as follows:

- Regarding social security and safety, 55 training courses, 5 contests and 5 seminars were organized. 5 traffic safety models were implemented for 7,250 farmers in 15 provinces.

- Regarding job creation and job training, by 2017, the national fund for employment managed by the VFU is **VND 66,940,000,000** and is being loaned to 62/63 provinces, with 485 projects being implemented, creating jobs for 4,246 unemployed labor in rural areas.

- On social insurance - Health insurance has organized 3 contests, 11 conferences on social insurance policy, health insurance with farmers in 12 provinces.

- Regarding health care promotion program, the 9th round of the Global Fund for Tuberculosis Control was organized at the VFU branches in 17 provinces and cities.

- Regarding gender equality, more than 200 training courses, conferences, forums, exchanges of information in the form of seminars on gender equality and domestic violence prevention were held to raise capacity for about 41,340 grassroots cadres, members of the farmers in 30 provinces and cities.

- Regarding health, 60 training courses have been organized in the fields of communications or discussions on protection, care and improvement of people's health; clean water and rural clean water; tobacco harm prevention; population; Tuberculosis prevention for 10,840 grassroots cadres, members of farmers in 13 provinces and cities.

- Regarding child protection and care, the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs has worked out a plan for its operation in 2018; contributing comments to the draft policy on swimming skills for children; coordinating the development of an interdisciplinary coordination plan on child drowning prevention for the period 2017-2021, and establishing 15 communication models of "responsible father".

At the local level, the Central VFU Committee has directed the VFU branches in local provinces and cities to actively implement the Law on Children through communication and mobilization of peasants to implement the care and education

of children; prevention of injury, drowning; the "Action Month for Children" which handed out scholarships, books, bicycles, donated vegetable gardens, "meat meals bringing children to school" and provide support for thousands of children with difficulties (amounting to billions of VND).

The VFU has actively mobilized its members and farmers to contribute to the "Day for the poor" fundraising and assisted over 320,000 farmer households with difficulties in breeding, capital and agricultural materials, labor with total fund of over 12,000 billion VND to help them overcome poverty.

5. The leadership, policies and activities to protect the legitimate rights and interests of religious and ethnic minorities people

The Central Standing Committee of the VFU issued Decision No. 07- NQ / HND dated October 15, 2005 (General Session IV) on "Vietnam Farmers Association's participation in socio-economic development in rural areas with Ethnic minorities and mountainous areas with special difficulties "; and advised the Standing Committee and Executive Committee to pass Resolution No. 06-NQ/HND dated December 26, 2005 on "The organization's work and farmer's movement in religious areas". After 5 years of implementing the two resolutions, the Central Committee of VFU held a review and issued Conclusion No. 123 and 124-KL/HNDTW on February 23rd 2011 on continued implementation of Resolution 06 and 07 on ethnic and religious affairs.

In order to implement the Resolution and Conclusions No. 123 and 124 effectively, the Standing Committee of VFU signed the Coordination Program No. 951/CTPH-HNDTW-UBDT with the Government Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs. At the same time, VFU signed the cooperation program No. 47-CTPH/HND-BTGCP with the Government Committee for Religious Affairs on "Education and mobilization of farmers in implementing the guidelines and policies of the Government in connection with economic-socio-cultural development for the period 2017-2022 ".

II. Proposals and recommendations

1. VFU recommends the Government to intensify the training and fostering of knowledge on public relations of ethnic and religious affairs for officials at all

levels of the Union. At the same time, we recommend the Government to consider and promulgate policies towards officials working in people mobilization as well as officials working in public security and order at grassroots level.

2. VFU recommends the Government to pay attention to VFU's operation, especially with regards to the the key cadres of the VFU at all levels so that they are qualified and capable of leading, directing and organizing the implementation of the Association's activities and the farmer movement in the new era of international integration.