

Operational Plan 2011-2015

DFID VIETNAM

May 2011

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1) Introduction

- The UK Government is determined to help reduce the inequalities of opportunity we see around the world today. We believe that promoting global prosperity is both a moral duty and in the UK's national interest. Aid is only ever a means to an end, never an end in itself. It is wealth creation and sustainable growth that will help people to lift themselves out of poverty.
- In May 2010, the International Development Secretary, Andrew Mitchell, commissioned the Bilateral Aid Review to take a comprehensive and ambitious look at the countries in which DFID works through our direct country and regional programmes. The review focussed on the best ways for the UK to tackle extreme poverty, ensuring that we make the greatest impact with every pound we spend. In parallel, through the Multilateral Aid Review, DFID assessed how effective the international organisations we fund are at tackling poverty.
- On the 1st March 2011, the key outcomes of the reviews were announced, including the results that UK aid will deliver for the world's poorest people over the next four years. The Bilateral Aid Review has refocused the aid programme in fewer countries so that we can target our support where it will make the biggest difference and where the need is greatest. The Multilateral Aid Review findings enable us to put more money behind effective international organisations which are critical to delivering the UK's development priorities. In addition the independent Humanitarian Emergency Response Review looked at how the UK can build on its strengths in responding impartially to humanitarian needs and help ensure future disaster responses can be better prepared and coordinated.
- DFID is committed to being a global leader on transparency. In the current financial climate, we have a particular duty to show that we are achieving value for every pound of UK taxpayers' money that we spend on development. Results, transparency and accountability are our watchwords and guide everything we do. DFID regards transparency as fundamental to improving its accountability to UK citizens and to improving accountability to citizens in the countries in which it works. Transparency will also help us achieve more value for money in the programmes we deliver and will improve the effectiveness of aid in reducing poverty.
- The UK Aid Transparency Guarantee commits DFID to making our aid fully transparent to citizens in both the UK and developing countries. As part of this commitment we are publishing Operational Plans for country programmes. The Operational Plans set out the vision, priorities and results that will be delivered in each of our country programmes.
- We will concentrate our efforts on supporting achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, creating wealth in poor countries, strengthening their governance and security and tackling climate change. The prize, in doing so, is huge: a better life for millions of people, and a safer, more prosperous world.

2) Context

Vietnam has developed rapidly over the last two decades, following successful economic reforms since the 1980s. Consistent high rates of growth propelled the country to middle-income status in 2010. Poverty has reduced significantly, from 64% in 1995 to 21% in 2008. Most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – particularly in health and education – are achieved or within reach. At the same time, Vietnam has started asserting itself as a more prominent player in global affairs, e.g. as chair of The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

But some significant development challenges remain. 18 million people live below \$1.25 a day and over half of ethnic minority people are poor (7 million). The MDG target for HIV and AIDS is off track and the target for sanitation could be missed. A sizable part of the population – mainly ethnic minority and other vulnerable groups – risk stagnating in poverty without access to basic services. Climate change is a real threat: Vietnam is in the top five countries most affected by sea level rise. Corruption is systemic and there has been limited progress in tackling it, despite some high-profile steps taken by the Government. Mechanisms for accountability are limited, with a restrictive environment that makes it difficult for citizens to challenge the Government or obtain access to information. Overall, there is a need to strengthen the Government's implementation capacity and its ability to source and produce policy advice to support reforms that will be increasingly complex.

As regards women and girls, Vietnam has led the way in several areas. As many girls as boys go to primary school, and the share of women in Parliament is among the highest in the world. But other areas, such as wider empowerment of women and tackling domestic violence, still require much more attention.

The Government of Vietnam has adopted its ten-year vision (Socio-Economic Development Strategy or SEDS, to 2020) and will endorse its five-year plan, which is equivalent to a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (Socio-Economic Development Plan or SEDP, 2011-2015) soon. The Government continues to focus its efforts on achieving high growth, which is seen as a prerequisite for generating the large number of jobs (around 1.5 million per annum) that are needed to absorb the increasing population and the migration to urban areas. The Government also emphasises sustainable development, dealing with climate change, and maintaining social equity. In the short term, the Government's priority is on maintaining macroeconomic stability, improving the business environment, providing support to vulnerable groups and poorer regions, and designing a new social protection system.

Vietnam's overall development success and enhanced geopolitical profile is leading to a change in the relationship with its key development partners. While the main multilateral agencies (World Bank and Asian Development Bank) are planning to maintain a large lending portfolio in Vietnam (albeit at less concessional rates), bilateral development partners are gradually changing their approach. Development assistance is increasingly focussing on the remaining challenges: the off-track MDGs and agendas on which progress has been more limited (e.g. governance). Several traditional donors already announced that they will phase out development assistance and focus bilateral relations on economic and political matters.

The UK is no exception. Aid has played its part in supporting Vietnam's development success story. While there is a continuing role for aid in the medium term – particularly in terms of loan financing to tackle infrastructure bottlenecks – other forms of financing (e.g. public-private partnerships) and diplomatic collaboration will become more prominent. In recognition of this, the recently signed Strategic Partnership between the UK and Vietnam encompasses a broad range of bilateral interests, of which core poverty reduction agendas around the MDGs are but one strand. DFID's programme in Vietnam is due to end by 2016.

3) Vision

Overview

The UK has been a long-standing development partner to Vietnam as evidenced by the ten year Development Partnership Arrangement (DPA). Given Vietnam's rapid development and recent achievement of middle-income status, the UK will phase out its aid programme when the DPA ends in 2016. This Plan sets out a transition towards graduation. The UK will conclude its MDG programmes in Vietnam by 2013/14 and refocus on the three priority areas of wealth creation, governance and climate change, where we will play a more prominent role. DFID Vietnam will:

- Support achievement of the MDGs, particularly those that Vietnam is struggling with (HIV and AIDS, sanitation) as well as primary education in remote areas. We will support Vietnam to address chronic poverty and protect poverty gains made to date. DFID Vietnam will provide 350,000 poor rural people with toilets, keep the HIV and AIDS prevalence rate below 1%, and increase the share of ethnic minority children completing primary education from 83% to 91%.
- Step up wealth creation programmes by supporting Vietnam to benefit from global trade agreements and achieve a growth path that is more private sector led. DFID Vietnam will do this by building on our two flagship programmes. The first one focuses on market development and fosters business-led projects for the poorest. The second one supports regulatory reform, particularly following Vietnam's World Trade Organisation accession in 2007, in order to improve Vietnam's competitiveness.
- Enhance support on governance and accountability. DFID Vietnam is a leading voice on anti-corruption, supporting both Government (State Audit) and other stakeholders (e.g. Transparency International). We will step up our engagement with, and support for, key accountability institutions like civil society and the National Assembly.
- Address challenges for women and girls, who will benefit from many of our programmes: creating jobs, raising minimum incomes and pensions (social protection), and providing access to education. DFID Vietnam will also support policy reforms (through the UN) to enhance women's empowerment and reduce violence against women.
- Launch a new trilateral partnership on climate change with the Government and the World Bank. DFID Vietnam will enhance the Government's technical expertise and coordination capacity, mainstream climate resilience (in World Bank/ Government projects) and develop a low-carbon strategy.

DFID Vietnam will build on innovative work with the World Bank and the UN to ensure that Vietnam has access to world-class policy advice on poverty and governance issues. Lesson learning will be packaged as a core part of our engagement to share within DFID corporately and with other development partners in Vietnam and other countries the development experience through DFID support in Vietnam, and to communicate best practice by disseminating lessons.

Alignment to DFID and wider UK Government priorities

DFID Vietnam priorities are directly linked to DFID's Business Plan and Structural Reform Plan. They are fully embedded in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) led Strategic Partnership, which underpins the UK-Vietnam bilateral relationship and is the basis for the Embassy's Business Plan. In particular, we will deliver against five Structural Reform Priorities: honour our commitments; wealth creation; governance; women and girls; and climate change. We will work with UK Government colleagues to ensure a strong UK Government role on development issues after DFID exits, and will reduce staff numbers as our programmes decrease and we share services/premises with the FCO (co-location in mid 2013).

What we will stop doing

DFID Vietnam will end general budget support in 2011 and phase out the large MDG programmes by 2013/14. DFID Vietnam will also manage the closure of the remaining Cambodia programmes, which are due to come to an end by 2013.

4) Results

Headline results

Pillar/ Strategic Priority	Indicator	Baseline (including year)	Expected Results (including year)
Poverty, Hunger and Vulnerability	Shortfall relative to the national poverty line/Poverty gap index for ethnic groups.	15.4% (2006)	13% (2016)
Education	Percentage of poorest students completing primary education (as percentage of all students). DFID attributable share of expected result: 14%.	83% (2008)	91% (2015)
Sanitation	Number of additional people/ <i>women</i> in rural areas with access to an improved sanitation facility as a result of DFID support.	0 (2010)/ Women: 0 (2010)	325,000 (2013)/ 164,450 (2013)
HIV/AIDs	Percentage of <i>female</i> sex workers in project provinces reporting consistent condom use with their clients. DFID attributable share of expected result: 56%.	60% (2008)	80% (2012)
	Proportion of injecting drug users using clean clean needles. DFID attributable share of expected result: : 60%.	50% (2006)	70% (2012)
Wealth Creation	Number of additional jobs created	0 (2010)	20,000 (2015)
	Number of additional jobs created for <i>women</i> as a result of DFID support.	0 (2010)	10,000 (2015)
Climate Change DFID climate change programming is subject to the strategy and allocations of the UK's cross-Government International Climate Fund (ICF). ICF priorities are to be agreed by summer 2011	Number of rural poor people/ <i>women</i> benefiting from enhanced climate resilience in rural development and natural resource management.	0 (2010) Women: 0 (2010)	10 million (2016) 5.6 million (2016)
Governance	Percentage of citizens satisfied with government anti-corruption efforts	40% (2010)	50% (2015)
Health - Cambodia	Percentage of births delivered by trained health personnel in health facility. DFID attributable share of expected result: 53%.	39% (2008)	65% (2013)

4) Results (continued)

Evidence supporting results

MDGs:

In the education, HIV and sanitation sectors we rely largely on The Government of Vietnam's administrative reporting, supplemented by periodic surveys. The availability of good evidence underpinning results is high for education, medium for sanitation and low for HIV and AIDS. The quality and reliability of data are one of the areas of DFID and co-financiers' support in all three sectors: to improve the quality of data collection and analysis, and their use. It is anticipated that better quality gender-disaggregated data will gradually become more available over the programme period.

Wealth Creation and Poverty:

DFID support to job creation and livelihood improvement (under M4P project) has strong evidence to support results (especially on jobs created and jobs for women) as we have developed a good Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework, supplemented with Government's increasingly robust and regular statistics on jobs and income. Results of our support to policy improvement on wealth creation has less tangible and attributable evidence but we will conduct more independent evaluations to measure policy impacts and prioritise our support to some focus policy areas to make sure we achieve value for money and deliver measurable results.

Governance:

Data for governance are being improved thanks to DFID and the World Bank's support to the General Statistics Office (GSO). GSO's Governance Module - as part of the Vietnam Household Living Standard Survey - was introduced for the first time in 2010. There are other surveys supported by other donors which are useful for monitoring e.g. the Provincial Competitiveness Survey, Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index. Donors are encouraging Government to adopt these tools systematically for policy making and monitoring processes, and publish governance data transparently. DFID and the Embassy are working with the National Assembly (NA) to conduct a baseline survey on public confidence in the NA in 2011. We have strong evidence on the anti-corruption indicator from the State Inspectorate's bi-annual survey on anti-corruption.

Climate Change:

Impact of climate change on MDG achievements are well documented in Vietnam, especially on fallback to poverty. There is an increasing amount of research on climate change, e.g. Nick Stern's Study on Economic Impact of Climate Change for the region supported by the UK. DFID is developing an M&E framework for climate change interventions. A national M&E framework for the National Target Programme on Climate Change has also been developed. These two M&E frameworks will provide sufficient evidence to monitor impact of our support, especially on rural and poor people's resilience to climate change.

Value for Money (VfM) rationale

DFID support to Vietnam has proved to be good VfM. Independent assessment of the UK/Vietnam Development Partnership Arrangement in June 2010 confirmed DFID support has been effective and shown strong impact in supporting Vietnam to improve service delivery, reduce poverty and undertake important reforms. Going forward there is a strong case for investing through resource transfer in the first three years of the spending round to fight HIV and AIDS and improve sanitation, the two likely off-track MDGs and improve primary education quality and equality to sustain the poverty reduction gains. With smaller resources in the years before exit in 2016, stronger value for money will be achieved through technical assistance to help Vietnam put in place good mechanisms to address emerging issues of accountability and transparency, climate change, and private sector led wealth creation. All these areas are the biggest challenges for Vietnam now. The unit costs for support in these areas are relatively low, while the impacts will be significant.

5) Delivery and Resources

DFID Vietnam's structure, design and means to deliver will evolve as we prepare for graduation in 2016. Our programme spend for Vietnam is £70 million for the next four years compared to £50 million per annum over the last five years, but we will also take on responsibility for £23.5m of programme spend in Cambodia. Our operating costs will reduce gradually, but not proportionately to programme spend as the nature of the programme is changing to staff-intensive policy dialogue and influencing; more technical assistance..

Staff resources and professional skills: From 2011 – 2013, with the management of Cambodia programme added to DFID Vietnam, and before phasing out of budget support and MDG transfers, we will maintain the current structure of two teams: the Programme and Delivery team, with technical skills in Economics, Private Sector Development, Governance, Social Development, Climate Change, Education/HIV and Sanitation; and the Management, Compliance and Communications team. We will progressively cut back corporate functions to prepare for co-location with the Embassy. We will reduce our capacity on education, HIV and sanitation by the end of this period. By mid 2013, DFID Vietnam will be co-located with the Embassy with shared services and a declining pool of management and multi-disciplinary programme staff with stronger influencing skills, before DFID's presence ends in 2016.

Partnerships: Partnerships are key in DFID Vietnam's delivery strategy. We will continue our close relationship with the World Bank in the majority of programmes to maximise our leverage over much larger resources and reduce the administrative burden on DFID. We will actively work with the Bank and most importantly Government counterparts to ensure programmes have sustainable results, particularly on policy changes. This is to mitigate the risk of the Bank focusing more on inputs rather than results as identified by the Multilateral Aid Review. We will also work with the UN on selected issues such as governance, gender and social inclusion. DFID will work closely with the FCO, UKTI, and other UK agencies present in Vietnam, and from the UK to deliver the objectives on governance, trade/growth, and climate change. These form an important part of the UK/Vietnam Strategic Partnership signed in September 2010. We will strengthen partnerships with non-government institutions such as i) private sector to mobilise investment for job creation; ii) the National Assembly and other state bodies to hold Government to account; and iii) civil society including research institutions also to strengthen accountability and transparency.

Aid instruments: DFID Vietnam currently uses a mixture of aid instruments to fit the nature and context of different programmes, but will phase out of budget support and narrow down to Technical Cooperation. During 2011 – 2013 we will deliver the majority of our resources through financial aid (general budget support finishing in 2011, targeted budget support for two MDG programmes, and a key technical assistance programme to promote economic reforms for trade and growth). We use Technical Cooperation for engagements with the Government and NGOs on anti-corruption, climate change and accountability. Technical Cooperation will be the main instrument for DFID in the last three years before exit. DFID staff will involve more deeply in policy dialogue, influencing and networking with wide ranging partners. We (DFID and Embassy) are considering taking on the lead role in the donor community on anti-corruption with the Government.

Graduation: We will ensure DFID's presence in Vietnam in the next five years leaves a strong legacy in MDG terms, and put in place the key mechanisms to address increasingly complex issues of governance, wealth creation, and climate change. We have signalled to the Government that we will see through the Development Partnership Arrangement until 2016. We have also informed the Government and other partners that our financial envelopes will be reduced for the coming five years. We will manage our programme finance tightly to fit the allocated spending profile across the five years. Importantly we will prioritize change management through communications, staff consultation, and staff support and training. This will be key in retaining the relevant pool of staff, and ensuring they remain motivated, continue to deliver effectively, and depart happily from DFID Vietnam. We are taking on the management of the last three MDG programmes in Cambodia (HIV/AIDS, Health and Poverty Monitoring) to ensure their successful completion in 2013.

5) Delivery and Resources (continued)

Programme Spend

Vietnam

Pillar/Strategic priority	2010/2011		2011/12		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		TOTAL 2011-2015		
	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Total £'000
Wealth Creation	8,774		1,980		5,491		4,714		1,947		14,132	0	14,132
Climate Change	634		1,000		1,000		856		1,000		3,856	0	3,856
Governance and Security	3,763		2,220		3,309		2,988		2,450		10,967	0	10,967
Education	2,792		1,200		4,000		2,900		1,603		9,703	0	9,703
HIV/Aids	7,000		3,000		2,000		381				5,381	0	5,381
Water and Sanitation	7,037		1,600		3,200		1,160				5,960	0	5,960
Poverty, Hunger and Vulnerability	20,000		20,000								20,000	0	20,000
TOTAL	50,000	0	31,000	0	19,000	0	13,000	0	7,000	0	70,000	0	70,000

Cambodia

Pillar/Strategic priority	2010/2011		2011/12		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		TOTAL 2011-2015		
	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Resource £'000	Capital £'000	Total £'000
Poverty, Hunger and Vulnerability	540		500		500						1,000	0	1,000
Reproductive, Maternal and Newborn Health	1,305		1,930		930						2,860	0	2,860
Other Health	8,000		8,070		8,070		3,500				19,640		19,640
TOTAL	9,845	0	10,500	0	9,500	0	3,500	0	0	0	23,500	0	23,500

5) Delivery and Resources (continued)

Efficiency savings

Delivering Programme Efficiencies

Category	Details	£'000
Strategic Reprioritisation	(i) Reduce priority areas : Rural Transport project will end in 2011/12 (£7.5m); Poverty Reduction Budget support will end in 2011/12 (£20m); two MDG projects (£5m-£7m per year) will end in 2012/13; (ii) Focusing on good impact interventions within one project (Beyond WTO); (iii) Re-programme unused funds from less well performing projects to achieve better value for money (Making Market works for the poor phase 2) and (iv) Asking donor partners to share a bigger proportion of implementation cost of co-financing projects to save DFID fund for direct programme delivery and get bigger impacts (partnerships with the WB for climate change and governance projects).	
Further examples of Programme efficiency		

	2011/12			2012/13			2013/14			2014/15		
Administrative Cost Savings Initiative	PAY £'000	Pay £'000	Total £'000	PAY £'000	Non Pay £'000	Total £'000	PAY £'000	Non Pay £'000	Total £'000	PAY £'000	Non Pay £'000	Total £'000
Reduction in Consultancy Payments		2	2		2	2		2	2		2	2
Reduction in Travel			0			0			0			0
Reduction in Training			0			0		2	2		2	2
Reduction in Estates & Property Costs			0			0		2	2		10	10
Reduction in costs as a result of Office Restructuring			0	12	2	14	24	4	28	48	8	56
Other Reductions			0			0			0			0
Total	0	2	2	12	4	16	24	10	34	48	22	70

6) Delivering Value for Money (VfM)

Key challenges

(i) Desire for excellence in the concept of VfM among DFID staff and partner agencies; (ii) Fiduciary risks are high; and (iii) different understanding of and levels of attention paid to VfM by different developmental partners e.g. UN, the World Bank, bilateral donors.

Key actions:

DFID Vietnam will develop a DFID Vietnam VfM Strategy by September 2011 to be implemented over the Spending Round. The results champion will lead the formulation with major support from the governance advisers, and the programme team will implement it.

Within DFID and at programme and project levels, to improve VFM and to address challenge (i) above we will:

As regard to skills, systems and structures to improve:

- Harnessing Corporate and Divisional financial improvement strategies and tools to ensure DFID Vietnam has the correct systems, procedures and practice in place to drive continued improvement in financial management
- Deliver comprehensive training on VfM (especially on external controls, VFM indicators, economic and efficiency of VFM) and M&E for advisory and project staff, preferably together with other offices in Asia by April 2012.

As regard to VfM and operating costs:

- Review all aspects of the office operations (internal controls) and agree measures to ensure VfM and improved outcomes: e.g. on-going workforce planning exercise to maximise resources for frontline delivery.
- Implement effectively FCO/DFID co-location plan in 2012/13, aiming for a June 2013 move.
- Continue to monitor closely our consumption of energy, paper, and telephone charges; and apply measures to cut down consumption where possible. Continue to maintain the Green Office certificate award by WWF, which promotes green and economical practices.

As regard to VfM at various stages of project cycle:

- Ensure rigorous economic analysis for new programme interventions at the design phase;
- Apply various tools and measures to ensure better competition and transparency in procurement e.g.. Fair and Transparent Procurement Action Plan, good procurement is one of the success criteria for increased funding for provinces. Include VfM audit in selected programmes.
- Undertake a stock take (and systematic monitoring) of the quality of our log frames as to whether they retain appropriate indicators to monitor systematically VFM (by end of 2011)

To improve external controls and address challenges (ii) and (iii) above we will take the following actions:

- Continue to support Vietnam in its anti-corruption efforts, and in improving transparency and accountability of Government systems. Particularly, continue to support key Government accountability institutions for better VfM e.g. the State Audit, sectoral ministries and provincial procurement policies and capacities, through targeted training and raising awareness.
- Promote wider application of selected best practice VfM interventions in provinces (e.g. harm reduction for HIV prevention, household sanitation improvement through social marketing and behaviour change).
- Improve aid effectiveness for a stronger focus on results by key multilateral agencies who are critical for Vietnam's development given Middle Income Country status: DFID is a leading donor to the World Bank and has been leading on improving it's effectiveness through International Development Association (IDA) monitoring in Vietnam. DFID has significant experience in Vietnam from joint programmes with the World Bank covering 80% of DFID resources, and is a key member of the donor group on UN Delivery As One.
- Establish and lead VfM discussion fora (focusing on audits, unit costs and transparency) with key co-financiers and Government of Vietnam (by Dec 2011 led by the results champion with support from governance advisers). This process will lead to an agreed understanding of how VfM should be considered in Vietnam's context.

7) Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring

How – At national level, DFID with the World Bank have been supporting the GSO on the design, data collection and analysis of the Vietnam House Hold Living Standard Surveys which is a key poverty, social and governance metadata source in Vietnam. At sectoral and project levels, sectoral and project M&E frameworks (supported by donors, agreed and reported by government agencies) are used for monitoring. Besides, each sector and project also defines a list of thematic areas for in-depth studies to monitor its effectiveness, to promote evidence-based policy making and lesson learning. For example, under the Rural Water and Sanitation Programme (RWSP), DFID together with other donors have been supporting the Government to design and collect data to report on rural water and sanitation sector performance, and on important thematic areas such as hand washing. Each project also has a log frame, which tracks programme progress against outcomes and outputs, reporting to DFID at regular intervals.

Who - Primary responsibility for monitoring will fall to programme partners: mainly on government agencies, and with support and collaboration with donors e.g. the World Bank on co-financed programmes. DFID Vietnam lead advisers/programme managers will ensure that funding and necessary actions are taken at the design phase and at key programme milestones.

When – Monitoring at the project level by implementing partners will be continuous. DFID have agreed a regular reporting schedule with programme partners (normally quarterly) and major reporting schedules based on programme key milestones e.g. annual reviews, mid-term reviews. During key reviews, DFID will assess progress against outputs and how this is contributing to the achievement of the outcomes. The office results framework will be reviewed at least every 6 months, and the operational plan reviewed/refreshed annually.

What - We will ensure that the best complement of methodologies (with support from EvD and the Asia Division results advisers) will be used to provide a rigorous and timely qualitative and quantitative information base that informs programme management, enables measurement of programme impact and supports timely policy and management adjustments to ensure programme appropriateness. We will increase our capacity on results (having a shared Evaluation Adviser) to capture and share best practices and lessons learnt from Vietnam's success story in poverty reduction.

Embedded Evaluation

We will develop an evaluation plan, with support from DFID's Evaluation Department (EvD) and the Asia Division results advisers. An independent assessment is currently underway for the PRSC programme and an impact evaluation on the Governance and Poverty Analysis and Policy Advice Programme. DFID Vietnam will increase the amount of evaluations, focusing on our strategic support areas (e.g. HIV, primary education, governance and climate change). We will capture best practices and lessons learnt from innovative programmes and partnerships (e.g. on the Challenge Fund for the private sector under the Making Market Work for the Poor project). Selected operations research and longitudinal impact assessment studies will be considered to assess the quality of implementation and evaluate results, possibly on MDG sectors and areas in which we have been involved for several years (e.g. HIV, sanitation and education). At least 50% of our budget for the period of the Operational Plan will be subject to independent evaluation. We will also review the Operational Plan implementation annually and consider an evaluation for the whole programme in Vietnam. Support to manage evaluation work will be lead by an Evaluation adviser we are bidding for (shared with DFID Burma) with the support of the broader programme team. We will also review effectiveness of our communications work as part of the evaluation plan.

Building capacity of partners

DFID has been the key supporter via the World Bank and the UN for GSO and sectoral ministries to build their capacity and skills for professional evaluation. DFID also promotes transparency, disclosure of information and public participation under our programmes, for example with the World Bank under Rural Transport project, we promote Construction Sector Transparency Initiative, public disclosure of programme information at district and commune levels, and community supervisory boards so that people are informed and can participate in programme budgeting, planning and monitoring. We also support think tanks and academic institutions e.g. the Central Institute for Economic Management to provide independent and diversified views on Government policies. Vietnam also participates in the MDG project supported by the Global Statistics Partnership team in DFID, and implemented by UN Statistics Division. The project aims to help reconcile country and international data on MDGs.

8) Transparency

Transparency is one of the top priorities for the UK Government. We will meet our commitments under the UK Aid Transparency Guarantee: we will publish detailed information about DFID projects, including programme documents and all spend above £500. Information will be accessible, comparable, accurate, timely and in a common standard with other donors. We will also provide opportunities for those directly affected by our projects to provide feedback

1. Publication of Information:

- DFID Vietnam will publish detailed information of all new programmes, all contracts over £10,000, documents of formal tenders above the £25,000 threshold, and DFID Vietnam's Operational Plan (in both English and Vietnamese), on DFID's external website. In addition, from April 2011, we will publish annual project performance reports and end-of-project evaluations. We will ensure that information on DFID Vietnam's programmes/projects is comprehensive, comparable, accurate and timely.
- Our published information will be in plain English, and we will consider to what extent we could make this information more accessible by translating it into local languages (Vietnamese or ethnic minority languages). Our local project partners do prepare project implementation reports in Vietnamese which can be published through DFID's external website.

2. Supporting our partners (donors, civil society organisations and Government agencies) to be more transparent

- Most of our project partners have committed to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). We will encourage others to do the same. For example, we will require, from FY 2012/13, any civil society organisations in direct receipt of DFID funds to publish information about DFID-funded projects in line with the IATI standards.
- DFID Vietnam will continue working together with the UK Embassy and other partners to promote greater transparency by the Government of Vietnam. We will use our influence and provide support to the Government to introduce the new Law on Access to Information, to improve disclosure of the State budget and expenditure, and transparency in key sectors such as construction, health and education. Our support to civil society organisations will be enhanced to increase their capacity to make donors and Government more accountable to citizens for how aid is spent in Vietnam.

3. Enabling Access to Information by and feedback from beneficiaries

- We will increase opportunities for feedback by those benefiting from DFID programmes. We will continue the existing mechanisms we have built up with partners, which have been working well, and advocate for those mechanisms to be replicated in other donors and Government projects. Some examples are :consultative processes to make key and sensitive project decisions available at different stages; Community Supervisor Boards established with community representatives to monitor project activities; and independent social safeguard audits.