

Country Report

**residential areas and housing Construction programme in
the frequently flooded areas
in mekong River delta of Vietnam**
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I. Background: The frequently flooded areas in Mekong River Delta.

1. Mekong River Delta is a low area in the south of Vietnam with Mekong River running across.

It comprises 12 provinces with natural land areas of 3,960 sq km, occupying about one eighth areas of the whole nation. More than 21% of the total population live in here (16.1 million).

2. There are 7 provinces which frequently suffer from flood: Sảng Th,p, An Giang, Long An, Ki^an Giang, Ti^on Giang, CÇn Th-, and Vŭnh Long. The flooded areas occupy about 2 million ha (about 50% of the region), with the population of about 11 million (approximate 2 million households). There are three provinces that heavily suffer from flood: Long An, Sảng Th,p and An Giang. The

flood takes place every year between June and October, with different overflow levels from year to year.

3. In the frequently flooded areas most of the shelters are temporary houses (about 55%, up to 90% in the deep flooded areas, whereas the rate of the temporary houses in the whole nation is 25%). About 20% of the houses are built on canals preventing the swift flow, disfacilitating water traffic, and causing bad pollution. About 10-20% of houses are built on the greenfield sites, causing inconveniences to the community daily life. Houses scattered on the greenfield sites, which become unprotected in the flood season. The public infrastructures such as schools, health centers, wards people's committee's offices are poorly built. Among hundreds of villages there are no motor roads leading to the centre. The number of rural population who enjoy clean water are about 30%. Electricity is absent from a great number of rural households. Most of the infrastructures such as schools, health centers, roads, etc. are over flooded in the flood season. Thus, if the flood lasts long, not only the people's life will become difficult but also their property and their own lives will be in danger.

4. In the year 2000 the flood was greatest during the past 70 years. In this year, 610 villages were over flooded, among them 77 were in deep flood (over 3 meters),

122 in average flood (2-3m), and 329 in shallow flood (under 2m), 82 villages on the coasts and river mouths were partly blown off by flood.

5. The 2000 flood had a bad impact on the 10 million inhabitants' life. More than 800,000 households were over flooded, among them 80,000 had to move away. Housing, health centers, schools and roads were heavily damaged. More than 16,000 ha of ripped rice-fields were destroyed. The flood had a bad impact on nearly 60,000 ha of fruit trees. The total toll was estimated at 2,500 billion VND (166.7 million USD).

6. The 2001 flood caused the loss of about 1,000 billion VND (66.7 million USD).

7. In 2002, until 5 September 2002, 20,000 houses in Mekong River Delta were overflooded, among them 9,792 households had already moved and the rest are prepared to move. About 201 schools were overflooded. The schools are closed for 41,096 pupils. Most of these schools are located in Dong Thap province. Until 5 September 2002 there found 16 people dead in An Giang, Long An and Dong Thap.

8. If houses, physical and social infrastructures are continuously constructed spontaneously, scatteredly and not in accordance with planning, safety regulations and

technical standards, floods will continue damages for infrastructures and lives of the people.

To ensure that inhabitants in flooding areas can have stable lives and gradually develop even in flooding season, by the end of 2001 the Government and Ministry of Construction of Vietnam have forwarded a Residential Areas and Housing Construction Programme in the frequently flooded areas in Mekong River Delta for period 2001-2005.

II. Objectives of the programme

1. Overall Objectives

Invest in building new residential areas in the frequently flooded areas to provide a safe, stable and sustainable life for people there, and enable them to stay in during the flood seasons, enhance the capability of struggling against flood disasters to minimise human and property losses.

2. Specific Objectives

According to the programme of new residential areas construction in the frequently flooded areas approved in November 2001 by the Government, 1,043 residential areas will be completed during period 2001-2005 providing housing for 200,000 households with annual plan as follows:

Year	Residential areas	Flood level (over 3 m)		Flood level (2-3 m)		Flood level (1-2 m)		Coast and river mouths		Total investment (billion VND)
		Residential areas	Investment (billion VND)	Residential areas	Investment (billion VND)	Residential areas	Investment (billion VND)	Residential areas	Investment (billion VND)	
2002	164	77	256	51	150	36	94	-	-	500
2003	415	90	333	150	495	150	405	25	68	1.300
2004	388	19	72	128	435	176	510	65	176	1.200
2005	76	-	-	-	-	50	135	26	70	200
Total	1.043	186	661	329	1.081	412	1.144	116	313	3.200

III. Main Requirements of the Programme

1. Level up the former flooded areas to make it higher than the 2000 flood peak, together with the plan of flood disposal, facilitating agricultural, forestal and fishing production in these areas.

2. Develop physical and social infrastructures in the residential areas (roads, health care, education, kindergarten, village offices) to answer the people's vital daily needs, even during the flood periods.

3. Materialise the level-up in all the four overflowed areas: deep, average, shallow and crumbled areas along the coasts and the river mouths. Priority is given to the deep flooded areas to complete the leveling-up in 2003.

4. Develop housing and infrastructures for supply immediately after the completion of the level-up residential areas.

IV. Realising the programme

To facilitate the practice of the above programme, the following policies are issued:

1. Invest 3,200 billion VND (213.3 million USD) in the level-up for 1,043 residential areas, of which half (1,600 billion VND) is subsidized by the Government, and half is given as non-interest loan to the local authorities. Funds for building technical and social infrastructures will be mobilised from different resources, especially from the people.
2. Lend an amount of maximum 17 million VND (1,200 USD) per household for buying housing, with low annual interest rate of 3% by the banks for the poor.
3. Encourage enterprises of all economic sectors to invest in housebuilding in the frequently flood areas to speed up the completion of the programme.
4. Permit the projects of residential areas in the programme to directly appoint a contractor, not to go through bidding.
5. Develop dykes surrounding existing residential areas for flood prevention.
6. Produce building components and provide guidelines for the people to construct their houses on pillars.
7. Set up a Central Steering Committee for Investment in Construction of housing and residential areas in flooding regions of Mekong River Delta. It comprises leaders from the concerned ministries, headed by Vice Minister of

Construction. Housing Bureau is executive office. And I myself is a member of the Steering Committee. / .