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**Joint Staff Assessment of the Poverty Reduction Strategy**

Prepared by the Staffs of the International Monetary Fund and the  
International Development Association

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## ACRONYMS

|        |                                                     |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| CPRGS  | Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy |
| GSO    | General Statistical Office                          |
| IDA    | International Development Association               |
| IMF    | International Monetary Fund                         |
| I-PRSP | Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper            |
| MTEF   | Medium Term Expenditure Framework                   |
| MDG    | Millennium Development Goals                        |
| MOLISA | Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs     |
| MPI    | Ministry of Planning and Investment                 |
| NGOs   | Nongovernment Organizations                         |
| PPAs   | Participatory Poverty Assessments                   |
| PRSP   | Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper                    |
| PTF    | Poverty Task Force                                  |
| PIP    | Public Investment Program                           |
| VLSS   | Vietnam Living Standards Surveys                    |
| NCAFAW | National Committee for the Advancement of Women     |

## I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

1. The Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS) of the government of Vietnam builds on the interim strategy (I-PRSP) presented to the Boards of the International Development Association (IDA) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in March 2001 and is now presented to the Boards of the IDA and the IMF as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). The CPRGS is seen by the government and other stakeholders as a living document, which will be improved and adjusted in response to new analyses and experience in implementing the strategy.

2. The CPRGS has several strengths, both in substance and in the process guiding its preparation. Important strengths include: (i) the active participation by a wide range of stakeholders in the drafting process; (ii) a robust and comprehensive analysis of poverty which makes balanced use of quantitative and qualitative evidence; (iii) the articulation of a growth-based strategy for poverty reduction with policies covering macroeconomic, structural, and sectoral areas; (iv) the attention given to improving governance; (v) the identification of outcome targets addressing the national challenges and the government's international commitments to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG); and (vi) an attempt to prioritize public actions and to assess their resource implications.

3. The implementation of the CPRGS presents several challenges. First, the proposed establishment of the inter-ministerial working unit and CPRGS secretariat is urgently needed to provide a strong coordination function. Second, attention must be given to involving all stakeholders in the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the strategy, including greater public access to data. Third, there is a need to develop concrete action plans detailing the timing and costs of activities; this is particularly pressing for some of the proposed measures to improve governance. Fourth, sectoral programs need to be more sharply prioritized and set within resource constraints and a well-defined medium-term expenditure framework. Fifth, aligning resource allocation decisions at the national and provincial levels to the desired outcomes will be important to place the proposed interventions in the budget framework. Sixth, more work is needed to fully assess the poverty and social impact of the reform strategy and the adequacy of safety nets.

## II. COUNTRY OWNERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

4. The government has a strong commitment—endorsed at the highest levels of policymaking—to poverty reduction and social equity. This commitment to eradicate poverty predates the government's initiative to draft the CPRGS, and has been articulated in the Socio-economic Development Strategy 2001–10 and in the ten-year sectoral strategies covering the same period. The CPRGS plays an important role in knitting together the components of these sectoral strategies by giving them a poverty focus, addressing cross-sectoral issues, and identifying priorities. Donors hoping to align their assistance strategies to the CPRGS will expect to see, over time, fuller integration of the government's five- and ten-

year planning documents, annual and multi-year budget documents and plans, and the public investment program (PIP).

5. The CPRGS has been drafted wholly by the government. The Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), which had led the work on the I-PRSP, established an inter-ministerial committee of 52 officials from 16 government agencies to guide the drafting process. They also engaged consultants—mostly local experts and researchers—to assist in the drafting process and to write background papers where necessary. The document was drafted in Vietnamese and went through several iterations in response to comments and consultation exercises. Four drafts were translated into English and circulated to the international community for comments and suggestions.

6. A wide range of stakeholders has been involved in this process. The inter-ministerial task force engaged national government agencies and their input was reinforced by four consultation workshops held at the national level. These workshops also included international and local civil society organizations. A number of line ministries established cross-departmental poverty task forces to coordinate their input into the CPRGS. Sub-national levels of government were involved through a series of four regional workshops, which brought together approximately 500 officials from the provincial and district levels of the administration, local politicians, and elected representatives to discuss the content of the draft CPRGS. The challenge of the implementation phase will be to build on these processes to ensure strengthened engagement and ownership across the government system.

7. Poor communities were consulted on the main policy measures proposed in the strategy in a research exercise that involved returning to sites where Participatory Poverty Assessments (PPAs) had been carried out in 1999. More than 1,800 people were involved in this exercise, in which poor people and local officials prioritized policy measures and public actions to reduce poverty. Though there was general support in the consulted communities for the overall policy direction, there were real concerns about the ability of the local institutions to convert the statements into reality and many constructive suggestions about how the actions could be made to work best for the poor. This final CPRGS draws on many of the findings. Five international NGOs (Action Aid, Catholic Relief Services, Oxfam GB, Plan International, and Save the Children UK) were partners in the community-level consultations.

8. Attention to gender issues in the CPRGS is more comprehensive than in the I-PRSP and the staffs commend the process which has informed the CPRGS. The Women's Union and the National Committee for the Advancement of Women (NCFAW) have been highly active contributors to the drafting and consultation process. Following a six-country regional meeting on gender-mainstreaming in PRSPs, the NCFAW poverty task force drew up an action plan for mainstreaming gender issues into the CPRGS. This involved conducting a survey of 65 female National Assembly members and summarizing their opinions, consulting provincial and commune-level Women's Union officials and members, and hosting a high-

level round-table dialogue with the CPRGS drafting committee. In addition, the views of poor women have been sought: during the community-level consultations, approximately half the participants were women.

9. The government-donor-NGO Poverty Task Force (PTF) has been the main point of interaction between the CPRGS drafting team and the international development partners. An early draft of the CPRGS was discussed at the Consultative Group meeting in December 2001.

10. The CPRGS has been approved by the Prime Minister, giving the document similar status to the ten-year sectoral strategies. The draft document has also been distributed to the Economic and Budget Committee of the National Assembly for comments. Although National Assembly members and party officials have been involved in many of the consultation events and exercises, it remains a weakness that the CPRGS will not be debated by the National Assembly. However, MPI plans to distribute the approved document widely, including to National Assembly members and all provinces.

11. Although local levels of government have been involved through four regional and six community level consultations, it is too early to assess broad-based commitment at the local levels to the outcome targets set out in the CPRGS. This commitment will be fundamental if the CPRGS is to achieve its ambitious goals since provinces have significant powers in determining public actions and expenditure.

### **III. POVERTY DIAGNOSIS**

12. The poverty diagnosis in the CPRGS draws on a wide range of credible data from various sources. This includes data from inside and outside government, quantitative data from the two Vietnam Living Standards Surveys (VLSS, in 1993 and 1998) and from administrative monitoring, and qualitative data from four PPAs carried out in 1999. The staffs agree with the analysis presented that poverty is a largely rural phenomenon and is associated with fragile livelihoods dominated by low-productivity agricultural activities. Issues of gender, ethnic and regional inequality are discussed and are followed up in the strategy part of the document. The analysis of vulnerability is more substantial than in the I-PRSP, which acknowledges the high levels of risk which poor and near-poor households face. This sets the stage for approaches to poverty reduction which build resilience to shocks and which are sustainable over the longer term. The staffs welcome the discussion of social exclusion in the urban areas and the acknowledgement that unregistered urban migrants face significant difficulties in accessing basic services. Urban poverty in general is given more serious consideration than in the I-PRSP.

13. The striking achievements which Vietnam has made over the last decade in halving the proportion of the population living in poverty is attributed in the CPRGS to a number of factors. The staffs agree that high growth, particularly in the agricultural sector and the informal services sector, has played an important role in reducing poverty. In the absence of

systematic and rigorous evaluation of the impact of the Hunger Eradication and Poverty Reduction Program, the National Employment Generation Program, and the provision of subsidized credit through the Vietnam Bank for the Poor, it is not possible to agree that these activities have contributed significantly to poverty reduction. The poverty impact of these programs should be assessed so that adjustments can be made if necessary.

14. The government presents two measures of poverty: (i) the poverty headcount measured by the General Statistical Office (GSO) based on VLSS consumption data, which uses internationally-recognized methodology, and (ii) the estimates derived from the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs' (MOLISA) administrative poverty monitoring system. While recognizing the need to retain administrative mechanisms for identifying and targeting poor households, the staffs welcome the stated commitment to moving in the future toward using one poverty line based on international methodology for monitoring purposes. This addresses a concern raised in the JSA of the I-PRSP.

#### **IV. PRIORITY PUBLIC ACTIONS**

15. The policy actions cover macroeconomic, structural, governance, and sectoral measures needed to increase opportunity, improve equity, and reduce vulnerability. The accompanying policy matrix specifies actions in the main areas outlined in the strategy. There are shortcomings and areas where opinion differs between the government and the staffs. Taking the text and the policy matrix together, however, the staffs believe that the strategic direction, policy measures, and public actions set out in the CPRGS are comprehensive enough to generate broad-based growth and poverty reduction over the coming years.

##### **Growth and macroeconomic policy**

16. The medium-term macroeconomic framework for 2002-2004 set out in Appendix 2 was developed in consultation with the IMF staff. It is designed to foster high growth over the period while maintaining macroeconomic stability under a prudent stance for fiscal and monetary policies. The framework provides sufficient resources to support reforms while also avoiding the crowding out of critical social expenditures. The projections take account of rapid private sector development and trade liberalization, but do not provide contingency policies or alternative scenarios to deal with the risks of exogenous shocks such as sharp declines in commodity prices or a weaker than anticipated external demand.

##### **Structural reforms**

17. The CPRGS lays out the various areas for structural reforms: trade liberalization, banking/financial sector reform, SOE restructuring, public expenditure management, and private sector development. Measures are detailed in the policy matrix and most proposed measures are timebound. The text, however, is less clear on the linkages between trade liberalization and private sector development on the one hand and job creation and full

employment promotion on the other. More generally, the link between the proposed reforms and poverty reduction is not well-articulated.

18. There have been some attempts to capture, ex ante, the possible impact of the reforms, though more work is needed for a fuller assessment. Ex post assessments will also be important in informing future reform measures. A World Bank study carried out with a local economic research institute shows that the recently-adopted trade reforms, when implemented, will increase the employment, incomes, and consumption of all income groups. On average, the increases in labor for expanding sectors compensate for the contractions in the highly protected, import competing sectors. Policies that support retraining and job search will help displaced workers find new employment and mitigate the near-term transitional costs associated with reform.

19. SOE reforms will involve reductions in state enterprise employment as some enterprises close and others shed labor. It is estimated that the reforms could result in 400,000 job separations over a five year period, and the government has put in place a workable safety net for displaced workers. The staffs believe that this safety net, which will finance compensation and retraining packages for redundant workers, will mitigate the impact that these reductions in employment will have on poverty. By including a substantial lump-sum component in the compensation payments, the severance package has been designed to reduce possible gender biases.

## **Governance**

20. The government faces pressing, cross-cutting governance challenges which, in the view of the staffs, could undermine progress in achieving the desired outcomes unless effectively addressed. The CPRGS includes targets for improving governance and elaborates some actions to be undertaken in the areas of public administration reform, the promotion of grassroots democracy, and legal reforms. In this respect, the government makes some progress in addressing one of the gaps noted in the JSA of the I-PRSP.

21. The staffs agree that strenuous effort is now needed to reform public administration. A five-year Master Program for Public Administration Reform for 2001–05 has been approved, but a strategy for implementing reforms is yet to be formulated. The CPRGS therefore lacks detailed concrete actions for the next few years. The government has carried out a legal needs assessment and an action plan is being drawn up. The action plan emphasizes legal needs for the poor and the CPRGS draws on this work to define clear tasks in improving the access of the poor to justice.

22. The document makes only passing references to the problem of corruption. Vietnam fares poorly in international indices of corruption and the staffs believe that the government now needs to announce decisive measures to combat corruption to underpin efforts to reduce poverty.

23. The government articulates strong commitment to implementing the Grassroots Democracy Decree throughout the country and the staffs agree that this is fundamental to ensuring that poor communities are fully involved in planning and resource-allocation decisions at the commune level. The community-level consultations on the draft CPRGS found that there has been little implementation of this Decree to date and that there is high demand at the community level for strengthened accountability systems and mechanisms for greater community participation. Improved performance will require considerable training and information dissemination at the commune level. Mechanisms to monitor progress on a regular basis will also be needed.

### **Sectoral policies**

24. The sectoral parts of the CPRGS draw on a variety of sources, including: sectoral ten-year strategies for 2001–10; submissions made by line ministries to the CPRGS drafting team; analytical work on target-setting and localizing the MDGs; the community level consultations; and direct consultations with government agencies and NGOs through workshops. From these sources, the drafting team has consolidated the main elements of sectoral strategies which have the greatest importance for achieving the CPRGS poverty and social goals. Implementing the CPRGS will require decision on how these actions and associated expenditures should be prioritized and sequenced, and how to place them in the budget and the medium-term expenditure framework.

25. The CPRGS proposes a number of measures to address rural poverty and vulnerability concerns raised in the poverty assessments. These include increasing resources to improve the research and extension system, paying special attention to the needs of farmers in mountainous areas; enhancing access to credit for the poor; improving land-use right security; and facilitating sustainable management of natural resources with the involvement of all stakeholders. The staffs welcome these measures.

26. A number of additional measures need more specific attention as the strategy is implemented. First, rural development policies need to be consistent with the proposed macroeconomic reforms that facilitate the growth of the private sector. This means that land-use planning should be based more on market demand, on assessment of competitive advantages, and on priorities of farmers and should be less driven by centrally-determined targets. Second, the government needs to establish a regulatory and administrative framework for clear and secure long-term land-use rights and for reallocating underutilized land of SOEs and state farms to farmers. Third, it needs to facilitate the establishment of sub-sectoral business associations that can facilitate vertical and horizontal integration and conduct market research. Finally, the staffs welcome the proposed move toward more sustainable rural finance, but believe this requires additional measures: (i) phasing out interest rate ceilings, and (ii) developing a supportive legal framework for microfinance activities.

27. The community consultations on the draft CPRGS reinforced earlier findings that the costs associated with educating children and accessing basic curative health care are



burdensome. The CPRGS recognizes that the private costs of basic education (primary and junior secondary school) and health care threaten future gains in human development. The CPRGS proposes an increase in the share of the budget going to both these sectors (the share going to education rising from 15 percent in 2000 to 20 percent in 2010 and the share going to health rising to 5 percent in 2005 and to 8 percent in 2010) and the actions proposed are generally consistent with the need to improve access to, and quality of, these services for the poor. In addition, it is important that the government act on its plans to adopt a formula-based system for cash transfers to provinces to promote equity. This reform is particularly important for the delivery of basic social services.

28. Reaching the last 6–8 percent of the population to universalize primary education will be extremely difficult and will require a fundamentally different strategy and increased unit costs. This problem is well-defined in the CPRGS and the staffs urge the government to specify the detailed strategies which will be put in place to reach this disadvantaged group of population.

29. Although the government articulates a welcome commitment to improve the system of exemptions for education costs and the provision of free health services to poor households, this may conflict with the recently-issued Decree 10 on revenue-raising by public service entities. This Decree includes educational establishments, clinics, and hospitals in these guidelines on raising revenues. The concern here is that managers of schools, clinics, and hospitals will not be receiving the clear and consistent message that it is a high priority of government to ensure that poor people receive free primary education and curative health care. The staffs believe that the commitment to provide access to basic education and health services free of charge to the poor is one of the most important statements made in the CPRGS and recommend strongly that steps are taken to protect this commitment in the light of Decree 10.

30. The government articulates its commitment to promoting gender equity through a whole range of actions, which includes: (i) re-issuing all land certificates in the name of both men and women; (ii) increasing the representation of women in economic and political life; (iii) public investments which reduce the domestic work burden of women; and (iv) actions to reduce family violence. The staffs agree that these address issues of priority concern, but note that actions to reduce domestic violence are the least well-elaborated and will require clearly specified interventions to be effective.

31. The CPRGS includes a number of important statements on the need to reduce HIV transmission but there is a pressing need to identify actions to realize these commitments. The staffs agree with comments made by the HIV/AIDS Working Group that there exists a “window of opportunity” in which to minimize the rates of transmission and the impact of the epidemic, if key actions are defined and taken immediately. The CPRGS asserts that people living with HIV/AIDS should not be marginalized from mainstream society and the

staffs believe that this requires that the issues of social evils and HIV transmission be delinked.

32. The staffs welcome the attention paid to urban poverty in the CPRGS, which represents a more comprehensive approach than that set out in the I-PRSP. The CPRGS suggests that the government will implement a national urban development strategy which would enable the actions outlined to be addressed in a consistent manner while promoting balanced urban development. The intention, set out in the policy matrix, to review the labor migration and household registration policies will be extremely important in increasing labor mobility and addressing the inequitable access to basic services, including education and health care, within urban areas.

33. The CPRGS recognizes the importance of environmental protection for poverty reduction and proposes a number of key measures. These include enhancing access of the poor to clean water, strengthening conservation of natural forests and protection of watersheds through the involvement of the people that depend on them for their livelihood, and halting urban pollution. However, the proposed actions do not sufficiently address some key constraints: the enforcement of the legal framework; improving environmental monitoring and disclosure; and providing incentives and financial resources for protection of forest, coastal and marine resources.

### **Costing, budget, and financing**

34. The CPRGS has a chapter on the resources needed for implementing the priority actions outlined in the strategy. In Vietnam, there is presently no Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), where sectoral strategies are fully costed and prioritized and where processes guiding decisions on recurrent and investment expenditure are divided institutionally. In this context, therefore, the preliminary costing of policy actions in the CPRGS represents significant progress. Nonetheless, the chapter falls short of providing a comprehensive and prioritized costing and a considerable amount of work is still needed. Though the chapter is confusing in places, the staffs believe that the CPRGS is likely to be backed by resources as the annual plan and the PIP are prepared. The staffs further believe that the process that has guided the preparation of this chapter can be enhanced in coming years to better define the MTEF and a more robust system of outcome-related expenditure planning.

35. A number of issues have emerged in relation to mainstreaming the CPRGS into the government's planning and budget processes. If the CPRGS is to have a real influence over resource allocation and monitoring processes in the future, it is essential that these issues are addressed in the context of wider public expenditure management reforms. The chapter itself is unclear in many areas and reflects the shortcomings (set out in detail in the Public Expenditure Review) of the public expenditure management systems as they currently exist. The government will need to strengthen budget planning and ensure that the State Treasury is the major body responsible for controlling state budget outflows. It is critical for Vietnam to

improve its public expenditure management system, including developing multi-year budgeting, to create a more integrated budgetary framework.

36. Although the government has stated that the CPRGS will result in an increase in resources to activities related directly to reducing poverty, the staffs urge government to make this shift more transparent as work is concluded on the PIP and the next annual plan and budget. Likewise, in order to ensure that the strategy is effective, it is necessary to ensure clear responsibilities across levels and agencies of government for identifying, implementing, and monitoring the core CPRGS program.

37. To meet the poverty reduction and growth objectives of the CPRGS, the government will need to maintain a cautious fiscal stance that balances equity, efficiency, and transparency in the mobilization of revenue and the allocation of spending. The strategy aims to consolidate the tax system and expand the tax base toward a unified tax system that levels the playing field between sectors and across domestic and foreign-invested enterprises. The plan gradually raises the share of revenues from direct taxes to avoid regressive incidence, and at the same time simplifies the VAT and other remaining indirect taxes, limits tax exemptions, and improves tax administration.

38. The strategy seeks to combine resources from the state budget with external aid and other domestic sources to implement poverty reduction programs. However, the financing estimates of programs are still necessarily rough, and will require refinement as the alignment with external development partners proceeds. As Vietnam moves toward sector-specific MTEFs and an overall MTEF to improve its planning and budgeting processes, donors will need to facilitate this process by providing medium-term, rather than annual, commitments of their support to Vietnam.

39. The staffs would underline their concern that the costs of achieving the stated outcomes should not be unduly placed on poor communities. There are a number of references in the text, especially in relation to infrastructure development, about mobilizing contributions from the communities. The CPRGS community consultations and other available research suggest that the commune-level fees and contributions to public service delivery are causing hardship and that poor households and communities are least able to bear these costs. As the CPRGS is implemented, steps should be taken to rationalize the number of fees and contributions, to ensure that they are not levied in a regressive manner, and to keep them at affordable levels. It will be important to monitor the level of informal payments.

## **V. TARGETS, INDICATORS, AND MONITORING**

40. The government has set out a monitoring framework in the final section of the document. It is proposed that the CPRGS secretariat will have responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the CPRGS using survey data and data collected through administrative reporting systems. The proposed targets cover the core areas where progress is

needed to generate sustainable poverty reduction in the future—including economic, social, and governance targets. The targets described reflect collaborative work carried out over the last year on localizing the MDG. Although the document still lacks a clear distinction between impact, outcomes, outputs, and inputs and their corresponding monitoring frequency, the current range of selected indicators should capture progress on a broad range of issues.

41. The staffs welcome the emphasis the CPRGS puts on a monitoring system that is based on sample surveys of households and enterprises and participatory assessments, as well as administrative reporting systems. Given the track record of GSO in the collection of high quality household living standards data, the staffs are confident that an adequate monitoring system will be in place if the government allocates sufficient resources to such surveys. The household data will be collected bi-annually to allow disaggregation by sex, ethnicity, and province. It is crucial that similar high quality sample surveys be collected annually from formal enterprises to allow timely monitoring of growth and employment. A strategy is under development to ensure this is possible. There is a need to streamline and improve the quality of line ministry monitoring systems so that information is available to track intermediate and input indicators. There will also be a need to improve the capacity within line ministries and local levels of government to analyze data.

42. In implementing the strategy, attention will need to be paid to mechanisms by which poor households and local officials can be involved in monitoring. One option would be to build on the work undertaken in the PPAs and the community-level consultations to develop a participatory monitoring methodology in chosen sites around Vietnam.

43. Improving public access to data will be essential for an open system of monitoring and evaluation of the CPRGS that allows learning and improvement of the strategies over time, and allows all stakeholders to be informed about progress made. Such policies are required to promote basic research on poverty and growth issues and are also important for conducting assessments of the poverty impact of the policies that the CPRGS proposes. The lack of commitment in the CPRGS to develop policies for transparent dissemination of poverty and other data is a serious weakness. The staffs welcome the intention to pass a new Statistical Law but believe this law should ensure that poverty and other data be made publicly available.

44. Indicators have been identified in the document to show whether progress is being made on the budget transparency dimensions of the Grassroots Democracy Decree. Given the emphasis in the CPRGS on improving the quality of public services, collecting opinions among households on the quality of public service delivery is important. With a few amendments to the existing questionnaire, these indicators could usefully and easily be tracked through the biannual household expenditure surveys that GSO will conduct.

## **VI. RISKS TO THE STRATEGY**

45. The main risk is that the CPRGS will not be viewed by the government, ministries, or development partners as the central guiding document for all poverty reduction efforts across agencies. The integration of the CPRGS with the government's five- and ten-year planning documents, annual and multi-year budget documents and plans, and the PIP are the core linkages in this process and will have to be strengthened over time. Donor coordination should now be guided by the principles and targets of the CPRGS. While some donors have announced their intentions to align their assistance strategies to the priorities outlined in the CPRGS, others appear less sure about how to respond. It is clear that donors are only likely to align their own resources to the CPRGS if the government also does so. As annual budgets and medium-term expenditure plans are drawn up, it will be extremely important that government can demonstrate this link clearly.

46. An important external risk arises from the possibility of exogenous shocks that could hamper the growth trajectory. Domestic economic risks also exist, and there is insufficient contingency planning to meet potential fiscal shortfalls. While there are real possibilities of a slowdown in implementation of structural reforms, the staffs regard the prospects of a halt or reversal to be small.

47. A third risk is that the required reforms in public administration, legal development, and corporate governance—some of which are still ill-defined—will not take place at the pace that is required. Thus, as the private sector grows in the coming years, corrupt practices between private enterprises and government officials could develop. The CPRGS does not currently lay out an anti-corruption strategy to minimize this risk.

## **VII. CONCLUSIONS**

48. The government is committed to preparing a CPRGS progress report on an annual basis. They expect to update the CPRGS every 3–5 years, synchronized with their own planning cycle.

49. The first draft of this JSA was sent to all donors and the NGO community and discussed at two meetings. Their feedback has been reflected in this final version.

50. The staffs of the World Bank and the IMF consider that the CPRGS paper presents a credible poverty reduction strategy that provides a sound basis for Bank and Fund concessional assistance. The staffs recommend that the Executive Directors of the World Bank and the IMF reach the same conclusion.