

## COMPLETION REPORT

### **Out-Migration, Depopulation and Revitalization of Rural Communities: Japanese Experiences and Lessons for Vietnam**

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This research aims to: (i) analyze the rural out-migration and depopulation in Japan and Vietnam; (ii) examine efforts on revitalization of the depopulated communities in rural Japan; (iii) Imply policies for sustainable rural development in Vietnam.

#### ***Research activities***

Primary data, collected in Mekong River Delta provinces in January 2020, are mainly used for analysis. Secondary data and reports (e.g., from General Statistics Office of Vietnam, Statistics Bureau of Japan) are also employed. In addition, this research exploits materials associated with depopulation and rural revitalization in Japan, especially the Kaso Laws.

#### ***Main findings and results from secondary materials***

- + Since the 1955s, Japan has experienced a large rural out-migration and depopulation problem in rural areas (Japan Population Census, 1965, 2015).
- + To revitalize depopulated areas in rural Japan, the Kaso Laws have been introduced and constantly updated.
- + Reports and data from UNESCAP (2016) and GSO (2016) indicate that rural out-migration in Vietnam has not been so serious as in Japan. However, depopulation is a potential problem in rural Vietnam. The main reason for migration is economic purposes (34.7%), followed by family (25.5%) and education (23.4%) reasons.

#### ***Main findings and results from the surveyed data***

- + Most of the migrants migrate due to economic reasons (93.6%), followed by education (42.9%), family issues (11%), natural environment (5.5%), and medical treatment (4.4%) reasons.
- + Both migrants and non-migrants find it lack of or difficult to access: market or shopping center (29.8%), facilities for doing business, entertainment (23.1%), health treatment facilities (19.8%), agricultural infrastructure (13.2%), and school (11.6%) in their home countries.
- + Both migrants and non-migrants respond their home countries face “more and more out-migration” (64.5%), “more and more depopulated” (52.1%), “rural residents being mainly the elder and children” (49.6% and 40.5%, respectively), “reduced agricultural production due to reduced labor” (40.5%), “declined non-farm business due to lack of labors and clients” (33.1% and 26.4%, respectively), “reduced cultural activities due to lack of young participants” (37.2%), and “deteriorated tradition or festival due to lack of participants and sustainers” (27.3%). These statistics indicate that depopulation and deterioration in rural community functions are potential problems.

#### ***Policy implications for sustainable rural development in Vietnam***

- + Attract investment in rural areas to promote industries by improving local infrastructure and implementing tax exemption or relief. Accordingly, new businesses can enhance employment and raise income for rural residents.
- + Enhance investment in agricultural infrastructure to reduce workload and risk, and ensure agricultural income. It should be implemented with caution as the modernizing agriculture may result in unemployment and thus more rural out-migration.
- + Promote tourism, especially in the mountainous and remote areas with unique, special culture and tradition.
- + Raise the children’s knowledge of traditional and cultural values in their rural communities, and thus they can promote and preserve their communities.
- + Promote infrastructures and facilities in rural areas (e.g., medical care, education, entertainment, communication, and business environment) to ensure the welfare and encourage non-farm self-employment of rural residents, and to attract urban-rural migrants to arrive for starting their businesses or living.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)  
*Not yet available. Under preparation to be submitted to 6th International Conference on Finance and Economics*

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)  
*Not yet available. Under preparation to be submitted to refereed Vietnamese journal (Target: Economy and forecast review; Review of Regional Sustainable Development).*

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)