



## FROM HO CHI MINH'S WORK "NEW LIFE" TO BUILD NEW RURAL RULES IN VIETNAM NOW

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### **Abstract:**

While leading the Vietnamese revolution, President Ho Chi Minh had many measures to direct and build new life to change the way of eating, dressing, living, and traveling in a scientific manner, civilized and progressive. His instructions are the basis for the Communist Party of Vietnam to set out policies and guidelines for cultural development in the people's national democratic revolution and the socialist revolution. In this article, the author mentions two essential contents: building a new life - the core contents; and the work of new life with new rural construction today.

**Keywords:** Ho Chi Minh; new life; new countryside

### **1. Introduction**

Ho Chi Minh is a Hero of national liberation and a cultural celebrity of humanity. During revolutionary activities, he paid particular attention to economic, cultural, and social development, in which cultural development was an important content, considering it the spiritual foundation of society. Therefore, after the August Revolution in 1945, even though he had to focus his energy and intelligence on the resistance to war and national construction, Ho Chi Minh still took the time to write the work *New Life* with the pen name Tan Sinh, published by the Central Committee for New Life Campaign. "New Life" is one of his typical works, with profound meaning and value in theory and practice in many fields, especially culture. Ho Chi Minh's instructions in the work "New Life" are considered a methodology for Vietnam's current building of new rural areas.

The 7th Conference of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam, term X, issued Resolution No. 26-NQ/TW dated August 5, 2008, on agriculture, farmers, and rural areas, setting out a program to build building new rural areas is considered both an urgent and long-term task for Vietnam. Following Resolution 26, on June 16, 2022, the 5th Conference of the 13th Party Central Committee issued Resolution No. 19-NQ/TW on agriculture, farmers, and rural areas until 2030. Vision to 2045 identifies solutions to

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build rural areas in a modern direction associated with urbanization. Thus, building new rural areas is one of the essential contents in implementing the agriculture, farmers, and rural areas policy in Vietnam to constantly improve the material and spiritual life of the people, investing in synchronous structures. Infrastructure, shortening the gap between rural and urban areas, aiming for "Rich people, strong country, democratic, fair and civilized".

In building new rural areas, applying the contents of Ho Chi Minh's ideology on culture in general and building a new life in particular has a significant meaning and role.

## 2. Methodology

The article uses the research method of the work "New Life", written by Ho Chi Minh in 1947 under the pen name Tan Sinh, presented in the series "Ho Chi Minh's Complete Works", in volume 5. On that basis, the analysis is analyzed, synthesizes Ho Chi Minh's views on building a new life as a theoretical framework to relate and apply to the New Rural Construction Program in Vietnam.

## 3. Results

### 3.1. Ho Chi Minh's views on building a new life

Although the country had just gained independence and continued to enter the resistance war for national construction, President Ho Chi Minh affirmed that in such conditions, it was necessary to build a new life, which was both an objective need and a need to create a new life and that was the responsibility of everyone, all sectors, and genders, by the trend of humanity. Ho Chi Minh's views on building a new life are expressed in the following fundamental issues:

Firstly, about the purpose of building a new life.

According to Ho Chi Minh, building a new life aims to make people's material lives more complete and their spiritual lives happier. According to Ho Chi Minh, the core content is to practice diligence, frugality, integrity, and righteousness to achieve the above goal. He generalized the necessity and meaning of diligence, thrift, integrity, and fairness in each gender and industry nationwide. He explained the word "Can" here means *"the army must diligently practice, fight diligently. People increase production and must work diligently, then the resistance war will surely win"* (Minh, 2011, vol.5, p.112). Ho Chi Minh said that the word "Kiem" at this time means *"soldiers must save ammunition, each bullet is one enemy. People must save materials to help soldiers and displaced people. That's why we have to be frugal"* (Minh, 2011, vol.5, p.112). As for the word "Liem" he said that it is *"pure, not greedy, not using public property for private purposes, then everything will work"* (Minh, 2011, vol. 5, p. 112). "Chinh" means that *"every citizen must forget their home for the sake of their country, enthusiastically support the resistance war, strive to increase production, eliminate traitors who harm the people, and make the Fatherland unified and independent"* (Minh, 2011), vol.5, p.112). Diligence, frugality, and integrity are the beautiful features of the

traditional culture of the Vietnamese people that Ho Chi Minh inherited, supplemented, and innovated to suit the country's conditions.

Second, about inheritance and innovation in building a new life.

Ho Chi Minh pointed out the principle of building a new life, which is to inherit and innovate, expressed in the relationship between the old and the new. He pointed out: *"New life Not everything old must be thrown away, not everything must be made new"* (Minh, 2011, vol.5, p.112). Therefore, to innovate successfully, we must know how to inherit the good and reasonable things of the old, which is an inevitable, objective requirement, a dialectical relationship between the old and the new in the process of movement and development. However, inheritance is not about restoring or preserving the old because, in the process of upward mobility, the old must inevitably be destroyed. However, there are still old things that can be maintained, innovated, supplemented, and developed at the level of the new ones. Ho Chi Minh said:

*"Whatever is old and bad must be abandoned. For example, we must give up all laziness and greed. Something old is not bad but is troublesome, so it must be revised properly. For example: Offerings and weddings are too expensive, we have to reduce them. Something old but good must be developed further. For example, we must be close to each other, be loyal to the country, and be more respectful to the people than before. Whatever is new and interesting, we must do. For example: Eat and live hygienically, work tidily"* (Minh, 2011, vol.5, pp.112 - 113).

Thus, according to Ho Chi Minh, building a new life based on inheriting the inherent good traditions of the nation, amending the "troubles" of the old to suit, and developing further in the new conditions new case at the same time, absorbing the "new and good things" into building a new life and eliminate the "old but bad things" from the new life. However, Ho Chi Minh also pointed out the harmful effects of "habit" in identifying and evaluating new things. He said: *"If something is good but strange, people can think it is bad. "If people get used to bad things, they think they are normal"* (Minh, 2011, p.5, p.125). Because habits are challenging to change, they are not determined to give up bad things.

Third, about the content of the new life.

Ho Chi Minh said that, in building a new life, the first thing is to revise the essential and prevalent daily stuff of people in terms of how to eat, how to dress, how to live, how to travel, how and work; eliminate outdated customs in life to build new ethics, new lifestyles and new ways of life in society.

According to Ho Chi Minh, the scope of new life includes the new life of a person, a family, the new life in the village, school, office, etc. He clearly explains the content of each scope. Which is as follows:

- Building a new life for one person: each person is the root of the village. The content of each person's new life is expressed through the way of eating, dressing, living, studying, and working. Every person must genuinely love the Fatherland. We must try our best to do what is beneficial for the country. What is harmful to

the country, we must try our best to avoid; willing to do public service; any big or small work of common benefit must be enthusiastically done; do not be arrogant; do not flatter; do not be greedy or stingy. The dressing style must be clean, simple, and plain, not sloppy, luxurious, or flashy. The way to work is to be diligent, organized, and have a sense of responsibility. If you do something, do it right, do it to the fullest, and don't lie. You must be honest, cordial, and willing to help in relationships.

- Building a new life for a family: expressed in the relationships between family members; relationships between families; make the family a model. In a family, there must be harmony from above, harmony from below, and no favoritism or favoritism. Stop the habit of mothers-in-law abusing their daughters-in-law and stepmothers hating their sons-in-law. Material things, from clothing to work, must be fair, planned, and tidy. Practice frugality and simplicity in weddings and Tet death anniversaries. In the house and garden, always clean and tidy. To neighbors, be friendly and willing to help. Regarding village affairs, we must be enthusiastic and exemplary; everyone in the family is literate.
- Building a new life in a village: must make the whole town literate about the ethics and responsibilities of citizens. Eliminate evils and outdated customs such as drunkenness, gambling, smoking, and theft. Build village love and harmony, making the village "beautiful customs and traditions". Maintain environmental hygiene and clear and clean roads.
- Building a new life of a school: Ho Chi Minh determined the position and role of the young generation - the future owners of the country. School is a training ground for children. It must teach students to love their country, love their race, have self-reliance, be self-reliant, and not be inferior to anyone. Schools' teaching and learning content must aim at comprehensive development, with particular emphasis on revolutionary moral education. Implementing educational principles: learning goes hand in hand with practice, labor goes hand in hand with production and fighting, Eliminating the remnants of old colonial education and moving towards modern education.
- Building a new life in the army: must maintain discipline and a strict training regimen; learn culture and politics; increase production coupled with thrifty practices; maintain hygiene and prevent diseases; make the people believe, obey, love, help the people, and fight the enemy well.
- Building a new life in the workplace: all officials, civil servants, and public employees serve the people and must be trusted by the people, so officials in public offices must set an example in building a new life for the people to follow. Cadres, civil servants, and public employees must be diligent, thrifty, honest, and upright. If they do not maintain those four virtues, they will quickly become corrupt and turn into pests of the people. Therefore, Ho Chi Minh required working officials to be punctual, quick, thoughtful, and work with a plan; must save paper, pens, materials, and people's money; must be pure, not take advantage of the position to make money, embezzle, or exploit the people. When exposed

and punished, all reputation and wealth will be lost; one must be genuinely fair-minded and virtuous. *"Do not use public property for private purposes. Do not use private people to do public work. Everything must be fair and upright and should not be based on personal favors, private hostility, resentment, etc. Must be loyal to the Government and fellow citizens. Don't pretend to be a revolutionary mandarin"* (Minh, 2011, vol.5, p.123).

- Building a new life in a factory or enterprise: establishing a close relationship between owner and worker, mutually beneficial cooperation, and loving each other. In particular, the owners must take care of the lives of workers so that they have enough food and clothing so that they will have enough strength and motivation to work, and must pay attention to "salaries, housing, hygiene, and treatment. Workers, need to be generous and kind" (Minh, 2011, p.5, p.124). If you can do that, workers will have more motivation to work, work faster more skillfully, save time, and save materials. For the benefit of the owner, it is partly to benefit yourself.

Fourth, about methods of building a new life.

For people to properly understand and practice the new life, according to Ho Chi Minh, it is first necessary to do an excellent job of propaganda, advocacy, and setting an example. The person requested: *"We must take the trouble to make it clear to everyone how useful the new life is and how to practice it. Say it once, and if they don't understand many times. Say it repeatedly, when people understand, they will do it"* (Minh, 2011, vol.5, p.125). People who request officials working in propaganda and advocacy to build a new life must speak practically to each person's situation; say it so people can listen and do it right away. We'll discuss the big and challenging things once you've done the easy and small items. They must *"speak with their mouths, work with their hands, and set an example for others to imitate"* (Minh, 2011, p.5, p.126). Setting an example starts with each person, from each home to each village. When we see good results, other people, families, and places will enthusiastically follow suit. People believe that in the propaganda process, avoid being "too enthusiastic," which can easily ruin the work, be in the spirit of voluntariness, and avoid coercion. Ho Chi Minh also reminded: in propaganda, *"you must be enthusiastic, persistent, hard-working, and at the same time careful, clever, and soft"* (Minh, 2011, vol. 5, p. 127).

At the same time, Ho Chi Minh also pointed out an essential method in building a new life: to organize emulation movements between people, between families, between villages, and between singles. Unit or locality with another department or locality.

### **3.2. Ho Chi Minh's views on building a new life with the construction of new rural areas in Vietnam today**

The national target program for building new rural areas in Vietnam started in 2010 with Decision No. 800/QĐ-TTg, dated June 4, 2010 of the Prime Minister. After summarizing ten years of building new rural areas in 2010 - 2020, on February 22, 2022, the Prime Minister signed and issued Decision No. 263/QĐ-TTg on approving the National Target Program for Construction. New rural areas for the period 2021 - 2025 set targets by 2025

to strive for Vietnam to have at least 80% of communes meeting new rural standards, at least 50% of districts, towns, and cities in the province meet new rural standards, completing the task of building new rural areas; there are about 17 - 19 provinces and centrally run cities recognized by the Prime Minister for completing the task of creating new rural areas.

According to the Preliminary Report on the 3-year implementation of the National Target Program on building new rural areas for the period 2021 - 2025 of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, as of July 2023, Vietnam has 6,022/8,177 communes (73.65%) meet new rural standards (an increase of 11.3% compared to the end of 2020). On average, the whole country achieves 16.9 criteria/commune. There are 263 district-level units in 58 provinces and centrally-run cities that the Prime Minister has recognized for completing tasks/meeting new rural standards, an increase of 90 units compared to the end of 2020 (accounting for about 40.8 million units % of the total number of district-level units in the country). Currently, there are 19 provinces and centrally run cities, with 100% of communes meeting new rural standards (an increase of 7 localities compared to the end of 2020), including five provinces (Nam Dinh, Dong Nai, Ha Nam, Hung Yen). The Prime Minister has recognized Hung Yen and Hai Duong for completing the task of building new rural areas.

The current national target program on new rural construction includes 11 component contents:

- 1) Improve the efficiency of management and implementation of new rural construction according to planning to improve economic life - Rural society is associated with the urbanization process;
- 2) Developing socio-economic infrastructure, basically synchronous and modern, ensuring rural-urban connection and connecting regions;
- 3) Continue to restructure the agricultural sector and develop the rural economy effectively; Strongly deploy the One Commune One Product (OCOP) Program to increase added value in line with the process of digital transformation and adaptation to climate change; Strongly develop rural industries; develop rural tourism; improve the operational efficiency of cooperatives; support start-up businesses in rural areas; improve the quality of vocational training for rural workers contributing to sustainably raising people's income;
- 4) Sustainable poverty reduction, especially in ethnic minority areas, mountainous areas, coastal areas and islands;
- 5) Improve the quality of vocational training for rural workers... contributing to sustainably raising people's income; sustainable poverty reduction, especially in ethnic minority areas, mountainous areas, coastal areas, and islands; improve the quality of education, medicine, and health care for rural people;
- 6) Improve the quality of cultural life of rural people; preserve and promote traditional cultural values in a sustainable manner associated with rural tourism development;
- 7) Improve environmental quality; build a bright - green - clean - beautiful, and safe rural landscape; preserve and restore the traditional landscape of rural Vietnam;

- 8) Promote and improve the quality of public administrative services; improve the quality of grassroots government operations; promote the digital transformation process in new rural areas. Increase the application of information technology and digital technology and build intelligent new rural areas; ensure and enhance access to the law for people; strengthen solutions to ensure gender equality and prevent gender-based violence;
- 9) Improve quality and promote the role of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations in building new rural areas;
- 10) Maintain national defense, security, and rural social order;
- 11) Strengthen monitoring and evaluation of Program implementation; improve capacity to build new rural areas; communicate on new rural construction; Implement the national emulation movement to join hands in making new rural areas.

At the same time, to be recognized as a new rural commune, it is necessary to achieve 19 criteria as prescribed in Decision No. 318/QĐ-TTg, dated March 8, 2022 of the Prime Minister on planning; traffic; irrigation and natural disaster prevention and control; electricity; school; cultural facilities; rural commercial infrastructure; information and communication; residential housing; income; multidimensional poverty; labor; organize production and develop rural economy; education and training; medical; culture; environment and food safety; political system and access to law; defense and security.

From the above criteria, we can generalize some essential contents in building new rural areas in Vietnam: first, it is building civilized, clean, and beautiful villages and communes, ensuring good infrastructure. Floors serving production and people's lives; Second, output in rural areas is developed in a sustainable manner associated with the market economy; Third, the material and spiritual life of people in rural areas is increasingly improving; Fourth, the nation's cultural identity is preserved and developed; Fifth, security in rural areas is guaranteed, and the people's ownership is promoted.

Thus, the content of new rural construction is the inheritance and creative application of Ho Chi Minh's views on new life in the current period, clearly shown in the following points:

- 1) New rural construction aims to improve all aspects of life for the people continuously.
- 2) Promoting the spirit of patriotism, diligence in work, solidarity, and love is one of the essential requirements in building new rural areas.
- 3) In building new rural areas, it is necessary to eliminate evil customs, "old and bad things", and backward things that hinder new things and progress.
- 4) In building new rural areas, we must consistently implement propaganda, advocacy, and setting an example by taking examples of good people and good deeds to educate each other.
- 5) Promoting the people's subjective role is a crucial step in building new rural areas, which, according to Ho Chi Minh, is "citizen responsibility".

#### **4. Conclusions**

"New Life" is one of Ho Chi Minh's works of great value, contributing to directing the construction and development of Vietnam after the August Revolution of 1945 in all aspects: economy, politics, culture, society, defense - and security. Thanks to that, Vietnam overcame countless difficulties after the first days of independence, successfully carried out the resistance war and national construction, completed the people's national democratic revolution, and brought the whole country to build democracy. Socialism, according to his wish, is to strive for the goal of "peace, unity, independence, democracy, and prosperity, having friendly and equal relations with all countries in the world" (Minh, 2011, vol.14, p.354). Even though more than 75 years have passed, the work "New Life" still has its value and is still very necessary for building the country of Vietnam today, especially in building new rural areas in comprehensive development.

#### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

#### **About the Author(s)**

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