

# **INVESTIGATING CURRENT STATUS AND DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TRADITIONAL HANDICRAFT MAKING IN MEKONG DELTA**

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The Mekong River Delta has about 200 traditional handicrafts villages, absorbing about 200,000 labourers. Recently, these handicrafts have significant contributions to the local society in creating employment for the landless and those have little land, exploiting advantages of local resource for production and consumption, which contribute remarkably to the poverty reduction in the rural area.

However, most of the handicraft villages in the region are operating in difficult conditions such as poor organization of consumption market, lacking of working capital, poor production technology and untrained labourers. In addition, the poor supporting activities and service of local credit system, market information, handicraft extension activities that make to low development of handicraft villages.

A set of solutions has been recommended to the local authorities for further consideration and selection the best ones those fit well to the real situation of each locality. In term of organization of production and consumption, the priority solution is to establish handicraft cooperatives, handicraft cooperative union and to promote development of handicraft enterprises for dealing output activities as well as input services. Besides, skills training, credit supports, improvement of production technology are prioritized for supporting handicraft producing households. In addition, the requested improvements of local infrastructure, market information, trade mark promotion are necessary for sustainable development of traditional handicraft villages in the Mekong River Delta.