

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

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**IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY
POLICIES FOR FARMERS IN THE MEKONG
DELTA AT PRESENT**

SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

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INTRODUCTION

1. The urgency of the research topic

The implementation of social security (SS) policies has been a consistent policy of the Communist Party of Vietnam throughout the Renewal process, to realize the humane nature, inherent superiority, and people-centered objectives of socialism; harmoniously reconciling economic growth with social progress and social justice; and balancing the responsibilities of the State and the community with each individual's capacity to ensure their own social security. The Documents of the 14th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam affirm the need to “build and develop a multi-tiered, modern, adaptive, and flexible social security system that is life-cycle-based and provides universal coverage, ensuring that no one is left behind.” This orientation toward building a comprehensive, inclusive social security system demonstrates the Party's political determination to improve the People's quality of life and ensure all citizens benefit from the country's development achievements.

In building socialism in Vietnam, farmers constitute a major social force, “accounting for more than one-third of the national population, with over 9.1 million farming households.” They are a fundamental component of the alliance between the working class, the peasantry, and the intelligentsia under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam. Therefore, concern for farmers' material and spiritual well-being and the assurance of their social security are not merely economic concerns or matters of social policy; they are also issues of profound political and social significance.

The Mekong Delta is a key agricultural production region of the country, “contributing 31.37% of the gross domestic product (GDP) of the entire agricultural sector, more than 50% of national rice output, 65% of aquaculture production, and 70% of fruit production.” In recent years, localities throughout the region have actively implemented social security policies, thereby helping to expand employment opportunities, improve incomes, and enhance farmers' access to and enjoyment of social

insurance, health insurance, social assistance, education, healthcare, housing, clean water, information, and essential social services. These achievements have laid the groundwork for promoting sustainable poverty reduction, preventing people from falling back into poverty, and narrowing development gaps between rural and urban areas, among localities, and across population groups. At the same time, they have created opportunities for farmers to enhance their capacities, participate proactively in the development process, and benefit from its achievements.

Nevertheless, the implementation process still reveals certain limitations. Some farmers face difficulties in accessing vocational training, employment, social insurance, health insurance, social assistance, and essential social services. In some localities, policy implementation has not been adequately adapted to the production characteristics, livelihoods, residential conditions, and information-access capacities of different groups of farmers. Furthermore, disparities persist in access to the pillars of social security among different groups of farmers and across localities within the region. In addition, the emerging development context presents numerous challenges to the implementation of social security policies. Climate change, manifested in saltwater intrusion, coastal and riverbank erosion, and declining water resources, together with difficulties in transitioning production models, labor migration, population ageing, and shortcomings in policy implementation, is increasing the vulnerability of certain groups of farmers. These factors directly affect farmers' employment, incomes, and living conditions, thereby undermining efforts to ensure social security and achieve sustainable development in the region. According to a scenario developed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, "if sea levels rise by 100 cm, approximately 47.29% of the region's area will be at risk of inundation, including approximately 570,000 hectares of rice-growing land directly affected." This situation places increasing pressure on the social security policy system to support livelihood transitions, reduce poverty, and strengthen farmers' adaptive capacity in response to the impacts of climate change.

In light of the aforementioned theoretical and practical issues, systematic research into the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong Delta is an urgent necessity. Such research will provide scientific grounds for improving the effectiveness of policy implementation, ensuring social progress and social justice, and developing the peasantry in a comprehensive manner in the process of building socialism. This constitutes the rationale for the doctoral candidate's selection of the topic ***“Implementation of Social Security Policies for Farmers in the Mekong Delta at Present ”*** for the doctoral dissertation in Scientific Socialism.

2. Research objectives and tasks

2.1. Research objectives

On the basis of clarifying the theoretical and practical issues concerning the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong Delta, the dissertation proposes orientations and solutions to improve the effectiveness of implementing social security policies for farmers in the region in the coming period.

2.2. Research tasks

- To review representative studies related to the dissertation topic, thereby identifying findings of reference value and issues requiring further investigation in the dissertation.
- To clarify the theoretical issues concerning social security, social security policies, and the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong Delta.
- To analyze the current situation, clarify the underlying causes, and identify issues arising in the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong Delta at present.
- To propose several orientations and fundamental solutions to help improve the effectiveness of implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong Delta in the coming period.

3. Research subjects and scope

3.1. Research subject

The implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong Delta.

3.2. Research scope

- *Geographical scope*: The dissertation examines the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the provinces and cities of the Mekong Delta. For the field survey, the author selected three localities: Can Tho, Ca Mau, and Vinh Long.

- *Temporal scope*: The dissertation investigates the implementation of social security policies for farmers over the ten years from 2016 to 2026. This period witnessed the promulgation and implementation of several important policy documents concerning social security policies for farmers.

- *Content scope*: From a political and social perspective, the dissertation examines the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong Delta, focusing on four fundamental policy areas: (1) employment policies; (2) social insurance and health insurance policies; (3) social assistance policies; and (4) policies facilitating access to essential social services, including housing, clean water, healthcare, and education. The study focuses on farmers from poor households, near-poor households, and low-income households, with the aim of helping them cope with risks when they are unable to secure a minimum standard of living for themselves and their families through their own means.

4. Research methods

The dissertation is grounded in the methodology of dialectical materialism and historical materialism. The research methods employed include the historical and logical method; analytical, synthetic, and comparative methods to clarify the theoretical foundations, assess the current situation, and propose solutions; sociological survey methods based on 450 questionnaires, including 300 administered to farmers and 150 to officials working within the political system; and in-depth interviews. In addition, the dissertation employs document analysis and secondary data analysis to examine reports, statistical data, and policy documents relevant to the research process.

5. Significance of the thesis

The thesis contributes to clarifying theoretical issues concerning the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong Delta at present. On this basis, it provides scientific arguments for developing mechanisms and policies to improve the effectiveness of social security

policy implementation for farmers in the region. In addition, the dissertation may serve as a reference for teaching and scientific research on issues related to farmers and the implementation of social security policies for farmers at educational institutions, as well as in training and professional development courses on agriculture, farmers, and rural areas in the provinces and cities of the Mekong Delta.

6. New contributions of the thesis

Based on an analysis of the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong Delta, the dissertation identifies the following new contributions:

First, the dissertation approaches social security for farmers from the perspective of policy implementation, thereby clarifying the process through which policies are translated into people's actual access to and enjoyment of social security benefits, as well as tangible social security outcomes.

Second, the dissertation elucidates the distinctive characteristics of social security policy implementation for farmers in the Mekong Delta, arising from the region's agricultural livelihoods, seasonal production patterns, labor migration, population ageing, climate change, and broader socioeconomic transformations.

Third, based on field surveys and practical analysis, the dissertation identifies gaps and bottlenecks in policy implementation, particularly the gap between the extent of policy coverage and farmers' actual access to social security benefits and the degree to which their social security needs are effectively met.

Fourth, the dissertation proposes a framework/model for implementing social security policies in a proactive, inclusive, and adaptive manner. Under this approach, social security is intended not only to support farmers facing risks but also to strengthen their resilience, ensure livelihood stability, and enhance their capacity to transition to alternative livelihoods suited to changing socioeconomic and environmental conditions, thereby promoting the sustainable development of the Mekong Delta.

7. Structure of the thesis

Apart from the introduction, conclusion, list of references, and appendices, the thesis is structured into 4 chapters with a total of 9 sections.

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH RELATED TO THE THESIS TOPIC

1.1. TYPICAL STUDIES RELATED TO THE THESIS TOPIC

1.1.1. Studies on the theoretical foundations of social security policy implementation for farmers

1.1.1.1. Studies on the concepts, functions, nature, and content of social security policies and the implementation of social security policies for farmers

These studies have examined the theoretical foundations of social security policies and the implementation of social security policies for farmers. They have clarified the concepts, content, and implementation methods of such policies while identifying the fundamental pillars of the social security system for farmers, including employment, social insurance, health insurance, social assistance, poverty reduction, and access to essential social services.

1.1.1.2. Studies on the principles, influencing factors, actors, and roles of social security policies and the implementation of social security policies for farmers

These studies have analyzed the conditions necessary to ensure the effective implementation of social security policies. They have identified the responsibilities and coordination mechanisms among the State, socio-political organizations, enterprises, communities, and farmers in policy implementation. They have also examined the effects of natural, economic, political, cultural, and social conditions, the quality of public services, digital transformation, and climate change on the effectiveness of implementing social security policies for farmers.

1.1.2. Studies on the current situation of social security policy implementation and the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong Delta

1.1.2.1. Studies on the current situation of social security policy implementation

These studies have assessed the outcomes of social security policy implementation in Vietnam and several other countries in terms of policy

coverage, access to policies, and the receipt of policy benefits. They have also clarified the limitations, shortcomings, and underlying subjective and objective causes arising in the policy implementation process.

1.1.2.2. Studies on the current situation of social security policy implementation for farmers

These studies have assessed the implementation of employment, vocational training, social insurance, health insurance, social assistance, preferential credit, and poverty reduction policies for farmers. They have analyzed the outcomes, limitations, and factors affecting farmers' ability to access, participate in, and benefit from these policies.

1.1.2.3. Studies on the current implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta

These studies primarily focus on examining the implementation of social security policies for farmers, assessing the outcomes of policy implementation, and analyzing the factors affecting the implementation process in relation to the specific conditions of the Mekong River Delta.

1.1.3. Studies on orientations and solutions for implementing social security policies in general and social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta in the current period

1.1.3.1. Studies on orientations and solutions for implementing social security policies

These studies propose orientations for improving the social security policy system towards a comprehensive, multi-tiered, and sustainable framework. They emphasize institutional improvement, strengthening the effectiveness of state management, mobilizing and efficiently utilizing resources, promoting the application of science and technology and digital transformation, and improving the quality of policy implementation for farmers in the Mekong River Delta in the current period.

1.1.3.2. Studies on orientations and solutions for implementing social security policies for farmers in general and farmers in the Mekong River Delta in the current period

These studies primarily propose orientations and solutions to improve the effectiveness of implementing social security policies for farmers. With regard to the Mekong River Delta, research mainly focuses

on proposing solutions for livelihood development, climate change adaptation, poverty reduction, employment generation, and improving farmers' access to social security policies in ways that are appropriate to the region's natural conditions, socio-economic characteristics, and development context.

1.2. REFERENCE VALUE OF THE REVIEWED STUDIES AND ISSUES REQUIRING FURTHER RESEARCH IN THE THESIS

1.2.1. Reference value

First, the reviewed studies provide a theoretical foundation for understanding social security policies and the implementation of social security policies for farmers.

Second, these studies analyze the current state of implementation of social security policies for farmers in Vietnam and in several localities across the Mekong River Delta.

Third, these studies propose orientations and solutions to improve the effectiveness of implementing social security policies for farmers in general and farmers in the Mekong River Delta in the current period.

1.2.2. Issues requiring further research in the thesis

First, to examine, supplement, and further develop the theoretical foundations concerning the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta from a socio-political perspective.

Second, to analyze and assess the current state of implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta, clarifying the achievements, limitations, underlying causes, and issues arising in the policy implementation process.

Third, to propose orientations and a system of solutions to improve the effectiveness of implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta by 2030, with a vision to 2045.

Chapter 1 summary

Social security policies and the implementation of social security policies for farmers have been extensively studied by scholars from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

In general, these studies have outlined fundamental theoretical and practical issues, as well as orientations and solutions for implementing social

security policies for farmers in general and farmers in the Mekong River Delta in particular. However, existing studies have primarily focused on the implementation of social security policies in general, while comprehensive research evaluating the process of implementing social security policies specifically for farmers in the Mekong River Delta remains lacking. Therefore, giving due attention to the implementation of social security policies for farmers constitutes an urgent issue in both theoretical and practical terms. Addressing this issue will contribute to building a civilized farming community and creating a driving force for farmers to effectively fulfill their role in agricultural economic development and the construction of new-style rural areas.

Chapter 2

FUNDAMENTAL THEORETICAL ISSUES CONCERNING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY POLICIES FOR FARMERS IN THE MEKONG RIVER DELTA IN THE CURRENT PERIOD

2.1. SOME FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS

2.1.1. Concepts of social security and social security policies

Based on a review of various conceptual approaches to social security, the dissertation defines social security as a fundamental human right and, at the same time, a system of policies and measures implemented by the State and society to protect members of society against shocks and risks arising in economic, social, and environmental life. Social security thereby ensures a minimum standard of living, meets essential needs, contributes to social stability, and improves people's quality of life.

Social security policies constitute an integral component of the social policy system. They are formulated and implemented through the system of viewpoints and guidelines of the Communist Party of Vietnam, together with the State's policies and laws, to enable members of society to proactively prevent, mitigate, and overcome economic, social, and environmental risks and contingencies. At the same time, these policies create conditions for individuals to enhance their adaptive capacity, stabilize

their incomes, and comprehensively improve their material and spiritual well-being.

2.1.2. Concepts of farmers and characteristics of farmers in the Mekong River Delta

To date, no specific, widely established conceptual definition of farmers in the Mekong River Delta has been developed. According to Nguyen Minh Sang (2017), farmers in the Mekong River Delta constitute a segment of the Vietnamese peasantry and possess the following characteristics: (1) although they benefit from favorable natural conditions, they do not rely passively on nature. Instead, farmers in the Mekong River Delta demonstrate self-reliance, independence, resilience, dynamism, creativity, steadfastness, and an indomitable spirit; (2) farmers in the Mekong River Delta are characterized by a strong sense of honor and integrity, a willingness to sacrifice for the greater good, and a high regard for human relationships founded on affection and mutual obligation. They also exhibit an open-minded, generous, and forthright disposition, valuing both compassion and loyalty; (3) farmers in the Mekong River Delta are distinguished by their simplicity and unpretentiousness in everyday life, as well as their deep affection for nature and the region's rivers and waterways. These characteristics demonstrate that farmers' identities and ways of life are closely associated with the riverine culture of the Mekong River Delta. In addition, the characteristics of farmers in the region are closely linked to livelihood-related risks and environmental risks.

2.1.3. Concepts of social security policies for farmers and the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta

Social security policies for farmers constitute a component of social policy, reflecting the viewpoints and guidelines of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the policies of the State aimed at helping farmers prevent, mitigate, and overcome risks, ensure a minimum standard of living, enhance their capacity for self-provision, and expand development opportunities, with a view to ensuring sustainable social security.

The implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta is the process through which entities within the

political system and society as a whole organize, implement, and concretize legal provisions on social security in accordance with the region's natural conditions, socio-economic characteristics, and farmers' livelihoods. This process aims to prevent, reduce, and overcome risks; stabilize living conditions; enhance farmers' capacity to ensure their own social security; and promote their role as active agents in contributing to social progress, social justice, and the sustainable development of the Mekong River Delta.

2.2. ACTORS, CONTENTS, AND METHODS OF IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL SECURITY POLICIES FOR FARMERS IN THE MEKONG RIVER DELTA IN THE CURRENT PERIOD

2.2.1. Actors implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta in the current period

First, entities within the political system in the Mekong River Delta

These entities play a pivotal role in leading, directing, organizing, and implementing social security policies for farmers.

Second, economic organizations, social and professional organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other organizations operating in the Mekong River Delta

The participation of these entities helps mobilize additional social resources, promote the socialization of social security policies, and improve the effectiveness of policy implementation, particularly in remote and isolated areas severely affected by climate change.

Third, the population, including farmers and various social classes and strata in the Mekong River Delta

Farmers are the direct actors in implementing and beneficiaries of social security policies. Other social classes and strata contribute material and spiritual resources, uphold the tradition of mutual assistance and solidarity, and promote humanitarian values, social cohesion, and mutual support.

2.2.2. Contents of implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta

The implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta encompasses the following fundamental areas:

(1) Employment policy

Employment policy is one of the key pillars of the social security system. It plays a decisive role in increasing incomes, improving living standards, and promoting the comprehensive development of agriculture and rural areas.

(2) Social insurance and health insurance policies

The implementation of social insurance and health insurance policies helps compensate farmers for part of their income when it is reduced or lost due to illness, old age and retirement, occupational accidents, or maternity.

(3) Social assistance policy

Social assistance is an important component of the social security system, comprising regular social assistance and emergency social assistance.

(4) Policies on farmers' access to basic social services: housing, healthcare, education, clean water, and environmental sanitation

Access to basic social services for farmers not only ensures the exercise of their individual rights but also contributes to the promotion of social justice and social progress.

2.2.3. Methods of implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta

The process of translating policies from written documents into practice requires coordination among multiple actors and is carried out through the following methods:

First, institutionalizing the Communist Party of Vietnam's viewpoints and guidelines.

Second, disseminating information and conducting educational activities.

Third, developing plans for policy implementation, including the assignment and coordination of responsibilities and the allocation of resources.

Fourth, mobilizing the participation of society as a whole.

Fifth, conducting inspections, supervision, and evaluations of policy implementation.

2.3. THE ROLE OF AND FACTORS AFFECTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY POLICIES FOR FARMERS IN THE MEKONG RIVER DELTA

2.3.1. The role of implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta

The implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta plays an important role, as reflected in the following principal aspects:

First, contributing to improving farmers' living standards.

The implementation of social security policies helps improve farmers' material and spiritual well-being; supports the mitigation of risks in production and daily life; and creates conditions for stabilizing livelihoods, enhancing their capacity for self-provision of social security, and adapting to changes in natural and socio-economic conditions.

Second, promoting farmers' exercise of their rights as masters and contributing to maintaining socio-political stability in rural areas.

The implementation of social security policies creates conditions for farmers to fully exercise their rights and fulfill their obligations, strengthens their confidence in the guidelines of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the State's policies and laws, promotes social consensus, consolidates the great national unity bloc, and maintains socio-political stability in rural areas.

Third, it contributes to environmental protection, the preservation and promotion of traditional cultural values in rural areas, and the realization of social progress and social justice.

The implementation of social security policies helps raise environmental awareness and preserve the cultural identity and traditional values of rural communities. It also ensures opportunities to access development policies, narrows disparities in living standards, and gradually advances the realization of social progress and social justice.

2.3.2. Factors affecting the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta

The implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta is influenced by various objective and subjective factors, including the following:

2.3.2.1. The impact of the natural, political, socio-economic, and cultural conditions of the Mekong River Delta

2.3.2.2. The impact of international integration and the socialist-oriented market economy

2.3.2.3. The impact of the Communist Party of Vietnam's lines, guidelines, and policies and the State's policies on the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta

2.3.2.4. The quality of the cadres responsible for policy implementation

Chapter 2 summary

Chapter 2 has clarified the theoretical and practical foundations for implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta. The dissertation affirms that social security constitutes an important component of social policy, contributing to socio-political stability and the sustainable development of the region. Social security policies for farmers are implemented through employment policies, social insurance, health insurance, social assistance, and the provision of basic social services, using diverse organizational and implementation methods. Furthermore, the dissertation clarifies the role of implementing social security policies for farmers in improving living standards, promoting farmers' exercise of their rights as masters, maintaining socio-political stability, advancing social progress and social justice, and promoting the sustainable development of the Mekong River Delta. The factors affecting policy implementation are examined in terms of natural, political, socio-economic, and cultural conditions; international integration and the socialist-oriented market economy; the lines and guidelines of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the State's policies; and the quality of the cadres responsible for policy implementation. These theoretical and practical foundations provide a basis for analyzing

the current situation and proposing orientations and solutions to improve the effectiveness of implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta.

Chapter 3

IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY POLICIES FOR FARMERS IN THE MEKONG RIVER DELTA IN THE CURRENT PERIOD: CURRENT SITUATION AND ISSUES ARISING

3.1. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL SECURITY POLICIES FOR FARMERS IN THE MEKONG RIVER DELTA

3.1.1. Implementation of employment policies for farmers

Party committees, local authorities, the Vietnam Fatherland Front, and socio-political organizations in localities across the Mekong River Delta have made concerted efforts to implement employment policies both before and after administrative boundary mergers, thereby contributing to livelihood stabilization and sustainable income generation for farmers in the region. Notable positive developments have been achieved in vocational training activities and the provision of credit support linked to employment generation. Despite these efforts, the implementation of this pillar of social security has not yet achieved sustainable effectiveness. Specifically, the proportion of farmers employed in jobs requiring formal training remains limited, while the lending activities of certain credit institutions in support of employment generation for farmers continue to face shortcomings.

3.1.2. Implementation of social insurance and health insurance policies for farmers

Across the Mekong River Delta, social insurance and health insurance policies have contributed to expanding insurance coverage among farmers. Furthermore, these forms of insurance have become safety nets that protect farmers against health-related and income risks. Despite these positive results, the implementation of these policies remains subject to several limitations. The safety nets provided by social insurance and health insurance have not yet offered adequate protection, and voluntary participation in social

insurance and health insurance schemes has not become sufficiently attractive to encourage farmers to enroll proactively.

3.1.3. Implementation of social assistance policies for farmers

Social assistance policies contribute to ensuring a minimum standard of living and stabilizing the livelihoods of eligible farmers. They also serve as a vital source of support, helping farmers overcome the consequences of climate change. Nevertheless, the coverage and level of assistance provided under social assistance policies remain insufficient to meet the livelihood needs of some eligible farmers. In addition, the organization and delivery of emergency social assistance have not adequately met practical requirements.

3.1.4. Implementation of policies supporting access to basic social services

In line with the general directives of central authorities, localities across the Mekong River Delta have made active efforts to implement policies ensuring farmers' opportunities to access basic social services. Rural infrastructure has been gradually improved to meet people's needs and expand access to social services, thereby enhancing farmers' quality of life and contributing to social progress and social justice. Nevertheless, policy implementation still faces several limitations. Some rural water supply facilities have not adequately met farmers' demand for fresh water amid climate change. Housing support policies have not fully met the safety and housing security needs of certain groups of farmers. Furthermore, farmers in the Mekong River Delta have yet to enjoy adequate access to healthcare and education services.

3.2. CAUSES AND ISSUES ARISING IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY POLICIES FOR FARMERS IN THE MEKONG RIVER DELTA IN THE CURRENT PERIOD

3.2.1. Causes

3.2.1.1. Causes of the achievements

Social security policies have become a “protective shield” that enables farmers in the Mekong River Delta to adapt to risks and overcome challenges. Practical implementation demonstrates that social security policies for farmers in the region have achieved certain positive results. These achievements can be attributed to the following principal causes:

First, the attention and support of central and local authorities in ensuring social security for farmers

Second, the continuous innovation by implementing actors in the content and methods of policy implementation

Third, the close attention paid to the inspection and supervision of the implementation of social security policies for farmers

Fourth, the close links among traditional community networks, mass organizations, and religious organizations in providing social security support for farmers

3.2.1.2. Causes of the limitations

The research findings indicate that social security policies have produced positive outcomes for farmers in the Mekong River Delta. Nevertheless, the implementation process continues to face limitations arising from the following principal causes:

First, the region's natural and socio-economic conditions exacerbate livelihood risks

Second, some farmers have an inadequate understanding of the benefits of social security, particularly voluntary social insurance and health insurance

Third, certain communication content and methods used to disseminate social security policies are not sufficiently appropriate to the characteristics and educational levels of farmers in the Mekong River Delta

Fourth, inspection and supervision of policy implementation in some localities lack regularity, systematic procedures, and professionalism

Fifth, certain processes of translating policies into specific measures and implementing them have not adequately taken the region's distinctive characteristics into account

3.2.2. Issues arising in the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta

3.2.2.1. The contradiction between the increasingly expanded coverage of social security policies and the lack of sustainable implementation outcomes

The implementation of social security policies has primarily emphasized providing support after risks occur rather than preventing and

mitigating risks in the first place. Consequently, policy implementation has mainly helped address immediate difficulties, while the long-term objectives of strengthening farmers' capacity to prevent risks, adapt to changing circumstances, and independently ensure their own social security have not yet been achieved to the expected extent.

3.2.2.2. The contradiction between farmers' increasingly diverse and growing social security needs and the limited awareness of some policy implementation actors

Amid increasingly pronounced changes in natural, economic, and social conditions, the need to ensure social security for farmers in the Mekong River Delta has become increasingly urgent and diverse. However, some policy implementation actors have yet to develop an adequate understanding of the role, responsibilities, and significance of social security for farmers in line with practical requirements. This situation adversely affects the quality of policy implementation and its overall effectiveness.

3.2.2.3. Organizational and coordination mechanisms in the implementation of social security policies for farmers remain inadequate

In the context of recent administrative mergers, shortcomings in organizational structures and coordination mechanisms reveal structural gaps in the implementation of social security policies designed to meet farmers' increasingly pressing social security needs.

3.2.2.4. The capacity of some cadres responsible for implementing social security policies has not kept pace with the requirements of the new context

Some cadres have limited professional expertise and capacity in policy advisory work, coordination, needs assessment, and the application of digital technologies, while their administrative jurisdictions, workloads, and policy implementation requirements continue to increase.

3.2.2.5. The contradiction between the growing resource requirements for implementing social security policies for farmers and limited resource availability

The demand for financial resources, infrastructure, and personnel for policy implementation continues to increase. Meanwhile, some localities face constraints in balancing budgetary resources, mobilizing social resources, and investing in infrastructure, thereby affecting the quality of social security benefits received by farmers.

3.2.2.6. The contradiction between the need for consistency in implementing social security policies and the requirement to address the diversity of livelihoods and social security needs among farmers in the Mekong River Delta

Differences in livelihoods, incomes, production cycles, and levels of risk among farmer groups and ecological subregions create a need to ensure consistency in social security policies while maintaining sufficient flexibility in their implementation to suit different target groups and local conditions.

Chapter 3 summary

Chapter 3 has provided an overview of the implementation of social security policies for farmers across four pillars: (1) Employment policies; (2) Social insurance and health insurance policies; (3) Social assistance policies; and (4) Policies supporting access to basic social services. By combining qualitative and quantitative research methods, the dissertation has comprehensively assessed the achievements, limitations, and underlying causes associated with the implementation of social security policies for farmers.

The research findings indicate that the implementation of social security policies has contributed to employment generation, income improvement, expanded social insurance and health insurance coverage, enhanced social assistance, and gradual improvements in farmers' access to basic social services. These outcomes have helped strengthen social security, stabilize livelihoods, and enhance farmers' capacity to cope with risks and adapt to changes in natural and socio-economic conditions. Despite these achievements, the implementation process continues to reveal several limitations. In particular, the quality of employment and income remains unsustainable for some farmers, while the coverage of social assistance policies and access to basic social services have yet to fully meet farmers' needs. These limitations stem from both objective and subjective factors, including the region's natural and socio-economic development conditions; the attention given by central and local authorities; innovations in policy implementation content and methods; inspection and supervision of policy implementation; and the strength of traditional ties among communities, mass organizations, and religious organizations.

Based on its analysis of the current situation and underlying causes, the dissertation identifies a number of issues that require further resolution to improve the effectiveness of implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta.

Chapter 4

ORIENTATIONS AND SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL SECURITY POLICIES FOR FARMERS IN THE MEKONG RIVER DELTA

4.1. THE NEW CONTEXT AFFECTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY POLICIES FOR FARMERS IN THE MEKONG RIVER DELTA

The new context of the Mekong River Delta is characterized by an orientation towards sustainable development and strengthened regional connectivity; agricultural restructuring towards an ecological, modern, and climate-resilient model; accelerated digital transformation; the operation of a two-tier local government system; and changes in climate, labor, population, and livelihoods. These changes create opportunities to expand employment, improve access to social services, and enhance the effectiveness of policy implementation. At the same time, the impacts of climate change, shifts in production methods, disparities in digital capabilities, differences in livelihoods across ecological subregions, migration, and population ageing are increasing and diversifying the risks faced by farmers and their social security needs. This context necessitates the implementation of social security policies in a proactive, flexible, and risk-responsive manner, closely linked to the development of sustainable livelihoods.

4.2. ORIENTATIONS AND SOLUTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL SECURITY POLICIES FOR FARMERS IN THE MEKONG RIVER DELTA

4.2.1. Orientations

Improving the effectiveness of implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta in the current period requires adherence to the following principal orientations:

4.2.1.1. Implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta as one of the fundamental pillars of sustainable agricultural and rural development

4.2.1.2. Linking economic development with the assurance of democracy, social progress, and social justice in the implementation of social security policies for farmers

4.2.1.3. Implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta in accordance with the region's specific characteristics and ensuring farmers' legitimate needs and interests

4.2.1.4. Implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta as a responsibility of the entire political system, particularly the grassroots-level political system

4.2.2. Solutions to improve the effectiveness of implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta in the current period

4.2.2.1. Enhancing the awareness, capacity, and responsibility of actors involved in implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta

Enhancing the awareness, capacity, and responsibility of relevant actors is a fundamental solution for improving the effectiveness of implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta.

First, enhance the awareness, capacity, and responsibility of actors within the political system.

Second, enhance the awareness and responsibility of economic organizations, social organizations, and residential communities in implementing social security policies for farmers.

Third, enhance farmers' awareness, capacity, and responsibility in implementing social security policies.

4.2.2.2. Improving social security policies to suit the natural conditions and livelihoods of farmers in the Mekong River Delta

Improve social security policies to ensure their suitability for the natural conditions, livelihood characteristics, and levels of risk faced by farmers in the Mekong River Delta. The focus should be on reviewing and amending regulations on employment, vocational training, preferential

credit, social insurance, health insurance, social assistance, and access to basic social services in a flexible and coordinated manner, while strengthening the delegation of authority to local governments. At the same time, ensure policy coherence and continuity, enhance adaptability to climate change, population ageing, and livelihood transitions, and meet the requirements of the region's sustainable development.

4.2.2.3. Innovating the content and organizational methods of implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta

Innovate the content and organizational methods of implementing social security policies to ensure coordination, flexibility, and adaptability to the development requirements of the Mekong River Delta. Priorities include innovating communication and advisory activities; strengthening coordination among implementing actors; accelerating digital transformation; and improving the effectiveness of inspection, supervision, and evaluation of policy implementation.

4.2.2.4. Developing and scaling up effective social security models to help ensure social security for farmers in the Mekong River Delta

Develop and scale up effective social security models linked to job creation, livelihood development, sustainable poverty reduction, and the expansion of social security coverage for farmers. Priority should be given to models involving production linkages, livelihood support, preferential credit, social insurance, health insurance, and the mobilization of community resources. The roles of the State, socio-political organizations, enterprises, cooperatives, and communities should be brought into full play in ensuring social security for farmers.

4.2.2.5. Strengthening resources for implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta

Strengthen and effectively utilize State, social, and international resources to ensure the implementation of social security policies for farmers. Priorities include investing in infrastructure, developing human resources, improving the conditions necessary for policy implementation, and prioritizing resource allocation to areas severely affected by climate

change, thereby contributing to greater effectiveness in implementing social security policies for farmers.

Chapter 4 summary

Chapter 4 identifies the impacts of the new context on the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta. These impacts give rise to new requirements for policy implementation, necessitating a shift from support- and relief-based models towards models emphasizing risk prevention and adaptation. On this basis, the dissertation establishes four orientations for implementing social security policies to improve their effectiveness for farmers in the Mekong River Delta under the new context, with an emphasis on flexibility, prevention, and adaptation. First, the effective implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta constitutes one of the fundamental pillars of sustainable agricultural and rural development. Second, economic development must be closely linked to ensuring democracy, social progress, and social justice in the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the region. Third, the implementation of social security policies must be consistent with the region's specific characteristics and ensure farmers' legitimate needs and interests. Fourth, the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta is the responsibility of the entire political system, particularly the grassroots-level political system. To translate these orientations into practice, the dissertation emphasizes the coordinated implementation of five key solutions. First, enhance the awareness, capacity, and responsibility of actors involved in policy implementation. Second, continuously improve the legal framework. Third, innovate the content and methods of policy implementation. Fourth, scale up social security models for farmers. Fifth, strengthen resources for implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta is of great significance for ensuring farmers' livelihoods, maintaining political and social stability, and promoting the sustainable development of the region. Drawing on the theories of Marxism - Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, and the Communist Party of Vietnam's viewpoints on social security, the dissertation has clarified the theoretical issues concerning the implementation of social security policies for farmers. It has also analyzed and assessed the current situation, identified the achievements and limitations, examined their causes, and clarified the issues arising in the implementation of social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta.

On this basis, the dissertation proposes a system of orientations and key solutions to improve the effectiveness of implementing social security policies for farmers in the Mekong River Delta. These include enhancing the awareness of relevant actors; improving mechanisms and policies; innovating the content and organizational methods of policy implementation; strengthening resources; and scaling up effective social security models. The coordinated implementation of these solutions will contribute to strengthening farmers' capacity to ensure their own social security, advancing social progress and social justice, and gradually building a comprehensive and inclusive social security system oriented towards socialism in the Mekong River Delta.

LIST OF PUBLISHED WORKS BY THE AUTHOR RELATED TO THE THESIS

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