

REDUCING CHILD MARRIAGE AND CONSANGUINEOUS MARRIAGE IN HANOI CITY CURRENT SITUATION, SOLUTIONS

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Decision 498/QĐ-TTg dated April 14th, 2015 approving the Scheme “Reducing the status of child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas in the period of 2015 - 2025” has clearly defined the target: “By 2025, to basically prevent and repel the situation of child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas, contributing to improving the quality of population and human resources in ethnic minority areas”. In ethnic minority communes of Hanoi city, this issue has been paid attention and made effort to implement, so by the end of 2020, the phenomenon of near-blood marriage has disappeared, but child marriage still persists. Through analyzing the current situation of child marriage, causes and consequences of child marriage in the ethnic minority areas of Hanoi city, the article offers a number of solutions to contribute to the successful implementation of the goal of ending child marriage in Hanoi city in 2025.

Keywords: *Hanoi city; Child marriage; Near-blood marriage; Population quality; Quality of human resources; Socio - economic development.*

1. Introduction

In Hanoi City, there are currently 107,847 peoples of ethnic minorities (out of a total of 8,053,663 peoples) of 50/53 ethnic minorities living interwoven with Kinh people in all 30/30 districts and towns, commune. In which, Muong people account for 57.71%, Tay people account for 17.81%, Thai people 6.61%, Nung people 5.85%, Dao people 4.32%, the rest are other ethnic minorities. However, ethnic peoples live concentrated in community only in 153 villages, in 14 communes of 5 districts: Ba Vi, Thach That, Quoc Oai, My Duc and Chuong My with over 55,000 peoples, accounting for 51% of ethnic minorities numbers in the whole city, of which mainly Muong and Dao people (Hanoi Committee for Ethnic Minorities, 2020).

The Hanoi ethnic minority area covers an area of over 30,000 hectares (10% of the total area of the city), has an important strategic position in defense and security, has many potentials and advantages for socio - economic development and ecological environment protection of the city. The annual economic growth rate of the Hanoi's ethnic minority communes increases by over 10% per year; per capita income is over 35 million VND/person/year; The rate of poor households decreases by an average of 3%/year, by 2020, the rate of poor households in ethnic minority areas in the capital is about 3% (Hanoi Committee for Ethnic Minorities, 2020). The situation of security, politics and social order and safety in the communes of ethnic minority areas of the City has always been maintained. The movement for the whole people to unite to build a cultural life is concerned by the localities, the people actively emulate productive labor, believes in the Party's undertakings, the State's policies and laws, and is well implemented citizenship services and local regulations.

However, child marriage and near-blood marriage have long been a persistent problem in ethnic minority and mountainous areas. Right in the urban land of Hanoi, after many efforts to implement the project "Reducing child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas" (period of 2015 - 2020), the phenomenon of near-marriage has been no longer exists, but child marriage still exists. This is a problem directly related to the quality of the population and human resources for socio-economic development in Hanoi city.

2. Research overview

Child marriage and near-blood marriage is a persistent and painful problem in ethnic minority and mountainous areas for a long time, so this is also a topic that attracts the attention of many researchers and managers at all levels, branches in

localities and central. Only in recent years, many research projects and topics have focused on finding solutions to reduce and overcome the problem of child marriage and near-blood marriage among ethnic minorities.

Specifically, after studying the situation of this issue on a national scale, the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs has developed the Scheme "Reducing child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas in the period of 2015 – 2025" and approved by the Prime Minister on April 14th, 2015 (Decision No. 498/QĐ-TTg). The common goal is to basically prevent and reverse child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas by 2025. The specific objective is to raise awareness and legal consciousness, and to change the behavior in marriage of ethnic minorities; over 90% of ethnic minority workers at all levels, socio-cultural staff are trained to improve their capacity, skills in advocacy, counseling and communication; an average reduction of 2%-3%/year in the number of child marriages and 3%-5%/year in the number of near-blood marriages for ethnic minority areas with high rates of child marriage and near-blood marriage. The approved project is to show the participation and determination of the Party and State in the fight against child marriage and near-blood marriage, creating a premise for the sustainable development of ethnic minority areas.

Accordingly, in the provinces and cities with ethnic minority areas, there are also research projects in the field of population health and the quality of this human resource. Typically, Lai Chau province has a provincial science and technology topic "Study on the situation of child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas in Lai Chau province" by Assoc. Prof. Dr. La Ngoc Quang (University of Public Health) is the project leader. The study was conducted with three objectives: To assess the situation of child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas in the province. Causes and consequences, factors affecting the status of child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas in the province. Proposing interventions to limit child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas in the province. This will be the basis for managers to develop solutions suitable to the local situation, contributing to solving the situation of child marriage and near-blood marriage among ethnic minorities and improving the quality of population - family planning works in the province.

Binh Phuoc province has a topic "Study on the situation of child marriage and near-blood marriage in the S'tieng community in the province" led by Mr. Dieu Dieu (Provincial Committee for Ethnic

Minority, Provincial People's Council). The thesis researched the content and implementation method with 29 specialized topics such as: Consequences of child marriage, near-blood marriage in the S'tieng community; sanctions and ways to resolve conflicts in the traditional marriage and family of the S'tieng people; the role of village elders, reputable people and the community in the situation of child marriage and near-blood marriage; the change in marriage and family of the Xtieng people; development opportunities of women and children, the viewpoint of preventing child marriage and near-blood marriage in the Xtieng community today...

In particular, the 5-year review report on the implementation of the Scheme "Reducing child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas for the period of 2015 – 2025" (October 2020) was carried out in the framework of the project "Empowering ethnic minority women and girls" between the United Nations Agency for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the Department of Ethnic Minorities, Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs (period of 2018 - 2021) with funding from the Government of Ireland. The report once again affirmed that, in recent years, child marriage and near-blood marriage have caused severe impacts on the health of mothers and children; degrade the quality of the population; affects the quality of human resources and is one of the obstacles to the socio-economic development and sustainable development of ethnic minority areas. The content of the report focuses on reviewing the results achieved in the period of 2015 - 2020 according to the main objectives and tasks; identify advantages, difficulties and challenges in the implementation of the Scheme; draw lessons from experience and propose recommendations to continue effectively implementing the Scheme in the period of 2021 - 2025.

The reduction of child marriage and near-blood marriage in the ethnic minority areas of Hanoi does not deviate from the general trajectory of ethnic minority areas in Vietnam. After many efforts, near-blood marriage was eliminated, but child marriage persisted. Therefore, in-depth understanding of child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas in Hanoi is essential in order to find effective measures for the next stage to achieve the goal of eliminating to abolish child marriage by 2025 that the Scheme "Reducing child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas" for the period of 2015 - 2025 has set out.

3. Research Methods

The article mainly uses research and synthesizes secondary documents method with a fairly rich volume of documents, including research works,

system of policy documents, reports on socio - economic development, culture and society of the whole country in general and Hanoi in particular, including the reduction of child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas. Especially, there is a preliminary report of 5 years of implementation of the Project "Reducing child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas" (period of 2015 - 2020) of the Hanoi Committee for Ethnic Minority.

Combined with research and document synthesis method is ethnic field method and expert method through conferences, seminars and in-depth interviews.

4. Research results

4.1. Situation of child marriage in districts in ethnic minority areas in Hanoi

Summary from districts with ethnic minority areas in Hanoi shows that the total number of couples getting married within 5 years (2015-2020) is 3,753 couples, of which 39 cases of child marriage (38 cases of husband or wife child marriage, 01 case of both husband and wife child marriage) exists in 2 districts of Quoc Oai and My Duc. The number of child marriages increased - decreased from year to year, but the number of near-blood marriages remained at zero (Hanoi Committee for Ethnic Minorities, 2020).

Table. Child marriage and consanguineous marriage in ethnic minority areas in Hanoi in 5 years (2015 – 2020)

Districts	Total number of married couples	Number of cases of child marriage	Number of near-blood marriages
Quoc Oai	201	29	0
Ba Vi	2.140	0	0
My Duc	346	10	0
Chuong My	417	0	0
Thach That	661	0	0
Whole city	3.753	39	0

Source. Report No. 39/BC-BT, March 24, 2020 of the Hanoi Committee for Ethnic Minority

Child marriage in ethnic minority areas in Hanoi is not on red alert like in remote areas of the country, or areas with extremely difficult socio-economic conditions. However, the above fact is still evidence that continues to affirm that early marriage, pregnancy and childbirth in adolescence, when the mother's body is not fully developed, lacks knowledge, experience and not being psychologically ready for pregnancy and childbirth has a great impact on the mother's health, the normal development of the fetus and newborn. This is the main reason for the increase in the rate of child malnutrition and the rate of malnourished children in ethnic minority

communes. Poverty, lack of food, lack of clothing, no work and a bleak future, all of this has become a vicious cycle in villages, hamlets and villages with high rates of child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas. Consequences from this situation are not only the agent of the self, the family, but also the burden on the society. Child marriage and near-blood marriage cause the population quality to decline, breed degradation, affect the quality of human resources, and are one of the obstacles to socio-economic development and social progress and sustainable development of ethnic minority areas.

In the ethnic minority area of Hanoi, the main cause of child marriage is "Ethnic minorities in general, marriage is carried out mainly according to customs, practices and economic conditions. The intervention from the local government in cases of child marriage is still not strong and not resolute. Sanctions to punish violations in marriage are not strong enough to prevent and deter child marriage. There are many cases of men and women living together as husband and wife without marriage registration but being recognized and protected by the community where they reside" (PVS Mr. Nguyen Phuc Hai, Deputy Head of the Hanoi Committee for Ethnic Minority). The most important thing is that people's awareness is still not high, and the consequences of child marriage are not anticipated. The responsibilities of parents in the family, and then teachers in schools, have not been promoted, when they have not properly and fully communicated to children about marriage and family issues, especially is a fertility problem. Going back to the villages of ethnic minorities, you can see the image of 15 and 16-year-old girls who have "promoted" wives and mothers. When asked about the Law on Marriage and Family, asked about questions related to child marriage and near-blood marriage, they did not know. Answering the question "Why get married early?", the answer is very simple: "To have more people to help the family" or "If you like each other, get married"... It must also be added that, at present, the life of ethnic minorities in Hanoi has been improved, the children are older before their age, the puberty age is earlier. In addition, the spread of information networks, rampant depraved movies and images stimulate curiosity among young people about gender, leading to early relationships without preventive measures, leading to unintended pregnancy, as a result, stop marrying before being old enough.

It is a very contemplative situation in the Hanoi's ethnic minority area - where not too far from the urban center, where living conditions, socio-economic conditions have been much improved

compared to before. However, this situation is also the basis for managers and policy makers to find a reasonable direction for the next stage to eliminate child marriage from the life of the people.

4.2. The role of government levels

In fact, Hanoi has made great efforts to prevent and reverse child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas. Implementing Decision No. 498/QĐ-TTg, April 14th, 2015 of the Prime Minister and the guiding documents of the Central Committee and the City People's Committee, the Hanoi Committee for Ethnic Minority has issued the documents proposes the People's Committees of districts with communes in ethnic minority areas to direct the implementation of the following contents: (1) Strengthening the leadership and direction of the Party committees and authorities, promoting the role of the Fatherland Front Committee, mass organizations and prestigious people among ethnic minorities, creating profound changes in awareness and action, raising the responsibility of the whole political system for prevention, combating child marriage and near-blood marriage, considering this an important and regular task of branches and levels in the locality. (2) Promote propaganda and dissemination of laws related to child marriage and near-blood marriage (harms, consequences); combine propaganda and dissemination of measures to prevent and handle acts of child marriage and near-blood marriage with propagating and setting an example of good people and good deeds complying with the law on marriage and family. The content and form of propaganda are suitable for each target group and geographical area, ensuring concise, practical, easy to understand and easy to remember to fully convey to the people, especially people in ethnic minority areas to raising awareness, changing behavior, gradually limiting and ending child marriage and near-blood marriage in the locality. (3) Strengthening support activities, health counseling, and free legal aid in the community and in mobile villages; put the provisions of the law on marriage and family into the village conventions, conventions of villages, hamlets and cultural families; strengthen extra-curricular activities, activities of unions, teams, clubs, groups, organize exams to learn about the law on marriage and family... (4) Regularly do well in management, inspection, promptly detect, prevent and handle cases of violations of the law on marriage and family. (5) Allocate funds to effectively implement the prevention and control of child marriage and near-blood marriage in the locality.

In addition, every year, the Hanoi Committee for Ethnic Minorities organizes and integrates propaganda and dissemination of laws related to child marriage and near-blood marriage and

combines propaganda and dissemination of prevention measures, prevent and handle acts of child marriage and near-blood marriage such as: Criminal Law, Civil Law, Law on Marriage and Family, Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence, Law on Gender Equality, Law on Children...

Even in the districts with communes in ethnic minority areas, there are also plans to implement the Scheme with many contents and forms such as: Implementation of the Law on Marriage and Family; strengthen propaganda and dissemination on child marriage and near-blood marriage; dissemination of legal education, grassroots conciliation, standards of access to law and implementation of local conventions; implementing an intervention model to reduce the rate of child marriage and near-blood marriage in mountainous communes in the area; consulting activities in the model: Law on Marriage and Family, Law on Gender Equality, adolescent/adolescent reproductive health care, benefits of prenatal and newborn screening; distributing leaflets on reducing child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas; integrating the contents of child marriage, near-blood marriage into extracurricular activities to propagate to students... thereby raising awareness and responsibility of society, community and ethnic minority people in practice implement the provisions of the law on marriage and family; creating social consensus to prevent child marriage and near-blood marriage, contributing to improving the quality of population and human resources in ethnic minority areas.

By the end of 2020, in the five districts with ethnic minorities living in Hanoi, namely Ba Vi, Quoc Oai, Chuong My, My Duc and Thach That, only two districts still have child marriage, namely Quoc Oai and My Duc. The good news is that the situation of near-blood marriage has been reversed, and there is no longer any “near-blood people” married couple. 100% of ethnic minority officials at all levels, socio-cultural workers are trained in capacity building, advocacy skills, counseling and communication to change behavior on child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas. The overarching figures recorded from the Hanoi Committee for Ethnic Minority are: An average reduction of over 3% per year in the number of child marriages. “After five years of implementation, initially certain results have been achieved. Through the Scheme’s activities, ethnic minorities have been propagated more widely on the Law on Marriage and Family, the Law on Gender equality, the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence... have partly improved and raised awareness about child marriage and near-blood marriage, a number of customs and practices that directly affect child marriage and near-blood

marriage is gradually abolished” (Reporter Mr. Nguyen Phuc Hai – Deputy Head of the Hanoi Committee for Ethnic Minorities).

4.3. Solutions for the period of 2021 - 2025

Orientation for the period of 2021 - 2025 has been determined quite specifically and in detail. The first is continuing to invest in physical infrastructure to support ethnic minorities in socio-economic development, hunger eradication and poverty alleviation, creating conditions for the elimination of outdated customs in general, child marriage and near-blood marriage in particular. Along with that, it is necessary to strengthen coordination between all levels, branches, political organizations and mass organizations to effectively implement ethnic policies, propaganda activities and mobilize the people to implement the national policy, policies of the Party, laws of the State; the implementation of the provisions of the law on marriage and family; annually conduct preliminary and final reviews of the implementation of the Scheme, put a number of sanctions solutions into the conventions, and sign an undertaking not to violate child marriage and near-blood marriage between households with the village, between the village and the commune People’s Committee.

In addition, it is necessary to strengthen the coordination of associations and mass organizations in order to mobilize members to help each other in economic development, hunger eradication and poverty reduction, building prosperous, happy and progressive families; fight against social evils; strengthen education in schools about the consequences and harms of child marriage and near-blood marriage, and at the same time fight against backward views in their families and in the community to overcome, eliminate this evil.

In order to effectively realize these goals, people in charge of ethnic affairs in Hanoi need to thoroughly grasp and well implement Resolution No. 21-NQ/TW dated October 25th, 2017 of the 6th meeting of the 12th Party Central Committee on population work in the new situation. Along with that is to improve professional capacity for officials and civil servants engaged in ethnic affairs to participate in the implementation of the Scheme; promote the role of the Fatherland Front, the Youth Union, the Women’s Union, socio-political organizations, village heads, and reputable people in ethnic minority areas to participate in propaganda and mobilization of ethnic minorities abolishing backward customs and preventing child marriage and near-blood marriage.

It is indispensable to provide care for reproductive health/family planning, reproductive

health for adolescents and young adults, and maternal and child health in the community; organize counseling for minors - young people, students in ethnic minority areas about safe and healthy sex, teenage pregnancy and childbirth...; organize training and fostering of legal knowledge and skills in communication, advocacy, and legal consultancy on marriage and family among ethnic minorities; supporting the provision of documents and related communication products on marriage and family to organizations and individuals involved in propagandizing and preventing child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas.

Along with that, it is also necessary to strengthen international cooperation, mobilize aid and other legal financial sources to join hands to increase resources for the implementation of the Scheme.

5. Discussion

It can be seen that the results achieved after 05 years of implementing the Scheme “Reducing child marriage and near-blood marriage in ethnic minority areas” (period of 2015 - 2020) of Hanoi have shown the continuous efforts of ethnic minority workers in a field that can be considered difficult in ethnic minority and mountainous areas in general. It is a foundation and advantage to improve the quality of the population and the quality of human resources in the capital's ethnic minority areas, serving sustainable poverty reduction and socio-economic development. Solutions and orientations for the period of 2021 - 2025 are also quite feasible and suitable to the socio-economic conditions of the ethnic minority areas in Hanoi. However, in order to soon reach the goal of “basically preventing and repelling child marriage and near-blood marriage by 2025”, localities where ethnic minorities are living need to be supported

some of the following conditions:

1. Increase additional budget sources for infrastructure investment, economic restructuring to increase income; strengthening cultural institutions, restoring, preserving and promoting good traditional cultural values of ethnic minorities, creating conditions for the people to have many community cultural activities, step by step improve the quality of life level, awareness in all aspects for people in ethnic minority areas, including legal awareness.

2. Continue to strengthen the organization of training conferences and professional exchanges on legal propaganda for officials working in direct consultation from the district to grassroots level, promptly replicate intervention models to reduce rates child marriage and near-blood marriage are highly effective.

3. To increase funding for regular organization of law propaganda conferences and contests to learn the law directly in communes, villages and hamlets in ethnic minority areas.

6. Conclusion

Through analyzing the situation of child marriage and the speed of socio-economic development in ethnic minority areas in Hanoi, the article has proposed some solutions to contribute to the successful implementation of the goal of ending child marriage in Hanoi by 2025. This is a very practical issue because it is directly related to the quality of population and quality of human resources in ethnic minority areas. Thoroughly solving the situation of child marriage is one of the solutions to reduce poverty, promote gender equality and human rights, as well as maintain the sustainability of socio-economic development for the community and country.

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GIẢM THIỂU TẢO HÔN VÀ HÔN NHÂN CẬN HUYẾT THÔNG TẠI THÀNH PHỐ HÀ NỘI

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Quyết định 498/QĐ-TTg ngày 14/4/2015 phê duyệt Đề án “Giảm thiểu tình trạng tảo hôn và hôn nhân cận huyết thống trong vùng dân tộc thiểu số giai đoạn 2015 - 2025” đã xác định rõ mục tiêu: “Đến năm 2025 cơ bản ngăn chặn, đẩy lùi tình trạng tảo hôn và hôn nhân cận huyết thống trong vùng dân tộc thiểu số, góp phần nâng cao chất lượng dân số và nguồn nhân lực vùng dân tộc thiểu số”. Tại các xã vùng dân tộc thiểu số của thành phố Hà Nội, vấn đề này đã được quan tâm và nỗ lực thực hiện, do đó đến cuối năm 2020, hiện tượng hôn nhân cận huyết thống không còn, song tình trạng tảo hôn vẫn diễn ra dai dẳng. Thông qua phân tích thực trạng tảo hôn và nguyên nhân cũng như hệ lụy của tảo hôn ở vùng dân tộc thiểu số Hà Nội, bài viết đưa ra một số giải pháp nhằm góp phần thực hiện thành công mục tiêu chấm dứt tình trạng tảo hôn tại thành phố Hà Nội vào năm 2025.

Từ khóa: Thành phố Hà Nội; Tảo hôn; Hôn nhân cận huyết thống; Chất lượng dân số; Chất lượng nguồn nhân lực; Phát triển kinh tế - xã hội.