**THE CURRENT SITUATION OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONSULTING, VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND JOB CREATION FOR THE ELDERLY IN HUNG YEN PROVINCE.**

(Speech and Presentation by Mr. Nguyen Duy Hy, Member of the Central Executive Committee of the Vietnam Elderly Association, Head Representative of the Elderly Association in Hung Yen Province at the Seminar)

Ladies and gentlemen,

Distinguished participants in this seminar,

Today, I am delighted and excited to attend the seminar on "**Sharing Experience in Entrepreneurship Consulting, Vocational Training, and Job Creation for the Elderly**," organized by the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training in collaboration with the Central Elderly Association of Vietnam. With the permission from the seminar's organizing committee, I would like to present on the topic "The Current Situation of Entrepreneurship Consulting, Vocational Training, and Job Creation for the Elderly in Hung Yen Province." Before delivering my speech at this seminar, on behalf of the elderly citizens of Hung Yen Province, I extend our respectful greetings and best wishes to the leaders of the Elderly Association of Vietnam, the leaders of the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training, and all distinguished seminar participants.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In my presentation on "The Current Situation of Entrepreneurship Consulting, Vocational Training, and Job Creation for the Elderly in Hung Yen Province," I will address three key points:

* An overview of the elderly population and the role and importance of the elderly according to the ideology of Ho Chi Minh and our party's perspective.
* The current situation of the elderly in Hung Yen Province and the issues related to entrepreneurship consulting, vocational training, and job creation for the elderly.
* Some solutions and recommendations to provide entrepreneurship consulting, vocational training, and job opportunities for the elderly. Specifically, I will discuss each of these points as follows:

1. An overview of the elderly population and the role and importance of the elderly according to the ideology of Ho Chi Minh and our party's perspective.

***1.1. Introduction to the elderly population:***

According to Article 2 of the Vietnamese Elderly Law approved in the 6th session of the 12th National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on November 23, 2009, **elderly people in this law refer to Vietnamese citizens aged 60 or older.** Therefore, elderly individuals are those who have reached the age of 60 or older.

Based on a report from the General Statistics Office, our country is currently experiencing a period of population aging. This means that the number of elderly people in our country is increasing annually. In 2019, the total number of elderly people in our country was 11.41 million, accounting for 11.86% of the total population. It is projected that by 2029, the total number of elderly people in our country will reach 17.27 million, accounting for 16.53% of the total population. By 2049, it is estimated that the total number of elderly people in our country will reach 28.61 million, accounting for 24.88% of the total population. By 2069, it is projected that the total number of elderly people in our country will reach 31.68 million, accounting for 27.11% of the total population.

These statistics illustrate that the number of elderly people is steadily increasing each year. This growing elderly population significantly impacts the economic development and social life of our country.

***1.2. The role and importance of the elderly according to the ideology of Ho Chi Minh and our party's perspective:***

Regarding the elderly, President Ho Chi Minh consistently held an objective, comprehensive, and accurate assessment. He rejected outdated notions about the elderly, such as "Lão lai tài tận" (Old age equals a loss of skills) or "Lão giả an chi" (Old people should rest and not be concerned with anything, they need not know anything, or participate in anything). As for him, he believe that although the elderly may not possess the same level of physical strength as when they were young, they have fundamental strengths. He believed in each elderly person and the elderly population, in their abilities, work ethic, and dedication. Therefore, President Ho Chi Minh called for and encouraged support and motivation for the elderly. President Ho Chi Minh believed that the elderly had a deep love for the country and a proud tradition of patriotism.

In his prime years, after traveling far and wide, facing numerous challenges and hardships to find ways to save the nation, President Ho Chi Minh paid great attention to senior citizens and their vital role in the revolutionary cause. On June 6, 1941, President Ho Chi Minh issued a call to "Kính cáo đồng bào" (Respectful greetings to fellow citizens) and "Lời hiệu triệu đoàn kết tất cả các bậc phụ lão" (A rallying cry to unite all elder generations) to urge all fellow citizens, regardless of their class, age, or occupation, to unite against imperialists and traitors, safeguard the nation's interests, and struggle for independence and freedom for our homeland.

In his address, President Ho Chi Minh elevated the role of the elderly to the highest level. In his call, he wrote, "Hỡi các bậc phụ huynh! Hỡi các bậc hiền nhân, chí sĩ! Hỡi các bạn sĩ, nông, công, thương, binh"... (Dear elder generations, honorable citizens, patriots, scholars, farmers, workers, traders, and soldiers). He highlighted the heroic examples of Vietnamese people throughout history and hoped that they would serve as inspirations for today's generations. In "Kính cáo đồng bào," President Ho Chi Minh emphasized the importance of senior citizens, placing them at the forefront of the movement. He stated, "Hỡi các bậc phụ huynh! Hỡi các bậc hiền nhân, chí sĩ! Hỡi các bạn sĩ, nông, công, thương, binh"... (Dear elder generations, honorable citizens, patriots, scholars, farmers, workers, traders, and soldiers). He set forth the heroic examples of the Vietnamese nation through various historical periods and... 'I hope that you will emulate the examples of our elders during the Tran dynasty, who, in the face of the Mongol invaders, fervently encouraged the younger generations to participate in the national salvation mission...'. In the 'Opening words of uniting all our elders,' he wrote, 'Our elders' responsibility towards the mission of our country is truly of paramount importance. A prosperous nation is built by our elders; a nation survives with the help of our elders. When our country is in peril, our elders come to its rescue. When our nation faces decline, our elders provide counsel. In times of prosperity or decline, our elders bear a heavy responsibility. When the Mongols were ruthlessly aggressive, when the Ming invaders intruded upon our borders, the dynasties of that time, such as Tran Hung Dao and Le Thai To, urgently summoned our elders to strategize against the invaders, leading to the successful construction of our nation. It was thanks to our elders' calls, encouragement, and motivation that we achieved great victories..

President Ho Chi Minh believed that senior citizens were trustworthy. In addition to their love for the country, the elderly possessed knowledge, experience, and diverse skills, making significant contributions to their families and society. Therefore, the elderly were respected and trusted by the people. President Ho Chi Minh asserted that in the eyes of the community and relatives, the elderly are highly trusted. President Ho Chi Minh recognized that the actions and words of the elderly held great influence “A word from the elderly can influence the prosperity of the nation; an action of the elderly can affect the fight against the enemy. When the elderly call, the people respond, and when the elderly act, the people follow suit”.

Regarding families, President Ho Chi Minh believed that the elderly had the responsibility of being role models, setting an example for the younger generations. He said, "Phụ lão có trọng trách là bậc tôn trưởng" (The elderly have the responsibility of being esteemed elders).

President Ho Chi Minh believed that "Tuổi cao chí khí càng cao" (With age comes even greater determination). He acknowledged the crucial role that senior citizens played in the revolutionary cause of the nation. He wrote:

"Tuổi cao chí khí càng cao

Chống Mỹ cứu nước già nào kém ai"

(With age comes even greater determination

In the fight against the United States, which elderly person falls behind?)

"Tuổi già nhưng chí không già

Góp phần xây dựng nước nhà Việt Nam"

(Despite being old, their determination remains strong

They contribute to building our Vietnamese homeland)

In response to President Ho Chi Minh's call, millions of senior citizens united and joined the Viet Minh Front to build revolutionary bases, establish the armed forces of the Party, nurture revolutionary cadres, engage in logistics work, and participate in the August Revolution in 1945. They played a significant role in securing power for the people, leading to the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam—the first people's democratic state in Southeast Asia. Subsequently, alongside all segments of the population, senior citizens actively participated in the protracted struggle of the nation against French colonialists and achieved the historic victory of Dien Bien Phu in 1954 (which resonated across five continents), fully liberating the North. They continued the fight against the imperialist United States and its puppet regimes, eventually achieving the complete liberation of the South and the reunification of the country in 1975.

Under the leadership of the Party, elderly people in Vietnam continue to make significant contributions to the construction of socialism and the defense of the Fatherland, especially during the 37 years of carrying out the country's renovation initiated and led by the Party.

With the significant and effective contributions of successive generations of elderly people throughout the revolutionary periods, Vietnam's elderly generations deserve the 18 golden words bestowed upon them by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam: "The older one gets, the higher their spirit, setting a shining example for the cause of building and defending the Fatherland."

*In summary: This report provides an overview of the elderly population and presents the views of President Ho Chi Minh and our Party regarding the elderly population. It highlights that the elderly population in our country is growing compared to the overall population. The elderly are a generation that came before, gave birth to the younger generation, and possess extensive life experience, credibility, and have made significant contributions to the revolutionary struggle for national liberation as well as in the development and defense of the Fatherland, particularly in crucial social aspects, notably economic development. Therefore, the elderly in our country need to be advised on entrepreneurship, vocational training, and job creation to escape poverty and contribute to the continuous prosperity and civilization of the nation.*

**2. The Situation Regarding the Elderly in Hung Yen Province and the Issue of Entrepreneurship, Vocational Training, and Job Creation for the Elderly in Hung Yen Province.**

***2.1. The Situation Regarding the Elderly in Hung Yen Province.***

In Hung Yen Province, the number of elderly people is increasing annually. In 2019, the total number of elderly people in the province was 184,315, accounting for 14.71% of the total population of the province (1,252,731 people). It is projected that by 2030, the total number of elderly people in our province will reach 260,040, accounting for 19.27% of the total provincial population.

Within the province, the number of elderly people is significant, and there are also organizations of the Elderly Association at all levels with over 22.5 thousand members, including approximately 25 thousand members aged 55 to under 60. Among the 22.5 thousand Elderly Association members in the province, about 75% (approximately 16.8 thousand members) are aged between 55 and under 70, and they are still in good health, actively participating in economic development.

Presenting some statistics on the elderly population in Hung Yen Province, it is evident that the number of elderly people and members of the Elderly Association in the province is steadily increasing each year. This is a significant force to harness the role of the elderly and elderly association members in economic development and in various aspects of social life, contributing significantly to the socio-economic development of the province.

*This also demonstrates that elderly people in Hung Yen Province need to be provided with guidance on entrepreneurship, vocational training, and job creation to escape poverty and enrich themselves genuinely, thereby contributing to the development of the local economy, making Hung Yen Province increasingly prosperous and civilized.*

***2.2. The Situation Regarding the Issue of Entrepreneurship, Vocational Training, and Job Creation for the Elderly in Hung Yen Province.***

* *For the levels of the Elderly Association in the province*:

+ Every year, at the beginning of the year, during the conference summarizing the previous year's Elderly Association activities and outlining the tasks for the next year, the Elderly Association at all levels in Hung Yen Province launches a campaign called "Elderly Age - Bright Example." This campaign aims to promote the role of elderly association members in various aspects of social life, including encouraging active participation in economic development to alleviate poverty, enrich families, and contribute to the socio-economic development of local communities within the province.

Every five years, the Elderly Association at all levels in the province organizes a conference to commend members who have excelled in economic activities. From 2012 to the present, the Provincial Elderly Association has organized three such conferences to commend members who have excelled in economic activities (in 2012, summarizing the 5-year period and commending members who excelled in economic activities from 2007 to 2012; in 2017, summarizing the 5-year period and commending members who excelled in economic activities from 2012 to 2017; in 2022, summarizing the 5-year period and commending members who excelled in economic activities from 2017 to 2022).

+ Since 2017, in accordance with Government Decision No. 1533/QD-TTg dated August 2, 2016, Government Decision No. 1336/QD-TTg dated August 31, 2020, and other decisions of the People's Committee of Hung Yen Province, the Provincial Elderly Association has collaborated with the Elderly Association representatives at district, town, and city levels to work with Party Committees and local authorities to establish 56 Self-Help Generation Clubs with 2,910 members. These Self-Help Generation Clubs have a total income growth fund of 4,595 million VND. With this amount, the Self-Help Generation Clubs have provided loans to over 700 members (ranging from 5 to 10 million VND per member) for production, business, and services to improve their livelihoods.

Every year, each Self-Help Generation Club conducts four sessions of economic development communication to help members enhance their awareness, especially those who have borrowed funds to ensure the effective use of the borrowed capital. These Self-Help Generation Clubs often share information on pricing strategies, experiences in cultivating longans, growing high-quality bananas, poultry and pigeon farming techniques, and more.

+ In the "Elderly Age - Bright Example" campaign within the economic development sector, tens of thousands of elderly people in the province have actively participated in economic development to alleviate poverty and achieve meaningful prosperity, significantly contributing to the socio-economic development of grassroots areas. Among these elderly individuals participating in economic development, thousands have excelled in production and business, providing employment opportunities for thousands of laborers, including elderly individuals with significant contributions who have gained employment and stable income. Examples include Mr. Truong Huy Hoi, a member of the Elderly Association in Tho Vinh commune, Kim Dong district, Hung Yen province, who established an LLC with 112 employees, including 63 people with disabilities, earning monthly incomes of 5 to 6 million VND each; Mr. Nguyen Cong Thang, a member of the Elderly Association in Nhue Duong commune, Khoai Chau district, Hung Yen province, who operates a construction materials business, providing jobs for 25 employees with monthly incomes of 8 to 10 million VND each; Mr. Cao Huy Trang, a member of the Elderly Association in Tan Quang commune, Van Lam district, Hung Yen province, who operates an agricultural supplies business, serving local farmers and providing jobs for 15 to 20 employees, earning monthly incomes exceeding 10 million VND each.

* *For the levels of the Women's Union in the province:*

Over the past few years, from 2017 to the present, Women's Unions at all levels in Hung Yen Province have implemented the "Supporting Women's Entrepreneurship Project for the 2017-2025 period." The Provincial Women's Union has designated June 28th as Women's Entrepreneurship Day in Hung Yen Province. According to the reports from the Provincial Women's Union over the past five years (2017-2022), Women's Unions at all levels in the province have organized 76 training courses to enhance the capacity of 5,042 specialized union officers and women interested in entrepreneurship. This includes elderly women in skills related to supporting women's entrepreneurship, idea selection for entrepreneurial activities in production and business, business planning, brand building, trade promotion, product promotion, and access to credit. Women's Unions at all levels in the province have also organized hundreds of conferences and talks on implementing women's entrepreneurship initiatives, propagating entrepreneurship in production, business, and services to 104,571 union officers and members, including elderly women.

To implement the Women's Entrepreneurship Project, the provincial budget has provided 1 billion VND to Women's Unions at all levels in the province to offer loans to women union members for developing production, business, and services. Women's Unions at all levels have also collaborated with social policy banks to provide loans to 5,910 women entrepreneurs, with a total amount of 262.926 billion VND, including elderly women union members.

* *For the various levels of Farmer's Association in the province:*

In recent times, the Farmer's Associations at different levels in the province have initiated and intensified the movement to encourage skilled agricultural and business production by farmers. To create favorable conditions for active participation in this movement by Farmer's Association members, Hung Yen province has established a fund to support farmers. According to the report of the provincial Farmer's Association, as of June 15, 2023, the total capital of the Fund to support farmers at various levels in the province is 96,229.08 million Vietnamese Dong (including 18,400 million Dong from the Central Fund, 55,510 million Dong from the provincial fund, 16,149.77 million Dong from the district fund, and 6,169.31 million Dong from the commune fund). The Central Fund has provided loans to 340 households for the implementation of 34 projects. The provincial fund has provided loans to 1,046 households with an amount of 55,510 million Dong for the implementation of 102 projects in cultivation, animal husbandry, aquaculture, services, and traditional crafts. The district fund has provided loans to 640 households with 20,708.87 million Dong. Among the recipients are elderly Farmer's Association members. Additionally, Farmer's Associations at various levels in the province have collaborated with the Social Policy Bank to provide loans to 23,287 Farmer's Association members, totaling 1,253,367 million Dong, including elderly Farmer's Association members, to create employment opportunities and support the development of production and business.

* *For the Veteran's Association in the province*:

According to the report of the provincial Veteran's Association in Hung Yen, in recent times, the Veteran's Associations at various levels in the province have also actively promoted the movement to "Uphold the tradition of Uncle Ho's soldiers, help each other develop the economy, reduce poverty, and enrich ourselves," contributing to the economic development at grassroots levels. In this movement, the Veteran's Associations at different levels in the province have utilized various sources of funding (from the Social Policy Bank and contributions from members) to provide loans for production and business development to their members, including 323,561 million Dong from the Social Policy Bank and loans provided to 6,517 households of Veteran's Association members, including many elderly veterans. Additionally, there were 38,525 million Dong contributed by Veteran's Association members, and loans provided to 3,188 Veteran's Association members, including many elderly veterans.

*In summary, in Hung Yen province, only the Women's Union has implemented the Project to support women's startups, while political and social organizations, as well as mass organizations, have focused on building funds to provide loans for their members to create employment opportunities, including elderly members, for the development of production, business, and services. This aims to help lift families out of poverty, contribute to local economic development at the grassroots level.*

**3. Some solutions and recommendations for providing guidance, vocational training, and job creation for the elderly**.

*3.1. Some solutions for the elderly in Hung Yen province to start businesses, receive vocational training, and create jobs for economic development.*

* State management agencies such as the Department of Industry and Trade, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Cooperative Alliances, etc., in provinces and cities should allocate budgets annually to support the elderly in starting businesses, receiving vocational training, and creating jobs for workers, especially for members of political and social organizations, mass organizations, including elderly members. Particular attention should be paid to organizing skill classes to support the elderly in starting businesses, selecting business startup ideas, business planning skills, brand building, trade promotion, product introduction, and access to credit.
* The Elderly Association should actively explore funding sources (from the budget, bank funds, especially the Social Policy Bank, and funds for elderly care and development) to organize advisory classes for startup, vocational training, and job creation for Elderly Association members, especially for those aged 55 to under 70 years old (members in this age group are generally healthy and capable of economic development).
* Strengthen the dissemination of information on entrepreneurship, vocational training, and job creation for Elderly Association members, promote effective entrepreneurial, vocational training, and job creation models for the elderly through various communication channels, especially through mass media and channels tailored to the elderly audience, to encourage and inspire the elderly to use funding for entrepreneurship, vocational training, and effective job creation.
* Regularly organize conferences to summarize and honor individuals, officials, and elderly association members who have made significant contributions and achievements in entrepreneurship, vocational training, and job creation for the elderly.

*3.2. Recommendations:*

To create favorable conditions for the elderly to participate in entrepreneurship, vocational training, and job creation in the coming time, in addition to the above solutions, I would like to propose the following:

* After this seminar, the Vietnam Elderly Association Central Committee should coordinate with central ministries, departments, and agencies to propose policies to the government to support the elderly in entrepreneurship, vocational training, and job creation. The Vietnam Elderly Association Central Committee should actively develop a fund for the care and promotion of the role of the elderly at the central level. Annually, allocate funding from this fund to support the elderly's participation in entrepreneurship, vocational training, and job creation (this funding should be allocated from the fund for promoting the role of the elderly in economic development).
* The Vietnam Elderly Association Central Committee should work with the Vietnam Bank for Social Policy to direct the banks in provinces and cities to allow the elderly to borrow capital for entrepreneurship and vocational training, enabling them to create jobs.

Above is the report on "***The Current Situation of Providing Guidance for Entrepreneurship, Vocational Training, and Job Creation for the Elderly in Hung Yen Province"*** presented at the Workshop. Finally, I wish all delegates to the Workshop and their families good health, happiness, security, and prosperity. I wish the Seminar great success. Thank you very much.