

The Movement For New Rural Development In Thai Nguyen: Current Status And Proposed Solutions

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Abstract

Thai Nguyen, a midland and mountainous province in Northern Vietnam, holds a strategic position in the socio-economic development of the Northern midland and mountainous region. In the early years of the reform period, the province faced numerous challenges due to a low starting point, underdeveloped rural infrastructure, a high poverty rate, and adverse impacts from natural conditions. In response, the Party Committee and the diverse ethnic communities of Thai Nguyen demonstrated strong unity, harnessed internal resources, and progressively realized the Party's reform policies. After 25 years of reform (1986–2010), Thai Nguyen achieved significant progress in rural development. Leveraging its substantial agricultural potential and abundant labor force, the province proactively implemented the National Target Program for New Rural Development across the 2010–2020 and 2021–2025 phases. The results indicate that numerous communes have met new rural standards; infrastructure has improved; residents' living standards have risen; and sectors such as education, healthcare, culture, and the environment have seen notable advancements. The grassroots political system has also been strengthened. However, the implementation process has faced challenges: uneven progress across areas, difficulties in meeting certain criteria—particularly in remote and isolated regions—unstable infrastructure quality and household incomes, and limitations in vocational training and job creation for rural labor. Consequently, studying and evaluating the current state of new rural development in Thai Nguyen is essential to propose effective solutions for the future.

Keywords: Thai Nguyen, farmers, agriculture, rural areas, new rural development

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I. Introduction

The Communist Party of Vietnam and the Vietnamese State have consistently upheld the critical role of agriculture, farmers, and rural areas in the nation's development process. This perspective is clearly articulated in Resolution No. 26-NQ/TW, issued on August 5, 2008, by the Central Committee of the Communist Party, which affirms: "Agriculture, farmers, and rural areas hold a strategic position in the cause of industrialization and modernization; they serve as the foundation and a critical force in promoting sustainable socio-economic development, maintaining political stability, ensuring national defense and security, preserving and promoting national cultural values, and protecting the ecological environment."

Building on this understanding, numerous specific policies and guidelines have been issued to orient and effectively implement the national target program for new rural development. Notable among these are Decision No. 491/QĐ-TTg, dated April 16, 2009, establishing the National Criteria for New Rural Development; Decision No. 800/QĐ-TTg, dated June 4, 2010, approving the program for the 2010–2020 phase; and subsequent amendments in Decision No. 342/QĐ-TTg (2013), Decision No. 1980/QĐ-TTg (2016), and Decision No. 2540/QĐ-TTg (late 2016), aimed at enhancing the quality of criteria, integrating infrastructure, environment, and culture, and promoting sustainable development. Notably, Resolution No. 19-NQ/TW (2022) of the 13th Central Committee of the Communist Party reaffirmed the critical importance of the "three rural pillars" (agriculture, farmers, and rural areas) in the context of integration and transformation, emphasizing the development of new rural areas with an ecological orientation, advanced technology application, increased agricultural product value, and environmental protection.

Recently, Decision No. 03/2024/QĐ-TTg, dated March 7, 2024, amended and supplemented certain provisions of Decision No. 18/2022/QĐ-TTg, further refining the mechanisms for evaluating and recognizing localities achieving new rural standards at various levels. These adjustments enhance the program's practical implementation, reflecting the Government's commitment to reinforcing the essential role of rural areas in the nation's development process.

Thai Nguyen province, with its advantageous position in the center of the northern midland and mountainous region, benefits from favorable natural conditions and a long-standing agricultural tradition. Through the implementation of movements such as “Thai Nguyen united in building new rural areas” during the 2010–2020 phase and the national target program for the 2021–2025 phase, the province has achieved significant results, with rural areas undergoing gradual transformation and residents’ living standards steadily improving. However, the process of new rural development in Thai Nguyen continues to face certain challenges, including regional disparities, issues of sustainable development, limited labor structure transformation, and constraints in applying technology to agriculture. Therefore, analyzing and evaluating the current implementation of the program in Thai Nguyen and proposing appropriate solutions are pressing needs, holding both theoretical and practical significance in the context of contemporary agricultural and rural development.

II. Main content

2.1. Data sources and research methodology

Data sources: This study draws on documents, including texts and related research works concerning the new rural development program. Notable works include:

The monograph *New Rural Development: theoretical and practical issues* (edited by Vu Van Phuc, 2012) compiles research from various authors, primarily focusing on elucidating foundational theoretical issues and international experiences in new rural development. Based on this, the authors provide preliminary assessments of the implementation status of the New Rural Development Program in Vietnam.

Similarly, the monograph *New Rural Development in Vietnam: new vision, new organization, new steps* (To Xuan Dan and colleagues, 2013) synthesizes the state of Vietnamese agricultural development in the new context while identifying key challenges in the process of new rural development. The work proposes several strategic orientations, with particular emphasis on reforming administrative structures and coordination mechanisms among different levels of government in program implementation.

The article *New Rural Development in the spirit of opening speech of the 7th Central Committee of the X Session - some results* (Nguyen Van Quy, 2018) analyzed the political and ideological foundations derived from Party and State resolutions, thereby summarizing achievements and remaining issues in the program’s implementation. The author also recommends solutions to enhance the program’s effectiveness in subsequent phases.

In addition to comprehensive studies, numerous works have delved into practical experiences in specific localities. For instance, the article *Successes and Lessons from New Rural Development in Hanoi* (Tran Minh Tri, 2018) examines the factors contributing to the capital’s remarkable results. Meanwhile, *Bac Giang Province: Leveraging the role of political-social organizations in mobilizing people for new rural development* (Bui Van Hai, 2019) highlights the central role of grassroots political systems in rallying public participation.

Although numerous studies have focused on theoretical frameworks, international experiences, and practical implementation of new rural development in key localities, there has yet to be an in-depth study on the status and specific characteristics of the program’s implementation in Thai Nguyen Province. Addressing this gap, this article focuses on analyzing the prominent achievements and persistent challenges in the process of new rural development in Thai Nguyen, thereby proposing solutions tailored to local conditions to enhance the program’s effectiveness in the future.

Research Methodology: The study primarily employs methods of synthesis, analysis, comprehensive evaluation, and generalization.

2.2. Research results and discussion

Notable achievements in the new rural development process in Thai Nguyen

The Communist Party of Vietnam and the State of Vietnam have identified the national target program for new rural development as a strategic policy to comprehensively advance agriculture, farmers, and rural areas within the framework of the country’s industrialization and modernization. The program is designed not only to stimulate economic growth in rural areas but also to enhance the material and spiritual quality of life for rural residents, preserve traditional cultural values, and ensure sustainable development. Its core objectives include developing a synchronized and modern infrastructure system; restructuring the agricultural sector in alignment with suitable production models; promoting sustainable rural urbanization; protecting natural resources and the ecological environment; and strengthening national defense, security, and social order. The program places significant emphasis on improving rural residents’ income and living conditions while reinforcing the community’s central role in the development process. Through the synchronized implementation of these objectives, the program lays the foundation for comprehensive rural development and contributes to narrowing the development gap between rural and urban areas, thereby affirming the pivotal role of rural areas in the nation’s sustainable development strategy.

Thai Nguyen province spans a natural area of approximately 3,536.4 km², with a population of around 1,391,000 (according to 2024 statistical data). The rural population constitutes a significant proportion, with over 60% residing in rural areas, underscoring the critical role of agriculture and rural development in the province’s socio-

economic structure. Administratively, Thai Nguyen is divided into nine district-level units, including three cities and six districts, encompassing a total of 172 commune-level administrative units, including communes, wards, and townships. The province enjoys a favorable geographical position in the northern midland and mountainous region, adjacent to the capital city of Hanoi, serving as a key transportation hub while possessing substantial potential for agricultural development, agro-processing industries, and new rural development (General Statistics Office, 2024).

Based on the Party's strategic directives and the Government's action programs for new rural development, the Thai Nguyen provincial people's council issued Resolution No. 10/2011/NQ-HDND on December 8, 2011, approving the "Master plan for socio-economic development of rural areas in Thai Nguyen province for the 2011–2020 period, with a vision to 2030." The resolution outlines a clear orientation for in-depth rural development, shifting from a growth model based on quantity to one prioritizing quality, efficiency, and sustainability. Central to this approach is the role of farmers as both implementers and direct beneficiaries of the development process. During the program's implementation, Thai Nguyen proactively adjusted policies to align with local realities while effectively mobilizing and utilizing financial resources from the state budget and community contributions. Notably, the restructuring of the agricultural sector, closely tied to new rural development, has been implemented comprehensively, emphasizing the development of key agricultural products for commercial markets and the application of scientific and technological advances. This has provided a foundation for establishing advanced and model new rural development frameworks (Thai Nguyen Provincial people's council, 2011).

Following the directives of the Government and central authorities, the Thai Nguyen provincial people's committee has implemented the national target program for new rural development for the 2021–2025 period, based on regulatory documents such as government decree No. 27/2022/ND-CP dated April 19, 2022, and Prime Ministerial Decision No. 263/QĐ-TTg dated February 22, 2022, approving the program for the 2021–2025 phase, alongside relevant resolutions of Thai Nguyen province.

The implementation plan for the national target program for new rural development in Thai Nguyen for the 2021–2025 period outlines key objectives, including achieving new rural standards for an additional eight communes, bringing the total proportion of communes meeting new rural standards to 97% (out of 172 communes) and improving the quality of criteria in communes already recognized as meeting these standards. Each commune is targeted to achieve 15–16 criteria, with the provincial average reaching 15.5–16 criteria per commune. Thai Nguyen also aims to develop two communes meeting advanced new rural standards, increasing the total proportion of advanced new rural communes to 40%, and strives for 10% of communes to achieve model new rural standards.

The province is also focused on maintaining and enhancing the quality of criteria in communes already recognized as meeting new rural, advanced new rural, and model new rural standards, while promoting the development of products under the "One Commune, One Product" (OCOP) program. The target is to have at least 12 products rated three stars or higher, including at least one product achieving five-star status.

Through the concerted efforts of the Provincial Party Committee, the provincial people's committee, and the entire population of Thai Nguyen in implementing new rural development since 2010, the program has yielded numerous significant achievements:

Firstly, the new rural development program in Thai Nguyen province has been implemented comprehensively across the province, with numerous communes successfully achieving new rural standards.

On November 10, 2019, the Thai Nguyen provincial people's committee organized a conference to review 10 years of implementing the national target program for new rural development and the "Thai Nguyen building new rural areas" movement for the 2010–2020 period. By the end of 2020, 85 out of 172 communes in the province had achieved new rural standards, with an average of 13.2 criteria per commune, marking an increase of 9.3 criteria per commune compared to 2011. Additionally, 10 communes had attained advanced new rural standards. In 2011, communes across the province averaged only 5 criteria per commune, with the highest-performing commune reaching 12 criteria. At that time, the average rural household income was approximately 13 million VND per person per year, and the poverty rate stood at 30%. Despite these challenges, the province faced significant socio-economic limitations, particularly the lack of synchronized infrastructure and services, which posed difficulties for a portion of the rural population.

As of 2011, only 3 out of 172 communes in the province had approved plans for the New Rural Development Program. However, by the end of 2013, all communes had completed their general planning approvals, marked a significant milestone and positioned Thai Nguyen as one of the earliest provinces in the region to fulfill the planning criterion. Furthermore, communes in the province developed and implemented new rural development proposals and production development proposals, mobilizing a total capital of 3,500 billion VND, including 600 billion VND contributed by local communities.

By 2024, Thai Nguyen had 118 out of 172 communes achieving new rural standards (a rate of 93.6%), with 28 communes meeting advanced new rural standards (22.2%) and 8 communes attaining model new rural standards (6.3%) (thainguyen.gov.vn).

Secondly, socio-economic development in the province has progressed, with improvements in residents' income and quality of life.

The ultimate goal of the new rural development program is to enhance the quality of life and promote comprehensive development for rural communities. After a decade of implementation, Thai Nguyen has recorded tangible achievements, reflected in significant transformations in socio-economic conditions. The average per capita income in rural areas increased from 13 million VND in 2010 to 45 million VND per person per year in 2020. The poverty rate decreased from 22.5% to 8.3%, and the proportion of trained labor saw notable progress, rising from 32% in 2010 to 58% in 2020 (Thai Nguyen Statistics Office, 2021).

The Thai Nguyen provincial party committee has effectively leveraged the potential and strengths of agriculture, particularly in promoting sustainable and clean agricultural practices integrated with the new rural development process. Agriculture remains a cornerstone of the province's economy, significantly contributing to improving rural livelihoods. The restructuring of the agricultural sector, aligned with new rural development, has yielded positive results, with a reduction in the area dedicated to staple crops and an increase in high-value economic crops. The province has also prioritized the development of specialty crop regions, adhering to safe production standards. Policies to encourage investment and support the development of cooperatives, production linkages, and agricultural product consumption have been vigorously implemented.

By the end of 2023, Thai Nguyen had 100 OCOP products rated three stars or higher, alongside the establishment of 20 production and consumption linkage chains. These chains have not only improved product quality but also expanded market access. Key products such as Thai Nguyen tea, glutinous rice, Canh oranges, and Dien pomelos have met export standards and are consumed in both domestic and international markets, establishing strong brands and enhancing the competitiveness of the province's agricultural products.

To support production development, Thai Nguyen has allocated hundreds of billions of VND annually from the state budget to implement agricultural development programs and proposals, such as the "Agricultural Extension Development" proposal, the "Livestock Development" proposal, and the "Innovation in Production Organization Models" proposal. Funding for the program has come not only from the state budget but also from community and social organization contributions. The province has also emphasized production organization through models such as cooperatives, cooperative groups, and craft villages. By 2020, the province had 820 farms, 380 cooperatives (including 250 agricultural cooperatives), and 1,600 enterprises, of which 35 operated in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries (Thai Nguyen Statistics Office, 2021). These entities have played a crucial role in enhancing production efficiency, processing, and commercializing agricultural products, contributing to the province's sustainable development.

Thirdly, rural infrastructure has been significantly improved.

Thai Nguyen has proactively implemented flexible investment support mechanisms tailored to local conditions, optimizing resource mobilization. This has facilitated the establishment of new residential areas and modern urbanization. The expansion and upgrading of transportation and irrigation infrastructure have been pivotal to the province's socio-economic development. Key transportation projects, including Cai Dan Bridge, Tan Thai Bridge, the Hanoi–Thai Nguyen Expressway, and arterial roads connecting industrial zones and border gates, have been completed. The completion of border roads has also strengthened intra- and inter-provincial economic linkages. Notably, the rural transportation infrastructure development movement has achieved significant milestones, with 80% of roads to commune centers paved by 2020, representing a 15% increase compared to 2015 (Thai Nguyen Statistics Office, 2021).

Irrigation systems and domestic water supply have been invested in systematically and modernized to meet the needs of agricultural production and residents' daily lives. By the end of 2020, 98% of the urban population had access to clean water, a 3.5% increase from 2015, while 92% of the rural population used hygienic water, an 11% improvement from previous years (Thai Nguyen Statistics Office, 2021). Additionally, all commune-level administrative units in the province were connected to the national power grid, with 98% of rural households having access to electricity.

In education, the province completed the construction and upgrading of infrastructure, including 360 new classrooms, 80 functional rooms, and other auxiliary facilities. In culture, 85% of communes established commune-level cultural institutions, and 98% of villages had cultural houses. The healthcare sector also saw significant improvements through the construction and renovation of 140 commune health stations, enhancing the quality of community healthcare services. The proportion of rural households using hygienic domestic water increased substantially from 78% in 2011 to 92% in 2020 (Thai Nguyen Statistics Office, 2021). These achievements have not only markedly improved residents' quality of life but also contributed to socio-economic development and the modernization of Thai Nguyen's rural areas.

Fourthly, the sectors of education, healthcare, culture, and environmental protection have shown significant progress.

The quality of education in Thai Nguyen has improved markedly in recent years, as evidenced by the expansion of school infrastructure to enhance access to education in remote and isolated areas. The socialization of education has been promoted through diverse approaches tailored to the province's unique socio-economic context.

Concurrently, effective career guidance and student streaming initiatives have been implemented, focusing on nurturing and enhancing the quality of human resources to meet development demands. Statistics indicate that the province annually supplies approximately 20,000 trained workers, of which 13,000 hold vocational certificates. The proportion of trained labor increased from 48% in 2015 to 62% in 2020, with the vocational training rate rising from 40% to 52% (Thai Nguyen Statistics Office, 2021).

By 2023, Thai Nguyen recorded 310 out of 720 educational institutions meeting national standards, while achieving the target of 220 commune-level administrative units fulfilling national healthcare criteria. Key health indicators also improved, with a density of 13.3 doctors and 37 hospital beds per 10,000 people. Health insurance coverage reached 92%, reflecting enhanced access to quality healthcare and education services, significantly improving residents' quality of life, particularly in the context of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic (Thai Nguyen Statistics Office, 2021).

The new rural development program has had multifaceted impacts on the cultural landscape of rural Thai Nguyen, requiring a balance between preserving traditional cultural values and facilitating economic growth. The province has proactively implemented cultural movements such as "All people unite to build a cultural life" and the campaign "Building new rural areas and civilized urban areas" to harmonize the preservation of cultural heritage with adaptation to contemporary societal development. These efforts have been effectively carried out by local communities, contributing to the maintenance and development of cultural values through over 1,000 community art clubs and performance groups. Additionally, adherence to civilized standards in social events has helped shape a distinctive cultural identity for the province.

Alongside cultural policies, environmental protection has been prioritized in the New Rural Development process in Thai Nguyen. Active community participation in environmental protection movements has significantly contributed to the establishment of advanced new rural communes and model residential areas with sustainable environmental practices. By the end of 2019, 72 out of 250 communes in the province had met environmental criteria, demonstrating initial successes in environmental protection and enhancing community living standards. These efforts are pivotal in creating a sustainable living environment and improving living conditions for Thai Nguyen's residents (Thai Nguyen Statistics Office, 2021).

Fifthly, the political-social organization system, security, and social order have been strengthened.

To build a robust political-social organization system, commune-level administrative units in Thai Nguyen have proactively implemented reforms and enhanced the operational efficiency of grassroots Party organizations. Training and capacity-building for cadres have been conducted systematically, aiming to improve leadership and management capabilities to meet the demands of the new context. Quantitative results show that by the end of 2020, all communes in the province had achieved the goal of strengthening their political-social systems, thereby optimizing leadership effectiveness and advancing local socio-economic development.

Efforts to ensure security and social order in Thai Nguyen have been implemented proactively and creatively, yielding positive outcomes. Enhanced legal education and awareness campaigns have increased community compliance with the law, fostering high social consensus. As a result, security in rural areas has been maintained stably and sustainably.

Additionally, Thai Nguyen has proactively implemented crime prevention campaigns, strengthened security monitoring, and developed contingency plans for potential scenarios. Particular emphasis has been placed on ensuring economic security, commercial security, and tourism security. Consequently, crime rates have been controlled, and investigation efficiency has improved, with a case resolution rate of 97%, including the thorough resolution of serious cases (Thai Nguyen Statistics Office, 2023).

Despite these positive outcomes, the new rural development program in Thai Nguyen still faces several limitations that need to be addressed:

Firstly, the implementation progress of the new rural development program in Thai Nguyen has been slow, with some set targets unmet. Infrastructure systems, particularly transportation and environmental infrastructure, still face numerous shortcomings. Mobilizing investment resources for the program continues to encounter significant challenges, resulting in essential infrastructure projects, such as the paving of transportation routes, failing to meet required technical standards. Additionally, cultural facilities have not yet reached national standards, and the proportion of communes meeting environmental criteria remains low and lacks sustainability. The effectiveness of mobilizing resources from businesses and communities for new rural development goals has also fallen short of expectations.

Secondly, although there have been positive changes in improving residents' living standards, the quality of life for a portion of Thai Nguyen's rural population remains relatively low, and agricultural production efficiency has not matched its potential. Production models remain fragmented and small-scale, with limited integration of scientific and technological advancements, hindering the modernization of farming practices. Furthermore, preserving and promoting traditional cultural values faces numerous obstacles. Data from the 2020 living standards survey by the General Statistics Office indicate that Thai Nguyen remains among the provinces with low per capita income, while living costs tend to be high, placing pressure on residents' lives, particularly in rural areas.

Thirdly, in the field of vocational training, the quality of training for Thai Nguyen's rural labor force still has certain limitations, failing to fully meet the requirements of a modern agricultural economy. Statistics from 2020 estimate the province's working-age labor force at approximately 530,000 people, with only 22% holding formal qualifications or vocational certificates. Notably, the proportion of rural workers with vocational skills is only 16%, significantly lower than the 45% in urban areas (Thai Nguyen Statistics Office, 2021). This indicates that the rural labor force primarily relies on traditional experience, with limited access to advanced production methods.

Despite efforts to invest in infrastructure and develop production models, development remains uneven across regions and has not fully met the demands of a market economy.

The new rural development program in Thai Nguyen has achieved several positive results, as demonstrated by the growth of the agricultural sector and improvements in residents' quality of life. However, the program still faces significant challenges, such as regional development disparities, low labor productivity, and limited application of science and technology. Therefore, to enhance the program's effectiveness in the next phase, comprehensive solutions are needed to address these issues.

III. Proposed solutions

Based on the existing challenges in Thai Nguyen, to enhance the effectiveness of the new rural development program, the following solutions are proposed:

Firstly, intensify propaganda and mobilization efforts to raise awareness and responsibility among cadres, Party members, and residents regarding the significance, content, and objectives of the new rural development program. Propaganda should focus on specific criteria such as transportation, electricity, clean water, environment, and culture, while encouraging community participation through the "Thai Nguyen building new rural areas" movement, in line with Directive No. 10-CT/TU dated May 19, 2021, issued by the Provincial Party Standing Committee.

Secondly, strengthen leadership and direction in implementing the program's key tasks, with an emphasis on improving the quality of communes already recognized as meeting new rural standards and progressively developing advanced and model new rural communes. Regular inspections and monitoring should be conducted to maintain the quality of criteria, particularly challenging ones such as environment and cultural facilities, as guided by Decision No. 1804/QĐ-UBND dated June 20, 2022, of the Thai Nguyen Provincial People's Committee.

Thirdly, promote rural economic development in alignment with agricultural restructuring and sustainable production planning. The province should prioritize the development of key agricultural products such as Tan Cuong tea, La Hien custards, and La Bang pomelos by implementing high-tech agricultural production models, value chain linkages, and product branding. This aligns with the overarching direction of the "One Commune, One Product" (OCOP) Program, as outlined in Plan No. 78/KH-UBND dated April 15, 2022, of the Provincial People's Committee.

Fourthly, enhance the quality of healthcare, education, and rural cultural development. Thai Nguyen should focus on investing in infrastructure, equipment, and human resources for schools and commune health stations, particularly in mountainous and remote areas such as Vo Nhai and Dinh Hoa. Additionally, efforts to preserve and promote the cultural values of ethnic groups, especially ethnic minorities, should be intensified through traditional festivals, community cultural activities, and rural tourism development.

Fifthly, continue investing in and completing the rural socio-economic infrastructure system, prioritizing inter-commune transportation, production and residential infrastructure, schools, cultural houses, and clean water facilities. Resource allocation should prioritize disadvantaged localities, particularly communes yet to meet new rural standards, as specified in Resolution No. 10/2021/NQ-HĐND dated August 13, 2021, of the Thai Nguyen Provincial People's Council.

Sixthly, promote rural tourism development linked to the preservation of craft villages and cultural identity. Localities such as Hong Thai Commune (Vo Nhai), Quan Chu Commune (Dai Tu), and La Bang Commune (Dai Tu) should be oriented to develop community-based tourism models leveraging natural resources, culture, and traditional products, thereby creating livelihoods and increasing incomes for rural residents.

Seventhly, strengthen environmental protection activities and build vibrant, green, clean, and beautiful rural landscapes. The province should encourage the development of green rural models, promote awareness of sorting and treating household waste at the source, improve drainage systems, and protect water resources. These efforts are integrated into the environmental criteria implementation plans outlined in Decision No. 1804/QĐ-UBND dated June 20, 2022.

Eighthly, ensure security and social order in rural areas, particularly in remote, isolated, and border-adjacent communes. Regular activities such as preventing and mediating land disputes and community conflicts should be conducted through legal education sessions and direct dialogues with residents, fostering a stable environment for sustainable rural development.

Finally, refine mechanisms and policies to support and enhance the effectiveness of state management of the new rural development program. Thai Nguyen has issued several specific documents, such as Plan No. 164/KH-UBND dated September 19, 2022, on implementing the national target program for new rural development for the 2021–2025 period. Emphasis should be placed on integrating resources from various programs and projects, while attracting participation from enterprises, cooperatives, and communities to amplify the central role of residents in the new rural development process.

In conclusion, the new rural development process in Thai Nguyen has brought about significant transformations, contributing to the sustainable development of rural areas. Through the synchronized implementation of criteria related to infrastructure, economy, culture, environment, and social welfare, the rural landscape of Thai Nguyen has undergone notable modernization, with residents' material and spiritual lives steadily improving. Many communes have achieved new rural standards, with some localities progressing toward advanced and model new rural goals. However, alongside these achievements, the program still faces challenges, including insufficient investment resources, disparities in development levels among localities, and limited effectiveness in organizing large-scale agricultural production. These issues underscore the urgent need to adjust support policies, enhance management and operational capacity, and amplify the central role of residents in new rural development. Overall, building new rural areas in Thai Nguyen is an ongoing process requiring persistence, creativity, and close coordination among all levels, sectors, and communities. The initial results provide a solid foundation for the next phase and reflect the province's determination to achieve modern, civilized, and sustainable rural development.

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