Red tape still a major headache: poll

HÀ NỘI — A survey released yesterday showed that a large number of people still believed administrative procedures required too much paperwork (67 per cent) and that personal connections played a large part in completing procedures (73 per cent).

Nearly half of respondents said they found land-use rights related procedures the most annoying, said Jairo Acuna-Alfar, UNDP policy advisor on public administration reform and anti-corruption.

The online survey, conducted by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and online newspaper VietNamNet from June 8 to September 15, received nearly 1,500 valid responses from 63 provinces nationwide.

Participants shared their experiences in dealing with public administration and made suggestions related to administrative procedures for the next phase of public administration reform.

Half of the responses received came from centrally managed cities because of the nature of an online survey which required access to the internet and computers, Acuna-Alfar said.

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Nearly 60 per cent of participants suggested that the top priority for the next phase should focus on simplifying administrative procedures to make them transparent, concise and user-friendly. The second priority was to continue to reform and improve the quality of civil servants after the survey showed that half of the respondents believed civil servants were not competent enough.

The survey also suggested a one per cent increase in completing procedures within the stated deadlines, improving the competence and attitude of civil servants and providing clear information about the procedures would increase the satisfaction of citizens in dealing with the public administrative system by 28, 23 and 18 per cent, respectively.

“This is the first time such a survey has been carried out in Việt Nam. The results are encouraging and they confirm that citizens are very eager to participate in public administration reform,” said Acuna-Alfar.

“We hope that the information will prove helpful to policymakers and the Government as the public administration reform master programme for 2011-20 is formulated,” he said.

Acuna-Alfar said the UNDP wished to conduct this type of survey on an annual basis, but said that it would require further co-operation with Government agencies.

“Citizens’ voice is very important when it comes to public administration reform and we welcome any survey coming in from different channels,” said the Home Affairs Ministry’s Administrative Reform Department director, Dinh Duy Hào.

He said the survey’s results would be used as a reference during the process to adjust the objectives of the master plan for the next 10 years.

The public administration reform process started in Việt Nam 10 years ago. Ministries and Government agencies have reported to having reviewed 5,500 administrative procedures, and proposed to eliminate 453, replace 288 and amend 3,749. — VNS