

# **Country Gender Profile: Viet Nam**

## **Final Report**

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## Summary

<b>Country Gender Profile in Viet Nam (2011)</b>
<b>Current Situation of Women in Viet Nam</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (Viet Nam) is a multiracial country with a population of around 89 million made up of Kinh and 53 other ethnic minorities. Viet Nam ranked 113<sup>th</sup> out of 169 countries on the Human Development Index (2010) and 91<sup>st</sup> out of 157 countries on the Gender Development Index (2007-8).</li><li>• While women work actively in the society due to the Socialist ideology, the patriarchal system took root in the country. Women are required to continue to work after marriage and childbirth, which places on them the double burden of a job outside the home and domestic work. Viet Nam has a strong boy-preference and this fact leads to a number of issues such as abortions and an imbalance of sex ratio at birth.</li><li>• The present percentage of women in the national assembly is 25.76%, which is 2% lower than in the previous tenure. The government of Viet Nam is implementing training programmes for female candidates with assistance from international organizations in order to increase to 30% of women's participation at both national and local level.</li><li>• The "National Study of Domestic Violence Against Women in Viet Nam" (2010) reported that 34% of married women had experienced physical or sexual violence from their husbands. In 2008, the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control was enacted, and the government is actively coping with this issue, such as planning of action plan. However, little action is being taken against sexual harassment; therefore, social awareness remains low.</li></ul>
<b>Government Policy on Gender</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "National Strategy for the Advancement of Women in Viet Nam by 2010" sets labour, education, health as priority issues. At present, the Department of Gender Equality in the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) and other ministries are developing the "National Strategy on Gender Equality (2011-2020)" and the "National Targeted Programmes on Gender Equality (2011-2020)".</li><li>• The Law on Gender Equality was issued in 2006, and the government also issued three decrees on the implementation of the Gender Equality Law.</li><li>• The Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control was enacted in 2007, and the Family Department of the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Tourism is an implementing agency. The department implements advocacy, prevention and support for victims. MOLISA is planning on the establishment of shelters and appointment of social workers.</li><li>• At present, the difference in the retiring age (60 for men and 55 for women) which is stipulated in the Law on labour is under discussion.</li></ul>
<b>National Machinery</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In 2008, the Department of Gender Equality was established at MOLISA as a national machinery of Vietnam. Currently, the Department is developing the "National Strategy on Gender Equality." It is also reviewing the Law on Gender Equality and, in cooperation with the Department of Statistics, compiling gender statistics. The Department is also working with the aim of eliminating gender discrimination, targeting employees of MOLISA and other ministries of the Vietnamese government. The National Committee for the Advancement of Women established within the Department of Gender Equality (currently chaired by the Minister of MOLISA who is female) offers to the Prime Minister advice on gender equality and the empowerment of women.</li><li>• Until 2008, popular organizations and the Viet Nam Women's Union (VWU) had essentially played the key role in promoting gender equality in Vietnam. At present these two organizations are still involved in the development of national strategies and, by</li></ul>

advocating a range of policies and implementing poverty reduction projects, they have developed a network covering a wide range of administrative districts from the capital to provinces, counties and communes and they play a role in supporting women in a variety of areas including healthcare, education, economic empowerment and ethnic minority issues. In recent years, a particular focus has been placed, among others, on advocacy in such fields as women's participation in politics, revision of the Labour Law of Vietnam and measures against violence against women.

### **Education**

- The net enrolment rate in primary education was over 90% for both boys and girls, and there is little gap between boys and girls. However, the net enrolment rate in primary education in ethnic minority and mountainous areas is still low. In particular, girls from ethnic minorities have the worst enrolment rate in primary education, repetition and dropping-out, and are identified as the group with the lowest enrolment rate in secondary education.
- Gender bias in textbooks is still identified. As gender bias in education has an effect on teachers and the values of students, gender-neutral descriptions are required.
- Although the total literacy rate is over 90%, the female literacy rate is only 89.3%. There is a disparity in the illiteracy rate among ethnicities and regions. The government of Viet Nam is promoting literacy education, targeting people aged between 15-35 years, implemented by primary or secondary school teachers.
- Men have more opportunity to receive vocational training than women. The Viet Nam Women's Union established vocational training centers for women. However, the number of trainers and classrooms is still limited, and in many cases the curriculum does not fit with the needs of women and young people in rural areas.

### **Health**

- Life expectancy is 72.9 years for men and 76.8 years for women. MDGs indicators have been improving, and the maternal mortality rate has fallen from 233 per 100,000 in 1990 to 69 per 100,000 in 2009. However, the disparity in the maternal mortality rate between regions and ethnic groups is received attention (for example, 411 per 100,000 in mountainous areas).
- The total fertility rate (TFR) has been falling, and the TFR in 2008 was 2.08. The rate of contraceptive use is high, at 79% (for all contraceptive methods). However, ethnic minorities, unmarried couples, adolescents and migrant workers have limited access to family planning services, and there are some issues such as unwanted pregnancy and abortions.
- It is estimated that the number of people living with HIV in Viet Nam was about 240,000 in 2009. Infected people were mainly drug users and sex workers. Most of those infected are men (85%), so that there is concern about the spread of infection among women.
- The sex ratio at birth in Viet Nam was 110.5 (in 2009), and there are more boys than girls. The reasons why this phenomenon occurs might be strong preference for boys, the falling fertility rate and advances in medical technology.

### **Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries**

- The results of the monitoring and evaluation of gender policies implemented during the year are being compiled into a report in accordance with the "Gender Strategy on Agriculture and Rural Development 2003-2010."
- Since the Land Law specifies that land use certificates should be issued under the joint names of husband and wife, farmland ownership is legally granted on a gender equality basis. In reality, however, farmland use is in almost all cases certified under the name of the husband only. In addition, in rural areas, decision-making and organizational leadership are dominated by men, and women's access to water, microcredit loans, agricultural equipment and training is limited.

- In Vietnam, approximately 60% of the population is engaged in agriculture and women take on the larger part of farm work. Women's status is, however, still low and women are doubly burdened with domestic duties, working without pay and suffering from domestic violence and a preference for boys. The burden of women is increasing because an increasing number of men and young people are moving to the cities and the economic crisis is still ongoing.
- Although development officers appointed to each commune by the provincial or district development centres or offices give technical guidance to women in rural areas, technology transfer is not successful because these women are often illiterate and have difficulty in gaining access to training.
- Poverty reduction based on an increase in farmers' income is defined as an overall objective for the agriculture and rural development sector and, therefore, support is required to increase incomes and promote entrepreneurship. Currently, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is developing policies for vocational training programs for people in rural areas.

### **Economic Activities**

- Vietnam has been enjoying unprecedented economic growth and the labour force has grown year by year; but the labour market has been supported mainly by the self-employed and unpaid family workers. 76.7% of the total labour population (2007) is not covered by social security, and 53.5% of women workers are unpaid family workers (2010).
- In Vietnam, the problem of gender discrimination in the age of retirement (60 years old for men and 55 years old for women) has long been discussed, but equality has not yet been realized. In particular, the proportion of women in managerial posts in the private sector is substantially lower than that of men. There are also problems with differences between employees with regard to wages and social security, and the concept of sexual harassment has not been sufficiently addressed.
- It is natural that women should be paid for their labour and it appears that women are gaining a footing in more areas of society; but their labour value in family businesses and household work has not been sufficiently recognized.
- Laws and regulations on the protection of household workers are in the course of being formulated. The exploitation of working women as family workers, and sexual violence against them, are serious problems in Vietnam and abroad. The problems of sexual harassment and sex workers are treated as the social evil which is still considered taboo.

### **Migration**

- The major destinations of international labour migration include South Korea, China, the Middle East, Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan, Europe and the U.S.A. Female workers are engaged mainly in domestic work, the sex industry, factory labour, etc., in which the problems of sexual violence, shortage of safety nets and social security and the lack of labour information have been pointed out.
- The migration from rural to urban areas within the country is increasing year by year along with economic growth and industrialization in Vietnam. In particular, the migration of the younger generation, in the 15 to 24 year-old age group, is marked. Due to the difficulty of registering as resident in the areas to which they have moved, these migrants often find themselves in the situation where they cannot avail themselves of social services such as education and healthcare at all.
- Human trafficking is a problem on the border with China and Cambodia, but in the inland areas, there are a growing number of cases of women and girls from rural poor families being tricked by sex traders and trafficked as sex workers and brides. The destination countries include South Korea, China, Thailand and Cambodia.

### **Ethnic Minorities**

- Employment, education and healthcare are pinpointed as urgent issues in the "Policy for

Support of Gender Equality Activities in Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas Where the Social and Economic Conditions are Particularly Difficult 2011-2015” drawn up by the Ethnic Minority Committee.

- Ethnic minority women have no access to education and technology and employment opportunities for them are limited. If employed, they are often exploited and paid low wages. They have little chance of starting up businesses and no way of increasing their income.
- Many girls drop out of education and the illiteracy of many women is a hindrance to the improvement of their standard of living and income. Ethnic minority women have little chance of obtaining life skills or technical training under the patriarchal culture.
- Access to healthcare service is limited for women; they suffer a lack of nutrition and live in an unsanitary environment. The healthcare of mothers and children and family planning are also restricted.
- As ethnic minority women cannot obtain sufficient education and knowledge, they may become the victims of human traffickers. The problem has also arisen of labour exploitation in the sex industry.
- There are some fields in which gender equality does not lag behind in comparison with the Kinh people: for instance, the decision-making right within the family and the gender ratio at birth are not largely different. However, the customary laws of each tribe may have the tendency to obstruct the health and rights of women.

## List of Abbreviations (Viet Nam)

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AECID	Agencia Espanola de Cooperacion Internacional para el Desarrollo
AusAID	Australian Government's overseas aid program
CEC	Continuing Education Center
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms Discrimination Against Women
CFAW	Committee for Advancement of Women
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CLC	Community Learning Center
DOLISA	Department of Labour-Invalids and Social Affairs
EFA	Education for All
GFP	Gender Focal Point
HIV/AIDS	Human-Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IUD	Intra-Uterine Contraceptive Devices
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour-Invalids and Social Affairs
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NCFAW	National Committee for Advancement of Women
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
SEDP	National Socio-economic Development Plan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programs
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organizations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNIAP	United Nations Inter-Agency on Human Trafficking
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VWU	Vietnam Women's Union
WTO	World Trade Organization

# 1. Basic profiles

## 1-1 Socio-Economic Profile

<u>International Development Indicators</u>	Human development index		Gender-related development index	Gender empowerment measurement (Value)	Gender Inequality Index	Reference	
	0.572 / rank 113 (2010)		0.732 / rank 91 (2007)	0.554 / rank 62 (2009)	0.530 / rank 58 (2008)		
	0.566 / rank 116 (2008)		NA	NA	NA		
<u>Demographic indicators</u>	Population <sup>2)</sup>		Urban population		Population growth rate (%) <sup>4)</sup>	Total Fertility rate <sup>5)</sup>	2) 3) 4) 5)
	total (million)	% of female population	% of urban population <sup>2)</sup>	% of female population <sup>3)</sup>			
	86.02 (2009)	50.48% (2009)	29.60% (2009)	52.1%(2007)	1.2%(2008)	2.08 (2008)	
	85.12 (2008)	50.71% (2008)	28.99% (2008)	50.0%(2006)	1.2%(2007)	NA	
	Life expectancy		Households number by head of households (HH)				
Male	Female	Total	Male-headed	Female-headed	6)		
72.9 (2010)	76.8 (2010)	NA	NA	NA			
NA	NA	NA	NA	NA			
<u>Economic Indicators</u>	GNI/Capita <sup>7)</sup> (Atlas method)	Growth rate of GDP <sup>8)</sup>	GDP implicit deflator <sup>7)</sup>	Gini index <sup>4)</sup>	Aid/GNP <sup>7)</sup>	4) 7) 8)	
	US\$930 (2009)	5.32% (2009)	5.6% (2009)	37.8 (2006)	2.9% (2008)		
	US\$860 (2008)	6.18% (2008)	NA	39.2 (2004)	3.6% (2007)		
<u>Public sector expenditure on sectors</u>	Health	Education	Social welfare	Defense	Gender	others	9)
	4.03% (2008)	12.85% (2008)	10.16% (2008)	NA	NA	NA	
	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
	/GDP	/GDP	/GDP	/GDP	/GDP	/GDP	7)
	2.8% (2007)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
2.1% (2006)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		
<u>Industry/GDP</u>	Agriculture (value added)	Industry (value added)	Services,etc (value added)	Others	7)		
	21% (2009)	40% (2009)	39% (2009)	NA			
	22% (2008)	40% (2008)	38% (2008)	NA			
<u>Labour indicators</u>	population		Unemployment		Minimum wage		4)
	Total No. (million)	% of female population	Unemployment rate	of female population	Male	Female	
	46.71 (2007)	48.4% (2007)	2.4% (2007)	2.5%(2007)	NA	NA	
	45.58 (2006)	48.6% (2006)	2.3% (2006)	2.2%(2006)	NA	NA	
<u>Employment rate (year)</u>	Agriculture	Industry	Service	Others	4)		
	Population	52.2% (2007)	19.2% (2007)	28.6% (2007)		NA	
	% of female population	NA	NA	NA		NA	
	Population	54.7% (2006)	18.3% (2006)	27.0% (2006)		NA	
% of female population	NA	NA	NA	NA			



**Approaches to gender issues**

**Ratification and signature of international laws**

1982	CEDAW ratification	
2000	Millenium Development Goals	

**Women in decision -making (% of female population)**

	Government			Private sector		10)
	In parliament	Ministers	Deputy ministers or equivalent	Managers	Technicians	
	26%	4.00%	9.15%(2004-2009)			

**Policy of gender**

2002	National Strategy for the Advanecment of Women in Viet Nam by 2010	11) 12)
2009	Programme of Action to 2020 to implement the Politburo's Resolution No.11-NQ/TW on women's mobilization during the period of accelerating national industrializatin and modemizatio	

**Laws of gender**

2006	The Law on Gender Equality	12)
2007	Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control	
2008	Decree No.70/2008/ND-CP (implementation of some articles of the law on gender equality)	
2009	Decree No.48/2009/ND-CP (definition of measures to ensure gender equality)	
2009	Decree No. 55/2009/ND-CP (penalies for adminitrative violations of gender equality).	

**Public organization of gender**

Name of the national machinery	Department of Gender Equality in Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs	
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## 1-2 Health Profile

<b>Prevalence of health service</b>	No. of hospital beds per 1,000 persons		No. of physicians per 1,000 persons		Reference		
	NA		0.56 (2002)				
	NA		0.534 (2001)				
<b>Infant mortality rate</b>	Total (1000 birth)		Female		13)		
	12 (2009)		NA				
	15 (2005)		NA				
<b>Under-five mortality rate</b>	Total (per 1,000 live births)		Female (per 1,000 live births)		13)		
	14 (2009)		NA				
	18 (2005)		NA				
<b>Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis</b>	Total		Female		13)		
	34 (2008)		NA				
	36 (2000)		NA				
<b>Prevalence and death rates associated with infectious diseases</b>	Total		Female				
	NA		NA				
	NA		NA				
<b>% of vaccinated (1 year old)</b>	BCG	DPT1	Polio3	Measles	14)		
	92% (2008)	90% (2008)	93% (2008)	92% (2008)			
<b>Reproductive health</b>	Contraceptive prevalence rate		Rate of births attended by trained personnel		Anemia prevalence among pregnant women		13)
	79.5% (2008) (15-49 years old)		87.7% (2006)		NA		
	73.9% (2001) (15-49 years old)		85.0% (2002)		NA		
	Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 birth) <sup>15)</sup>		Total fertility rate <sup>5)</sup>		Average age of first marriage <sup>6)</sup>		5) 15) 16)
	69 (2009)		2.08 (2008)		Men	Women	
	80 (2005)		NA		25.7 (2001)	22.8 (2001)	
<b>Nutrition</b>	Children under weight for age (and aged under 5)		Oral re-hydration therapy use rate		Iodine deficiency		13)
	18.9% (2009)		NA		NA		
	25.3% (2005)		NA		NA		
<b>Community health service</b>	Access to safe water			Access to adequate sanitation			13)
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	
	94% (2008)	99% (2008)	92% (2008)	75% (2008)	94% (2008)	67% (2008)	
	88% (2005)	97% (2005)	85% (2005)	68% (2005)	88% (2005)	61% (2005)	
<b>HIV/AIDS</b>	HIV prevalence <sup>7)</sup>				% of population aged 15-24 with comprehensive knowledge of HIV/AIDS <sup>13)</sup>		7) 13)
	Total (15-49 years old)	Male (15-24 years old)	Female (15-24years old)		Male	Female	
			Total	Pregnant women			
	0.5% (2007)	0.6%(2007)	0.3%(2007)	NA	50.3% (2005)	43.6% (2006)	
	0.5% (2006)	NA	NA	NA	NA	25.4% (2000)	

### 1-3 Education Profile

<u>Education system</u>	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Reference		
	5 years	7 years	2-4 years			
<u>Adult literacy rate</u>	Total	Male	Female	12)		
	93.5% (2009)	95.8% (2009)	91.4% (2009)			
	90% (1990)	NA	NA			
<u>Primary education</u>	Net enrolment rate			17)		
	Total	Male	Female			
	97% (2009)	NA	NA			
	NA	NA	NA			
	Progression rate					
	Total	Male	Female			
	NA	NA	NA			
	NA	NA	NA			
	Drop-out rate					
	Total	Male	Female			
	NA	NA	NA			
	NA	NA	NA			
<u>Secondary education</u>	Net enrolment rate			18)		
	Total	Male	Female			
	NA	71% (2008)	68% (2008)			
	NA	NA	NA			
	Progression rate					
	Total	Male	Female			
	NA	NA	NA			
	NA	NA	NA			
	Drop-out rate					
	Total	Male	Female			
	NA	NA	NA			
	NA	NA	NA			
<u>Tertiary education</u>	Gross enrolment rate			18) 7)		
	Total <sup>7)</sup>	Male <sup>18)</sup>	Female <sup>18)</sup>			
	9.7%(2001)	11.0%(2008)	8.0%(2008)			
	9.6% (2000)	NA	NA			
	Progression rate					
	Total	Male	Female			
	NA	NA	NA			
	NA	NA	NA			
	Drop-out rate					
	Total	Male	Female			
	NA	NA	NA			
	NA	NA	NA			
<u>Tertiary level enrolment by field of study by gender</u>	Education		Arts		Social science	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Engineering and Technology		Medicine		Others	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

## 1-4 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Indicators

### Gender parity index

Primary level enrolment <sup>16)</sup>		Secondary level enrolment <sup>6)</sup>		Tertiary level enrolment <sup>13)</sup>		Reference
2009	91.90	2009	73.00	2001	0.73	13)
2005	91.20	2005	72	2000	0.72	15)

### Share of women in wage employment in the non-agriculture sector

2008	49.0%	12)
2003	40.1%	13)

### Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament

Seats held by women (%)	Total number of seats	Seats held by men	Seats held by women	13)			
2010	25.8%	2010	493	2010	366	2010	127
2007	27.3%	2007	498	2007	362	2007	136

### Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live birth)

2009	69
2005	80

### Birth attended by skilled health personnel (%)

2009	94.8%	15)
2006	92.7%	

### Contraceptive prevalence rate (Current contraceptive use among married women 15-49 years old)

Any method (%)	Modern methods(%)	Condom(%)	13)		
2008	79.5%	2008	68.8%	2007	8.3%
2007	79.0%	2007	68.2%	2006	7.6%

### Adolescent birth rate (per 1,000 women)

2007	35.0	13)
2006	28.0	

### Antenatal care coverage

at least one visit (%)		at least four visits(%)		13)
2006	90.8%	2002	29.3%	
2002	86.4%	1997	15.2%	

### Unmet need for family planning

Total(%)	Spacing(%)	Limiting(%)	13)		
2002	4.8%	2002	2.0%	2002	2.8%
1997	6.9%	1997	3.5%	1997	3.5%

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## 2. General Situation of Women and Government Policy on Gender

### 2-1 General Situation of Women in Viet Nam

#### General Situation of Women in Viet Nam

- 1) The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (Viet Nam) is a multiracial country with a population of around 89 million made up of Kinh and 53 other ethnic minorities. Viet Nam ranked 113<sup>th</sup> out of 169 countries on the Human Development Index (2010) and 91<sup>st</sup> out of 157 countries on the Gender Development Index (2007-8).
- 2) While women work actively in the society due to the Socialist ideology, the patriarchal system took root in the country. Women are required to continue to work after marriage and childbirth, which places on them the double burden of a job outside the home and domestic work. Viet Nam has a strong boy-preference and this fact leads to a number of issues such as abortions and an imbalance of sex ratio at birth.
- 3) The present percentage of women in the national assembly is 25.76%, which is 2% lower than in the previous tenure. The government of Viet Nam is implementing training programmes for female candidates with assistance from international organizations in order to increase to 30% of women's participation at both national and local level.
- 4) The "National Study of Domestic Violence Against Women in Viet Nam" (2010) reported that 34% of married women had experienced physical or sexual violence from their husbands. In 2008, the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control was enacted, and the government is actively coping with this issue, such as planning of action plan. However, little action is being taken against sexual harassment; therefore, social awareness remains low.

#### [General Situation]

The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (Viet Nam) is a multiracial country with a population of around 89 million made up of Kinh and 53 other ethnic minorities. With a history of rule by China and French colonization, in 1945, Viet Nam became a socialist state with Ho Chi Min as its first head of state. After the independence, Viet Nam experienced segregation between south and north and the Viet Nam War. At present, Viet Nam is a socialist state with a one-party system under the Communist party of Viet Nam, and the "Doi Moi" policy towards a system of market economy has been implemented since 1986. Since the introduction of the "Doi Moi" policy, Viet Nam has been growing economically; the economic growth rate in 2009 was 5.32%. The main industries are agriculture, the mining industry and light industry, and GDP per capita in 2009 was 1,064 USD<sup>1</sup>.

The government of Viet Nam announced its "Socio-Economic Development Plan Strategy 2001-2010" in 2001, and aims to be an industrial country by 2020. At present the government is preparing the "Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plan 2011-2015". According to the Human Development Report by UNDP (2009), Viet Nam ranked 113<sup>th</sup> out of 169 countries on the Human Development Index and 91<sup>st</sup> out of 157 countries on the Gender Development Index.

#### [Issues Originated in Religious and Traditional Customs]

Most of the population believes in Buddhism (80%), and others are Catholics or Caodaists<sup>2</sup>. It is said that Viet Nam once had a matriarchal system, and many women were identified as

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/vietnam/data.html>

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website

historical characters<sup>3</sup>. The oldest document which mentions equality between men and women is from the period of the Ly Dynasty (1009-1225), and the Hong Duc Code in 1483 stipulated that women had equal rights to inheritance, divorce and protection from violence<sup>4</sup>. However, the patriarchal system took root in the country due to the long rule by China, the permeation of Confucianism and French colonization, and remains strongly entrenched. According to the teachings of Confucianism, women's obligations are to give birth and care for children and to engage in domestic work in order to maintain family cohesion<sup>5</sup>. On the other hand, the influence of Communism and the "Doi Moi" policy encourages women to work outside the home, so that many women participate in economic activities. Therefore, women are required to continue to work after marriage and childbirth, which places on them the double burden of a job outside the home and domestic work.

Because of the influence of patriarchy, Viet Nam has a strong boy-preference. This is the result of traditions which dictate that men administer some ceremonies (e.g. funerals). Additionally, a woman is required to live with the family of her husband after marriage and to take care of her parents-in-law until they pass away, and a system of social security for the elderly is still lacking; therefore, people prefer to have a son<sup>6</sup>. This is why married women are required to have a son, and this fact leads to a number of issues such as abortions and an imbalance of sex ratio at birth.

#### **[Low Representation in Key Decision Making Positions in the Government]**

It is said that the proportion of females in decision-making positions in Viet Nam is the highest in the Eastern Asia and Pacific regions<sup>7</sup>. Directive No. 37 issued in 1994 stipulates that the percentage of women's representatives must be at least 20% at both national and local level. The present percentage of women in the national assembly is 25.76%, which is 2% lower than in the previous tenure<sup>8</sup>. While the percentage of women in the People's Councils at local level is slightly lower than at national level, the percentage at local level is consistently over 20% (at province level: 23.88%, at district level: 23.2%, and at commune level: 20.11%)<sup>9</sup>. As for leadership in the government, 12.50% of ministers are female; 9.15% of deputy ministers; and 12.2% of directors (2007)<sup>10</sup>.

In committees, women are most strongly represented on the Ethnic Minorities Councils, at 56%, followed by the Committee of Social Affairs (37.5%) and the Committee on Technology, Science and the Environment (32.4%)<sup>11</sup>. There are no women participants in the Committee on Military and Defence, and women's representation in the Committee for Economic Affairs and the Committee for Finance and Budget is around 10%; therefore, the role of women in the government focuses on social welfare<sup>12</sup>. Although many women are already participating in decision-making institutions in Viet Nam, the government encourages more participation, so that the "National Strategy for the Advancement of Women in Viet Nam by 2010" provides for

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<sup>3</sup> At present, some ethnic minorities have a matriarchy system.

<sup>4</sup> UN Viet Nam (2009), UN Gender Briefing Kit: Gender Relations through History.

<sup>5</sup> UN Viet Nam (2010), Gender-Based Violence Issue Paper.

<sup>6</sup> UN Viet Nam (2010), Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> ADB (2006), Viet Nam Country Gender Assessment

<sup>8</sup> UN Viet Nam (2009), UN Gender Briefing Kit Women's Participation and Gender Equality Issues in Legislation.

<sup>9</sup> UN Viet Nam (2009), Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (2010), Report on Implementation of National Targets for Gender Equality in 2009

<sup>11</sup> UN Viet Nam (2009), Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> UN Viet Nam (2009), Ibid.

an increase to 30% of women's participation at both national and local level. To this end, the government of Viet Nam is implementing training programmes for female candidates with assistance from international organizations.

### **[Sexual Harassment and Violence against Women]**

The "National Study of Domestic Violence Against Women in Viet Nam" (2010) reported that 34% of married women had experienced physical or sexual violence from their husbands. In addition, the report mentions that 58% of women had suffered from at least one type of violence, whether physical, sexual or emotional. In most cases the assailant is the husband. While there are many cases of domestic violence in Viet Nam, the issue is normally hidden. One of the researchers on the study considered that many women feel violence by a husband is normal, and women tend to endure for the sake of family harmony<sup>13</sup>. Also, it is reported that 87% of female victims who were participants in the study had not asked for help from public services or persons in authority; their advisers were mainly the parents of their husbands or a brother-in-law<sup>14</sup>.

In order to resolve domestic violence issues, the government of Viet Nam is actively enforcing pertinent laws and policies. In 2007, the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control was enacted, and the Family Department of the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Tourism was appointed as the implementing agency. In addition to this Law, other laws related to domestic violence have been enforced (further information will be presented in the following chapter). The Family Department of the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Tourism is implementing such activities as awareness-raising of domestic violence among the people and the protection of victims<sup>15</sup>, but stops short at the development of laws.

While some measures to curb domestic violence are being taken, little action is being taken against sexual harassment; therefore, social awareness remains low.

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<sup>13</sup> General Statistical Office Viet Nam (2010), Joint Media Release: New study shows the high prevalence of domestic violence in Viet Nam [http://www.gso.gov.vn/default\\_en.aspx?tabid=487&ItemID=10693](http://www.gso.gov.vn/default_en.aspx?tabid=487&ItemID=10693)

<sup>14</sup> According to an interview with an officer of the Family Department of the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Tourism, an assailant is advised or supervised by his relatives and an older person in his family.

<sup>15</sup> As there are few centres for protection, victims can stay only three days.

## 2-2 Government Policy on Gender

### Government Policy on Gender

- 1) “National Strategy for the Advancement of Women in Viet Nam by 2010” sets labour, education, health as priority issues. At present, the Department of Gender Equality in the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) and other ministries are developing the “National Strategy on Gender Equality (2011-2020)” and the “National Targeted Programmes on Gender Equality (2011-2020).
- 2) The Law on Gender Equality was issued in 2006, and the government also issued three decrees on the implementation of the Gender Equality Law.
- 3) The Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control was enacted in 2007, and the Family Department of the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Tourism is an implementing agency. The department implements advocacy, prevention and support for victims. MOLISA is planning on the establishment of shelters and appointment of social workers.
- 4) At present, the difference in the retiring age (60 for men and 55 for women) which is stipulated in the Law on labour is under discussion.

#### [Government Policy on Gender]

In 2002, the Prime Ministerial Decision 19/2002/QĐ-TTg on “National Strategy for the Advancement of Women in Viet Nam by 2010” was issued. The overall objective of this national strategy is to raise the quality of women’s material and spiritual life, to create all conditions for the effective exercise of women’s fundamental rights, as well as for the promotion of their role in all political, economic, cultural and social domains. This strategy has five priority objectives, the details of which are as follow:

#### National Strategy for the Advancement of Women in Viet Nam by 2010<sup>16</sup>

	Objectives	Indicators
1	To exercise women’s rights to equality in the field of labour and employment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the proportion of female employees to 50% by 2010.</li> <li>2. Increase the productivity of rural women to 80% by 2010.</li> <li>3. Reduce the unemployment rate of women to 5% by 2010.</li> <li>4. 80% of poor female-headed household to receive loans from poverty reduction programmes.</li> </ol>
2	To exercise women’s rights to equality in education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 100% literacy rate for women under 40 years of age by 2010.</li> <li>2. Increase the percentage of women with a post-graduate degree to 35% of the total by 2010.</li> <li>3. Increase the percentage of trained women to 40% by 2010.</li> <li>4. 30% of civil servants or officials to be trained in political science, administration, computer skills and foreign languages. Also increase the number of women participating</li> </ol>

<sup>16</sup> The National Committee for the Advancement of Women in Viet Nam Website:  
<http://www.ubphunu-ncfaw.gov.vn/?lang=E&func=newsdt&CatID=90&newsid=1372&MN=90>



		in professional and/or technical training.
3	To exercise women's rights to equality in health care	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase women's average life expectancy to 73 years by 2010.</li> <li>2. Increase the percentage of pregnant women undergoing three antenatal checks to 60% by 2010.</li> <li>3. Reduce the maternal mortality rate to 70 per 100,000 by 2010.</li> <li>4. Increase the percentage of women with access to health care services to 95% by 2010.</li> <li>5. 80% of hospital midwives to have graduated from medical college by 2010.</li> </ol>
4	To improve the quality and effectiveness of women's activities in politics, economy and society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. At the 10<sup>th</sup> National Congress, at least 15% of women to be elected as committee members.</li> <li>2. The percentage of women in the National Assembly to be 30%.</li> <li>3. The percentage of women in People's Councils to be over 28% at the provincial level, over 23% at district level, and over 18% at commune level.</li> <li>4. 50% of political or socio-political leaders to be women by 2010.</li> <li>5. 30% of staff members in all agencies providing educational, medical, cultural and social services will be women by 2010.</li> </ol>
5	To strengthen capacity of activities for the advancement of women	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All staff engaged in the advancement of women to be trained.</li> <li>2. All leaders of ministries and mass organizations to have improved awareness of gender equality by 2005.</li> </ol>

Additionally, in December 2009, Resolution No.57/NQ-CP on the "Programme of Action to 2020 to implement the Politburo's Resolution No.11-NQ/TW on women's mobilization during the period of accelerating national industrialization and modernization" was issued. At present, the Department of Gender Equality in MOLISA and other ministries are developing the "National Strategy on Gender Equality (2011-2020)" and the "National Targeted Programmes on Gender Equality (2011-2020).

The "National Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP)" indicates a course of action on prospective economic growth and social development. Gender equality is integrated into SEDP which sets gender indicators regarding agriculture, employment, environment management, health and education. SEDP, action plans for the advancement of women and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are constantly revised to keep them consistent with each other.

#### **[Gender related Laws and Regulations]**

The government of Viet Nam enacted the Law on Gender Equality in 2006. The law stipulates: 1. Participation in politics and decision making; 2. Equal opportunity in economic activities; 3. Equal opportunity in labour participation; 4. Equal opportunity in education and vocational

training; 5. Equal access to science and technology; 6. Equal participation in culture and sports; 7. Health care; and 8. Equality between husbands and wives. The government also issued three decrees on the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality (refer to the list of gender-related laws and regulation).

The Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control enacted in 2007 specifies arbitration within families, counselling services, public awareness, prevention and support for victims. In addition to this law, other laws regarding implementation guidelines were enacted (further information is in the list of gender-related laws and legislation). The Family Department of the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Tourism is an implementing agency to combat domestic violence, passing legislation and supervising its enforcement<sup>17</sup>. Additionally, decrees on the establishment of shelters and appointment of social workers, enforcement of the referral system and capacity building of counselling services were issued by the Departments of Social Evil Prevention, Social Protection and Child Protection and Care in MOLISA, and action plans on those issues are in the process of development.

The Law on Marriage and Family 2000 regulates marital status, relations between husbands and wives after marriage and divorce. The minimum age for marriage is 20 for men and 18 for women. After marriage, the husband and wife have equal responsibility as guardians and equal rights to property. Both men and women have the right to divorce, and the law ensures equal distribution of property (especially land and family assets) after divorce. However, there is a disparity among the cultures and traditions of different ethnic groups, and the ethnic minorities, in particular, follow their customary law.

The Law on Labour reviewed in 2002 revised social security and salaries for women. At present, the difference in the retiring age (60 for men and 55 for women) is under discussion because this difference makes it more difficult for women than for men to be promoted higher positions<sup>18</sup>.

Name of law	Year enacted	Outline
Constitution	1992	Constitution of Viet Nam
Law on Marriage and Family	2000	Marital status, relations between a husband and a wife, distribution of property on divorce.
Law on Gender Equality	2006	Achieving gender equality in all fields, such as politics, economy, education and health care.
Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control	2007	Definition of domestic violence, prevention of DV and protection of victims.
Decree No. 70/2008/ND-CP	2008	Guideline on implementation of articles of law on gender equality.
Decree No. 48/2009/ND-CP	2009	Definition of measures to ensure gender equality.
Decree No. 55/2009/ND-CP	2009	Penalties for administrative violation of

<sup>17</sup> As the department of Gender Equality in MOLISA was established in 2008 and national machinery was reformed recently, so the family department in the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Tourism is in charge of the issue of domestic violence. However, some international organizations such as UNIFEM points out that they will be unified in the future.

<sup>18</sup> Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (2005), Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women

		gender equality.
Resolution No.57/NQ-CP	2009	Programme of Action to 2020 to implement the Politburo Resolution No.11-NQ/TW on “The advancement of women in the process of national industrialization and modernization”
Circular No.191/2009/TT-BTC issued by Ministry of Finance	2009	Guide to budget management and spending for gender equality and advancement of women.
Decision No. 1855/QD-TTg	2009	Strengthening of committees for advancement of women at the provincial and district level.
Decree No. 56/2009/ND-CP	2009	Assistance for the development of small and medium sized businesses (including support for female workers).
Decree No.60/2009/ND-CP	2009	Penalties for administrative violations such as illegal marriage brokerage and marriage registration abuse.
Decree No.08/2009/NC-CP	2009	Guidelines on implementation of the law on domestic violence prevention and control.
Circular for DVL 16/2009/TT-BYT-2009 issued by Ministry of Health	2009	Guidelines on provision of health care services for victims of domestic violence.
Circular for DVL 02/2010/TT-BVHTTDL-2010	2010	Counselling services for domestic violence.

Source: CEDAW report (2005), Report on the Implementation of National Targets for Gender Equality in 2009.

## 2-3 National Machinery

### Department of Gender Equality, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs

- 1) In 2008, the Department of Gender Equality was established at MOLISA as a national machinery of Vietnam. Currently, the Department is developing the “National Strategy on Gender Equality.” It is also reviewing the Law on Gender Equality and, in cooperation with the Department of Statistics, compiling gender statistics. The Department is also working with the aim of eliminating gender discrimination, targeting employees of MOLISA and other ministries of the Vietnamese government. The National Committee for the Advancement of Women established within the Department of Gender Equality (currently chaired by the Minister of MOLISA who is female) offers to the Prime Minister advice on gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- 2) Until 2008, popular organizations and the Viet Nam Women’s Union (VWU) had essentially played the key role in promoting gender equality in Vietnam. At present these two organizations are still involved in the development of national strategies and, by advocating a range of policies and implementing poverty reduction projects, they have developed a network covering a wide range of administrative districts from the capital to provinces, counties and communes and they play a role in supporting women in a variety of areas including healthcare, education, economic empowerment and ethnic minority issues. In recent years, a particular focus has been placed, among others, on advocacy in such fields as women’s participation in politics, revision of the Labour Law of Vietnam and measures against violence against women.

#### [Background]

In the Prime Minister’s Decree No.186/2007/ND-CP issued in December 2007, the role, responsibility and authority of MOLISA<sup>19</sup> in promoting gender equality were defined and in 2008, the Department of Gender Equality was set up under MOLISA as an entity to develop and implement gender-related policies. At the same time a new personnel structure was established for the department.<sup>20</sup> Meanwhile, the National Committee for the Advancement of Women (NCFAW), which had been striving for many years for the improvement of the status and rights of women in Vietnam<sup>21</sup> moved its office to a new location within the Department of Gender Equality; and since then the committee has been continuing its efforts as an advisory body to promote efforts to eliminate gender discrimination among government ministries.

#### [Organizational Structure of the Department]

The role of the Department of Gender Equality of MOLISA is defined in the above-mentioned Decree as follows:

- Development of gender strategies, annual plans and programs
- Drafting of laws related to gender equality
- Development of policies to reduce gender discrimination in socioeconomic areas such as labour, education, culture, healthcare and households
- Monitoring and evaluation of gender related strategies
- Compilation and dissemination of gender statistics and

<sup>19</sup> In the whole of the Vietnamese government, only MOLISA has a female minister.

<sup>20</sup> Some officials transferred from other departments of MOLISA and others left the VWU for employment in the department.

<sup>21</sup> Established in 1994.

- Surveys, communication and awareness raising activities
- Preparation of reports on gender equality

With respect to the development of laws with the aim of eliminating gender discrimination, the main focus of the Department was the development of the Law on Gender Equality<sup>22</sup>, which took effect in 2006. In addition, in order to reduce gender discrimination, the Department of Gender Equality has been developing guidelines to promote gender equality in the government ministries and implementing skills development and training for personnel responsible for gender equality in the government ministries. The department has also carried out gender equality campaigns and awareness raising programs for the general public of Vietnam.

At present, there are 13 personnel at the Department of Gender Equality; of these, 8 are administrative officials responsible for gender equality and 5 are staff members of NCFAW. Although UNIFEM, the World Bank and bilateral agencies are providing support to enhance the capabilities of the department and its personnel, it has been pointed out that the personnel do not have sufficient knowledge and capabilities for the work, partly because it is a newly established, small department.<sup>23</sup> At the central level there are some full-time specialist officials, although there are not enough of them. On the other hand, however, at the provincial level of the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (DOLISA), no administrative officials have been appointed to take responsibility for gender equality. In Vietnam, the issue of the gender discrimination is particularly significant at the provincial and local levels and, therefore, the People's Committee has taken up the responsibility for the promotion of gender equality at these levels.<sup>24</sup>

Name	Department of Gender Equality, MOLISA
No. of personnel	13
Budget	N/A
Goal	Promotion of gender equality in Vietnam
Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of gender strategies, annual plans and programs</li> <li>• Drafting of laws related to gender equality</li> <li>• Development of policies to reduce gender discrimination in socioeconomic areas such as labour, education, culture, healthcare and households</li> <li>• Monitoring and evaluation of gender related strategies</li> <li>• Compilation and dissemination of gender statistics and implementation of educational activities</li> <li>• Surveys, communication and educational activities</li> <li>• Preparation of reports on gender equality</li> </ul>

### **[The Main Activities of the Department]**

From 2009 to 2010, key efforts were made by the Department of Gender Equality as follows:

- Operation, monitoring and evaluation of the Law on Gender Equality enacted in 2006
- Elimination of gender discrimination in socioeconomic policies

<sup>22</sup> Previously, the law had been developed by the VWU.

<sup>23</sup> According to UNIFEM and the director of the department, personnel transferred from other MOLISA departments require further education because they do not have enough knowledge on gender issues. Other personnel appointed by the VWU are also relatively young.

<sup>24</sup> The Law on Gender Equality specifies the roles to be played by the People's Committee at the provincial and local levels.

Inclusion of gender equality in the Vietnam Socioeconomic Development Plan 2011-2015

- Development of the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2011-2020 and the National Targeted Programmes on Gender Equality 2011-2015
- Campaigns and awareness raising activities related to the Law on Gender Equality and training in gender equality
- Collection and maintenance of information for gender statistics
- Promotion of a gender equality budget allocation by the government

### **[Roles of the NCFAW]**

NCFAW is a cross-sector organization that offers the Prime Minister advice on gender equality and the empowerment of women. In particular, NCFAW is responsible for conducting surveys and supporting coordination between government ministries, and is composed of members who represent each of the government ministries and popular organizations. In 2008, the Minister of MOLISA was appointed the representative of NCFAW, while the head of the VWU and the Deputy Minister of MOLISA were appointed its deputy representatives. NCFAW has a total of 21 committee members, each one of the level of deputy minister.

Under NCFAW, each of the government ministries has established a Committee for the Advancement of Women (CAW) at local level to develop action plans for that ministry. CAWs are regularly monitored by NCFAW. The deputy representative of the People's Committee in each province or other local administrative district is appointed to be the representative of the local CAW, and DOLISA functions as the entity that implements the plans and programs that are developed<sup>25</sup>.

The roles played by NCFAW are as follows:

- Submission to the Prime Minister of survey results and proposals concerning the advancement of women's status
- Support of the Prime Minister in coordination and collaboration between ministries, relevant organizations, the People's Committee and popular organizations in order to enlighten the Vietnamese people on the laws and policies related to the advancement of women's status
- Support of the Prime Minister in promoting the achievement of national targets relating to the advancement of women's status
- Submission to the Prime Minister of regular activity reports

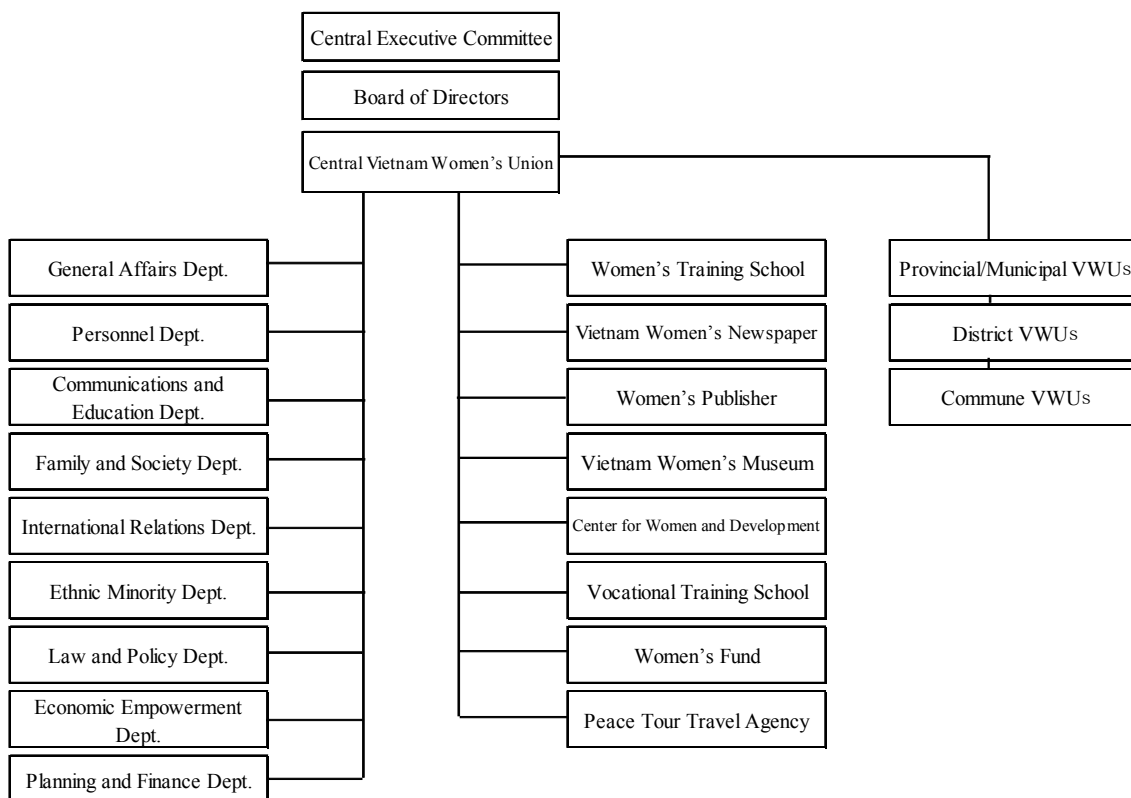
### **[Organizational Structure and Roles of the VWU]**

The VWU was established in 1930 as a party organ and has been supporting women in various areas at the central, provincial and local and grass-roots levels. In recent years in particular, the Union has been enhancing the significance of its existence as a popular organization in acting for poor women in rural areas, making the most of its organizational strength and grass-roots networking ability. The VWU has a membership of approximately 13 million people around the nation, which corresponds to over 50% of the entire female population aged 18 or over in Vietnam. In Hanoi City, about 350 personnel work at the Vietnam Central Women's Union and related facilities on a regular basis. The union has in its employ about 25 personnel at the provincial level (in every one of the 63 provinces and cities), about 10 personnel at the district level (in every one of the 642 counties) and about 3 personnel at commune level (in every one

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<sup>25</sup> This function was enhanced by Decision No.1855/QD-Ttg, taking effect in 2009.

of the 10,472 communes). The organizational structure of the VWU is shown below:



[Organizational Chart of VWU]

For the period 2007-2012, VWU is working on the following six activity themes:

- Theme 1. To enhance the awareness, knowledge and capacity of women. To nurture Vietnamese women who are healthy, intelligent, technically capable, strong, innovative, civilized and gentle.
- Theme 2. To participate in the process of developing the Gender Equality Law, to hold discussions on the law and to monitor enforcement of the law
- Theme 3. To support economic empowerment, job creation and income generation for women
- Theme 4. To support the creation of rich, equal, progressive and happy families
- Theme 5. To strengthen the VWU as an organization
- Theme 6. To promote international cooperation for equality, development and peace

The annual action plans for 2008 in accordance with the above 6 themes were developed as follows, and the VWU has been working in a range of areas to support women, children and families<sup>26</sup>:

- Theme 1. Planning of a campaign with the aim of disseminating knowledge of the policies and resolutions of the Party and laws for women and development of campaign

<sup>26</sup> According to information of the Planning and Finance Department, the annual budget of the Vietnam Central Women's Union is VND170 billion (US\$1=VND 18,700). Major international support organizations include ILO, UNICEF, UNFPA, the World Bank, the Ford Foundation, AusAid, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany.

tools

- Theme 2. Monitoring of enforcement of the Laws on Gender Equality and Domestic Violence Prevention and Control, participation in development of the legal system, support for a campaign for legal counselling and arbitration groups at the commune level, etc.
- Theme 3. Provision of micro-finance for poor women, surveys of poor households and female headed households, support for women with disabilities, vocational training, assistance in job creation, assistance for female entrepreneurs, etc.
- Theme 4. Campaigns for food security and health/sanitation, environment improvement activities, promotion of enforcement of the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control, family planning, reproductive health, education of children, measures against human trafficking, etc.
- Theme 5. Education of VWU workers down to the grassroots level, strengthening of networks and activities to recruit additional members
- Theme 6. Participation in international activities on International Women’s Day and “Campaign for Eradicating Violence against Women,” etc.

**[The Activities of Other Ministries]**

In the National Strategy on Gender Equality<sup>27</sup>, the roles of government ministries and other related organizations are defined as follows:

- The Ministry of Planning and Investment should coordinate, supervise and monitor the national strategy and incorporate gender targets in the national and local socioeconomic development plans.
- The Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Training, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and MOLISA should develop and implement action plans. Taking ethnic minorities, poor households and HIV-positive patients particularly into consideration, these ministries should incorporate gender equality initiatives into their national plans.
- The Ministry of Finance should develop annual plans and offer guidance in the disbursement of budgets to implement gender policies.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should secure funds from other countries’ governments, NGOs and international organizations.
- The Department of Statistics should analyze gender statistics and submit the results to the Ministry of Planning and Investment and NCFAW.
- The People’s Committees should incorporate gender initiatives in each of their socioeconomic development plans.
- The Vietnam Fatherland Front and the VWU should implement the strategy.

Key initiatives currently being implemented by government ministries are described in detail in Section 3 below. A summary is shown in the following table.

Ministry or organization	Key initiatives
Ministry of Education and Training	Realization of gender equality based on the “National Education for All Action Plan 2003-2015.” Literacy and non-formal education.
Ministry of Health	Improvement of health of women and expecting mothers, equal rights in decision making on family planning and educational activities for adolescents, based on the “National Strategy on Reproductive

<sup>27</sup> Developed in 2004 in cooperation with NCFAW with the support of UNDP.



	Healthcare 2001-2010.”
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	Reduction of gender income gap in rural areas, reduction of poverty among women in rural areas, enhancement of rural development and training and extension based on the “Gender Strategy on Agriculture and Rural Development 2003-2010.” Improvement of health and sanitation.
Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism	Development and enforcement of the “Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control.” Development of laws relating to violence against women and to educational activities.
MOLISA	Labour and employment issues related to women, overseas emigrant labour, vocational training, microfinancing, support for human trafficking victims and their social reintegration, and training of social workers.
VWU	Information on gender equality, economic empowerment of women, maternal and child health, support for ethnic minorities, vocational training, culture, violence against women, anti-human trafficking
People’s Committees	Empowerment of women in local areas, promotion of gender equality, rural development and reduction of gender discrimination and poverty in communes.

### 3. Current Situation of Gender by Sector

#### 3-1 Education

##### Education

- 1) The net enrolment rate in primary education in 2009 was over 90% for both boys and girls, and there is little gap between boys and girls. However, the net enrolment rate in primary education in ethnic minority and mountainous areas is still low. In particular, girls from ethnic minorities have the worst enrolment rate in primary education, repetition and dropping-out, and are identified as the group with the lowest enrolment rate in secondary education.
- 2) Gender bias in textbooks is still identified. As gender bias in education has an effect on teachers and the values of students, gender-neutral descriptions are required.
- 3) Although the total literacy rate is over 90%, the female literacy rate is only 89.3%. There is a disparity in the illiteracy rate among ethnicities and regions. The government of Viet Nam is promoting literacy education, targeting people aged between 15-35 years, implemented by primary or secondary school teachers.
- 4) Men have more opportunity to receive vocational training than women. VWU established vocational training centers for women. However, the number of trainers and classrooms is still limited, and in many cases the curriculum does not fit with the needs of women and young people in rural areas.

#### [Government Policy]

The government of Viet Nam issued the Education Law in 2005, the objective of which is to impart to the Vietnamese people ethics, knowledge, physical health, and loyalty to socialism and the state. According to the law, the educational system in Viet Nam has four sectors: 1. Early Childhood Education (Nursery and kindergartens); 2. General education (primary and lower and upper secondary education<sup>28</sup>); 3. Professional education (professional secondary education and vocational training); and 4. Higher education (college, university and graduate school).

Prior to the enforcement of the Education Law, the “Education Development Strategy Plan 2001-2010” was launched<sup>29</sup>. The goals of this strategy plan are to: 1. Change the quality of education; 2. Ensure social equality in education; 3. Create the opportunity for education for all people. In addition, this strategy plan sets out the maintenance of primary education for all and the achievement of lower secondary education for all by 2010<sup>30</sup>.

#### [Gender Consideration Development Plan and Education]

In 2003, the government of Viet Nam launched the “National Education for All (EFA) Action Plan 2003-2015”. This action plan stipulates that gender equality is a priority for achieving goals. It has four target groups: 1. Early Childhood Education; 2. Primary Education; 3. Lower secondary Education; and 4. Non-formal Education. Out of these target groups, the expansion of women’s and girls’ access to lower secondary education and non-formal education is set as a priority issue.

<sup>28</sup> According to the Education Law, secondary education is divided into two phases; lower (four years) and upper (three years).

<sup>29</sup> Ministry of Education and Training Website: <http://en.moet.gov.vn/?page=6.1>

<sup>30</sup> UNICEF Viet Nam (2010), An Analysis of Child Situation in Viet Nam 2010

### **[Primary and Secondary Education]**

The Education Law specifies that primary education lasts for five years starting at 6 years old. The net enrolment rate in primary education in 2009 was 97%, and 85.5% of pupils who entered elementary school completed five years of education<sup>31</sup>. There is little gap between boys and girls; 48% of all pupils are girls<sup>32</sup>. There is also little disparity between regions<sup>33</sup>. However, the access to primary education for children from ethnic minority and in mountainous areas is still insufficient. The net enrolment rate in primary education in ethnic minorities is over 80%, but the percentage of children who can complete primary education drops to 60%<sup>34</sup>. This is because of distance from home to school and the language used in schools (Vietnamese). Girls from ethnic minorities have the worst enrolment rate in primary education, repetition and dropping-out, and are identified as the group with the lowest enrolment rate in secondary education<sup>35</sup>.

The rate of advancement from primary to secondary education is 91%<sup>36</sup>, and the net attendance rate is 80% for boys and 82.6% for girls (in case of Kinh)<sup>37</sup>. However, the net attendance rate in secondary education for boys from ethnic minorities is 67.8% and for girls from ethnic minorities, 61.6%; therefore, there is a wide gap between Kinh and ethnic minorities. The reason is that parents prefer to educate boys more than girls; they need the support of girls for domestic work, and family finances are lacking.

As there is no reliable data on the advancement of girls from primary to secondary education, gender equality is not sufficiently mainstreamed in the national policy on secondary education.

### **[Gender Bias in Textbooks]**

Gender bias in textbooks is an emergent issue in the education sector<sup>38</sup>. Textbooks used in primary and lower secondary schools describe the traditional gender roles and stereotypes<sup>39</sup>. As gender bias in education has an effect on teachers and the values of students, gender-neutral descriptions are required. The goal of the Education Development Strategy Plan, mentioned above, is to improve the quality of education, with a revision of textbooks, including the removal of gender bias in textbooks.

### **[Higher Education]**

According to the Education Law, higher education comprises college, university, and graduate school (master course and doctoral course). Although many students are eager to enter higher education after completing secondary education, the number of institutions is limited, so that only 11% of men and 8% of women entered into higher education (in 2008)<sup>40</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> UN Viet Nam, Achieving the MDGs with Equity: MDG 2

<sup>32</sup> UN Viet Nam, Achieving the MDGs with Equity: MDG 3

<sup>33</sup> UN Viet Nam, Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> UNICEF Viet Nam (2010), Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> UNICEF Viet Nam (2010), Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> UNICEF Viet Nam (2010), Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> United Nations Viet Nam (2009), UN Gender Briefing Kit: Gender issues in Education

<sup>38</sup> Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (2005), Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

<sup>39</sup> For example, women and girls engage in domestic work and agriculture and are typically dependent and shy in character, whereas men and boys work as professionals and technicians, and are typically strong and independent in character.

<sup>40</sup> World Economic Forum (2008), Global Gender Gap Report 2008

In addition, there is a disparity between the subjects studied by men and women. While more than half of women (55%) major in education and business studies, nearly 40% of men major in technical and engineering studies<sup>41</sup>. The National Strategy for the Advancement of Women by 2010 sets the education sector as a priority, and one of its indicators is for 35% of all those with a certificate of higher education to be women.

### **[Literacy Education]**

According to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) report (2005), the literacy rate for those over 10 years of age is 92.13%, whereas the female literacy rate is only 89.31%. There is a disparity in the illiteracy rate among ethnicities and regions; for example, the illiteracy rate among ethnic minorities in Thai Nguyen City, Eastern North Province, is 17.1% for men and 29.1% for women (in the same region, of the illiteracy rate among the Kinh is 1.3% for men and 1.1% for women)<sup>42</sup>.

The importance of literacy education is mentioned in the Education Law and the National EFA Action Plan. One of the indicators of the National Strategy for the Advancement of Women by 2010 is for all women to be literate by 2010. The government of Viet Nam is promoting literacy education, targeting people aged between 15-35 years, implemented by primary or secondary school teachers.

### **[Vocational and Technical Education]**

Men have more opportunity to receive vocational training than women. 16.3% of men received vocational training in school, whereas the percentage of women was 9.9%. Also, while 13.9% of men received training at the workplace only 9.7% of women did<sup>43</sup>. However, the number of women receiving vocational training has been increasing recently, and the percentage of women aged 18-21 who received vocational training increased from 7.5% (in 2004) to 11.1% (in 2006)<sup>44</sup>. The number of vocational training schools has increased, and the areas of training have become more diverse (e.g. telecommunications and tailoring)<sup>45</sup>. However, there are fewer female workers with professional skills than men, so that three quarters of female workers are engaged in unskilled work<sup>46</sup>.

VWU established vocational training centres for women at the central and provincial level, and implements activities for technical achievement income generation and support for enterprises. However, the number of trainers and classrooms is still limited, and in many cases the curriculum does not fit with the needs of women and young people in rural areas. The Centre for Women Development in Hanoi offers vocational training in IT and service work (in hotels and restaurants) for women and support in finding employment. This Centre also provides training for victims of domestic violence, in small numbers.

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<sup>41</sup> UN Viet Nam (2009), Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> UNIFEM (2010), Gender Analysis on Draft Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plan 2011-2015

<sup>43</sup> ADB (2006), Viet Nam Country Gender Assessment

<sup>44</sup> UN Viet Nam (2010), Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> ADB (2006), Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> ADB (2006), Ibid.

## **[Non-formal Education]**

Chapter 2 Section 5 of the Education Law, “Continuing Education”, defines non-formal education, which includes literacy education and life skill education. Additionally, non-formal education is one of the target groups of the National EFA Action Plan. The goals of this national action plan are: 1. Provision of primary education for young people with no basic education; 2. Provision of literacy education and life skill education for adults; 3. Improvement of non-formal education programmes; 4. Development of a national strategy for non-formal education and continuing education; and 5. Strengthening of capacity building at the local level. The national action plan targets all people, in particular young people with no basic education and adults who are women, peasants or from ethnic minorities.

Non-formal education is implemented at Community Learning Centres (CLC) and Continuing Education Centres (CEC). By 2006, 7,384 CLCs had been established in 70% of all communes in Viet Nam<sup>47</sup>. In these centres, literacy education and primary education for young people are implemented by teachers and members of social organizations.

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<sup>47</sup> UNESCO (2008), Viet Nam Non-Formal Education: Country Profile prepared for EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008

### 3-2 Health

#### Health

- 1) Life expectancy is 72.9 years for men and 76.8 years for women. MDGs indicators have been improving, and the maternal mortality rate has fallen from 233 per 100,000 in 1990 to 69 per 100,000 in 2009. The disparity in the maternal mortality rate between regions and ethnic groups is receiving attention (for example, 411 per 100,000 in mountainous areas).
- 2) The total fertility rate (TFR) has been falling, and the TFR in 2008 was 2.08. The rate of contraceptive use is high, at 79% (for all contraceptive methods). However, ethnic minorities, unmarried couples, adolescents and migrant workers have limited access to family planning services, and there are some issues such as unwanted pregnancy and abortions.
- 3) It is estimated that the number of people living with HIV in Viet Nam was about 240,000 in 2009. Infected people were mainly drug users and sex workers. Most of those infected are men (85%), so that there is concern about the spread of infection among women.
- 4) The sex ratio at birth in Viet Nam was 110.5 (in 2009), and there are more boys than girls. The reasons why this phenomenon occurs might be strong preference for boys, the falling fertility rate and advances in medical technology.

#### [Government Policy]

The government of Viet Nam has been announcing actively some policies on health since 2001. The overall goal of “The National Strategy for Reproductive Healthcare 2002-2010” is to improve reproductive health and to narrow the gap between urban and rural areas by 2010. The national strategic plan has seven objectives, including the improvement of female and maternal health, equal rights to make decisions on family planning and raising the awareness of adolescents. In addition to this national strategy, the “National Nutrition Strategy 2001-2010”, “Strategy for Public Health 2001-2010” and “National Safe Motherhood Plan 2003-2010” was also implemented<sup>48</sup>.

The first document on health policies to mention gender issues is “Ordinance on Population”, which bans choosing the sex of a foetus and stipulates the government’s responsibility in eliminating all forms of discrimination against boys and girls<sup>49</sup>.

#### [Medical Health]

According to State of World Population (2010), life expectancy is 72.9 years for men and 76.8 years for women. Although cases of communicable diseases have been decreasing in number because of the change in life styles brought about by rapid economic growth, cases of non-communicable diseases (e.g. alcoholism and traffic accidents) are on the rise. Non-communicable diseases affect more men than women, so that the life expectancy is different for men and women.

MDGs indicators (infant mortality rate, mortality rate of children under five and maternal mortality rate) have been improving<sup>50</sup>. The maternal mortality rate has fallen from 233 per 100,000 in 1990 to 69 per 100,000 in 2009<sup>51</sup>. The main reason for the reduction of the maternal mortality rate is the improvement of access to high quality reproductive health (e.g. antenatal

<sup>48</sup> Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (2005), Combined fifth and sixth reports of CEDAW

<sup>49</sup> Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (2005), Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> WHO (2007), WHO country cooperation strategy 2007-2011

<sup>51</sup> UN Viet Nam, MDG Fact Sheet: Achieving the MDGs with Equity: MDG 5.

care, family planning services and births attended by skilled health personnel)<sup>52</sup>. However, as the indicator has not changed since 2006, it is considered that more effort is needed in order to achieve the targeted indicator, 58.3 per 100,000 by 2015<sup>53</sup>. In addition, the disparity in the maternal mortality rate between regions and ethnic groups receiving attention. For example, while the maternal mortality rate in regions where many Kinh live was 46 per 100,000 in 2002, in regions where many ethnic minorities live the rate was 411 per 100,000 (in mountainous areas) and 119 per 100,000 (in the central coastal area). As pregnant women are more likely to die mainly during or immediately after childbirth, it is recommended that skilled health personnel attend each birth. However, ethnic minorities have lack of access to these health services, so that only 45.8% of childbirths by women from ethnic minorities were attended by skilled health personnel, whereas 96.4% of childbirths by Kinh were attended by skilled health personnel (in 2006)<sup>54</sup>.

### **[Nutrition]**

According to a report by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2010), 21.1% of boys under 5 years of age and 19.2% of girls were underweight; therefore, boys receive better nutrition than girls. With regard to nutritional conditions, the gap is greater between different regions and ethnic groups than between the genders. For example, the percentage of underweight Kinh children is 18%, whereas the percentage of ethnic minority children is 29.7%. In addition, many women (especially pregnant women) have Iron Deficiency Anemia and the data for 2008 shows that 38% of pregnant women had this symptom<sup>55</sup>.

The government of Viet Nam launched the "National Nutrition Strategy 2001-2010", and implemented some activities to reduce malnutrition, especially for children under five and pregnant women<sup>56</sup>. Through this strategy, cases of malnutrition have been reduced dramatically; however, the target has not been reached by the end of the period.

### **[Family Planning]**

According to a report by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (2008), the total fertility rate (TFR) has been falling. The TFR in 2008 was 2.08 (1.83 in urban areas and 2.22 in rural areas), with a gap between urban and rural areas<sup>57</sup>. In addition, the TFR of women with no education is the highest (2.65), while that of women who have completed higher education is 1.64.

The rate of contraceptive use is high, at 79% (for all contraceptive methods)<sup>58</sup>. The main methods are IUD (35.9%) and natural family planning methods (10.2%), whereas the use of the male condom is 7.6%<sup>59</sup>. As the national family planning program targets only married couples<sup>60</sup>, ethnic minorities, unmarried couples, adolescents and migrant workers have limited access to family planning services.

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<sup>52</sup> UN Viet Nam, Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> UN Viet Nam, Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> UNICEF Viet Nam (2010), An Analysis on Child Situation in Viet Nam 2010

<sup>55</sup> UNICEF Viet Nam (2010), Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> For example, June 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> are designated "Micronutrient Day", and campaigns are implemented such as infant health checks, distribution of iron tablets to pregnant women, etc.

<sup>57</sup> UNFPA Viet Nam (2009), Viet Nam Population 2007

<sup>58</sup> UN Viet Nam (2009), UN Gender Briefing Kit: Gender issues in health and health care.

<sup>59</sup> UN Viet Nam (2009), Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> UNICEF Viet Nam (2010), Ibid.

The issue of family planning is intensified in cases of abuse. In particular, there is an increasing abortion rate by adolescents; about 20% of all abortions occur among teenage girls<sup>61</sup>. It is also reported that 7.5% of teenagers had sex before marriage without any knowledge of sexuality, and this is considered to be one of the reasons for the increase in cases of abortion.

### **[HIV/AIDS]**

It is estimated that the number of people living with HIV in Viet Nam was about 243,000 in 2009<sup>62</sup>. If more people take HIV tests, there will be more people with HIV. Infected people were mainly drug users (20.27%) and sex workers (3.12%) in 2008<sup>63</sup>. According to the UN gender briefing kit by UN Viet Nam, most of those infected are men (85%), one out of ten is under 19 years old and half of the infected people are young people aged 20-29<sup>64</sup>. Although many men are infected, there is concern about the spread of infection among women. In the case of women, the main path of transmission is intercourse with their partners (men) as a result of sexual intercourse before marriage and the low rate of use of the male condom. The number of infected pregnant women with HIV has been increasing; it is estimated that 4,100 pregnant women were infected in 2008, and this number will rise to 4,800 by 2012<sup>65</sup>. This is why it is necessary to carry out HIV testing at antenatal check-ups and to provide information<sup>66</sup>.

The government of Viet Nam issued the “National Strategy Plan on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control by 2010” in 2004, and enacted the “Law on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control” in 2007. The government is working on awareness-raising programmes and the provision of services for people infected with HIV<sup>67</sup>. JICA provides support for people living with HIV as a technical cooperation project in partnership. In addition, USAID implements a support program on HIV/AIDS prevention for drug users and sex workers.

### **[Sex Ratio at Birth]**

At present, the emerging issue on gender equality in Viet Nam is the sex ratio at birth. Sex ratio at birth means the number of boys per 100 girls at birth, and the global standard sex ratio is around 105. However, it is pointed out that some countries in Asia have had an imbalance in the sex ratio at birth since the 1990s. In Viet Nam, the sex ratio at birth in 2000 was 106.2, which is the global standard. It is reported that since 2003 the sex ratio at birth in Viet Nam has been rising: for example the sex ratio at birth in 2009 was 110.5<sup>68</sup>. Although this ratio is not as high as in some other countries<sup>69</sup>, in the case of Viet Nam, it is pointed out that the ratio has been increasing rapidly during a short period (since 2003). If no measures are taken, the sex ratio of the population will be 113 (men) to 100 (women), and the drop in the female population will lead to an increase in early marriage and the expansion of the sex industry.

There is a disparity between regions and according to birth order and socio-economic quintile. Looking at the regions, the Red River Delta region (including Ha Noi) has the highest sex ratio,

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<sup>61</sup> UN Viet Nam, Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> UN Viet Nam (2009), Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> UN Viet Nam (2009), Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> UNICEF Viet Nam(2010), Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> UNICEF Viet Nam(2010), Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> UNICEF Viet Nam (2010), Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> UNICEF Viet Nam (2010), Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> UNFPA Viet Nam (2010), Sex Ratio at Birth Imbalances in Viet Nam: Evidence from the 2009 Census

<sup>69</sup> For example, sex ratio at birth in China is 120.6 (in 2008) and in India is 112.1 (in 2006).



at 115.4, and the lowest sex ratio, 105.6, is in the Central Highlands region where many ethnic minorities live<sup>70</sup>. As for birth order, the sex ratio at the third or later birth is the highest, at 115.5, and that of the second birth is the lowest, at 109<sup>71</sup>. In the case of the socio-economic quintile, the sex ratio at birth of the poorest is the lowest (105.2), while that of the middle class and over is quite high (over 110)<sup>72</sup>.

The reasons why this phenomenon occurs might be that: 1. there is still a strong preference for boys because of the traditional patriarchy system; 2. the falling fertility rate lowers the possibility of having a son; and 3. advances in medical technology have made it possible to identify the sex of an unborn child.

The government of Viet Nam enacted the “Ordinance of Population” in 2003, which prohibits foetal sex identification and abortion on grounds of foetal sex<sup>73</sup>. The law on gender equality also stipulates that abortion for sex choice is a violation of gender equality<sup>74</sup>. The Department of Population and Family Planning is implementing awareness-raising activities for married couples and health personnel<sup>75</sup>.

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<sup>70</sup> UNFPA Viet Nam (2010), Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> UNFPA Viet Nam (2010), Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> UNFPA Viet Nam (2010), Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (2005), Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> UN Viet Nam (2010), Factsheet 2010 World Population Day, Sex Ratio at Birth

<sup>75</sup> According to the interview with an officer of the department of population and family planning in the Ministry of Health.

### 3-3 Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Sectors

#### Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Sectors

- 1) The results of the monitoring and evaluation of gender policies implemented during the year are being compiled into a report in accordance with the “Gender Strategy on Agriculture and Rural Development 2003-2010.”
- 2) Since the Land Law specifies that land use certificates should be issued under the joint names of husband and wife, farmland ownership is legally granted on a gender equality basis. In reality, however, farmland use is in almost all cases certified under the name of the husband only. In addition, in rural areas, decision-making and organizational leadership are dominated by men, and women’s access to water, microcredit loans, agricultural equipment and training is limited.
- 3) In Vietnam, approximately 60% of the population is engaged in agriculture and women take on the larger part of farm work. Women’s status is, however, still low and women are doubly burdened with domestic duties, working without pay and suffering from domestic violence and a preference for boys. The burden of women is increasing because an increasing number of men and young people are moving to the cities and the economic crisis is still ongoing.
- 4) Although development officers appointed to each commune by the provincial or district development centres or offices give technical guidance to women in rural areas, technology transfer is not successful because these women are often illiterate and have difficulty in gaining access to training.
- 5) Poverty reduction based on an increase in farmers’ income is defined as an overall objective for the agriculture and rural development sector and, therefore, support is required to increase incomes and promote entrepreneurship. Currently, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is developing policies for vocational training programs for people in rural areas.

#### [Agriculture Sector]

In 1980s, agricultural land reform was carried out as part of the Doi Moi reform program, and the movement of the labour force within the country became more fluid. In addition, in 1993, the Land Law was introduced and agricultural output and food consumption increased rapidly. Currently, Vietnam is one of the largest rice exporting countries in the world, and the production of other major agricultural products such as tea, tobacco and coffee has also increased. Since joining the WTO in 2007, Vietnam is now enhancing its free trade policy, through which trade in agricultural products is also promoted. And, as a stronger focus is placed on efficiency in order to prevail in international competition, the price of farming supplies has been rising, as a result of which farmers are required to increase their income even more<sup>76</sup>.

Under such circumstances, at present, 74% of the Vietnamese people live in rural areas<sup>77</sup> (2008). Due to growing industrialization, the total population engaged in agriculture fell to 52.5% in 2008 from 71% in 1995. Agriculture, however, is still the major occupation of the Vietnamese people; approximately one half of the male rural population and two-thirds of the female rural population are farmers.

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<sup>76</sup> UNDP (1999).

<sup>77</sup> GSO data

## [Agricultural Policy and Gender]

In the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 3 general offices, for irrigated rice culture, forestry and fisheries, were established following the organizational restructuring carried out in 2008. Following this, in 2009, new legal documents related to gender equality were published. The “Gender Strategy on Agriculture and Rural Development 2003-2010” was developed in 2003 with the support of the VWU and the Asian Development Bank and was implemented in October 2003 in accordance with the decision made by the then Minister of Agriculture and Rural Areas. The gender strategy has been revised at times, for example, when the Ministry of Fisheries was merged in 2008. Also, the “Guidelines for the Elimination of Gender Discrimination” were developed with the support of ADB. Since 1994 the CFAW were established in the ministry but, since no authority was given to these committees in any formal document such as a decision by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, these committees are unable to properly demonstrate leadership. In the present situation, although each member of these committees functions as the GFP of each department, a system needs to be established to secure a budget.

In the “Gender Strategy on Agriculture and Rural Development 2003-2010,” an internal goal to increase income and reduce poverty has been set up for the ministry to achieve by 2020, in which it is clearly specified that there must be a reduction in the income gap between men and women and poverty among women in rural areas. In addition, as a goal to be achieved by 2010, it was specified that the agriculture and rural development sector should achieve gender equality and the improvement of women’s status and should draw up and implement plans to take responsibility for gender equality issues<sup>78</sup>. In order to achieve these goals, 5 targets were also established together with the related indicators as follows:

- (1) With growing industrialization and the modernization of the agriculture and rural development sector, the Vietnamese people’s awareness of gender equality should be improved, including that of public servants and farmers.
- (2) Women in rural areas should have access to and use of major resources such as land, credit, water and public services.
- (3) Gender goals should be consolidated by using gender statistics as a tool for the monitoring and evaluation of related programs and projects.
- (4) Gender equality should be aspired to, and consideration should be given to gender in conducting agricultural surveys and in offering public services and agricultural training.
- (5) Women’s participation and empowerment in decision making should be encouraged at every level, including the central and local levels of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the People’s Committees, as well as in agricultural colleges, organizations, vocational training schools and companies.

In 2010, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development compiled an evaluation report concerning the gender equality strategy and, in this report, the ministry indicated that several major achievements had been made, including an increase in the proportion of female administrative officials to 40.65%<sup>79</sup>, the development of a system for gender statistics<sup>80</sup> and the

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<sup>78</sup> According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, initiatives corresponding to 30% of those specified in the Gender Strategy have already been implemented. This percentage is rather low because of a shortage of budget and human resources.

<sup>79</sup> Of 215,000 administrative officials, 87,400 are female.

<sup>80</sup> From 2008 to 2009, through support of SIDA and FAO, a system for gender statistics was developed at the IT and Statistics Centre of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. The number of gender

enhancement of training for ethnic minorities. It was also pointed out that sufficient educational activities were not being carried out in rural areas, the necessary infrastructure had not been developed, not enough gender indicators had been established<sup>81</sup> and rural development would require collaboration between government ministries<sup>82</sup>. With respect to initiatives to eliminate gender discrimination, it was also indicated that incentives were necessary to promote information exchange to enable each ministry department to implement gender equality programs. In addition, as a result of this evaluation, the “Gender Action Plans” for the period of 2010-2015 were developed.

### **[Rural Life and Gender]**

In Vietnam, farmers account for 60% of the total population and women play a significant role in farm work<sup>83</sup>. Of all women workers, 53.7% are engaged in agriculture<sup>84</sup>. Women’s status, however, is still low because they are treated as subsidiary in the patriarchal system, they are doubly burdened with domestic duties, they work without pay and they face issues such as domestic violence and a preference for boys<sup>85</sup>. Since few women participate in decision making in the People’s Committees or the Rural Development Committees, leadership needs to be developed among women. Women’s participation in the People’s Committees is still low, at a rate of 23.88% at provincial level, 23.01% at district level and 19.53% at commune level (2009). In rural areas, basic infrastructure such as roads, water supply and electric power remains undeveloped, and the rural areas lag behind the nation’s strategy to promote modern agriculture, indicating the existence of a large poverty gap between urban and rural areas. In rural areas, services such as medical care, health and education have not been well developed, either.

In order to improve the current situation of rural women, the Vietnamese government has established the goal of increasing women’s income through entrepreneurship, and is implementing initiatives to enlighten village people to enhance women’s access to agricultural training and public services. Particularly in an environment where the traditional values of the patriarchal system are shared, efforts have been made mainly to change the consciousness of rural leaders and families who do not recognize the importance of women and their need for education and social participation<sup>86</sup>. Also in order to improve poor health and sanitation conditions in rural areas, training on the benefits of clean water and sanitation has been provided. With respect to maternal and child health, family planning to ease the population issue<sup>87</sup> and

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indicators related to agriculture and rural development increased from 14 to 30.

<sup>81</sup> In statistical indicators, it will be necessary to include not only indicators of agricultural production but also those that come under supervision of other ministries such as indicators of health, education and infrastructure in rural areas.

<sup>82</sup> It was proposed in the evaluation report of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development that, in order to realize gender equality in rural areas, it would be indispensable not only to improve agricultural production but also to establish collaboration with other sectors so that women’s status could be improved through participation in healthcare, education and politics.

<sup>83</sup> Particularly, women are often engaged in works such as cultivation, care of livestock, processing and marketing.

<sup>84</sup> Implementation Report of the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2009.

<sup>85</sup> It is also indicated by historical researchers that, in the modernisation of agriculture, the right of women to make decisions in agricultural production and domestic economy has deteriorated.

<sup>86</sup> In the “Project on Capacity Development of Participatory Agricultural and Rural Development for Poverty Reduction in the Central Highlands” of JICA, a range of approaches were worked out to incorporate women’s needs in rural development programs targeting ethnic minorities such as the Dao and Ba Na people. An environment has also been developed to promote women’s participation in meetings and encourage them to offer their opinions.

<sup>87</sup> Although the Vietnamese government recommend people not to have more than 2 children, many

antenatal care have been promoted, while educational seminars to prevent AIDS have been enhanced<sup>88</sup>. These issues are of particular urgency in ethnic minority villages, and since 2008 the government has been focussing especially on the reduction of poverty among the ethnic minorities<sup>89</sup>. Grass-roots citizens' groups and NGOs have also continued basic initiatives to resolve these issues, for example by providing rural women with life skills and literacy education, training for increased income and leadership development, and education on AIDS, sexual and domestic violence and human trafficking<sup>90</sup>.

In addition, as a result of recent circumstances such as the movement of an increasing number of men and young people to urban areas, the ongoing economic crisis and unseasonable weather conditions, women engaged in agriculture have to bear a larger burden. In relation with the issues of climate change, disaster management and gender equality, UNIFEM and other organizations have started offering support to women and families in rural areas who are victims of the flooding in Hung Yen Province<sup>91</sup>.

### **[Extension Activities and Training for Women]**

Although extension officers appointed by provincial or district extension offices are providing rural women with technical guidance, it is difficult to transfer enough technology to them due to their illiteracy and the problem of access. In addition, it is not clear how many men and women have been trained by extension officers, because the government has no compilation of gender statistics. According to a survey conducted by the Vietnamese Academy for Social Science in 2006, less than half of rural women have received extension training because the traditional ways of thinking in rural areas and the heavy burden of farm work prevented them attending the training sessions. It is pointed out that information on such training sessions cannot reach rural women effectively, since it is communicated not through women's networks but through popular organizations such as Farmer's Union<sup>92</sup>.

The Vietnamese government has also put an emphasis on vocational training for agricultural workers, and a policy was defined to enhance vocational training in rural areas by 2020 through collaboration between the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and MOLISA. Currently, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is developing policies for vocational training programs in rural areas. It is expected that consideration of gender equality will be incorporated into these policies.

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households in rural areas and ethnic minority villages have more than 3 children. In addition, the tendency of a preference for boys still prevails both in urban and rural areas.

<sup>88</sup> Since 2004, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, in cooperation with medical institutions, has continued to provide education in rural areas and between 2004 and 2009 the ministry invited a total of 2,750 young people and 1,340 farmers to training sessions.

<sup>89</sup> In the Prime Minister's decree of 2009, it was determined that the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development would enhance education for farmers and ethnic minorities in cooperation with the Ministries of Justice and Finance, the VWU and the Vietnam Farmers' Union and the Committee for Ethnic Minorities.

<sup>90</sup> A local NGO, the Center for Education Promotion and Empowerment of Women (CEPEW), works to improve the awareness and livelihoods of rural women and puts a particular emphasis on the improvement of their life skills. In recent years, since issues like domestic violence in rural poor households and human trafficking have become more serious, the NGO says that it is providing people with information on reproductive health and laws. Support is offered to the NGOs by USAID, AusAid, SIDA, CIDA, DANIDA and other bilateral aid organizations.

<sup>91</sup> This is a project managed by the Committee for Science, Technology and the Environment.

<sup>92</sup> According to "Women and Economy" in the UN Gender Briefing Kit 2009

As part of the initiatives for poverty reduction in rural areas in Vietnam, JICA conducted the “Study on Artisan Craft Development Plan for Rural Industrialization in Vietnam” based on an agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development; and from 2008, JICA implements the “Project on Capacity Development on Artisan Craft Promotion for Socio-economic Development in Rural Areas in Vietnam.” This is a pilot project to improve people’s livelihoods through the promotion of local industries in 4 provinces in the northern region near the border with China. Of a total of 8 selected subprojects, 4 are related to the organization of women’s cooperatives for woven products<sup>93</sup>. In order to provide administrative support to local industries at each of the various stages, enhancement of the flow of business planning, raw material production, product processing, marketing, distribution and sale is planned. It can be said that this is an initiative to help women in target areas to earn a living by operating local business so that they will not need to work away from home..

### **[Ownership of Farming Land]**

As specified in the Gender Strategy on Agriculture and Rural Development, land use certificates) need to be issued jointly under the names of husband and wife following the revision of the Land Law in 2003. Legally speaking, gender equality has been achieved with this law. In fact, however, land use certificates are often issued under the name of the husband only and it cannot be said that the law is being enforced effectively<sup>94</sup>. Since women’s right to land ownership has not been approved de facto, women encounter difficulties when they want to access to micro-finance because they do not own land to secure a mortgage on.

In addition, women in rural areas are treated as second-class, and decision-making and organizational leadership are monopolized by men. As a result, women’s access to natural resources such as water and economic resources such as agricultural equipment and training is limited.

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<sup>93</sup> These areas are inhabited by many ethnic minority people including the Tày and Lào people. Their traditional weaving patterns and techniques need to be arranged to suit the modern world so that finished products can be marketed. As women in these areas promote collaboration with women in other Asian countries and in African countries, academic societies for arts and crafts and the one-village, one-product campaigns, they are beginning to be proud of themselves and have built up confidence about their traditions and originality. According to project officers, however, it is difficult to maintain production on a steady basis all through the year since women play the principal role in farm work. Thus their efforts do not successfully result in a significant increase in output or livelihood.

<sup>94</sup> As an indicator of the Millennium Development Goal for Vietnam, land use certificates should be issued under the joint names of husband and wife by 2010.

### 3-4 Economic Activities

#### Economic Activities

- 1) Vietnam has been enjoying unprecedented economic growth and the labour force has grown year by year; but the labour market has been supported mainly by the self-employed and unpaid family workers. 76.7% of the total labour population (2007) is not covered by social security, and 53.5% of women workers are unpaid family workers (2010).
- 2) In Vietnam, the problem of gender discrimination in the age of retirement (60 years old for men and 55 years old for women) has long been discussed, but equality has not yet been realized. In particular, the proportion of women in managerial posts in the private sector is substantially lower than that of men. There are also problems with differences between employees with regard to wages and social security, and the concept of sexual harassment has not been sufficiently addressed.
- 3) It is natural that women should be paid for their labour and it appears that women are gaining a footing in more areas of society; but their labour value in family businesses and household work has not been sufficiently recognized.
- 4) Laws and regulations on the protection of household workers are in the course of being formulated. The exploitation of working women as family workers, and sexual violence against them, are serious problems in Vietnam and abroad. The problems of sexual harassment and sex workers are treated as the social evil which is still considered taboo.

#### [Economic Growth and the Status of Women Workers]

Economic growth in Vietnam has been remarkable since the market reforms of 1986. According to the Report on Labour Society Trends (2010) by MOLISA, the average growth rate from 2000 to 2008 was 7.5% per year. This was the result of industrialization and the strategy to promote exports; and the average per capita income in 2008 exceeded 1,000 US dollars, up to 2.5 times higher than it had been in 2000. The labour force grew on average at the pace of 1.06 million persons per year during the period 2000 to 2007, and reached 46.7 million persons in 2007<sup>95</sup>. However, the yearly growth of employment was 1.03 million jobs, a little lower than the growth of the labour force. Therefore, compared with the economic growth rate the government was slow to act in generating employment<sup>96</sup>. Nevertheless, the national poverty rate fell from 37.4% in 1998 to 14% in 2008 thanks to this economic growth, showing a great advance. However, a problem still needing to be resolved is the fact that there are still many households below the poverty line in rural areas and ethnic minority areas<sup>97</sup>.

According to the report by the World Bank, the participation of the Vietnamese people in the labour force is the highest of the ASEAN countries, with 81% of men aged 15 to 64 years old and 78% of women participating in one form or another (2008). However, most of this labour market was supported by the self-employed and unpaid family workers<sup>98</sup> and labourers who were not protected by social security accounted for only 76.7% of the total working population<sup>99</sup> (2007). The latest labour and social trends report issued by MOLISA in 2010 states that 53.5% of female workers are unpaid family workers. For wage earners the gender gap was

<sup>95</sup> However, this labour force has few technical skills and 2/3 of it had received no technical training.

<sup>96</sup> This value was low among the ASEAN countries.

<sup>97</sup> UNIFEM and the World Bank analyzed the gender problem following the abrupt economic growth after the Doi Moi reforms, and are preparing their reports. The report by the World Bank will be issued in 2011 under the title, "Economic Choice of Men and Women in Vietnam".

<sup>98</sup> These are people working without pay in family-operated small businesses and shops, including wives and relatives.

<sup>99</sup> According to the Labour Employment Research by MOLISA

apparent in all aspects, and there are very few women in management posts. Women's wages are on average 77% of men's wages. Women are engaged in such fields of labour as agriculture and forestry, the food industry, clothing production, the hotel/restaurant business and shops, while men are engaged in such fields as fish processing, construction, transportation, communications and the banking business.

### [Employment Opportunities]

According to the MOLISA report on gender, the Government made efforts to generate employment for women, with the aim of providing a stable livelihood for women and their families. As a result, 49.4% of all employees were women. In 2009, of the people who had found jobs recently, 60.8% were women.

Female employees account for 46% of workers in the production and business sectors<sup>100</sup>. 41.12% of all working women are self-employed, and 49.42% of women contribute to the household economy. Women are participating in the scientific and technical fields, and female workers in the field of machinery and bike repair account for 61.5% of the workforce. In the processing/manufacturing sector, 51.7% of workers are women. As a result, the total unemployment rate in urban areas dropped to 4.65% and the female unemployment rate fell to 5.10%. It is young people, aged 15 to 24 years old, present the most serious problem with regard to unemployment. 50% of the unemployed are young people. The unemployment rate of young females (6.3%) is higher than that of young males (5.8%) (2007).

Only 5% of the presidents of large companies<sup>101</sup> and 9.7% of the vice-presidents are female. Therefore, the National Socio-economic Development Plan 2011 – 2015 has set a gender goal of increasing the number of female company operators.

### [Women Workers in Public and Private Sector]

Category	Workers				Total	%
	Men	%	Women	%		
Wage-earners	5,562	54.1	4,719	45.9	10,281	22.6
Self-employed	10,279	65.2	5,476	34.8	15,755	34.6
Unpaid family workers	7,512	38.9	11,797	61.1	19,310	42.4
Others	172	73.8	61	26.2	233	1
Total	23,525	100	22,053	100	45,579	100

Source: Vietnam Employment Trends 2009 (Statistics for 2007)

The average income for men is higher than for women in the same type of labour; the wage for women in skilled jobs is 77% that of men. Among those with vocational training, women's wages are 78.5% those of men. It is also pointed out that the income of women with higher education qualifications (university graduate or higher) is 62% of that of men<sup>102</sup> (2007).

In Vietnam, the difference in retirement age between men and women (60 years old for men and 55 years old for women) had long been discussed, but equality has not been achieved. As the difference in the retirement age influences various working conditions, such as promotion to

<sup>100</sup> 2009/2010 Labour and Social Trend Survey

<sup>101</sup> Class-90 Corporations (companies having total legal assets of 500 billion VND)

<sup>102</sup> According to the Gender Report 2009 by MOLISA



managerial posts and the speed of promotion, the NCFAW and the VWU advocate the promotion of equality.

### **[Support System for Women Workers]**

In Vietnam, various systems such as social insurance, unemployment insurance and labour inspection have been developed over the past ten years or so, but these systems have not been applied to the informal sector, and the women who make up the greater part of this sector have obtained little benefit from the social security systems. It is expected that ILO will support MOLISA in reinforcing its capacity to establish social security systems and to promote the dissemination of information to female workers.

The Labour Law of Vietnam (2002) stipulates that companies shall preferentially employ women, but the industrial sector does not promote the employment of women probably because of fears about the cost of employing women with respect to childbirth and infant care<sup>103</sup>. As a countermeasure to this fear, the ILO recommends the introduction of a system of infant-care leave for men and the moderation of the gender gap in employment<sup>104</sup>.

The problems of sexual harassment and violence in the labour field are treated as social evil that are still considered taboos in Vietnamese society. The concept of sexual harassment is not well known and it is not deemed a problem at present. MOLISA is tackling the problem of the exploitation of sex workers as one of the measures for the prevention of social abuse, but such efforts are far from being sufficient.

### **[Business Start-up Support]**

Vocational training, entrepreneurship training and micro-finance are provided by MOLISA and the VWU at the national and local levels. In particular, the VWU concentrates on poverty reduction and economic empowerment for women in rural areas, and provides business start-up support and micro-finance in tie-ups with the People's Committee and others. According to the Report on Progress of the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2009, 34.86% of men and 29.21% of women respectively received some kind of technical training. Of these, 28.32% of the men and 22.66% of the women respectively attended some kind of vocational training (2007). Regarding micro-finance, it is also pointed out that since access to any good financial organization is difficult for women because they have no real right of ownership to land as security, they have to borrow small amounts of money at a high interest from relatives, friends or private moneylenders<sup>105</sup>.

As described above, women who want to start up businesses have access to limited skills, funding and time, and it is difficult for them to secure a sufficient labour force and sufficient backing. Their activities are also limited due to their housekeeping and child care responsibilities, and take place not on an economic base, but on a livelihood base in most cases. Their activities are deeply involved in the livelihood of their families. Therefore, an unsuccessful entrepreneurship has a direct impact on the livelihood of their families. A package of measures to support women in this kind of situation has not been developed by the Government yet<sup>106</sup>.

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<sup>103</sup> Based on an analysis by ADB

<sup>104</sup> According to "Women and Economy" in the UN Gender Briefing Kit 2009

<sup>105</sup> IFC-MPDF 2006

<sup>106</sup> According to "Women and Economy" in the UN Gender Briefing Kit 2009

### **[Unpaid Family Labour]**

Unpaid labour by women is often used in small family-operated businesses. Indeed, women participate in such labour and it appears as if they have gained a footing in society. However, the value of their labour is not fully recognized in family-operated businesses and domestic work. They undertake their housekeeping and child care without pay and have also often to put up with no pay or low pay in business. Therefore, the Government has set about formulating laws and regulations which provide for the protection of unpaid domestic or family workers such as maids and shop assistants. The serious problems of the exploitation of and sexual violence against women working as domestic workers in Vietnam and abroad are being taken up and there is a growing move to properly evaluate the unpaid labour of women.

### **[The Impact on Women of the Economic Crisis]**

Trade, investment and tourism in Vietnam have suffered serious damage under the global crisis and recession of the past 2 years and the following inflation. The economic growth rate fell to 5.3% in 2009, but increased a little after that. An assessment of the global economic crisis by MOLISA showed that the impact included shortened working hours and unemployment due to reduced commercial activity. In tourism especially, the handicraft industry has been hit by the economic crisis and growing numbers of women engaged in that industry are moving to other sectors in the country or migrating abroad in search of work. The impact on the poorer households in the mountainous areas is so great that they are cutting the amount they spend on food. The Government has attempted to generate employment opportunities by providing them with technical training and credit, and it is expected that a future study will be carried out to analyze the impact<sup>107</sup>.

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<sup>107</sup> According to the Labour and Social Trends Report by MOLISA, Oct. 2009

### 3-5 Migration

#### Migration

- 1) The major destinations of international migration include South Korea, China, the Middle East, Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan, Europe and the U.S.A. Female workers are engaged mainly in domestic work, the sex industry, factory labour, etc., in which the problems of sexual violence, shortage of safety nets and social security and the lack of labour information have been pointed out.
- 2) The migration from rural to urban areas within the country is increasing year by year along with economic growth and industrialization in Vietnam. In particular, the migration of the younger generation, in the 15 to 24 year-old age group, is marked. Due to the difficulty of registering as resident in the areas to which they have moved, these migrants often find themselves in the situation where they cannot avail themselves of social services such as education and healthcare at all.
- 3) Human trafficking is a problem on the border with China and Cambodia, but in the inland areas, there are a growing number of cases of women and girls from rural poor families being tricked by sex traders and trafficked as sex workers and brides. The destination countries include South Korea, China, Thailand and Cambodia.

#### [International Migration and Women]

It is estimated that at present approximately 400,000 persons are working in 40 foreign countries, with men working in agriculture and industry while women are employed as domestic workers, retail workers and factory workers in clothing and electric appliance manufacturing companies. Women workers accounted for 28% of all migrant workers in 1992, but this figure increased to 54% in 2004<sup>108</sup>. The reasons for this increase are deemed to be the rapid economic growth of Vietnam and the shortage of labour in the destination countries (including Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia). In addition, there are cases in which women from poor families move to China, South Korea or Taiwan in order to become brides, and a number of marriage brokers have set up in business to meet that demand. Actually, there are cases in which migrant women have become the victims of forced labour and sexual violence through such marriages, and it is feared that such marriages may be linked to human trafficking. The World Bank reports that about 100,000 Vietnamese women have married Taiwanese men since 1990. Women have migrated to many other countries too, such as Indonesia, the U.S.A, Europe and the Middle East, and a detailed data analysis remains a task to be done since there seems many cases of illegal migrations as sex workers. According to the latest data by MOLISA, 73,028 persons were employed abroad in 2009, including 22,020 women (30.2%)<sup>109</sup>.

There are also many cases of migrant workers being forced to do harsh work in adverse working conditions<sup>110</sup> and being unable to assert their due rights. They have no access to basic services such as healthcare and education, and they also have only limited access to technical training, career guidance and information services. There are cases in which they cannot obtain sufficient information on their contracts and are often exploited by their employers. IOM<sup>111</sup>, which supports migrant labourers, is working to resolve various problems faced by migrant

<sup>108</sup> A study by the Vietnam Society of Social Science

<sup>109</sup> Report on Progress of the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2009

<sup>110</sup> The 2005 report by the Statistics Office states that the wages of migrant workers are lower than those of general workers.

<sup>111</sup> The "Stand-up" Project II will, from 2010, begin work on: (1) Research into the actual status of boy's human trafficking (2) Research into the changing status of sex workers (3) Gender breakdown of remittances (4) Increased support for female victims of violence.

women, including sexual violence and the shortage of safety nets, social security and labour information.

### **[Internal Migration and Women]**

The 2009 census shows that 6.6 million residents aged 5 years and older changed their location between 2004 and 2009, but this is only the officially registered number. It is estimated that in fact the number of internal migrants was 3 times that figure, including seasonal workers and unregistered persons<sup>112</sup>. The number of internal migrants from rural to urban areas is increasing year by year due to economic growth and industrialization in Vietnam. In particular, young migrants aged between 15 and 24 are increasing. 60% of male migrants and 66% of female migrants are between the ages of 15 and 29, and most of them are unmarried, poorly-educated and unskilled<sup>113</sup>. According to research carried out in 2004, female migrants are younger than male migrants and their numbers are growing year by year<sup>114</sup>. This is because the demand for female workers has increased in clothing and shoe manufacturing plants due to the rapid development of the urban industrial areas. Men are engaged in farming and mining, and in construction and factory jobs in urban areas, while women are working mainly in manufacturing plants in urban areas. It is also reported that the total amount of remittance from these migrants reached 55 million US dollars, contributing to poverty reduction in Vietnam<sup>115</sup>. The collection and analysis of new data on the conditions of internal migrants is a task that needs to be tackled urgently in the future.

Various problems concerning internal migrant workers have come to the fore as described below, and urgent measures by the Government are called for<sup>116</sup>.

- Complex procedures for resident registration  
The procedures are made difficult by the revised Residence Law and there are increasing numbers of unregistered migrants who are unable to receive the various social services (including social insurance and poverty programs), which are the right of all citizens.
- Access to education, training and healthcare services  
Access to education and healthcare services for the migrant workers and their children is limited. They cannot make use of maternity healthcare services or access the safety net in event of illness or injury.
- Venereal disease and HIV infection  
The problem has arisen of venereal disease and HIV infection being spread by husbands returning from internal labour migration. Another problem is HIV infection spread by the sexual relations and use of drugs by young people.
- Violence against women  
Sexual violence against domestic workers in particular has resulted in the spread of venereal diseases and HIV.
- Discrimination and humiliation by local residents  
The migrants are alienated from the community by local residents, who say that they are untrustworthy and unclean. They suffer humiliation as migrants.
- Shortage of information on safe migration and labour laws  
The migrant workers lack information on safe migration and may often suffer unreasonable

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<sup>112</sup>“Internal Labour Migration – Opportunities and Challenges of Social and Economic Development in Vietnam” issued by IOM in 2010

<sup>113</sup> UN Vietnam(2010),Internal Migration

<sup>114</sup> A survey by the WB in 2006 reported that there were 76 male migrants for every 100 female migrants.

<sup>115</sup> According to the UNDP Human Development Report 2009

<sup>116</sup> IOM issued the above report in 2010 and made various recommendations. UNFPA also made recommendations from the perspective of the reproductive health of young migrants in particular.

exploitation.

### **[Human Trafficking and Women]**

Vietnam has formulated the “National Action Plan (2010-15)” to combat human trafficking and is implementing 4 projects for the prevention and regulation of human trafficking and protection and legislation against it<sup>117</sup>. The progress report of the Action Plan of 2004-2009 states that there were 1,586 cases of human trafficking, with 2,888 criminals arrested and 4,008 people designated as victims during the years of 2004 to 2009. The number of victims is increasing year by year; 60% of the cases involve human trafficking to China, 11% to Cambodia and several percent to Laos. In China, most of the victims are victims of the sex industry or forced labour in rural areas (through forced marriages to farmers). Women from the ethnic minority villages in the Northern region<sup>118</sup> in particular became sexual victims. In Cambodia, most cases are related to exploitation in the sex industry in the capital city. There are some cases of child prostitution moving from Cambodia to Vietnam.

The problems of child abduction and human trafficking are increasing in the Northern region: for instance, 66 children have been abducted and 49 cases of child trafficking have been prosecuted since 2007 in Ha Giang Province. Cases have arisen of infants being trafficked abroad under the name of adoption. In addition, there is also the problem of organ trading to China. The most serious problem in the Southern region is international marriages: for instance, 170 illegal brokers were prosecuted in HCMC for illegally arranging the marriages of 1,772 women in Taiwan and South Korea between 2007 and 2009<sup>119</sup>.

With regard to protection activities, the Police and the Border Guard rescued 1,238 victims in the past 5 years and accepted 2,936 returnees in total with the cooperation of MOLISA. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs designated and rescued 510 victims in tie-ups with Vietnam Embassies overseas, international organizations and NGOs.

Most of the female victims came from poor rural areas and have received only primary or middle school education. Many of them are from ethnic minorities or from broken families and are the victims of domestic violence. The brokers are people close to them: acquaintances, friends or relatives. There has been a rapid increase in the number of bogus marriages in China and South Korea and international marriage fraud using the Internet and mobile phones has also become a problem. The human traffickers are becoming more and more skilful<sup>120</sup>.

### **[Measures to Combat Human Trafficking]**

The 130 Steering Committee was set up in 2004 as the focal point for the implementation of the National Action Plan against human trafficking. In 2007, the Minister of Public Security was appointed as Chairman of the 130 Steering Committee. The 130 Steering Committee is made up of 16 members who are Vice Ministers and vice presidents from the ministries, agencies and

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<sup>117</sup> Prevention is undertaken mainly by the VWU, the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Tourism and the Ministry of Information and Communication, regulation by the Ministry of Public Security and Ministry of Defence, protection by MOLISA, and legislation by the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>118</sup> The provinces of the Northern region in which the serious cases of human trafficking are concentrated include Ha Giang Province (134 cases), Lao Cai Province (105 cases), Lang Son Province (95 cases), Quang Ninh Province (73 cases), Ha Noi City (66 cases), Nghe An Province (66 cases), Lai Chau Province (56 cases) and Bac Giang Province (44 cases).

<sup>119</sup> Implementation Report on the Action Plan 2004-2009

<sup>120</sup> Progress Report of an Advisor on Anti-Human Trafficking in Person in 2010

organizations related to the 4 Projects (prevention, regulation, protection and legislation) under the National Action Plan against Human Trafficking<sup>121</sup>. The Government is at present preparing to enact the Law on Prevention of Human Trafficking.

A number of organizations including UN organizations such as UNIAP, IOM, and UNICEF, bilateral organizations such as AECID, USAID and AusAid, and NGOs including World Vision, OXFAM and Save the Children are engaged in action against human trafficking and are handling programs to strengthen the capacity of ministries and agencies under the 130 Steering Committee. Individual experts of JICA are also dispatched to the VWU to develop the Pilot Project for prevention of human trafficking in 3 Provinces<sup>122</sup>.

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<sup>121</sup> 15 organizations; the Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Justice, MOLISA, the VWU, government offices, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Planning and Investment, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the People's Court, the People's Procuratorate, the Vietnam Fatherland Front, the Farmers' Union and the Youth Union.

<sup>122</sup> Hai Phong Province, Kien Gian Province and Nghe An Province

### 3-6 Ethnic Minorities

#### Ethnic Minorities

- 1) Employment, education and healthcare are pinpointed as urgent issues in the “Policy for Support of Gender Equality Activities in Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas Where the Social and Economic Conditions are Particularly Difficult 2011-2015” drawn up by the Ethnic Minority Committee.
- 2) Women of ethnic minorities have no access to education and technology and employment opportunities for them are limited. If employed, they are often exploited and paid low wages. They have little chance of starting up businesses and no way of increasing their income.
- 3) Many girls drop out of education and the illiteracy of many women is a hindrance to the improvement of their standard of living and income. Ethnic minority women have little chance of obtaining life skills or technical training under the patriarchal culture.
- 4) Access to healthcare service is limited for women; they suffer a lack of nutrition and live in an unsanitary environment. The healthcare of mothers and children and family planning are also restricted.
- 5) As ethnic minority women cannot obtain sufficient education and knowledge, they may become the victims of human traffickers. The problem has also arisen of labour exploitation in the sex industry.
- 6) There are some fields in which gender equality does not lag behind in comparison with the Kinh people: for instance, the decision-making right within the family and the gender ratio at birth are not largely different. However, the customary laws of each tribe may have the tendency to obstruct the health and rights of women.

#### [Government Policies for Ethnic Minorities]

There are 54 ethnic minority groups in Vietnam, accounting for 14% (approx. 12 million) of the total population of Vietnam, while the main ethnic group, the Kinh, accounts for 86%. Of the various ethnic groups, the Tay, Thai, Muong, Khmer and Nung tribes have relatively high populations<sup>123</sup>. Most of them inhabit the mountainous areas of the Northern region and the highlands of the Middle region<sup>124</sup>, but only Cham and Khmer tribes reside in the Mekong Delta areas. Characteristic of the ethnic minorities in Vietnam is the tendency to live together with other groups in the same area, and there are cases in which 10 or more ethnic groups are living in the same village. However, people of the same ethnic group do not confine themselves to living in a certain area, but may live scattered throughout the country. Each ethnic group has its own culture, religion and language. As various ethnic groups at different levels of development are living together in a single area, the Government has difficulty implementing the Vietnam National Development Plan, and the gap in economic development between those ethnic minority groups and the Kinh people grows wider and wider. The average poverty rate of the ethnic minority groups is as high as 49.8%, while the poverty rate in urban areas is 8.5%<sup>125</sup>.

Of the customary laws that individual ethnic groups traditionally observe, there are some problems from the viewpoint of human rights for women. For instance, there are some ethnic groups in which a woman is required to pass several days in a forest, not in her home, during the childbirth period; some groups in which a woman is expected to re-marry with a man in the

<sup>123</sup> These ethnic groups have a population of 1 million or more, while other ethnic groups have a population of only 300.

<sup>124</sup> 75% of the total population of the minority inhabit these 2 regions.

<sup>125</sup> According to the “Situation of Women and Men in Ethnic Minority Groups in Terms of Gender Equality Promotion, with Emphasis on Ethnic Minority Women’s Access to Legal Services 2010”.

same family, resulting in an increase in consanguineous marriages; or some groups in which the punishment for adultery is very severe for women. Trying to change these cultural customs is a very sensitive issue, but it is necessary to make such ethnic groups more aware of women's reproductive health and rights and the improvement of family livelihoods. The level of participation in politics is low in the ethnic minority communities and families. The participation of women in the People's Committees, for instance, is particularly low<sup>126</sup>.

To cope with this situation, the Ethnic Minority Committee has drafted the "Policy for Support of Gender Equality Activities in Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas Where the Social and Economic Conditions are Particularly Difficult 2011-2015" which has been formulated to tackle gender problems head-on. This policy is divided into 8 sections under the Law on Gender Equality. Of these, especial importance is attached to the 4 sections – education in gender awareness, improvement of employment and income, literacy, healthcare for mothers and children and nutrition, and the strengthening of tie-ups with MOLISA, the Ministry of Education and Training, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism is planned. In addition, the strengthening of support for ethnic minorities is also planned, this being a field many donors see as being in need of poverty reduction. JICA is also developing a technical project for ethnic minority support in the Northern region and the highlands of the Middle region. Furthermore, international NGOs<sup>127</sup> and regional NGOs have been undertaking grass-roots activities in the mountainous areas for many years.

### **[Government Initiatives for the Support of Women]**

The Government plans to provide support in the 4 important fields for 1,709 Communes, based on the results of conventional activities and problems remaining to be resolved, particularly in order to ease the difficulties of ethnic minority women. The 4 important fields are described below.

#### 1) Education in gender awareness

Most ethnic groups operate under a patriarchal system<sup>128</sup> which allows women no decision-making rights in their families, communities or areas. The traditional culture in which women are deemed to be subordinate to men has prevented women gaining access to the chances of education and healthcare service for mothers and infants, employment and business start-up and has prevented their participation in development projects. As a result, there are many cases in which this kind of ethnic culture has hindered women and their families from improving their livelihoods. The attitude of men who think of women as their property has led directly to an increase in victims of human trafficking and infringements of human rights. To change their awareness and behaviour, it will be necessary to furnish training in awareness education to the leaders of ethnic groups, religious groups and communities. Another task of the future will be the development of educational tools for illiterate men and women.

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<sup>126</sup> According to research by the Ethnic Minority Committee, the rate of women's participation is between 6% and 12%, depending on the area.

<sup>127</sup> World Vision, OXFAM Quebec, Action Aid and Asia Foundation are undertaking community support in the mountainous areas of the Northern region and in the Mekong Delta areas in the Southern region, to improve access to education and healthcare and to implement urgent measures such as safe migration and the prevention of human trafficking and AIDS.

<sup>128</sup> In Gia Lai Province which is supported by JICA, there are matriarchal ethnic groups where the gender gap is different from that of other groups. A project expert reports that the suppression of women is not so marked as in patriarchal groups.



Violence against women, particularly domestic violence in the ethnic minority communities, is also a serious problem. A study conducted by the VWU in 2006 reported that 40% of women had experienced physical violence at the hands of their husbands in Thai Binh, Lang Son and Tien Giang Provinces in the Northern region. These activities for awareness education are undertaken mainly by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and by MOLISA.

## 2) Improvement of employment and income

Women of ethnic minorities have little chance of employment and most of the women are engaged in farming in mountainous areas, cultivating crops and stock-raising on a self-sufficiency basis<sup>129</sup>. According to a sampling survey of 3 Provinces conducted by the Ethnic Minority Committee, the female employment rate in Duc Co District, Gia Lai Province was 47%, much lower than the average rate of 69% for the Province as a whole. It is also pointed out that even when employed, the women can only obtain half of the wages of the women of the Kinh people<sup>130</sup>. Many of them are employed in simple jobs at a low wage because they have no skills or legal knowledge. In recent years, an increasing number of ethnic minority women are employed by the roadside hotels, restaurants and nightclubs which have opened in response to economic and tourism development. As a result, the problems of labour exploitation and sexual abuse have come to the surface. Similarly, an increasing number of women are being trafficked by unscrupulous brokers to the sex industry in cities and abroad<sup>131</sup>. Therefore, there is an urgent need to generate employment in the communities. A program is planned that will provide vocational training, business start-up support and micro-finance for women, and will be implemented mainly by MOLISA.

## 3) Literacy and education

The rate of ethnic minority children who finish primary school is low;<sup>132</sup> many of them drop out of elementary education to help with housekeeping and farming, to take care of the children of relatives or because of poverty. According to a report by UNESCO, 16% of ethnic minority girls (11% of boys) do not attend primary school and 32% of the girls (20% of the boys) do not attend lower-secondary school.

The literacy rate for women aged 10 or older is 84.93% in the Northwest region and 72.2% in the highlands of the Middle region<sup>133</sup>. In the Northern region and the highlands of the Middle region, the illiteracy rate of ethnic minority women is as high as 24.2% compared with 0.9% for Kinh women<sup>134</sup>. The illiteracy rate differs markedly from tribe to tribe. The literacy rate of the women of the Hmong tribe is very low while that of the women of the Tay and Muong tribes is high as that of Kinh women. However, the illiteracy rate among women of middle age in general is a serious problem, hindering their employment, business start-up and livelihood improvement. Therefore, the Government plans to expand literacy education in a non-formal style of education, for which the Ministry of Education and Training will be responsible.

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<sup>129</sup> According to World Bank data from 2006, 87% of ethnic minority women are farmers.

<sup>130</sup> According to a 2006 study by the Asian Development Bank

<sup>131</sup> There are many cases of human trafficking in the form of marriage to men in China, South Korea and Taiwan. There are many girls and women who go abroad to support the livelihood of their families because of the contract money paid to their parents.

<sup>132</sup> According to the Population and Housing Census 2009 by GSO, the proportion of children who finished primary education was 19.9% in Nghe An Province and 43.4% in Khanh Hoa Province.

<sup>133</sup> According to the SITUATION OF WOMEN AND MEN IN ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS IN TERMS OF GENDER EQUALITY PROMOTION, WITH EMPHASIS ON ETHNIC MINORITY WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LEGAL SERVICES 2010.

<sup>134</sup> According to the 2010 draft of the 2011-2015 Plan by the Ethnic Minority Committee

#### 4) Healthcare and nutrition of mothers and infants

Only 59% of rural residents throughout the country have access to health centres and this situation has a large impact on the healthcare of mothers and infants. Ethnic minority women often give birth at home or in the forest without the help of a midwife. UNFPA reports that the situation in Ha Giang Province is particularly bad, with only 58.1% of women receiving care from a midwife (2005). UNICEF also reports that 60% of ethnic minority women never receive pregnancy check-ups (2000). This situation often leads to the deaths of pregnant women<sup>135</sup> and has an adverse effect on the health of mothers and infants; it may also lead to births not being registered, resulting in a situation whereby such children cannot receive the benefit of various social services.

The problem of HIV infection is very serious, especially in the mountainous areas of the Northern mountainous region. According to a study by the Vietnam Administration for HIV/AIDS Control (VAAC), 7 out of 10 Provinces in which infected patients are concentrated in the ethnic minority areas are located in the northern mountains<sup>136</sup>. Most of the infected patients are men and the main route of infection is the repeated use of single-use needles. The number of infected women is also increasing and a survey in Dien Bien Province where infection rates are most serious reported that the proportion of women who were infected rose from 4.2% in 2000 to 22% in 2009. According to a report by the Ethnic Minority Committee, in recent years there has been a rapid increase in the numbers of HIV-infected young women with experience of labour migration to cities. Therefore, there is an urgent need for educational activities to provide young people with knowledge about sex and AIDS prevention methods, a task for which the Ministry of Health will be responsible.

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<sup>135</sup> According to the survey by UNFPA in 2006, the mortality rate of pregnant women in the mountainous areas of the Northern region is 4 times higher than in the lowlands.

<sup>136</sup> Dien Bien, Thai Nguyen, Son La, Yen Bai, Bac Can, Cao Bang and Quang Ninh Provinces

## **4. Gender Issues to be Particularly Taken into Consideration in Future JICA and Other Donor/NGO Intervention in Vietnam**

### **(1) Women's Labour and Reproductive Health**

It appears that Vietnam has achieved economic development under the Doi Moi reform policy and that Vietnamese women have gained a footing in many areas of society. However, women participating in economic activities are subject to various types of gender discrimination including wage differences and unpaid family labour. Women having a job have to undertake the female tasks of housekeeping and child care. They are also under pressure to give birth to boys, thus handling a double labour burden. In Vietnam, male dominance is indicated by the unusual birth rate by gender; the male birth-rate is higher than in other Asian countries. In affluent urban areas, identification of the gender of the foetus which can be done at hospitals enables female foetuses to be aborted, resulting in a wider gap between the birth rates of boys and girls. This situation is widespread not only in the main ethnic group, the Kinh, but also among ethnic minority groups. Thus, the heavy labour endured by women and the effects on their reproductive health are major problems to be resolved.

Although it seems that women's participation in society is making progress in the history of this communist nation, the status of women within their families is still subordinate to men and gender problems exist that are unique to Vietnam. There are various gender differences from area to area and between ethnic groups. The development assistance projects need to be planned, implemented and evaluated with full understanding of the different gender problems in the various areas and ethnic groups. In particular, in projects focussed on gender equality or empowerment of women, it will be important to pay attention to the issue of ethnic minority women; this is one of the urgent tasks facing the government, especially with regard to the issues of education, healthcare and employment for these women.

### **(2) Women of Ethnic Minorities**

In Vietnam, the problem of gender discrimination, among others, is particularly marked in ethnic minority groups. While Vietnam has been promoting economic and social development, the economic and social development of 53 diverse ethnic minority groups cannot be achieved without improving the condition of women, and this is one of the important issues. In order to cope with this situation, the Government drafted the "Policy for Support of Gender Equality Activities in Ethnic Minority Areas and Mountainous Areas Where the Social and Economic Conditions are Particularly Difficult 2011-2015" as an official start to its gender initiatives. From the perspective of gender issues and poverty reduction, this will be the most reasonable way in which to cope with the gender-related problems in the ethnic minority groups which are being actively discussed both in Vietnam as well as abroad.

Government policy places emphasis on employment and income improvement, education and literacy, healthcare of mothers and infants, and nutrition, which are fields in which Japan can offer cooperation using its knowledge and experience. At present, JICA is implementing the technical project for the support of ethnic minority groups in the Northern region and the highlands of the Middle region. The promotion of this project as a model for other regions in Vietnam will make a great contribution to the future development of Vietnam. The activities of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) in Vietnam in supporting the healthcare of mothers and infants, nutrition guidance, literacy instruction and income improvement will produce a spin-off effect in integration with the JICA project activities.

### **(3) Livelihood Improvement Support and Infrastructure Development**

For further development of the above technical project intended to reduce poverty and improve livelihoods in rural areas, the development of the rural infrastructure is essential. Infrastructure development will call for planning, construction, rehabilitation, maintenance and repair works to support the improvement of the livelihoods of poor residents and women. In planning, implementing and evaluating such infrastructure development projects, consideration will need to be given to access to main trunk roads and markets and to means of transportation, and a full understanding of the status of woman residents will also be required. In implementing a residents-participation type of infrastructure development project, it is desirable to focus on participation by and the benefits to women, and the improvement of rural living standards.

### **(4) The Influence of Rapid Economic Growth – Internal and External Migration and Human Trafficking**

Economic growth in Vietnam since the market reforms of 1986 has been remarkable and has increased the employment of women, while the poverty gap between rural and urban areas has widened. Women in rural areas who have no skills earn their living through simple labour of labour migration. Year by year an increasing number of women are engaged in work through internal or external migration. As a result, labour exploitation, human rights infringements and human trafficking have become social problems.

In order to provide information on safe labour migration, IOM and several other organizations are expanding their support and MOLISA is reinforcing the support system for women who are the victims of sexual violence or human trafficking. JICA is supporting capacity development for preventive activities by a pilot ministry in the human traffic prevention project implemented by the VWU. In future, it will be effective for JICA to commit itself not only to support activities in the field of prevention but also in the field of social rehabilitation. In particular, supporting the development of administrative capacity will be the most effective way to support MOLISA which is responsible for the general labour issue and contains the Department of Gender Equality. At the same time, there is a need to provide a means of resolving the problems of rural poverty and the wide economic gap between rural and urban areas which give rise to the problem of human trafficking.

### **(5) Empowerment of Women in Rural Areas**

For capacity development in the Department of Gender Equality, bilateral aid organizations<sup>137</sup> such as the UN Joint Program, AECID, AusAID and DFID are providing continued support initiatives, but it seems that the elimination of gender discrimination in rural areas is delayed. It is strongly required that DOLISA and the People's Committees at the Province, District and Commune levels which are working continuously to promote gender equality be provided with gender training and capacity development training. When considering that the ethnic minority groups in rural areas have serious gender problems, it is also important to enhance the gender awareness of the People's Committees and to enlighten the various public organizations. Women's participation in pilot projects for the rural development projects and the elimination of

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<sup>137</sup> Norway, Denmark, Switzerland and Finland are also providing support activities for gender equality and women's human rights. CIDA is engaged in activities for community capacity improvement and the empowerment of women in rural areas.

gender discrimination in the People's Committees and related organizations will be a unique approach in rural areas where other gender-related donors<sup>138</sup> are not very active.

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<sup>138</sup>The donors, NGOs and public organizations including UNFEM which are working for gender equality organized the Gender Action Partnership (GAP) to provide donor coordination, exchange of information and regular seminars.

## 5. On-going Gender Projects

Project / Program	Implementing Organization	Donor Organization	Duration	Budget (US\$)	Area
Gender					
Encouraging men's participation to prevent domestic violence	CSAGA	Embassy of Sweden in Hanoi	2009-2011	N/A	Education for men on the issue of violence against women
Human Rights Technical Program - Vietnam Australia Phase 3	VWU	AusAID	2010-2011	AUD170,000	Legal support for women and capacity building of legal clubs for women
Improve the financial planning and resource mobilizing capacity of the VWU and raise community's awareness to reduce domestic violence in Vietnam.	VWU	AECID	2009-2011	Euro350,000	Violence against women and capacity building for educational activities of the VWU
Joint Programme on Gender Equality	MOLISA, Aus AID	UNIFEM	2009-2011	N/A One UN fund	Capacity building of the Department for Gender Equality
Prevention of domestic violence with active involvement of men and boys	Women's Union, RAFH	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	2007-2011	332,000	Education to enhance men's awareness of violence toward women and children
Project on developing Behavior Change Communication to support the Implementation of the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control	MOCSTV, MOLISA, Action Aid, RAFH	AECID	2010-2012	Euro490,200	Enhancement of structure to enforce the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control
UNDP-ONA Project "Strengthening the capacities of people's elected bodies in Vietnam"	National Assembly	UNDP	2008-2012	N/A One UN fund	Enhancement of networking of female lawmakers' groups

UNODC Building capacity of law enforcement and justice sectors to prevent and respond to domestic violence in Vietnam	MOI, MPS	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	2008-2011	740,000	Capacity building of the Ministry of Justice and the police department in charge of measures to prevent domestic violence
<b>Education</b>					
Capacity-building of MOET on gender mainstreaming in education	MOET	UNESCO	2009-2011	215,875	Support for gender mainstreaming efforts carried out by the Ministry of Education and Training
<b>Health / Medicine</b>					
Improved recognition of the needs to address MSM in the national HIV response and strengthened national and provincial coordination on MSM and HIV activities	Government ministries, Civil society organizations	USAID	ongoing	185,000	Measures against HIV among MSM groups
Support the implementation of the national HIV Monitoring and Evaluation framework	MOH GSO	USAID	ongoing	273,000	Construction of a framework for HIV/AIDS related monitoring and evaluation
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishery</b>					
Gender Mainstreaming of the UN Joint Programme on HPAI in Vietnam'	MARD, MOH	FAO	2006-2010	N/A	Support for female farmers' livelihood and eradication of bird flu
<b>Economic Activities</b>					
Empowerment of Women in the Public Sector in the Context of International Economic Integration".	MOFA, Cambridge Overseas Trust	UNDP	2009-2012	5,050,000	Support for employment of women in the public sector
Improved partnership between mass organizations and government agencies to promote women's economic empowerment	VCCI ILO	UNIDO	2009-2010	82,690	Women's entrepreneurial activities and economic empowerment
<b>Migration</b>					
Addressing Human Trafficking in Vietnam through Capacity building and Technical Assistance	MPS, MILISA, MOFA, WU	IOM	2009-2011	Euro 400,000	Capacity building of ministries in charge of prevention of and protection from human trafficking

Community based Initiatives in counter human trafficking in Ha Giang Province	OXFAM Quebec	CIDA	2009-2010	C\$61,304	Improvement of awareness of human trafficking and protection of victims and their social reintegration
Peace House Shelter of Centre for Women and Development (CWD). Humanitarian Reception Programme for the rehabilitation and reintegration of children and women victims of human trafficking.	VWU	AECID	2007-2011	Euro638.000	Support for providing shelters for human trafficking victims and their rehabilitation and social reintegration
To prevent and deter trafficking in women and children	CEPEW	Asia Foundation	ongoing	VND 318.960.000	Prevention of and protection from human trafficking
<b>Ethnic Minorities</b>					
Promoting ethnic minority community participation in village self-governance according to grassroots democracy decree in Na Tau Commune, Dien Bien District, Dien Bien Province	Centre for Sustainable Development in Mountainous Areas (CSDM)	CIDA	2009-2010	CD61303	Education to improve awareness of ethnic minorities, development of communities and local governance



## 6. Gender Information Sources

### 6-1 List of Organizations related to Gender

Name of Organization	Area of Specialization	Activity	Contact
<b>Government Organization</b>			
Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs, Department of Gender Equality	Gender policies and systems	Development of gender policies and promotion of gender mainstreaming	Mr. Phạm Ngọc Tiến Director of Gender Equality Department 12 Ngo Quyen, Hanoi Tel : (84-4) 39362915 Fax:(84-4) 38253875
Vietnam Women's Union	Gender equality and improvement of women's status	Educational and support activities for improvement of women's status and gender equality	Ms. Nguyễn Thị Tuyết Mai, Director 39 Hàng Chuối, Hai Bà Trưng, Hà Nội. Tel: (84-4) 39720063/ Fax: (84-4) 9713143. Ms. Tran Thu Thuy, Deputy Director, International Relation Department, Tel: (84-4)3941-9886 Fax:(84-4)3972-1606,
Ministry of Education and Training	Education and gender	Development of policies and strategies related to education	Ms. Tran Huong Ly Officer of International Cooperation Department 49 Dai Co Viet Str., Hai Ba Trung District, Hanoi Tel: (84-4)-38693224 Fax: (84-4)-38693243
Ministry of Health	Healthcare and gender	Development of policies and strategies related to healthcare	Mr. DƯƠNG QUỐC TRỌNG, Director Ms. TRẦN HOA MAI, Deputy Director, Department of Family Planning and Population Tel: (84 - 4) 38 438694 Fax: (84 - 4) 38 438694
Ministry of Aquiculture and Rural Development	Agriculture and gender	Development of policies and strategies related to agriculture and rural development	Ms. Hoang Thi Dung, Deputy Director, Department of International Cooperation Mr. Nguen Anh Minh, Director, Bilateral Cooperation Division, 2 Ngoc Ha Street, Bsdninh, Hanoi Tel: (84-4)4592199/ Fax:(84-4)7300752
General Statistics Office of Viet Nam	Gender statistics	Economic and social statistics in general	Ms. Nguyen Thi Viet Nga, Researcher So 6B, Hoang Dieu, Ba Dinh, Ha Noi Tel: (84-4) 989128250
Ministry of Sports, Culture and Tourism	Violence toward women	Development of policies and strategies related to culture, sports and tourist industry Development of laws and support for prevention and control of domestic violence	Ms. Bui Bich Ha Officer of Family Department 51 Ngo Quyen Street, Hanoi
Committee for Ethnic Minorities	Ethnic minorities and gender	Development of policies and strategies related to	Mr. Hoang Duc Thanh, Administration

Name of Organization	Area of Specialization	Activity	Contact
		the issue of ethnic minorities	Mr. Nguyen Thanh Hai, Department of Social Issue Mr. Le Trong Bang, Department of Social Issue No. 80 Phan Đình Phùng St., Ba Đình District, Hà Nội, Việt Nam Tel: (84-4) 37332009 Fax: (84-4) 38230235
<b>International Organization</b>			
UNDP Poverty and Social Development Cluster	Millennium Development Goals	Development assistance in general Promotion of the Millennium Development Goals	Ms. Nguyen Tien Phong, Expert on Gender 25-29 Phan Boi Chau Street. Ha Noi Tel: (84-4) 39421495 Fax: (84-4) 39422267
UNIFEM	Gender mainstreaming	Advice on gender policies and support for gender mainstreaming	Ms. Vu Phuong Ly, Senior Programme Officer Gate 72 Ly Thuong kiet Hanoi Tel: (84-4) 39421495 Fax: (84-4) 38223579
UN Joint Programme	Gender mainstreaming	Support for gender mainstreaming efforts in related ministries	Ms Aya Matsuura Gender Specialist UN / Government of Vietnam Joint Programme on Gender Equality 12 Ngo Quyen, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi Tel/Fax: (84-4) 39393145
ILO	Economic activities, labour and gender	Protection of workers' rights (incl. women's labour movement)	Ms. Jonna Naumanen Gender Programme Officer 48-50 Nguyen Thai Hoc, Hanoi, Viet Nam Tel: (84-4) 37340902 Fax: (84-4) 37340904
UNFPA	Reproductive health (maternal and child health, HIV/AIDS)	Diffusion of reproductive health	Ms. Phan Thi Thu Hien Gender Specialist, Unit Head 2 E Van Phuc Str., Ba Dinh District, Hanoi Tel: (84-4) 38236632 Fax: (84-4) 38232822
UNICEF	Education, healthcare and gender	Education, maternal and child health, HIV/AIDS and support related to protection of children	Ms Nguyen Thi Thanh Nga Education 81A Tran Quoc Toan Street, Ha Noi Tel: (84-4) 39425706 Fax: (84-4) 39425705
IOM	Labour movement and gender	Support related to the issue of labour movement	Ms. Dong Thuy Hanh Project Officer Room 701, DMC Tower 535 Kim Ma, Hanoi Tel: (84-4) 37366258 Fax: (84-4) 37366259
World Bank	Gender and governance	Support and capacity building for development of gender- related laws	Ms Keiko Kubota Senior Economist 63 Ly Thai To Str., Hanoi Tel: +84 4 3934 6597 Fax: +84 4 3932 6597
AusAID/Australian Embassy	Economic empowerment of	Support related to human rights, labour and	Ms. Nguyen Xuan Binh Country Project Coordinator

Name of Organization	Area of Specialization	Activity	Contact
	women	economic activities	Room A12, 3rd floor, Horison Hotel, 40 Cat Linh street Tel: (84-4) 37740100 Fax:(84) 37740111
USAIDS	Poverty reduction	Support for education,, healthcare and poverty reduction	Mr.Howard Handler, General Development Officer Mr.Eric Jophnson, Education Officer 15/F, Tung Shing Tower 2 Ngo Quyen Hanoi Tel: (84-4) 39351260 Fax: (84-4) 39351265
AECID / Embassy of Spain	Gender equality and domestic violence	Support related to gender equality and eradication of domestic violence	Mr. Benito Alvarez Fernandez Resident Representative 18 Ngo Van So Str., Hoan Kiem District, Hanoi Tel: (84-4) 39287600 Fax: (84-4) 39287603
<b>NGO</b>			
Center for Education Promotion and Empowerment of Women (CEPEW)	Women in rural villages	Support for improvement of lives and incomes of women in rural villages	Dr. Vuong Thi Hanh, Director Ms. Ngo Thi Thu Ha, Vice Director 113D1,Trung Tu, Dong Da, Hanoi Tel: (84-4) 35726789 Fax:(84-4) 35745999
National Committee for Advancement of Women	Improvement of women's status	CEDAW, gender equality and advice on improvement of women's status	Ms. Trinh Thi Hoang Anh Officer of Gender Equality Department (MOLISA) 12 Ngô Quyền - Hoàn Kiếm - Hà Nội Tel : 04-39364400 Fax : 04.38253875 /38248036
<b>JICA</b>			
Office for Nhat Tan Bridge Construction Project, etc.	Consideration for gender in JICA projects	Consideration for gender in infrastructure projects, etc.	JICA Vietnam Office Ms. Nobuko Wada
Project on Capacity Development in Artisan Craft Promotion for Socio-economic Development in Rural Areas in Vietnam		Support for capacity building in woven product cooperatives targeted at female ethnic minorities in the northern region	Ms. Sachiko Otowa, Expert Room 203, Lake View Building,D10 Giang Vo, Ba Dinh, Hanoi Tel/Fax: (84-4) 37713186
Participatory Rural Development Capacity Building Project for Poverty Reduction in the Central Highlands Region in Vietnam		Support for female ethnic minorities' participation in projects in Gia Lai Province	JICA Vietnam Office Ms. Yuko Haraguchi, Expert
Advisor for measures against human trafficking		Identification of issues related to human trafficking and development of projects	Ms. Reiko Nakazawa, Expert Vietnam Women's Union Policies and Laws Department 39 Hang Chuoi Street, Hai Ba Trung, Hanoi Tel: (84-4) 39727927

Name of Organization	Area of Specialization	Activity	Contact
Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers		Public health nurses, community development officers, etc.	JICA Vietnam Office

(As of December 2010)

## 6-2 List of Reports and References related Gender

Title	Authors	Publisher/Source	Year
<b>Education and Training</b>			
Education Law	Socialist Republic of Viet Nam	Ministry of Education and Training	2005
<b>Health</b>			
Avian and Pandemic Influenza	USAID Viet Nam	USAID Viet Nam	2010
Environmental Remediation and Health Program	USAID Viet Nam	USAID Viet Nam	2010
FACTSHEET 2010 World Population Day Sex Ratio at Birth	UN Vietnam	JICA Vietnam Office	2010
Population & Development in Viet Nam: Towards a New Population/Reproductive Health Strategy, 2011-2020 Brief 3	UNFPA Viet Nam	UNFPA Viet Nam	2010
Population & Development in Viet Nam: Towards a New Population/Reproductive Health Strategy, 2011-2020 Brief 4	UNFPA Viet Nam	UNFPA Viet Nam	2010
Population & Development in Viet nam: Towards a New Population/Reproductive Health Strategy, 2011-2020 Brief 5"	UNFPA	UNFPA	2010
Sex Ratio At Birth Imbalances in Viet Nam: Evidence from the 2009 Census	UNFPA Viet Nam	UNFPA Viet Nam	2010
Sex Ratio at Birth in South East Asia with a Focus on Viet Nam: An annotate bibliography designed to guide further policy research	UNFPA Viet Nam	UNFPA Viet Nam	2010
Taking Advantage of the Demographic Bonus in Viet Nam: Opportunities, Challenges, and Policy Options	UNFPA Viet Nam	UNFPA Viet Nam	2010
Viet Nam Population 2008	UNFPA Viet Nam	UNFPA Viet Nam	2009
<b>Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries</b>			
10 Stories Gift from Viet Nam	JICA Viet Nam	JICA Viet Nam	2010
Current status of gender equality in agriculture and rural development and the national targets in 2009	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	2010
Current status of the national strategy for the advancement of women by 2010 and future roles and direction of gender equality for women	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	2010
Development Assistance to Handicraft Sector in the Northwest Region of Viet Nam (PowerPoint)	Ms. Sachiko Otowa JICA Project Expert for Rural Industry Promotion Project in Vietnam	JICA	2010

Gender Strategy in Agriculture and Rural Development to the Year 2010	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Culture-Information Publishing House,	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	2003
Local Products MAP of Northwestern Vietnam	JICA Viet Nam	JICA Viet Nam	2010
Local Products and Map of World Heritage Vietnam	JICA Viet Nam	JICA Viet Nam	2010
Letter from Gia Lai Vol.15	JICA Viet Nam	JICA Viet Nam	2010
Progress Report on the Project on Capacity Development in Artisan Craft Promotion for Socioeconomic Development in Rural Area in Vietnam	JICA Viet Nam	JICA Viet Nam	2009
Project on Capacity Development on Artisan Craft Promotion for Rural Industrialization in Viet Nam	JICA	JICA	2010
<b>Economic Activities</b>			
ILO Programmes in Vietnam Asian Decent Work Decade 2006-2015	ILO	ILO	2006
Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs Organization Chart	JICA	JICA	2010
Labor and Social Trends in Viet Nam 2009/10 Asian Decent Work Decade 2006-2015	Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs	ILO	2010
Vietnam Employment Trends 2009 National Centre for Labor Market Forecast and Information Bureau of Employment, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs	Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs	ILO	2009
Work, Income and gender Equality in East Asia”	ILO	ILO	2008
<b>Social/Gender in general</b>			
Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Viet Nam: Towards a Strong National Programme Designed to Support Both Prevention and Response”	UN Vietnam	UN Joint Program on Gender Equality	2010
FACTSHEET Joint Program on Gender Equality	UN Vietnam	UN Joint Program on Gender Equality	2009
Gender Analysis on Draft Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plan 2011-2015 (Draft SEDP Version May 2010)	UNIFEM	JICA Vietnam Office	2010
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE Issue Paper	UN Viet Nam	UNFPA	2010
Information on Gender Based Violence and Gender Equality Activities in Vietnam	AECID	AECID	2010
Keeping silent is dying”	GSO Viet Nam	UN Joint Program on	2010

Results from the National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam		Gender Equality	
Law on Gender Equality	The National Assembly of the Social Republic of Vietnam		2006
Mind the Gaps: A comparative Analysis of ASEAN Legal Responses to Child-Sex Tourism	Child Wise and AusAID	AusAID	2009
Mandatory Gender-related Aspects of USAID Program Planning Policy	USAID Vietnam	USAID Vietnam	2010
Millennium Development Goals 2010 national Report at two thirds of the path to fulfilling the millennium Development Goals and vision towards 2015”	UNDP	UNDP	2010
National Committee for the Advancement of Women in Vietnam	National Committee for the Advancement of Women in Vietnam	Department of Gender Equality in MOLISA	2010
National Study of Domestic Violence Against Women in Viet Nam FACT-SHEET 1,2	GSO Viet Nam	UN Joint Program on Gender Equality	2010
National Study of Domestic Violence Against Women in Viet Nam Frequently Asked Questions	GSO Viet Nam	UN Joint Program on Gender Equality	2010
PRSC 10 version 1 Draft	The World Bank	The World Bank	2010
Report on the Implementation of National Targets for Gender Equality in 2009	Social Republic of Viet Nam	Department of Gender Equality in MOLISA	2010
Stand Up against Violence	IOM	IOM	2010
Study on Gender Statistics	UNDP	UNDP	2009
The Millennium Development Goals Report	UN Vietnam	UNDP	2010
The Pease House Shelter Project	AECID	AECID	2010
UN Gender Briefing Kit Chapter 1~Chapter 13	UN Viet Nam	UN Joint Program on Gender Equality	2009
Vulnerable Populations	USAID Viet Nam	USAID Viet Nam	2010
Women and Progress No.1 2010	National Committee for the Advancement of Women in Viet Nam	Department of Gender Equality in MOLISA	2010
Women have New Hope in Fight Against Gender-Based Violence in Vietnam	UN Vietnam	UN Joint Program on Gender Equality	2010
<b>Migration</b>			
EXIT End Exploitation and Trafficking (DVD)	USAID Vietnam	GTZ	2009
How can I...better understand gender in IOM?”	IOM	IOM	2010
International Migration and Socio-economic Development in Viet Nam: A call to Action	UN Vietnam	UN Vietnam	2010
International Migration Opportunities and challenges	UN Vietnam	UN Vietnam	2010

for socio-economic development in Viet Nam			
International Labour Migration	ILO	ILO	2010
<b>Ethnic Minority</b>			
Specific Policy to Support the Activities of Gender Equality in Remote Areas, Areas of Ethnic Minorities and Areas with Particularly Difficult Socio-Economic Conditions (Period 2011-2015)	Committee on Ethnic Minorities Affairs	Committee on Ethnic Minorities Affairs	2010
Field Study Report : Ethnic minority women's access to legal services: Existing situation and recommendations	UN	UNFPA	2010
Situation of Women and Men in Ethnic Minority Groups in Terms of Gender Equality Promotion, with Emphasis on Ethnic Minority Women's Access to Legal Services	UN	UN	2010
<b>Others</b>			
Aecid in Viet Nam	AECID	AECID	2009
Country Profile	USAID Viet Nam	USAID Viet Nam	2010
Law on issues of law and regulation standard document 2008	National Library Survey and Legislation Examination Bureau	JICA Expert	2008
Paz y Desarrollo Viet Nam	AECID	AECID	2009



## 7. Definitions

### <Technical Terms>

Term	Definition
Gender	Gender means social and cultural differences between men and women. Sexual differences in biological terms basically cannot be changed, but gender differences which mean social disparity in roles and relationships between men and women vary depending on time and place and they can change, since they are defined by people's way of thinking and sense of values. The word "gender" is used in phrases such as gender equality, gender role, gender analysis and gender balance.
Gender mainstreaming	This is a strategy to involve women's interests and experience in design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs on any political, economic and social occasion just as men's are involved, so that both men and women can gain equal income and inequality does not linger for a long time. The ultimate goal for gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality.
Gender focal point	This is an administrative official to promote gender equality, who is appointed in each department of government ministries. The official works for gender mainstreaming in government policies, systems and programs.
Gender responsive budget	It should be understood how national and local government budgets affect both men and women by conducting analysis of the budgets from the perspective of gender equality. The aim is not just to increase budgets for programs targeted at women but also to allocate budgets to achieve gender equality (for example, budgets for childcare services and allowances).
Reproductive health / rights	This means healthcare and rights that are related to gender and reproduction. The aim is to allow people to enjoy safe and satisfying sexual lives and the freedom to decide whether to have children or not and when and how many.
National machinery	This is a national-level administrative entity in charge of issues related to women to promote gender equality. It develops and implements women-related policies and promotes implementation of measures with gender equality in mind in government ministries.
Women's Empowerment	Empowerment means paving the way for women who have been eliminated from decision-making and robbed of power (disempowerment) because of gender discrimination. Opportunities for them to participate in decision-making are provided so that they can achieve self-empowerment and be aware of gender issues and, hence, transfer such awareness into action. The word is also used in the phrase, "economic empowerment of women."
Affirmative action	This refers to preferential measures to correct existing disparities immediately when a discriminated group has a significant disadvantage compared to other groups because of accumulated discrimination.
Sexual harassment	This means putting any woman worker at a disadvantage in the workplace by sexual words or actions or deterioration of her work environment because of such words or actions. It includes words and deeds by which female students are obstructed from learning opportunities at school or women are robbed of the chance to participate in social activities.
Access / control	Access means availability of resources or services for performance of economic activities, such as land, labour and wages. Control means the right to make decisions on how to manage resources or services or the right to own them.
Reproductive activities	This means activities to bear and raise children, or in other words, activities to "reproduce the next generation." It includes activities of families to maintain their daily lives such as laundry and cooking and to reproduce labour power.
Informal sector	This refers to forms of economic activity performed by small family businesses. According to the definition of ILO, in this sector, such businesses use simple skills, have insufficient capital or specific location bases, employ no or only a few employees, receive no protection under the legal system and

	lack appropriate accounting capability.
Micro-financing	This is a small-scale financing system for low-income people and small businesses to increase the income of the poor through provision of opportunities to enjoy financial services such as petty loans, savings and insurance. It is often targeted at female farmers in rural areas as typified by the Grameen Bank.
Non-formal education	This refers to educational activities developed to provide lifelong learning opportunities, literacy education and life-skills education in addition to formal school education. Normally, it targets people, whether adults or children, who have not received any school education or insufficient education (in quality). Typically, the content, scale, target and implementation methods vary significantly.
Millennium development goals	The MDGs are composed of 8 goals. These goals were established by incorporating the UN Millennium Declaration and international development goals adopted at major international meetings and summits held in 1990s into a larger common framework. The Millennium Declaration was adopted at the UN Millennium Summit held in September 2000 to present a clear vision of the role of the United Nations in the 21st century on the themes of peace and safety, development and poverty, the environment, human rights, good governance and special needs of African countries.

**<Indicators>**

Gini index	This is an aggregate numerical measurement to indicate inequality in income distribution. It is measured as a value between 0 and 1, with “0” implying complete equality and “1” complete inequality. If the value exceeds 0.4, it is generally determined that the level of inequality is high.
Total fertility rate	This is the total fertility rate of women in the reproductive age bracket (15-49 years old) in a certain year. It indicates the average number of children a woman delivers in her lifetime based on the fertility rate of her age bracket for that year.
Under-one mortality rate	Mortality of infants under one year old defined as the number of deaths per 1,000 live births. It is calculated as follows: Number of infant deaths under one year old during the year ÷ number of live births during the year × 1,000.
Under-five mortality rate	Mortality of infants under five years old defined as the number of deaths per 1,000 live births. It is calculated as follows: Number of infant deaths under five years old during the year ÷ number of live births during the year × 1,000.
Maternal mortality rate	1 Annual number of mothers who die among 100,000 cases of delivery due to pregnancy.
Rate of assisted childbirth	This is the rate of childbirth in which public healthcare workers including doctors, nurses and midwives or trained or traditional assistants offer assistance.
Oral Rehydration Therapy (ORT) use rate	The rate of using oral rehydrate salt or substitute solution for under-five infants having diarrhea.

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