

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

I. Overview of achievements and challenges in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

New legislation, rules and regulations

- Gender mainstreaming in national policy formulation has been recognized by Vietnam Government as a strategic measure to achieve the objective of gender equality of the National Strategy for the Advancement of Women by 2010. To realize the Strategy, a National Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women for period 2006-2010 (National POA) has been developed with specific objectives, indicators and measures to be taken. Emerging issues such as an imbalance of employment structure, unqualified women workers to meet with market demand, women trafficking, violence against women, etc... have been studied and introduced by indicators and measures to be taken in the National POA.
- The Political Bureau issued Resolution 11 on Female Cadres' Work on the stage of Strengthening Industrialization and Modernization, including Guidelines for I893 t 0.001 Tcv Tw -nceme Tc 0.115 T 15.223 p(n 11 quaaage of 28EBDC

further initiatives and action

Vietnam has almost reached

measures in this strategy for development are to strengthen the participation of women in socio-economic fields and to mainstream gender perspectives into policy planning and implementation.

Implementation and achievements

- As the recent statistic, the number of female frequently takes part in social and economic activities are on the rise, accounts for 49.3%, of which 48.78% in urban area and 49.46% in rural area. In term of distribution in economic sectors, women accounts for 48.2% and had a high share in such sectors such as processing with 48.72%, fishery with 49.78%, trade with 63.75%, hotel and restaurant with 68%. Accordingly, the high ratio of women working in service and trade is along the right shift in the economic structure toward sectors that contribute significantly to the fast growth of GDP.

- Since 2001, the *Women Entrepreneurs Council* was set up under the VCCI with the function of representing women entrepreneurs for the support and protection of their interests in international and domestic relations, as well as, promoting and assisting women entrepreneurs in trade and investment, technological applications in Vietnam and abroad.

- VCCI in cooperation with Vietnam Women's Union holds the annual ceremony in order to give Awards for Excellent Female Entrepreneurs.

- One Vice-chairperson of VCCI is a woman.

- In 2004, the Small and Medium Enterprise Promotion Bureau, under the Ministry of Planning – Investment was established.

- Every year, the Prime Minister has a meeting with enterprise representatives to discuss obstacles and difficulties in their activities.

- By 2005, 84 Clubs with 2,816 members and 8 Associations for female entrepreneurs have been established, which help create an important basis to broaden more the Female Entrepreneurs Network and to provide opportunities for information exchange, business extension and participating in policy making.

- Every year, women owned enterprises have many opportunities to access new information on markets and technologies through trade promotion activities jointly carried out by the VCCI, Ministries of Trade, Ministry of Culture and Information. These include the Vietnamese Women's Economic Development

and Integration Fair, Asia-Pacific Female Entrepreneurs Fair and Exhibition, American-Vietnamese Female Entrepreneurs Conference. They are also provided with opportunities to participate in an annual competition held across the country: Product Design Creation Competition – GOLDEN-V Prize.

- In the recent years, the Government of Vietnam has carried out many measures to develop the household economic sectors, especially in the rural areas. Model of small credit loans from job creation, poverty reduction and farm economy programs have provided

- Women labors in the informal sectors do not fully enjoy policies stipulated in the labor policies.
- The female labor force constitutes the majority of workers in export-oriented sectors such as garment, agriculture production, processing of food – drink – seafood etc, which are very strongly affected by economic integration.

Lesson learnt

- It is necessary to empower women to ensure they equally share in the benefits of globalization rather than in many cases shouldering the negative consequences.
- Economic empowerment for women can be achieved if we implement comprehensive measures including: communication to enhance women's own awareness and also the entire society on women's status in the integration process; knowledge and skill intensification for women through training; implementing gender-oriented policies and laws; and promoting the strength of the women's movement and organizations.

3. Women and political participation

New legislation, policies and ID ~~DP~~ ~~IF~~ ~~benefits of globalization~~ ~~recreates~~ ~~and~~ ~~ID~~ ~~DP~~ ~~c~~ ~~0~~ ~~po~~ ~~5~~ ~~0~~ ~~ME~~

- The national review of 10-year implementation of the Directive No 37-CT/TW on the work on female cadres in the new situation showed the fact that there is greater awareness on the work on female cadres of leaders and the civil cadres at different levels. Also, the capacity of female cadres has improved, reflected by their educational background, expertise, politics understanding, management capacity and competency. The review also mapped out the general objective to be reached by the year 2010 which is sustainable development of female leaders and managers in all fields and at all levels, ensuring an improvement in quality and quantity of female cadres to meet the requirements of the country's modernization and industrialization and to attain gender equality in leadership and management bodies. For this, 4 targets and 6 key measures have been set and developed.
- After a range of activities organized by NCFAW and concerned organizations towards the 2004- 2009 People's Council Election, the outstanding result is shown through the two following aspects: (1) public awareness on women's role, position and ability in social life is increased; (2) women proportion in People's Councils across the country at provincial, district and commune level is 23.8%, 23.2% and 20.1% respectively; an average increase of 2.7% in comparison with previous period.

Challenges and obstacles:

- The rate of women leaders in public administration, judicial agencies, research and science institutions are still low. That is not in line with women's capacity and contributi

- The national machinery for the advancement of women in Viet Nam has been strengthened in 2008 and now includes the National Committee for the Advancement of Women (NCFAW) and the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs.
- The NCFAW is a coordinately interdisciplinary organization, which has a function to assist the Prime Minister in researching and coordinating to deal with interdisciplinary issues related to the advancement of women in the whole country. NCFAW plays an important role in the development and implementation of laws and policies related to the implementation of women's rights through a series of activities: monitoring and advising the formulation of interdisciplinary programs and policies for the advancement of women in Viet Nam.
- State management agencies of gender equality are the MOLISA at the central level and Departments of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs in localities. The responsibilities of State management agencies of gender equality are specified in the Article 26 of the Gender Equality Law and relevant Decrees.

The Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs takes responsibility before the Government for exercising State management of gender equality throughout the country. The State management agencies of gender equality plays an important role in developing strategies, policies and national targets on gender equality and submitting them to the Government for promulgation; developing guidelines for legal documents on gender equality and also submitting those to the Government for promulgation; taking part in assessing gender mainstreaming in the drafting of legal documents; reporting to the Government about the realization of national targets on gender equality; co-ordinating with ministries and ministry equivalents in State management of gender equality; supervising and inspecting the implementation of laws on gender equality, settling complaints and handling violations of the laws..

- Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI)– Promoting Gender-Responsive National Policy and Planning. As the central government agency responsible for national planning and investment, MPI has a critical role to play in ensuring that all government organizations fulfill their own functions and responsibility in a gender-responsive manner, so that all policies and programs take account of men's and women's priorities and interests, that gender inequalities are identified and addressed, and that the benefits of national programs are distributed equitably between all members of society.

Despite concerted efforts, gender mainstreaming is not being carried out well. Part of the reason for this is that at present there is no effective mechanism to assess gender responsibilities of central and local level agencies and decision-makers. Also, officials trained in gender mainstreaming may retire or change jobs, particularly at the local level. Therefore training is a continuous process but financial resources are limited.

To achieve the goal, Vietnam determines to implement comprehensive measures including: communication to enhance women's own awareness and also the entire society on women's status in the integration process; knowledge and skill intensification for women through training; implementing gender-oriented policies and laws; and promoting the strength of the women's movement and organizations.