

QUANG NGAI RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (RUDEP) - PHASE 2

Gender Consultant Report



VIETNAM-AUSTRALIA

Prepared for

AusAID

Australian Embassy
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Prepared by

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Acronyms

APPW	Action Plan for the Progress of Women of Vietnam
CPW	Committee for the Progress of Women
DPI	Department of Planning and Investment
NCPW	National Committee for the Progress of Women of Vietnam
NSPW	National Strategy for the Progress of Women of Vietnam
PWU	Provincial Women's Union
WU	Women's Union

1 Report of Results

1.1 Results of Working with the Target Groups

Meeting with Mrs. Pham Thi Thu Trang – PWU Vice-Chairwoman, representative of the Provincial Board ‘for the progress of women’.

Ms. Trang advised that: the Province formed the Provincial Committee for ‘The Progress of Women’ (PCPW) in 1996. The Committee includes the Chairperson, who is the PPC Vice-Chairman, the Standing Vice-Chairperson, who is the PWU Chairperson, and members, who are directors of related provincial agencies, together with a number of supporting officers who are PWU staff. In general, the Province has well realized the guidance given by the National Committee for ‘The Progress of Women’ (NCPW) regarding the formation of operating structures down to grassroots. The Province also developed an Action Plan for the Progress of Women (APPW) up to 2005. However, the integration of the APPW targets into the general provincial targets has not been concretely implemented, and results obtained in terms of gender are quite casual. This is due to several reasons: the officials taking the membership of the PCPW as extra duties, there have not been full-time members working in the PCPW; Provincial budget for these activities is quite limited (*50 million dong per year for the whole province*) and not enough to expend for the gender awareness raising and training activities. More importantly, the leaders in the sectors and levels in the province have not perceived the whole importance of the PCPW, they have not considered the efforts for gender equity to be the mission of the whole society, and just see it as part of the duties of the WU.

Ms. Trang hoped that following the implementation of the Government Instruction 27/2004/CT/TTg regarding the change of the PCPW structure by shifting the standing role from the PWU chairperson to the DPI Director, it would be more favourable and provide a better opportunity for Quang Ngai to implement the provincial APPW as well as the NCPW for the period 2001 –2010.

With regards to the gender awareness in the communities, according to her, the WUs at all levels have cooperated with international projects in Quang Ngai to deliver many training courses on raising gender awareness for women. In comparison with 5 years ago, the people, especially men, have better understanding of the strain on their wives and daughters. They have had movements of sharing the housework with their wives, supporting their wives to participate into social activities, attend training courses and join the women’s groups of savings and credit, and reducing family violence. However, these people are not many and mainly in the families that have members joining the WUs. Therefore, the continuity of communication on gender in the community is very necessary.

Meeting with Mrs. Nguyen Thi Hoaø – DPI Vice Director & Director & PMU Co-Director

Mrs. Hoa admitted that the implementation of family planning for the progress of women in the province over the last years has been totally pushed to the WU. In the coming period, when DPI takes over the standing role in the PCPW, this will provide more

advantages, and the incorporation of gender issues into the social-economic development plans at all levels will be directed more closely and concretely. However, the current difficulties in relation to the implementation of this issue is that there has not been a synchronous guidance from the MPI. Statistical forms and report formats have not included the targets on gender, and therefore the integration of gender into the provincial socio-economic development plans for the year of 2006 as well as for the period of 2006 – 1010 has not been specific yet. Mrs. Hoa hoped that PMI prompt guidance can help to add gender targets into the general plan of the province as of the year 2007. However, she affirmed that, with the policies and guidance of the state together with the general trend of the era, the implementation of the government NCPW as well as the provincial APPW will be sure to obtain set gender targets.

Mrs. Hoa also indicated that the province has organized quite a number of training courses and gender awareness workshops for management officials at various sectors and levels in the province. From the awareness to the change of attitude and the way of recognizing and evaluating the contributions of women in general and female officials in particular in a view of gender equity, however, there still has not been a positive movement. Mrs Hoa very much concurred with the idea that RUDEP will support the construction of a local team of core gender staff, this will be an activity which bears the sense of sustainability in gender communication and promotion work.

Meeting with Mr. Nguyen Binh- District Finance – Planning Section Manager, DCG member

According to Mr. Binh, through the infrastructure projects it helps women to change the habits as well as reducing their hard work (*For example: local women over here specialize in tea planting, they harvest tea and carry tea on their back and walk to the market to sell it. When there is a road and travel becomes favourable, their hard work will be reduced.*).

Regarding gender awareness, he added: from the international development projects and the positive participation of WUs in the district, women in Minh Long have been provided with training and capacity building in many sectors such as health and education, and have joined in social activities. From the effective work of the WU, there have been impacts to the awareness and changes to the attitudes of a number of men, and they supported favourable conditions for their wives to participate into social activities. However, there are still quite a lot of men here who are restraints on the women's progress (*for example: while the husbands perceive that letting their wives to gain knowledge and participate into project activities would be useful for the development of economy and family income generation, they do not agree to let their wives to join in learning and meeting activities, and they are very unpleasant when seeing their wives regularly meet and communicate with development workers who are men*). Therefore, women should not be invited to attend meetings organized at night time.

According to Mr. Binh, to be able to implement the gender equity in the community, raising awareness for men is very necessary. In addition, women also need to be liberated from the reproductive and child care functions for work, therefore the provision of kindergarten in the community is a need for households.

Meeting with Minh Long DWU

According to Ms. Phuong, DWU officer, through the development projects over the last year and most recently the CIDA project, that women in Minh Long have been empowered with the participation into community activities. Women were provided with communications on gender awareness. Thanks to WU communication activities, men in the location gained positive improvements on the awareness of gender equity, they started to share the housework with their wives, discussed with their wives for decision making, and reduced significantly family violence. The voice of women in the families as well as in the community has been step by step more respected.

Ms. Tram who is also DWU officer added: the whole district has from 50% to 70% of total women participating in project activities but only a few of them hold the management position as the thought of belittling women still existis in the community, and managing officers are mostly men. Therefore, raising gender awareness and forming gender equity clubs are very necessary.

Meeting with Mr. Vo Cu, Long Son CPC Chairman & CCG leader, and Ms Bui Thi Minh Loan, CCG staff

According to Mr. Vo Cu, the Commune has also positively implemented instructions from the superior levels about promoting gender equity in the commune. As this is a disadvantaged commune that has a terrain which is difficult for travel and a high percentage of poor households (247 over 800 HHs, equal to 30.58%; based on the new DOLISA criteria, the number will be 600 HHs - that is equal to 75%), it receives more priorities in poverty alleviation support, but this has also made the community create the thought of relying on outside support. In the commune, the majority of households are ethnic minority. Women have the right to decide on family issues and they also bear all the hard work in their families that are seldom shared by their husbands. Over the recent years, thanks to the general social impacts, women increasingly participate into social activities and men have also seen the hard work that their wives have to bear. Men gradually have the understanding and share the housework responsibilities with their wives. However, this is still not in a significant number.

Meeting with Mrs. Dinh Thi Sut – Chairwoman of Long Son CWU

Over the last years, the commune has had many training courses on gender awareness in the community. According to her, men have had positive movements in their attitude and the amount of family violence has become less. Many husbands promised to provide favourable conditions for their wives to participate into capacity building events. Mrs. Sut said she thought that her commune would achieve gender equity targets in a near future.

Meeting with Mr. Bui Van Binh, Son Tinh DPC Vice Chairman, Mr. Trang Duc Hung, DCG member, and Mrs. Hong, DWU staff.

According to Mr. Binh, during the recent years, the district has especially given attention to the implementation of gender targets in its socio-economic development plan. Women

have been structured into the management and decision-making positions, and women made up 15% of the deputies of the district people council (*which is quite a high percentage compared to other districts*). In comparison to the past, women nowadays have more advances; women have participated in many fields, especially activities in relation to poverty reduction, social security and family planning. Women are talented in business production, protection of loan funds and doing successful business. However, the capacity and skill level of female officials is still lower than men's in general; therefore there are still quite a lot of difficulties in relation to this field. However, the District is determined to implement the targets of promoting gender equity in the coming time.

According to Mr. Tran Duc Hung, the local young staff have got sense of gender equity and provide all conditions for the women staff to keep learning for progress. Young men recognize women's capacity and work performance, and they are willingly to share the housework with women.

Mrs. Hong – DWU: women are much more progressive than before, they have been rising up to assert themselves, participating into many activities to improve family economy and this promotes the gender equity in the families as well as in the community, which results in high percentage of school girls going to school, women with less children and without bias in favour of son rather than daughter.

Mr. Binh added: to promote gender equity in state agencies as well as in residential communities, gender targets must be more specific and solutions should be more practical and feasible. In addition, women must be self-confident and should strive more in order to assert themselves. And, especially, there should be infrastructure facilities supporting women's work such as kindergarten, roads facilitating transportation, etc.

Contact with Tinh Tho Commune of Son Tinh District:

The CCG- Mr. Nguyen Van Thong (CPC chairman), Mr Le Van Thanh and Mr Nguyen Hung Cuong

The CWU- Ms. Phan Thi Thuy Hoa and Ms. Pham Thi Tham

Mr. Thong said that, over recent years, the Commune has been very interested in the gender issue. In 2000, the Commune developed the 'commune action plan for the progress of women'. The Commune has always been caring for building reserved resource of local women staff. Every year, the Commune send staff to attend cultural and political courses to supplement the resources of local management. According to Mr. Thong, the women in the commune are really trying their best to learn for knowledge improvement, but they must also bear the family duties, and men do not share much. This has also been causing pressure on women and therefore more training courses on raising gender awareness for men here will be very helpful.

According to Mr. Cuong, the Commune has very cared for poor, solitary and disabled women. In this year of 2005, of the 25 'great unity' houses (houses where the local authorities support poor households) that the Commune completed with the construction, 22 houses have been provided to poor women, households with specially disadvantaged situations.

Mr. Thanh added: the trend of gender equity is progressing well in the commune, men always care for women, and husbands discuss with wives in decision making on family matters rather than demonstrating the arbitrary manner. This is thanks to the communications from local authorities and, in addition, women make efforts to better themselves.

Ms. Tham – Commune WU: it's right that women are cared for, and men now understand more on the role of gender equity. However, changes of attitude towards positive gender awareness are still not significant (*For example, through training and communication, men understand that less children will make family life better, women will be less strenuous; to keep less children, sterilization on husband should be more favourable, etc. However, cases of men sterilization are still only a few: for the first 6 months of 2005, the whole commune had 140 cases of sterilization, men sterilization had only 4 cases while women sterilization had already 136 cases*)

Visit to VSCF Tho Tay 2 of Tinh Tho Commune

Members in the groups advised that they always provided favourable conditions for their wives to participate into social activities, they admitted that women would be better if they were facilitated to regularly attend meeting events, the learning would help the allocation of work in the family to be more equal, they also agreed with the possibility of incorporating gender issues into their VSCF activities.

Visit to VSCF Tho Trung 3 of Tinh Tho Commune

The VSCF has 18 members, which includes 7 women, but women attended less meetings and they let their husband to attend the meetings. In nearly two thirds of household members in the VSCF the wives are not available at home because they go away to work (instead of the husbands who would go away for work) and the husbands stay home to take care of the children and family work.

1.2 Analysis via Interview Forms to DDO

No	Questions	Answers	
		Yes	No
1	<p><i>Do you pay attention to the number of women participating into the project? Why?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women generate income for their families - Women have the right of making decisions on the matters of their families - This is the issue that the Program always cares about and it set targets on the number of participating women - As women always suffer disadvantages, they need to be encouraged to participate. 	7 4 / 7 2	

No	Questions	Answers	
		Yes	No
2.	<p><i>Which of the following types of household that you give the priority of involving into the project?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor - Solitary women - Disabled 	7	
3.	<p><i>What percentage of solitary women participate into the program activities that you facilitate?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From 01 to 10% - From 11 to 15% - More than 15 % - Unable to identify 	1 6	
4	<p><i>Normally, what percentage of women are there who participate into the training/ capacity building events?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From 10 to 20% - From 21 to 30% - From 31 to 40% - More than 40% - Unable to identify <p><i>Is this percentage provided in the invitation letters?</i></p>	1 1 1 4 1	5
5	<p><i>When women participate into the program activities, do you see that women have more work?</i></p> <p><i>Is their work better?</i></p> <p><i>Why?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Because the husbands entirely pushed the work to them - Because they benefit from the work - They are excited when being trained with new technologies - They want to assert themselves 	7 7 4 3	
6	<p><i>Have incomes of the households participating into the project activities increased?</i></p> <p><i>Do women benefit from those incomes?</i></p> <p><i>Who is the person that decides on the allocation of benefits</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The husband - The wife - Husband and wife discuss with each other - Unable to identify 	5 7 2 3 2	
7	<p><i>Do you agree that when women participate in the project activities, their words in their families are more respected?</i></p> <p><i>Why</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The wife takes advantage over her 	6	1

No	Questions	Answers	
		Yes	No
	husband - The husband perceives the progress of his wife	6	
8	<i>Are women's family workloads reduced when they participate into Program activities?</i> - Not sure Why / - The husband gets understanding, and shares with his wife - The wife is so busy with the work in the project that she can not bear the family work - The husband see the benefits that his wife demonstrate	5 2 2 1 4	
9	<i>Which mass organizations that you often contact when conducting the missions?</i> - DPC, CPC - DWU, CWU - Other mass organizations Why? - They are contact groups - They are easy to access - They give much support to Program activities	7 2 6 7	
10	<i>Have you ever participated into any gender training courses?</i> If yes, how long was the course: - 1 day - 2 days - 3 days - 4 days or more than that	5 3 2 1	1
11	<i>According to you, to promote gender equity in the communities, which activities should RUDEP conduct?</i> - Organize gender training course - Set up gender targets in its activities - Create opportunities for women to participate into social activities	7 6 4	

From the above results, it shows that DDOs have attention to the number of women participating into program activities because they are the objects aimed at by the Program. The DDOs know the number of women who benefit from the projects on the basis of the available statistic forms, not by taking the initiative to develop a plan towards gender equity. There are very few staff who have ever joined training courses on 'gender integration'

1.3 Analysis of Information through Data Given by Districts/ Communes

Table 1: Human Resources

No	Name of offices	Staff		Management	
		Total	Women	Total	Women
1	Minh Long DPC				
2	Son Tinh DPC	70	12	5	0
3	Long Son CPC	30	08	3	0
4	Tinh Tho CPC	32	06	4	0

Proportions of women staff in the organizations are still low; commune level is 22.58%; district level is%; and women are participating less in governance bodies.

There are no women in the management/ decision-making positions. This shows that women have still had no influence in the building of policies as well as implementation of social economic development plans at local levels.

Table 2: Ages of District/Commune staff

No	Name of offices	18 – 25		26 - 35		36 - 45		Over 45	
		Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women
1	Minh Long DPC								
2	Son Tinh DPC	0	0	15	04	17	05	38	03
3	Long Son CPC	03	02	01	01	20	04	6	0
4	Tinh Tho CPC	01	01	07	04	18	03	08	0

The data show that staff are mainly at the ages ranging from 26 – 45. There are very few young staff

Table 3: Education level of District/Commune staff

No	Name of offices	Under secondary school level		Secondary school graduation		Intermediate college		College/ University	
		Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women
1	Minh Long DPC								
2	Son Tinh DPC	0	0	06	/	20	/	44	/
3	Long Son CPC	14	01	11	06	04	02	01	0
4	Tinh Tho CPC	04	01	31	01	0	0	0	0

The number of women that have high educational level is very low. There are no women staff that graduated from university level. This shows that their cultural level has not yet ensured meeting the work requirements; therefore they are unable to hold the positions of managing and decision making.

Table 4: Gender right access

No	Name of office	Attendance at gender trainings		Capability of gender communications	
		Total	Women	Total	Women
1	Minh Long DPC				
2	Son Tinh DPC	0	0	0	0
3	Long Son CPC	01	0	01	0
4	Tinh Tho CPC	02	01	02	01

The learning and communication on gender issues have not yet been concerned. Women are often assigned with this work but they do not have the decisive rights to all policies in relation to gender equity.

2 Comments and Recommendations

2.1 Comments

Regarding local government's implementing policies of gender and development:

- They have the ideas of equity between men and women in all activities but they did not demonstrate these ideas through any policies, and they always believe that this is because the capacity level of the women is low. However, they have not showed any specific solutions for improving the capacity levels of women.
- They did provide conditions for women to access opportunities of development in all fields of activities in order to promote the roles of women, such as: providing conditions for women to access resources from poverty reduction projects, credit loans, trainings, participation in activity implementation, participation in project supervision, etc. However, women are still unable to receive the benefits made by them on an equal basis (*Women participate in projects very enthusiastically, they have done many things such as gathering people into groups, integrating activities, providing advice to savings and credit activities, etc. but they are not involved into the district/ commune contact groups*)
- -There are efforts of communication to raise the gender awareness in the working relationships within office area as well as in society. But this is only existing in those places where there are development projects operating.

Regarding 'For the progress of women' activities over the last periods:

- All local authorities have the formation of Committees for the Progress of Women, and Made the Action *Ńôn vò ñeàu còu thaønh laäp Ban vì söi tieän boä phuï nöð, còu xaây döïng keá hoäch haønh ñoäng Vì söi tieän boä phuï nöð giai ñoäin (2001-2005) nhöng hoät ñoäng chöa thöðøng xuyeân*

Regarding Gender Awareness

- Managing staff have made changes in terms of perception, they realize positive contributions that women make to the achievements of development, but they do not like to have many women stay in the managing and decision making positions. While they want to have many women staff that have good professional skill levels and are dynamic and creative, but for assisting them only. The reason is that men have a superiority complex, and they still have the thought of belittling women, they easily feel touchy when thinking that they have to serve women, and they have a little bit of envy in terms of rights and positions.
- For men in the community: they easily change the attitudes when seeing the issues and this has been recognized by the community. Many men have help their wives in housework; and there have been certain changes of traditional roles of gender (*men stay at home to take care of housework, caring for children, cleaning up the house, wives go away to work to contribute to family incomes*); The problems of violence in households have also significantly reduced (*thanks to many reasons, but also partly include the gender awareness*). One of the reasons is that the husbands see the benefits for their families from their wives' participation into community activities, and see the confidence that the community give to their wives.

- The women themselves have made more efforts in learning, working, arrangements of family work and they have been working more and more effectively. They work with sense of responsibility and always strive to accomplish the work from which they make the society change its attitude to women. However, there are still many women who are resigned to their fate, always feel inferiority complex, accept resignedly the existing disadvantages and dare not struggle for their interests. There are also a number of women who are selfish, small-minded or always wait for priorities given from the public policies.

DDOs

- They also care for involving women into project activities because, according to them, this is the issue that the Program emphasizes. However, they are unsure about the number as well as the quality of women's participation into the Program (because they have just started to collect data/information. There are very few DDOs who have attended gender training and they have not been able to be clear about the methods of integrating gender into activities; they have also not known about the local gender policies and therefore were unable to combine the Program gender activities with the gender-equity promotion activities in the community.

2.2 Recommendations

In Quang Ngai as well as in Viet Nam, there have been many motivations and conditions for the promotion of gender in offices, state offices as well as in communities, these are:

The National Program for the Progress of Women up to 2010

On 21 January 2002, the Prime Minister issue Decision 19/2002/QD-TTg approving the National Program for the Progress of Vietnamese Women up to 2010 with the following goal and objectives:

Goal:

“ Improve the quality of the spirit and physical life of women. Provide all conditions for the effective implementation of fundamental rights and the development of women role in all areas of the social and political life.”

Objectives:

1. Implement the equity rights of women in the area of employment
2. Implement the equity rights of women in the area of education
3. Implement the equity rights of women in the area of health
4. Improve the quality and effectiveness of women activities in all areas of political, economic, cultural and social life in order to increase the number of women to be introduced and elected into the leadership at various levels and sectors.
5. Improve the capacity of the activities for the progress of women

Together with 20 targets on gender and very specific solutions

The Action Plan for the Progress of Women up to 2005 given by the National Committee for the Progress of Vietnamese Women

The Action Plan concentrates on the implementation of the specific objectives of the Strategy such as: “Stabilize and improve the spirit and physical life of women. Provide all conditions for the effective implementation of fundamental rights and the development of women’s role in all areas of political, economic, cultural and social life.”

Prime Minister’s Instruction No 27/2004/CT-TTg

On 15 July 2004, the Prime Minister issued Instruction 27/2004/CT/TTg for the *Strengthening of activities for the progress of women in ministries, sectors, ministerial-level bodies, bodies affiliated to the Government and to people’s committees of the Centrally controlled cities and provinces*. This Instruction is to push the effective implementation of the fundamental rights of women in all areas of the political, economic, cultural and social life in the coming periods, especially shifting the standing role in the provincial committees for the progress of women onto DPI directors.

Letter 156/HD-UBQG given by the cuûa UBGQVSTBPNVN

- Fully aware of gender issues, enhance the responsibilities of sectors and levels to gender equity as well as the progress of women in the national development.
- Create effective operating mechanisms to incorporate gender issues into the policy planning and implementation process.
- Provide favourable conditions for the women to carry out their fundamental rights and participate fully and equally into all areas of political, economic, cultural and social life.

The Action Plan for the Progress of Women of Quang Ngai Province

The supports given by many international development projects in the province.

Recommendations

- Should provide many gender communication activities to local management levels and households in the communities, especially men as very necessary.
- Train a resource of staff who are professional and skillful in gender communications, and capable of providing advices on the integration of gender issues into local activities (*for the implementation of program localization and sustainability strategies*).
- Provide many training courses and workshops on raising gender awareness for management officials in various levels and sectors.
- Provide public welfare projects to support women's livelihoods such as kindergartens, road facilities, etc.

Work schedule, from 20/6 to 01/7/2005

Day 1 Monday 20/6/2005	<p>Morning: Discussion with Trevor/Duc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Objectives of the Contracts - Basis information on RUDEP - Requirements of the Strategy <p>Afternoon: Meeting with Ms. Pham Thi Thu Trang, Deputy Chairwoman of PWU, on issues relating to the PCPW</p>
Day 2 Tuesday 21/6/2005	<p>Whole day : Reading documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PDD - MTR Report - Gender Analysis Report 2004
Day 3 Wednesday 22/6/2005	<p>Morning: Meeting with Minh Long DCG and DWU</p> <p>Afternoon: Meeting with Long Son CCG and CWU</p>
Day 4 Thursday 23/6/2005	<p>Morning: Meeting with Mr. Nguyen Thi Hoa – DPI Vice Director/ PMU Co-Director</p> <p>Afternoon: Meeting with Mrs. Pham Thi Thu Trang – PWU</p>
Day 5 Friday 24/6/2005	<p>Morning: Meeting with Son Tinh DCG and DWU</p> <p>Afternoon: Meeting with Tinh Tho CCG and CWU</p>
Day 6 Saturday 25/6/2005	<p>Morning: Visit to VSCF Tho Tay 2 (Tinh Tho)</p> <p>Afternoon: Visit to VSCF Tho Trung 3 (Tinh Tho)</p>

Day 7,8 Sunday 26/6/2005 to Monday 27/6/2005	Document processing
Day 9 Tuesday 28/6/2005	Morning: preparation of the Strategy Afternoon: Discussions with Trevor
Day 10,11 Wednesday 29/6/2005 Thursday 30/6/2005	Writing report
Day 12 Friday 01/7/2005	Morning : Discussions with Duc on the recommendations of the MTR report Afternoon : Seminar

Limitations

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