

GENDER ACTION PLAN

A. Gender Status and Issues for Proposed Project

1. The Project's gender analysis revealed that women in the Project area reported being in poverty more often than men. Overall, 45% of women were poor, as compared to 38% of men, while 58% of female headed households were poor. The vast majority of women are farmers but, in addition to this economic activity, women are overwhelmingly responsible for the majority of housework tasks. In the Project area, women undertake about 80% of these laborious domestic chores and work 10 to 12 hours more a week than men. These traditional gender relationships and time constraints hinder women's participation in community decision-making and the gender analysis confirmed that women's knowledge of the proposed subprojects and their participation in community management generally is very low. Ethnic minority women face female prejudices, minority status, isolation in mountainous locations and often face heightened cultural barriers restricting their participation in decision-making. Women in the Project area farm smaller plots of land on average as compared to men and almost all land use rights certificates are in the husband's name. This limits women's incomes and access to other resources such as credit, which could restrict women from taking advantage of the income diversification potential arising from project activities. The HIV infection rate is significantly higher in the northern region (rate per 100,000 people was 232.9 in the North East, 316.2 in the North East as compared to 183.4 for Vietnam, in 2007¹) and rising rapidly among high risk groups. Although the project's activities pose a minimal risk of increasing the rate of HIV infection, the gender analysis revealed that knowledge of HIV/AIDS is very low in the Project area and women know much less about HIV prevention than men.

2. Key gender issues in rural transport development include the need to ensure that generated employment and income raising activities, both during subproject construction and in the post construction period, are equally available to women and to men; that measures are taken to prevent the spread of sexually-transmitted diseases and human trafficking and that measures are taken to allow women to maximize the new opportunities brought about by enhanced transport connections. The key issues in irrigation provision include the need to include women in the decision making processes for the use of enhanced irrigation water availability, to ensure that women are included in a reasonable number as representatives of water user associations and to ensure that increased crop production as a result of irrigation does not add to the existing labor burdens for women during land preparation and harvesting. Key issues in domestic water supply include ensuring that women-headed households can afford access to enhanced water supplies and the need to provide information and training on waste water disposal and disease prevention.

B. The Project Gender Action Plan

3. These gender inclusive design features respond to constraints faced by women across all project infrastructure types as well as to issues that are specific to a particular improvement. They have been prepared in consultation with stakeholders, particularly local women, and work to offset disadvantages for women revealed through the gender analysis described above:

- (i) A Social Impact Assessment (SIA), including a Gender Analysis (GA) resulting in a Gender Action Plan (GAP), will be prepared for each subproject;
- (ii) A Gender Specialist will be included in the Loan Implementation Consultant Team to oversee all gender related activities.
- (iii) Each PPMU will engage a safeguard specialist who will ensure the collection and analysis of gender disaggregated baseline data, including extension and training needs of women;
- (iv) There will be a representative of the Commune Women's Union on the Commune

¹ Health Statistic Yearbook, Viet Nam Ministry of Health, 2006.

- (v) Supervision Board (CSB)(three people);
- (v) 50% membership/participants in local subproject water user groups and market management committees;
- (vi) The project will deliver training for women to ensure their meaningful participation in project decision making;
- (vii) Gender mainstreaming training will be delivered for the implementing agencies at national, provincial and local levels;
- (viii) The Project will ensure that extension services are specifically designed for and deliver to women;
- (ix) The CSB will monitor that contractors are providing equal pay for men and women for work of equal type, safe working conditions for both men and women workers and that contractors do not employ child labor, and
- (x) The PPMUs will support HIV/AIDS awareness raising in the subproject areas by coordinating with ongoing initiatives.

C. Implementation Mechanisms for the Gender Action Plan

4. The CPMU will recruit national consultants to prepare Social Impact Assessments (SIA) and GAPs for each subproject. These will be reviewed by the Loan Implementation Consultants as part of the subproject investment report. Safeguard officers appointed within the CPMU and each PPMU will be responsible for supervising the implementation of the GAPs. The PPMUs will work with the relevant provincial, district and commune agencies (Viet Nam Women's Union, Health Department and local health workers) to implement and coordinate training, capacity building, and sanitation and HIV/AIDS awareness raising activities. Implementation of the GAP will be overseen by the Gender Working Group in MARD.

SRIDP Gender Action Plan Overview

Project Component	Gender Action Plan Targets
<p>Output 1: New and/or improved rural infrastructure rehabilitated and constructed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented evidence of consultation with local women and women's groups prior to subproject approval. • Local contractors will employ at least 30% women in construction/ rehabilitation and labor-intensive maintenance. • Equal pay for men and women for work of equal type. • Safe working conditions for both men and women workers. • Local contractors will not employ child labor. • Selection criteria for subprojects encourages the use of local labor and avoid construction camps. • Provision of sanitary and other facilities for women in markets constructed under the project
<p>Output 2: Improved institutional and local capacities to develop, manage and benefit from rural infrastructure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 50% participation of women on water user groups, irrigation management committees and market design and management committees. • Women's groups and the Women's Union consulted in the design of all project infrastructure improvements. • Gender mainstreaming training for implementing agencies at national, provincial and local levels (i.e. CPMU, PPMUs and other stakeholders). • Capacity building training delivered for women to participate in subproject and community decision-making in a meaningful way (i.e. participation and negotiation training, marketing skills and numeracy and literacy training). • Participation of women in Project study tours. • Female focused extension services designed for and delivered to women. • HIV/AIDS awareness raising campaign delivered prior to the start civil works.
<p>Output 3: Efficient project implementation management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender and Safeguard Specialists included in national and provincial subproject implementation teams. • SIA, Gender Analysis and a GAP will be prepared for each subproject. • CPMU and PPMUs responsible for monitoring and reporting of GAP performance indicators, including women's participation, training and employment targets, and HIV prevention campaigns. • At least one member of the Commune Supervision Boards will be a representative of the commune Women's Union.