

Improving gender equality and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) conditions in ethnic minority areas of Northern Viet Nam

VIETNAM RED CROSS AND FRENCH RED CROSS

GENDER TALK

April 2012

Improving gender equality and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) conditions in ethnic minority areas of Northern Viet Nam

INTRODUCTION OF THE GUIDE

Overview of the Project

Improving gender equality and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) conditions in ethnic minority areas of Northern Viet Nam supported by European Union and implemented by Vietnam Red Cross and French Red Cross in 3 provinces of Son La, Lai Chau and Dien Bien.

Overall objective: To contribute towards improving health, increasing gender equality and reducing poverty of ethnic minority groups located in 3 Northern provinces of Vietnam through the use and dissemination of a participative, decentralized and inclusive approach

Specific objective:

- (i) At national and provincial level, to mainstream gender in VNRC development programmes and strengthen the capacities of VNRC, WU and LA of the target areas in participative and gender-sensitive WASH programme management and implementation.
- (ii) At grassroots' level, to promote gender equality and women leadership and to improve water and sanitation access as well as knowledge of target population, especially children, in hygiene and environmental health.

Within framework of the project, a gender analysis was implemented in targeted communes in project areas in 3 provinces. The gender analysis's results have shown gender inequality in local community in various aspects. In order to raise awareness on gender equality in community, the project implements Gender Talks in 3 targeted communes.

Purpose of the Guide

The guide has been developed to support facilitators who directly implement Gender Talks in community. The purpose of the talks is to help people to realize existing gender inequality issues in their locality, then raise their awareness aiming at behaviour changes and practices. Facilitators use participatory approach with men and women through their experience in daily life and problems that their community is facing to. The guide is especially designed for ethnic minority groups in remote and disadvantaged communes of Northern Vietnam.

The gender analysis previously implemented in targeted communes of the project has detected gender burning issues including: heavy workload of women, limited participation of women in community activities, less important voice of women in family decision

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making, more priority to male children than female. The discussion topics in the guide were selected based on this analysis result.

Structure of the guide

The guide includes following parts:

Part 1: Introduction

Part 2: Sharing houseworks between male and female

Part 3: Participation of male and female in community activities

Part 4: Discussion and decision making in family

Part 5: Equal treatment to boy and girl

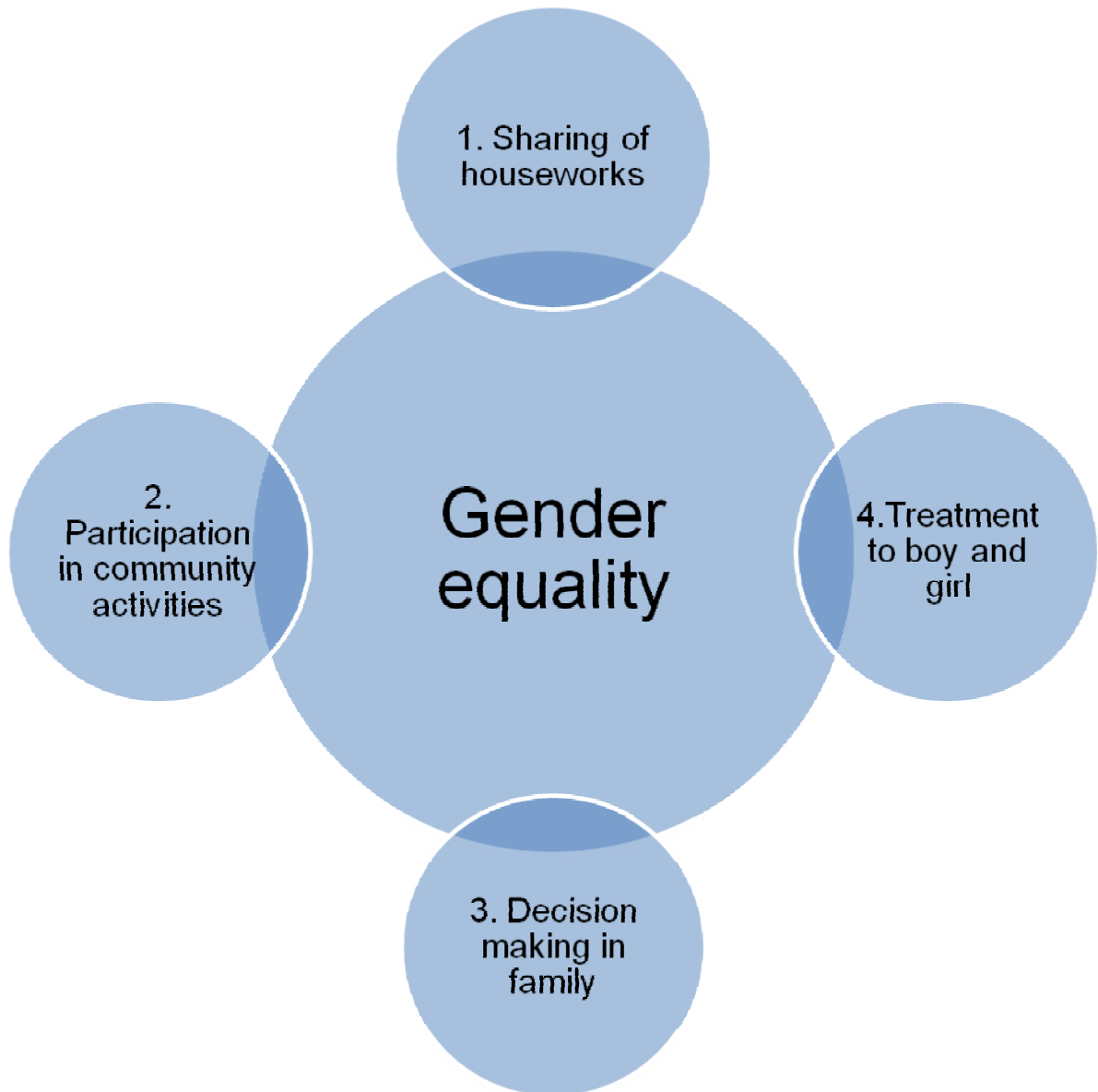
Part 6: Conclusion

Annex 1: Cases for group discussion

Annex 2: Gender basic knowledge

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WHAT WE TALK ABOUT?



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Notes for facilitators

Method

- During grouping, try to allocate one person with high competence in discussion leading in each group.
- Clearly explain to groups what to do their tasks.
- Cases for discussion should be read slowly. Ask participants if they understand the content or need to read it again.
- During discussion there could be different opinions. It's normal if some body disagree with or oppose your information inputted. In this case, you should not react immediately or make critical comments. Do invite people with good knowledge to share their thoughts.
- Do not impose your own opinion but try to give suggestion or explanation to help people access to knowledge and reliaze their problems by themselves.

Content

- Do not have a misconception that some works and characters are only suitable for male or female. Male or female, if well educated and trained in good study and working environments, are able to do the same works.
- Due to different gender role, male and female have different needs and priorities as well as different difficulties and challenges while participating in social life. Therefore, during activity designing these factors should be taken in to account in order to facilitate women's participation and access to resource in a most effective way.
- It's not easy to change gender stereotype in community. It needs a continuous and enduring progress in which men play an extremely important role.
- Do not have a misconception that to change traditional gender role is to change Vietnamese cultural value. To remove barriers to growth and development of men and women as well as the whole society is supported by any culture.
- Gender equality is not a separate target from other development targets. Promoting gender equality will contribute to reach project and program objectives in an effective way.

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION



Purpose:

- To encourage participants to talk freely and create an enabling environment
- To collect the expectations from participants
- Set ground rules



Materials:

- A0 paper, A4 paper, colored paper
- Colored markers, sticky tape
- Board



Time: 60 minutes



What to do:

1. Short introduction of the project and the importance of equal participation and having benefited of men and women in project activities.
2. Explain objectives of gender talks and emphasize on sharing from the participants and encourage them to raise questions for discussion.
3. Ask groups of 3 person (next to each other) to share what they want to know in the Gender Talk¹. Give them colored paper to write their expectations.
4. Facilitator summary participant's expectations, stick their papers in the wall to review at the end of the talk.
5. Ask participants and suggest rules for the entire talk (things should and should not be done during the talk) such as: do not have personal talk, turn off or keep

¹ As there could be many participants it is not necessary to have each person introduce and talk about their expectations.

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mobile phones in silent mode, arrive on time, actively participate in discussion...

6. Divide participants into groups with both men and female (ideally half of men and half of women) with 7-8 persons in each group.
7. Ask Group 1 to discuss on question: What are the good things when having daughter? Why? Group 2 to discuss on question: What are the good things when having son? Why?
8. Ask groups to write down their main ideas in A0 paper.
9. Each group assign one person to present their discussion results.
10. During presentations, facilitator writes down main ideas in colored paper and stick in the board (or wall). Be noted that the ideas from men and women could be different.

The most important task during this part is to start up the discussion. From participants' ideas, facilitator could direct the conversation up to the next part of the talk.

Notes to facilitators:

- In the beginning participants could be shy and not well participated. Start from persons that you know they could freely share their thoughts.
- Listen carefully and show your understanding and encourage to people thoughts.

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PART 2: SHARING OF HOUSEWORKS BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE



Purpose:

- To understand irrationality and inequality in doing houseworks.
- To understand how housework burden can impact to women health, knowledge, information accessibility and participation in social activities.
- To encourage men' sharing of houseworks.



Materials:

- Set of picture No. 1: Daily houseworks
- A table drawn in A0 papers:

Houseworks mainly done by men	Houseworks mainly done by women	Houseworks done by both men and women

- Have Case for discussion 1 prepared in A4 paper: *Story of Mr Vua A Trong and Mrs Vang Thi Mi family* (in Annex of the guide). Translate to local ethnic languages if necessary.
- Colored paper, markers, A0 paper



Time: 90 minutes



What to do:

- *Work with pictures (30 minutes)*
1. Divide participants into groups of 5-7 persons.

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2. Provide each group with a set of picture and an A0 paper with above-mentioned 3-column table.
3. Ask groups to find suitable picture to put in 3 columns. Emphasize that groups should find works that women do **mainly**; works that men do **mainly**; and works that men and women do **equally**, because there are works that both men and women do but the **involvement level** is different?
4. Groups present their table and discussion results and answer to questions from other groups.
5. Facilitator ask questions: Who mainly do the houseworks? Do these works take much of time? Why these works are mainly done by women?
6. From answers of participants, facilitator summary main ideas and say “In order to understand how housework burden could impact to women, we now listen to a story”. Ask participants to listen carefully to be able to answer questions.

➤ *Case discussion (40 minutes)*

7. Read case for discussion out loud: Story of Mr Vua A Trong and Mrs Vang Thi Mi family. Be sure that people understand story’s content.
8. Ask groups to discuss on following questions and write down discussion results in A4 paper.
 - *Why does Mrs Vang Thi Mi do all the houseworks? Are these easy works?*
 - *What is the impact of the housework burden to her? (health, time, opportunity to earn money, opportunity to participate social activities...)*
 - *How could Mrs Vang Thi Mi have time to participate the WU’s activities and Credit Fund? (solutions)*
9. Read each question and ask each group to give answers. Write down main ideas in board or A0 paper.
10. Stop and emphasize in the third question. Participants could raise different solutions but be noted to important: houseworks sharing of the husband, Ms Vang Thi Mi should talk to her husband about her intention to participate in the Credit Fund, representative of Women Union encourage her to participate and talk to her husband ...

✓ *Conclusion (10 minutes)*

Conclusion

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- ✓ Houseworks are not petty but necessary works to reproduce labor force. At present, in addition to productive works, women usually do houseworks but their efforts are not appropriately recognized. The houseworks increase workburden to women and they have few time to participate community activities, access to new information and knowledge, as well as take rest aftes work ...

- ✓ Men should actively share housework with women as a part of their responsibilities to family. Women should know how to encourage men to share housework such as give encouragement sayings when men do good jobs...

Notes to facilitator

- Discussion could take more time than expected or be difficult to some groups. Explain carefully to help groups understand story content.

- Encourage groups to raise as many as possible solutions for the third questions.

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PART 3: PARTICIPATION OF MALE AND FEMALE IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES



Purpose

- To understand that limited participation of women in community activities is a signal of gender inequality.
- To understand the need to attract women participation in community activities that is not only their right but also their duty and benefit.
- To encourage participants share their ideas on how to have more women participate in community activities.



Materials

- Colored paper, A0 paper, sticky tape, marker
- 2 tables drawn in A0 papers:

Table 1:

Community meeting	Many women participate	Few women participate	No women participate
Meeting on construction of road, school...			
Meeting on production, business opportunities			
Meeting on poor household selection			
Meeting on health care, family planning			
.....			

Table 2

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Community meeting	Many men participate	Few men participate	No men participate
Meeting on construction of road, school...			
Meeting on production, business opportunities			
Meeting on poor household selection			
.....			

- Have Case for discussion 2 prepared in A4 paper: *A village meeting in Ho Pu village* (in Annex of the guide). Translate to local ethnic languages if necessary.



Time: 90 minutes



What to do

➤ **Work with tables (30 minutes)**

1. Divide participants into separate male and female groups of 5-7 persons.
2. Provide female group with Table 1 and male group with Table 2. Cross x in selected column.
3. Groups present their discussion results.
4. Ask groups about topics of meetings (It is normal if participants do not remember meeting topics)
5. Facilitate discussion to help people realize difference between male and female participation in each meeting (which meeting women/men usually participate? Who have more participation in meetings? Why?)
6. Direct participants to story

➤ **Case discussion (40 minutes)**

7. Read case for discussion out loud: *A village meeting in Ho Pu village*
8. Ask groups to discuss on following questions and write down discussion results in A4 paper

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- *Why are there few women in Ho Pu village participated in the meeting on construction of water network?*
- *Why participated women did not give their opinion?*
- *How the fact that many women did not participate in the meeting on construction of water network impact to their benefits and voice in community?*
- *Could women participate in the Community supervision team? Why?*
- *How to have more women participate in the community activities?*

9. Read each question and ask each group to give answers. Write down main ideas in board or colored paper.

✓ *Conclusion (10 minutes)*

Conclusion

- ✓ In fact, in ethnic minority communities in mountainous areas, the participation of women in community activities is very limited. Without participation in community activities, women' benefit will be negatively impacted as their needs and expectations could not be expressed and solved.
- ✓ Families, especially men should encourage and create favor conditions to women to participate in community activities. Women should proactively participate and contribute ideas, expectations as well as difficulties.

Notes to facilitators

- Male and female groups could have different opinions (for example in question *Could women participate in the Community supervision team?*) or women do not feel necessary to participate in the discussion. In this case you could emphasize the benefits of active participation or refer to a good example of a woman in village, commune who actively participate in community activities.

PART 4: DISCUSSION AND DECISION MAKING IN FAMILY

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Purpose:

- To understand that any decision of family need discussion and agreement between male and female members.
- To encourage discussions and find solutions that help women to participate more in important decisions.



Materials

- A0 paper, colored paper
- Marker, sticky tape
- Have scenario (or story) of the Role play 3 prepared in A4 paper: *Decision of getting a loan*. Translate to local ethnic languages if necessary.



Time : 60 minutes



What to do

➤ *Preparation works*

1. Before the talk, select 2 persons (1 man, 1 woman) to act as Mr Sinh and Ms Mui.
2. Provide them with the story and ask them to read carefully before acting.

➤ *Role play* (10 minutes)

3. Introduce the role play. Ask 2 selected persons to introduce about the role that they will play.
4. Brief about the content of the role play.
5. Ask participants to observe and listen carefully in order to be able to discuss about it later.
6. After the role play finished, divide participants in separate male and female groups of 5-7 persons.

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➤ *Discussion on the role play* (30 minutes)

7. Ask groups to discuss on following questions:
 - *Is Mr Sinh's action wrong or right? Why?*
 - *Why Ms Mui was concerned when Mr Sinh decided to get a loan of 20 million dong? How a big loan could impact to the life of her family (being poorer, schooling opportunities of children...)*
 - *What can happen in family when wife and husband do not agree to each other in making decision?*
 - *Which action Ms Mui needs to do and who/which organizations could help her to persuade Mr Sinh?*
8. Groups write down their main ideas in A0 paper.
9. Each group present their discussion results and answer to questions from other groups or facilitator.
10. After presentations, facilitator summaries main ideas answering for each question.

✓ *Conclusion* (10 minutes)

Conclusion

- ✓ There should not be a misconception that men are the ones who make all decisions. Women and other members contributing to household business and development need to raise their voice in decision making.
- ✓ Women need to be active in participation and giving opinion in household decisions, not rely on men. Men need to listen to women's opinion and anyone's opinions need to be taken in to consideration.
- ✓ When there is a conflict between wife and husband that could not be internally solved, you could ask for support from local authority, mass organizations for example Women Union.

Notes for facilitators:

- If you find difficult to have 2 persons for role play, you could ask 2 village or commune staffs who are confident in public speaking to act in the play.

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- During discussion, there could be some opinion that women are not able to make important decisions or men usually are heads of households who need to make decision finally. In this case you could ask them if they know any woman who well plays the role of household head and good at decision making (Prepare in advance some good examples in community that you could refer to). Tell to participants that women could do many works if people believe and give them opportunities. Tell them that in order to be able to make good decisions, women need to have access to information, knowledge, social communication to improve their thinking and vision.

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PART 5: EQUAL TREATMENT TO BOY AND GIRL



Purpose:

- To understand that boy and girl are the same in term of right and responsibility. Boy and girl need to have the same access to school as well as same assignment for houseworks.



Materials

- *Set of picture No. 2:* Include pictures of girls doing houseworks, cooking, sweeping the floor, carrying baby...and boys playing with friends, watching TV, doing homeworks...
- *Set of picture No. 2:* Include pictures of boys and girls sharing houseworks, girl doing homeworks, boy taking care of baby, the whole family watching TV ...
- Have Case for discussion 4 prepared in A4 paper: *Equal treatment to boy and girl.* Translate to local ethnic languages if necessary.
- Sticky tape, colored paper, A0 paper, marker.



Time: 90 minutes



What to do

➤ *Discussion on Set of picture No. 2 (20 minutes)*

1. Divide participants into groups (5-7 persons)
2. Provide groups with Set of picture No. 2.
3. Ask groups to observe pictures and answer following questions in A4 paper:
 - *What are the differences between boy and girl in these pictures?*
 - *Which priorities are given to boys? How girls be put at a disadvantage in comparison with boys?*
 - *Is there any inequality in treatment to boy and girl? Why?*
4. Facilitator ask each question to get answer from groups

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5. Summary main ideas answering for each questions and direct participants to case story.

➤ **Case discussion (30 minutes)**

6. Read case for discussion out loud: *Equal treatment to boy and girl*

7. Ask groups to discuss following questions write down discussion results in A0 paper.

- *If your family meets the same situation, how will you make decision? Will you let your daughter attend to school or not? Why?*
- *What is the consequence if girls leave the school early?*
- *Why Ms Mai's son doesn't have to do houseworks?*
- *Does Ms Mai need to raise her voice to support her daughter to continue schooling?*
- *What Ms Mai should do and who can help her to support her daughter schooling?*

8. Facilitator read each question and ask groups give answers.

➤ **Discussion on Set of picture No. 3 (20 minutes)**

9. Stick pictures from Set of picture No. 3 in board or A0 paper.

10. Ask participants to observe and give comments: What is the difference between Set of picture No. 2 and Set of picture No. 3. Put an emphasis that pictures in Set of picture No. 3 are what we desire for.

➤ **Conclusion (10 minutes)**

Conclusion

- ✓ Girl needs to be respected as boy, it is child right protected by law

- ✓ Girl who leave school early will usually have to work for money or get married early that could put them in a high risk of health impact due to early childhood. Getting married before reaching the age of 18 is a law violation.

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- ✓ In family parents need to allocate equal houseworks both boys and girls. It is a misconception that houseworks are girls' works.

Notes to facilitators

- There could be some opposite opinions that (i) Boys are not good at houseworks as girls; (ii) it's good for family if daughter leave school because daughter could do many works supporting to family; (iii) it is wasteful to invest into girl's schooling because they will go away after getiing married. You could ask participants to find some examples that boys and men are keen on houseworks or girls are good at studying and women are successful in business. If individual capacity is well utilized both family and society will have benefited.

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PART 6: CONCLUSION



Purpose:

- To help participants memorize discussion contents during the talk.
- To encourage participants to change their thinking and practice in their own families after the talk.



Materials: Colored paper, marker



Time: 30 minutes



What to do:

1. Spend 5 minutes for participants to think about one thing that they find most interesting during the talk.
2. Ask participants to speak out (or write down in a colored paper) one new thing that they learn during the talk.
3. Facilitator summary main ideas (if the ideas are written down in colored papers, stick the papers into boards or wall)
4. Facilitator give conclusion.

Conclusion

- ✓ Both men and women are equally responsible for houseworks. Men need to take care more works because of their better health situation.
- ✓ Women need to actively participate in community activities. Family and men should create favour conditions for women to participate in community works.
- ✓ Women will be benefited from participation in community activities w(information exchange, access to updated knowledge and information, opportunities to increase

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production and income ...)

- ✓ Decisions in family need to be agreed by both wife and husband. It's essential to take women's opinion in to account when making important decision, because men and women have the same role and contribution to family..
- ✓ It is necessary to treat boy and girst equally in schooling and in houseworks.
- ✓ It is a misconception that only girls are obliged to do houseworks, and boys need to go to school. It should be noted that boy and girst could have the same study result and do the same houseworks if parent treat them equally.

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ANNEX 1: CASES FOR DISCUSSION

Case for discussion 1:

Story of Mr Vua A Trong and Ms Vang Thi Mi family

Mr Vua A Trong and Mrs Vang Thi Mi have 3 small children, the oldest one is 8 years old and the youngest one is 2 years old. Everyday, Mrs Vang Thi Mi have to wake up very early, prepare breakfast for the whole family as well as foods for pigs and chickens, then wake up her husband and children. She needs to feed the two small children and prepare for the oldest one to go to school. She also needs to do all the washing and cleaning works.

After all these works in the morning, she go with her husband to the farm to work until late evening. Back to home when her husband taking a rest after a hard working day, she have to continue working to prepare dinner for family, clean the house, take bath for children, have them sleep and feed the pigs and chicken. She always feel very tired after such a long day.

She said that last week due to cold weather the two small children were sick and she needs to spend sleepless nights to take care of them. She was very tired and totally has no time for resting. Some days ago, the WU invited her to participate in the Credit Fund, but she could not participate because her children are too small that she could not arrange any time to participate as the Credit Fund usually have meeting in evening. She said that her husband is good to her and their children but he is not familiar with taking care of children. Therefore this work is her responsibility.

Questions for discussion:

- *Why does Mrs Vang Thi Mi do all the houseworks? Are these easy works?*
- *What is the impact of the housework burden to her? (health, time, opportunity to earn money, opportunity to participate social activities...)*

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- *How could Mrs Vang Thi Mi have time to participate the WU's activities and Credit Fund? (solutions)*

Case for discussion 2:

A village meeting in Ho Pu village

The village meeting in Ho Pu village will start soon. After 15 minutes, villagers arrived to Mr A Dinh – village leader's house. There are 60 households in the village and today 45 persons participate in the meeting but only 5 women among them. This meeting is for discussion on the construction of water network for the village.

In the meeting there are many different opinions about the selection of place for water storage tank construction, establishment of Community supervision team to supervise the construction. Men actively give their opinion, while there is only one woman speaking out her opinion. Finally people select 5 persons to be members of Community supervision team and all of them are men.

Questions for group discussion

- *Why are there few women in Ho Pu village participated in the meeting on construction of water network?*
- *Why participated women did not give their opinion?*
- *How the fact that many women did not participate in the meeting on construction of water network impact to their benefits and voice in community?*
- *Could women participate in the Community supervision team? Why?*
- *How to have more women participate in the community activities?*

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Case for discussion 3:

Decision of getting a loan

Option 1: Role play with following scenario

Mr Sinh: It's time to reinforce our house. Storm is coming soon. Last year that tornado is too bad to destroy our house, now the temporary roof and wall are nearly broken.

Mrs Mui: I am very worried, but how we manage to have enough money? Do you know how much it will cost?

Mr Sinh: Perhaps 20 million dong is enough.

Mrs Mui: Such a big amount! You see, our neighbours with the same damages only pay 10 million dong to rebuild the house. Try to ask Mr Dua!

Mr Sinh: No, I want to have a steady house. I heard that now Women Union could give a loan of 20 million dong with low interest. Do you know about it?

Mrs Mui: But we are poor! How could we pay off this money even with low interest? This year the weather is so unfavourable that it's very possible that we will get bad harvest, how we could live with this loan? We could use old wood, no need for new ones.

Mr Sinh: (Silent)

Mrs Mui: Try to think how we will pay off? It costs a lot for our children to go to school already and now you work as time-worker with irregular wage.

Mr Sinh: Let's think about it later. I am head of household, I decided. We will get a loan of 20 million dong.

Mrs Mui: (sigh, sad face)

Mr Sinh: I have asked some shops for construction materials already. I will take care to all the works. You are busy with children and farming, you don't need to care. Women could not know anything about this..

Mrs Mui: (say nothing)

(end of role play)

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Option 2: Give story to 2 selected persons then they could develop conversation by themselves.

After a tornado last storm season, the house of Mr Sinh and Mrs Mui is the most damaged one, wall and floor are seriously damaged. They have to build a temporary house to stay in. This storm season is coming, they are very worried and discussing on how to rebuilt their house. The most concerned issue is that they need to get a loan to have money for house building. They could take a loan from Women Union with low interest as they are classified as poor household in the village. Mr Sinh want to get a loan of 20 million dong to build a steady house while Ms Mui only want 10 million dong as she know that other households pay this amount for house rebuilding. She tried to persuade her husband with many reason such as big amount of money, difficulty to pay back, bad harvest, costly schooling of children... but finally Mr Sinh still decided to get a loan of 20 million dong. He will decide and do all the works. Mrs Mui try to ask for more details but he said that women could not know anything about these issues.

Questions for discussion (after the role play)

- *Is Mr Sinh's action wrong or right? Why?*
- *Why Ms Mui was concerned when Mr Sinh decided to get a loan of 20 million dong? How a big loan could impact to the life of her family (being poorer, schooling opportunities of children...)*
- *What can happen in family when wife and husband do not agree to each other in making decision?*
- *Which action Ms Mui needs to do and who/which organizations could help her to persuade Mr Sinh?*

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Case for discussion 4

Equal treatment to boy and girl

Mrs Mai family is one among 55 poor households in Leo village. Both she and her husband are illiterate. They have 3 children, the first daughter is 14 years old and left the school for several years because her family is too poor to afford her study. The second boy is studying at 5th grade and the smallest daughter is studying at 4th grade. She said that at present her husband is sick, so they will have one more child leave school to help family on farming. In addition, the first daughter is going to get married in the coming time. Her husband wants their son to continue his study and let the smallest daughter to leave the school as he thinks that she could help family much more than their son. The teacher said that her daughter studies well, always gets certificate of merit, but she also think that her daughters could always help her in houseworks as well as farmwork while her son could not do anything. She doesn't know what she should do because she still wants her daughter to continue her study.

It is not the story of only Mrs Mai. In Leo village, there are many similar cases with many girls have to leave the school. In the whole village, there are no girls could complete high school. They get married early, have many children, so poverty pursues them persistently.

Questions for discussion

- *If your family meets the same situation as Mrs Mai's, how will you make decision? Will you let your daughter attend to school or not? Why?*
- *What is the consequence if girls leave the school early?*
- *Why Mrs Mai's son doesn't have to do houseworks?*
- *Does Mrs Mai need to raise her voice to support her daughter to continue schooling?*
- *What Mrs Mai should do and who can help her to support her daughter schooling?*

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ANNEX 2: GENDER BASIC KNOWLEDGE

1. Sex and gender concepts

Sex: *men and women's biological features, expressed by men and women's reproductive function such as women have womb, ability to be pregnant and to give suck to a baby, men have sperm... Biological difference between men and women cannot be changed.*

Sex is innate and homogeneous (men and women in all over the world have the same reproductive function and organ), not able to be exchanged (between men and women), determined by biological factors. We were born as men or women that we cannot change it.

Gender: *express social relationship between men and women. These features, status, roles can exchange each other between men and women and considered as gender aspect.*

For example: Women also can be powerful and decisive. Women can be a leader, a pilot, a technician. Otherwise, men also can be soft and patient, can be a cook, office staff, secretary

Gender reflects the difference of social aspect between men and women. These differences come from learning and studying process, variously and can be changed. They change in accordance with time, from this country to another country, from this culture to another culture in a specific social situation, are determined by social, historical, religious, economic factors. Western women's status is different from eastern women's status, Vietnamese women's social status is also different from Muslim women's social status, women' status in urban area is different from women's status in rural areas.

Important factors in establishment and existence of Gender characteristics:

- Family: children education
- School: books, teachers
- Law
- Religion
- Mass media: Image of men and women

2. Gender role

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Productive role: is kind of activities making product, good and service for consuming and trading. These are activities generating income and paid work.

Both men and women can join into productive activities, however due to social stereotypes, their level of participation is also different and society considers the value of work they do differently. Society values and appreciates this role

Reproductive role: are caring and bringing up and educating activities... to reproduce population and labor including having baby, taking care of family, bringing up and educating children, cooking, washing, cleaning, caring family's health.

These activities are essential to human life, spending a lot of time without generating income. That's why it's not considered as "a real work". Society doesn't value and appreciate this role. Almost women and girls play the important role and main responsibility in reproductive work

Community role: Includes series of social events and service: participation in village meetings, festival, wedding, funeral, cleaning street...

Community work is significant in spiritually cultural development in community. Sometimes it requires volunteer participation, spending time and not see the result immediately, some cases it's paid and known work.

3. Gender stereotype

Gender stereotype is unfair and negative awareness, attitude and consideration about characteristic, position, role and capacity between men and women.

Thinking about role of men and women can be right for some people, but wrong for others. In reality, men could do well housework or take care of children, while many women are good at being leaders.

It's necessary to eradicate gender stereotype in all aspects of life. When valuating anyone, we need to concern to their ability and capacity instead of men or women they are.

Instead of thought "women should be like this, men should be like that", we need to think that both men and women can do housework or make decision when they are educated, supported to do this kind of work. Women and men's working capacity is not available since they were born, it's the result from education and practice.

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4. Gender equality

- *Gender equality is that men and women have the same status and role, be provided with good conditions and opportunities to promote their capacity for community and family development, and benefit equally from achievement of this development.*
- *Factors to compose gender equality*
 - Concern to sex difference between men and women as well as unreasonable gender issues in reality .
 - Focus on the impact of custom, habits as well as deep and basic reasons for discrimination.
 - Policies, law concern not only common rules but also regulations expressing 2 sides: reasonable distinction about priority factors, equality or priority, equality for a specific group men or women to achieve gender equality in reality.
- *Example of gender inequality*
 - Women are main person responsible for taking care of children and houseworks.
 - Women have less participation in community activities.
 - Almost staffs of local authority are .
 - Men have right to make important decisions.
 - Male children are prioritized in schooling than female children
 - Son preference
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