

Focus on Women Program

Objective:

The goal of increasing women's involvement in the development process of Vietnam through focusing on gender and empowerment is integrated in all MCNV programs. Special attention is paid to the vulnerable situation of women who have been victims of human trafficking and domestic violence, and to poor and disabled women.



Background:

Since 2006, MCNV has supported the Center for Women and Development (CWD) to source funds from different donors and then to implement projects. Two key CWD projects are the establishment of shelters for victims of domestic violence and for victims of human trafficking. These two shelters provide safe accommodation for the women and their children and offer additional services to support the women's reintegration in society.

When the projects started in 2006, domestic violence was considered a sensitive and private issue in Vietnam, and to some extent still is. It was controversial for the CWD to set up the shelters as part of a strategy to reduce and to intervene in domestic violence and human trafficking. During the first two years of running these shelters, MCNV provided technical support and encouragement, which contributed to the promising results in this new endeavour. MCNV continues to support these projects, working towards long-term sustainability as well as replication in other provinces.

4. The focus on the children, who follow their mothers to the shelters, has been intensified. The resources to deal with the children (and the mothers with their children), to offer them adequate educational social work assistance, have improved. .
5. Awareness-raising activities have been intensified and active membership of appropriate networks has led to an improved referral system.
6. The number of women seeking support from the shelters has increased, and the capacity of the shelters to provide the needed services has also increased.

Other FOW activities:

In other programs, the focus on women has led to:

1. Increased economic strength through income generation programs for disabled women and women supporting families with a disabled member.
2. Increased capacity of women to play a role in local government through skills training for participation in elections and in local council work.
3. Improved working conditions for rural women through introduction of more ergonomic looms for weaving traditional cloth and motor-driven threshing machines.
4. Improved living conditions for rural women in mountainous districts through introduction of fuel-efficient cooking stoves and of water pumps and systems.
5. Empowerment of ethnic minority women in mountain districts after training in numeracy, giving them greater control over household finance and participation in the market economy.



Achievements with CWD:

1. The management of the projects has been supported and has improved.
2. Funding has been secured for the coming two years to run the shelters and develop the model in preparation for replication.
3. The social work skills of the staff operating the shelters have improved considerably and the turn-over of staff has been reduced.

More information about the impact of MCNV activities on the status of women can be found in the descriptions of the other programs:

- Community Managed Health Development
- Community Managed Health and Livelihood Development
- Comprehensive PMTCT for HIV-positive women and children
- Community Based Rehabilitation and Inclusive Education