

# **VIET NAM**

## **“Strengthening Capacity of the General Statistics Office of Viet Nam in Collection of Gender Data by Integration with Household Surveys”**

**General Statistics Office**

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## **I. Introduction:**

During the last decade, Vietnam has obtained marked achievements in economic development. GDP growth rate is from 7-8%/year. Achievements gained from renovation policy have led to commercial boom (growth rate of export increased from 20-25%/year, foreign investment and investment of all economic sectors (according to Haughton 2001). Economic boom has contributed to improvement of social and gender issues. Poverty rate has declined considerably (from 58% in 1993 down 37% in 1998), Total fertility rate decreases from 3.2 in 1993 down 2.2 in 1998) and enrollment rate is high in all levels (GSO and Haughton 2001). In recent years Vietnam has achieved much success in gender, especially in urban area. HDI ranks 89<sup>th</sup> in the total 149 countries. Of 14 countries with participation of women in Parliament, rate of female participation in Parliament is 27.3% in Vietnam, the highest figure of countries in Asia and the second highest figure of countries in Pacific Asia (after New Zealand: 29.2%) (according to Gender briefing Kit- UNDP Vietnam 2002). This shows that the Party and Government have always paid special attention to social and gender issues.

Social statistics in general and gender statistics in particular are indispensable to adequately provide updated data and accurately reflect real situation. Gender statistics has gradually been incorporated into collection, aggregation, analysis and dissemination of social data in Vietnam.

## **II. Current situation of social and gender statistics in Vietnam**

Statistical system in general and social statistics in particular are performed in two channels: national statistics and statistics of ministries and agencies. The General Statistics Office has the function of national statistics and regulates statistical performance of ministries and agencies.

Two subject-matter departments in the General Statistics Office responsible for social statistics are Department of Social and environmental Statistics and Department of Labor and Population. Data is collected from two periodical social reports of provinces (from city/provincial statistics offices) and of ministries and agencies (related ministries and agencies). In addition to these two report systems, the General Statistics Office and related ministries and agencies conduct surveys like Population and Housing Census (in 1989 and 1999), household surveys, demography surveys, survey on women and children, etc. Gender indicators are taken from the two report systems and surveys. Vietnam social statistical information has recently been improved and obtained some achievements:

### **1. Indicator system**

The above-mentioned data collection channels of the GSO can supply social indicators, including gender indicators, in the following domains:

- Population, family planning
- Labor, employment and unemployment
- Health, health care and children nutrition
- Safe water provision and environmental sanitation
- Education at different levels: creche, kindergarten, primary, secondary, etc
- Culture, entertainment
- Women protection, care and development
- Poverty reduction, social development.

In general, social indicators are still insufficient. Social indicators are quite different in coverage and reliability. However, they are used in making plan and policies for socio-economic development. Also, they are basis for surveillance and assessment of changes of social goals in general and goals relating to the rights of children and women in each subject- matter area in particular. They are also basis for international organizations to have programs and projects to support Vietnam.

## **2. Data collection:**

Social data is collected from regular report system and household survey:

### **a. Regular report system**

Regular report system on social data consists of: social data report system applied to ministries and agencies based on Decision 219/TCTK of the Director General dated 31 December 1990 and report system issued based on Decision 730/2002/QD-TCTK of the Director General dated 15 November 2002 applied to provincial and city statistical offices. These two systems collect and process necessary data for management and macro policy making of the Party and Government and contribute to satisfying part of users' demand on gender.

Data collected in these report systems includes:

- Population, labor and income: mainly based on administrative report system applied to governmental offices and administrative units. Data on labor is divided by gender but data on income is not. Data on crude birth rate, crude mortality rate, immigration, migration are also collected from administrative reports of 61 provincial/city statistical offices. However, these indicators are categorized by urban and rural area, not by gender. Indicators about population (aged 15 and more than) participating in economic activities, employment (by economic activities), working rate of labor force and unemployment are collected annually and include gender data.
- Education: Indicators like literary rate, enrollment rate, repetition rate, drop rate and teachers are categorized by gender.
- Training: college, university, professional secondary school and vocational school are not categorized by gender; teacher indicators are categorized by gender but detailed data by title are not categorized by gender. For indicators about students in colleges and universities, data by gender are just collected for university students, professional secondary students, technical workers and grade pupils. Other indicators on researchers, master students and short-term training of university, professional school, technical school and secondary school are not categorized by gender.
- Health and health care: some indicators are categorized by gender.
- Sport: indicators are not categorized by gender
- Safety water and environmental sanitation: indicators are categorized by urban and rural area and region
- Participation of leaders, authorities and unions: indicators are categorized by gender.

In reality, social data are mainly collected from reports of provincial/city statistical offices since data collected from reports of ministries are inadequate, untimely and implementation of report system in ministries and agencies is not good enough.

### **b. Household surveys**

Making socio-economic policies, setting goals for programs and supervising progress and results need accurate, comparable, timely and deeply analyzed social and gender data. Therefore the two report systems as mentioned above for data collection, especially social data are not sufficient and accurate due to overreporting, underreporting, lack of cooperation among some units, development of non-state sector and small scale of administrative data. As a result,

utilization of data collected from surveys should be promoted and institutionalized. Population and housing censuses have provided an adequate and systematic social data source. Nevertheless this census is only conducted every 10 years due to high cost. Since 1990's, the General Statistics Office has conducted some household surveys from state budget and sponsor of international organizations. They are survey on rural living standard in 1990, survey on poverty in 1993, survey on living standard in 1992-1993 and 1997-1998 and survey on living standard in 2001. These surveys provide a rich source of social and gender data, especially the surveys on living standard conducted in 1992-1993, 1997-1998 and 2001 since these surveys can provide raw data and users can flexibly exploit data. As far as women and children are concerned, some household surveys were conducted, such as MICs in 1996 and 2000, national health survey, survey on children and women basic indicators, and survey on "children lives". These surveys have been built into database on children and women, including gender indicators.

Based on these two data sources, the General Statistics Office has exploited and aggregated more than 100 gender indicators (see appendix about the list of social indicators with gender statistics).

### **III. Difficulties and problems of social and gender statistics in Vietnam**

#### *1. Difficulties and problems*

- Reliability of some social and gender indicators is not high. For the same indicator, data provided by ministries and provinces are quite different, i.e. poverty rate and children mortality rate. This is because of differences in concept, coverage and data collection among units.
- Indicators are inadequate and unsystematic: social indicators are unsystematic, especially indicators reflecting quality of life. Some fields only collect data reflecting phenomenon. There is insufficiency of indicators reflecting condition and cause, which hinders utilization of data in analysis and studies. Although surveys and regular report system try to collect gender data, this is just inharmonious effort. Many indicators are unsystematically incorporated into surveys and report systems. Incorporation of gender statistics into subject matter statistics has not been institutionalized, even in report system and survey relating to human being. Therefore, when aggregating and exploiting, attention has not been paid to gender statistics. Gender data can be found in many fields of population and socio-economic statistics but there has not been a main unit in the General Statistics Office to gather and be responsible for gender statistics.
- Coverage of data collection in regular social report system is insufficient. Usually, data in governmental offices, units and organizations easy to keep an eye on and update are collected. Data on private sector, private organizations and households are missed or collected insufficiently, especially indicators about gender and ethnic minority.
- Some social indicators used in plan and policy making are aggregated ones. There is insufficiency of indicators by gender, age group, and ethnic minority, etc.
- Some social indicators in general and gender indicators in particular are not in time series, which is difficult for long-term plan making since these data are collected from surveys or census.
- Weak timely updating of social and gender indicators hinders their effectiveness in serving the leading of the Party, Government, local authorities and ministries. Since data collection lasts for a long time and it takes a long time to aggregate data and report from localities to the GSO, it is difficult for data using. Moreover, data analysis, compilation and dissemination in provinces/cities and central government are usually late.

## 2. Cause

Methodology on social statistics in general and gender statistics in particular is not so complete to be suitable with organization and management:

- There has not been a set of complete indicators which satisfies surveillance of social changes as well as the goal for children and women. The General Statistics Office has recently cooperated with related ministries and agencies to release a set of indicators about children rights, women rights and social indicators of Vietnam. However, incorporating these indicators into implementation is still limited.
- Concepts, contents and calculating methods for indicators have not been standardized to be used in ministries, agencies, various levels and localities. Therefore, this leads to different understandings and results.
- Data collection is inappropriate to each indicator. Applying survey methods or regular report system is still subjective.
- Using computer in processing, analyzing and disseminating survey results is still limited in both localities and central government.
- Guidance for social statistics has been studied, compiled and published but application of this guidance in ministries, agencies and various levels to collect data is quite different, or even wrong.
- Competence and knowledge of statisticians have not met demand on development of social statistics.
- There is insufficiency of staff to satisfy volume of work. Furthermore, different models of organization are applied, especially in ministries and agencies.
- Staff has not been trained systematically, especially in localities and knowledge standard of staff is still weak. Due attention has not been paid to new training and retraining for statisticians whose work relates to social statistics in ministries, agencies and various levels (partly due to limited budget). As a consequence, it is quite difficult for statistical staff to access to new concepts and methodology of social statistics. Ability of organizing real performance, finalizing to get lessons and practising skill of majority of statisticians is still limited. They are passive and inflexible in dealing with work.
- Statisticians in localities, especially in departments are unstable, so they lack knowledge to do social statistics.
- Organization system to supervise, maintain and develop social statistics has not been renovated and completed.
- Ministries and agencies have not followed report system seriously. Some ministries have not had enough reports and their reports are still nominal. State statistical data are mainly collected from reports of provincial/city statistical offices. Cooperation between the GSO and ministries and agencies in data collection and processing has made progress. However, this cooperation is still limited and its effectiveness is not high.
- Due to existence of the two report systems (report system of ministries and agencies and report system of localities), there is overlapping in information and differences in data, which causes worries for data users.
- Mechanism for supervising social indicators has not been studied and completed, especially models of information channels and assignment in responsibility of data collection, processing, releasing and dissemination between the GSO and statistical division of ministries and agencies.
- Material conditions for development of social statistics still meet many difficulties due to lack of fund to maintain statistical performances, especially fund for sample surveys and special surveys. There is insufficiency of means to process, transmit, store and connect network in large scale.

#### IV. Directions for promoting social and gender statistics in the coming time

1. Improving methodology for social indicators system, including indicators about women rights and children rights.
  - Improving feasible social indicators system, consisting of 132 indicators which have been approved among the GSO, Ministry of Planning and Investment and other ministries and agencies. This system must be standardized to assure comparability among countries in the region and in the world. Also, the set of indicators on women and children rights must be completed and incorporated into the national social indicators system.
  - Concepts, definitions, contents and calculating methods for indicators must be brief and precise.
  - Method to collect social data in general and gender data in particular should be clearly regulated. For regular report system, content of reported data, coverage of collected data, cycle of report and responsibility should be clearly written down. For statistical surveys, purpose, content, targeted objectives, method of sample selection, time and duration of survey should be written down.
  
2. Establishing a system to operate social and gender indicators
  - Pointing out responsibility of collection and report of social data and gender data for each domain and each ministry and agency.
  - Having coordination mechanism between the GSO and ministries, agencies and provinces/cities. This mechanism will be:
    - + The GSO, Ministry of Planning and Investment and subject-matter ministries aggregate data to submit to the Prime Minister to issue legal documents concerning consolidating and enhancing social indicators based on Instruction 28 of the Prime Minister. Simultaneously, the GSO is assigned to issue, guide and supervise implementation of report system and survey in nation wide.
    - + The GSO must be the place for each activity by cooperating with statistics of ministries, agencies and provinces/cities. The GSO suggests direction for development of social and gender indicators, studies to improve methodology, organizes and gives guidance on report and survey for ministries, agencies and provinces/cities, aggregates, compiles, releases and disseminates data to users.
    - + Ministries and agencies are responsible for making plan and implementing activities of their domain but they must follow instruction and management in professional field of the GSO, even compilation and dissemination of data.
    - + Cooperation includes: organization, guidance, inspection, methodology, data provision, plan making for implementation of large surveys which need cooperation among many ministries and agencies.
  - Implementing supervision, inspection and evaluation of the results, including:
    - + Consolidating report and survey disciplines through the Law on Statistics
    - + Having a program to supervise, inspect and evaluate plans, implementation, coverage, content and method of data collection.
    - + After each activity, it is necessary to evaluate the results in both data quantity and quality, punish violation of Law on Statistics, draw lessons and find solutions.
  - Having flexible training programs for statisticians in various levels, ministries and agencies and trying to have staff who are good at statistics and able to perform their required tasks on statistics. This is decisive factor for successful development of social indicators system in Vietnam.
  - Assuring fund and necessary means for development of social and gender statistics.
  - Maintaining sustainability of social indicators, especially gender indicators. These indicators are tools for supervising, inspecting and evaluating of the Government on programs and

plans. Also, there must be a unit responsible for gender statistics to guarantee sustainability and consistence. These sets of indicators should be incorporated into national social indicators set. Moreover, plan for implementation should be made by ministries, agencies, provinces and cities in the general program of each subject matter area based on the Law on Statistics.

3. Having a complete household survey program
  - Being able to avoid overlap and cost waste
  - Having specific plan and program to incorporate gender indicators into module
  - Introducing a complete set of gender indicators which is adequate in time, coverage of data collection, etc.

## Appendix: List of social indicators in Vietnam which include gender statistics

### I. Population

1. Total population by gender in nation wide in population censuses, and average population in nation wide, in regions, provinces/cities, districts, towns.
2. Share of female population in total population of the whole country, provinces, cities.
3. Growth rate of female population by year
4. Share of female population by age group and its changes in the population censuses
5. Share of female age groups and their changes in the population censuses
6. Share of female population in urban and rural area by age group and its changes in population censuses
7. Share of female population in urban and rural area and its changes in population censuses
8. Share of female population in regions and provinces and its changes in population censuses
9. Share of female age groups in regions, provinces and its changes in population censuses
10. Total fertility rate (number of children per woman) in nation wide and regions (Population censuses)
11. Fertility rate by age group, urban and rural area during 1988-1989, 1993-1994, 1994-1997, 1998-1999 (Population Censuses and intermittent demography survey)
12. Fertility rate of regions from 4/1998-3/1999 (population census)
13. Average children ever born and living of a woman in age groups (Intermittent Demography survey)
14. Living children of a woman by age group and urban and rural area (Population Census)
15. Average children by their mother's knowledge standard (Intermittent Demography survey)
16. Average children by their mother's occupation (Intermittent Demography survey)
17. Average age at first birth by diploma and expenditure quintile (Living Standard survey)
18. Average age at first birth by the highest diploma and expenditure quintile (Living standard survey)
19. Average children by expenditure quintile and the highest diploma (Living Standard survey)
20. Percentage of women knowing and percentage of couple using contraceptive method by expenditure quintile, urban and rural area and region (Living standard survey)
21. Percentage of women knowing or being informed of using contraceptive method in urban and rural area and regions by expenditure quintile (Living standard survey)
22. Percentage of couple using contraceptive method in urban and rural area and region by expenditure quintile (Living standard survey)
23. Percentage of migration female population by age group and region (Population Census)
24. Reason for migration by gender (Living standard survey)

### II. Labor and employment

25. Total female population by working age (Labor and Employment survey)
26. Number of female population in urban area by working age (Labor and Employment survey)
27. Number of female population in rural area by working age (Labor and Employment survey)
28. Total female population aged 15 and over by age group (Labor and Employment survey)
29. Number of female population aged 15 and over in urban area by age group (Labor and Employment survey)
30. Number of female population aged 15 and over in rural area by age group (Labor and Employment survey)
31. Total female population aged 15 and over in rural area by economic activity (Labor and Employment survey)
32. Number of female population aged 15 and over in urban area by economic activity (Labor and Employment survey)

33. Number of female population aged 15 and over in rural area by economic activity (Labor and Employment survey)
34. Total female population doing regular economic activities by age group (Labor and Employment survey)
35. Number of female population aged 15 and over in urban area doing regular economic activities by age group (Labor and Employment survey)
36. Number of female population aged 15 and over in rural area doing regular economic activities by age group (Labor and Employment survey)
37. Total female population doing regular economic activities by knowledge standard (Labor and Employment survey)
38. Number of female population aged 15 and over in urban area doing regular economic activities by knowledge standard (Labor and Employment survey)
39. Number of female population aged 15 and over in rural area doing regular economic activities by knowledge standard (Labor and Employment survey)
40. Total female population aged 15 and over doing regular economic activities by professional level (Labor and Employment survey)
41. Number of female population aged 15 and over in urban area doing regular economic activities by professional level (Labor and Employment survey)
42. Number of female population aged 15 and over in rural area doing regular economic activities by professional level (Labor and Employment survey)
43. Total female population aged 15 and over doing economic activities by job (Labor and Employment survey)
44. Number of female population aged 15 and over in urban area doing economic activities by job (Labor and Employment survey)
45. Number of female population aged 15 and over in rural area doing economic activities by job (Labor and Employment survey)
46. Total female population aged 15 and over having regular job by economic sector (Labor and Employment survey)
47. Number of female population aged 15 and over in urban area having regular job by economic sector (Labor and Employment survey)
48. Number of female population aged 15 and over in rural area having regular job by economic sector (Labor and Employment survey)
49. Total female population aged 15 and over having regular job by employment status (Labor and Employment survey)
50. Number of female population aged 15 and over in urban area having regular job by employment status (Labor and Employment survey)
51. Number of female population aged 15 and over in rural area having regular job by employment status (Labor and Employment survey)
52. Total economically active female population at working age have been underemployed by economic sector (Labor and Employment survey)
53. Number of economically active female population at working age in urban area have been underemployed by economic sector (Labor and Employment survey)
54. Number of economically active female population at working age in urban area have been underemployed by economic sector (Labor and Employment survey)
55. Total female population at working age have been underemployed by employment status (Labor and Employment survey)
56. Number of female population at working age in urban area have been underemployed by employment status (Labor and Employment survey)
57. Number of female population at working age in rural area have been underemployed by employment status (Labor and Employment survey)
58. Number of unemployed female by age in regions (Labor and Employment survey)

59. Use of working time in rural area by region (Labor and Employment survey)

### III. Culture- Education

- 60. Literary rate of female aged 10 and over by age group (Living standard survey)
- 61. Literary rate of female aged 10 and over by urban and rural area and region (Living standard survey, Population census)
- 62. Literary rate of female aged 10 and over by urban and rural area, region and expenditure quintile (Living standard survey, Population census)
- 63. Literary rate of female aged 5 and over of some ethnic groups (Population census)
- 64. Rate of female of age groups by knowledge standard (Population census)
- 65. Highest diploma of female aged 15 and over by urban and rural area (Living standard survey)
- 66. Female knowledge standard by age group and urban and rural area (Population census)
- 67. Gross enrollment rate, age-specific enrollment rate and net enrollment rate of female by age group at school age (Living standard survey)
- 68. Age beginning school and leaving school and average years of education of female (Living standard survey)
- 69. Average years of education of female by age group (Living standard survey)
- 70. Enrollment rate of female at school age by educational level (forecast)
- 71. Enrollment rate of girls at creche age (6-35 months) and of female heads by urban and rural area, region and expenditure quintile (Living standard survey)
- 72. Enrollment rate of girls at kindergarten age (36-71 months) in urban and rural area, regions and expenditure quintile (Living standard survey)
- 73. Share of female in total teachers of Education Branch during periods (Report of the Ministry of Education and Training)
- 74. Share of female students in total students in grade schools, professional schools, colleges and universities during periods (Report of the Ministry of Education and Training)
- 75. Share of female students in learning disciplines (Report of the Ministry of Education and Training)
- 76. Female with post- graduate degree and rank (Report of the Ministry of Education and Training)

### IV. Health and health care

- 77. Percentage of sick female by age group (Living standard survey)
- 78. Percentage of sick female seeking treatment by expenditure quintile (Living standard survey)
- 79. Percentage of sick female seeking treatment by kinds of health facility (Living standard survey)
- 80. Percentage of sick female unable to work by expenditure quintile(Living standard survey)
- 81. Percentage of girls aged 10 and under receiving vaccine by urban and rural area, regions and age (Living standard survey)
- 82. Percentage of female infants weighted 2.5 kg by urban and rural area and region (Living standard survey)
- 83. Nutrition of female (adult) by urban and rural area (Living standard survey)
- 84. Average height and weight of female by age (Living standard survey)
- 85. Malnutrition of girl by height (Living standard survey, Malnutrition survey, survey on Children)
- 86. Mortality rate of girls aged under 1 and from 1-4 (Sample survey, Demography and health survey)
- 87. Reproductive health care (report of the Ministry of Health)
- 88. HIV female (National Committee for AIDS prevention)

89. Per capita expenditure on health in year by gender of household head and expenditure quintile (Living standard survey)

V. Household and structure of household

90. Gender of household head by age group (Living standard survey)

91. Structure of household head by gender and expenditure quintile (Living standard survey)

92. Per capita expenditure by gender of household head and expenditure quintile (Living standard survey)

93. Per capita expenditure on food and foodstuff by gender of household head (Living standard survey)

94. Structure of expenditure by gender of household head (Living standard survey)

95. Income by gender of household head and expenditure quintile (Living standard survey)

96. Per capita income in a year by age group and gender of household head (Living standard survey)

97. Share of household heads by the highest diploma (Living standard survey)

VI. Role and power

98. Gender structure in the Party's executive committee (report of the Vietnam Women Association)

99. Percentage of male and female in the Party's executive Committee in central government and provinces/cities (Organization Department of the Central Committee)

100. Gender structure in Divisions of the Party in central government and provinces/cities (Organization Department of the Central Committee)

101. Gender structure of representatives of the National Assembly (Office of the National Assembly)

102. Gender structure of leaders of the National Assembly (Office of the National Assembly)

103. Gender structure of elective representatives at various levels (Organization Department of the Government, Office of the National Assembly)

104. Gender structure in People's Council at various levels in sessions (Vietnam Women Association)

105. Gender structure of leaders of local People's Council (Organization Department of the Central Committee)

106. Gender structure in the People's Council and Committee at various levels (National report)

107. Gender structure of leaders in central government (national report)

108. Gender structure of leaders in local People's Committee (Organization Department of the Central Committee)

109. Gender structure of leaders in enterprises (Organization Department of the Central Committee)

110. Gender structure of leaders at provincial level by region (Organization Department of the Central Committee)

111. Gender structure of leaders at district level by region (Organization Department of the Central Committee)

112. Gender structure of leaders at communal level by region (Organization Department of the Central Committee)

113. Gender structure of leaders at precinct level by region (Organization Department of the Central Committee)

114. Gender structure of leaders at town level by region (Organization Department of the Central Committee)

115. Gender structure of leaders in political-socio organizations in central government and provincial authorities (Vietnam Women Association)