GENDER EQUALITY RESULTS IN ADB PROJECTS

Viet Nam Country Report

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Asian Development Bank
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Acknowledgments

This report is one of a series of four country reports and one synthesis report presenting findings of rapid gender assessments of selected loan projects financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in four developing member countries: Indonesia, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, and Viet Nam. This series follows the first round of rapid gender assessments carried out in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, and Pakistan in 2004–2005. The authors prepared this report under the guidance of Shireen Lateef, director, Social Sectors, Southeast Asia Department, and chair, Gender Equity Community of Practice; Asian Development Bank (ADB); and Sonomi Tanaka, principal social development specialist (gender and development) at ADB. A national dissemination workshop was conducted in Ha Noi on 6 November 2009.

The authors acknowledge the assistance provided by staff and consultants working on the projects in this assessment, including from the ministries and provincial departments of Construction, Health, and Education. ADB team leaders also provided much assistance, including Do Nhat Hoang, Eiko Izawa, Lisa Studdert, and Vincent De Wit. The authors also acknowledge the assistance provided by project gender advisers Nguyen Thanh Tam and Vu Manh Loi and by the Viet Nam Women’s Union in Dong Ha and Ha Tinh, in particular Bui Thi Cuc, chair of the Viet Nam Women’s Union. The authors also thank all ADB staff who provided valuable feedback and comments on the rapid gender assessment report during its development. Aldrin Roco assisted in production.

The authors hope that the report will be useful to governments, nongovernment organizations, development practitioners, researchers, and other individuals working in the field of gender and development.
Abbreviations

ADB – Asian Development Bank
CBS – community-based sanitation
CRUEIP – Central Region Urban Environmental Improvement Project
CMC – community management committee
DMF – design and monitoring framework
GAP – gender action plan
GEMAP – gender and ethnic minorities action plan
HICH – Health Care in the Central Highlands
HIV – human immunodeficiency virus
IEC – information, education, and communication
MOET – Ministry of Education and Training
NPIU – national planning and implementation unit
PPC – provincial people’s committee
PMU – project management unit (national level)
PPMU – provincial project management unit
RGA – rapid gender assessment
RRP – report and recommendation of the President (loan document)
Sida – Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
URENCO – Urban Environmental Company
USEDP – Upper Secondary Education Development Project
VWU – Viet Nam Women’s Union

Currency Equivalents
(as of 24 February 2010)
Currency Unit – dong (VND)
D1.00 = $0.000536769
$1.00 = D18,630.00
Executive Summary

Rapid Gender Assessments

Rapid gender assessments (RGAs) of 12 loans in four countries (Indonesia, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, and Viet Nam) were undertaken as part of the ongoing commitment of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to aid effectiveness and to assess gender equality results. With three loans selected from various sectors in each country, the RGAs were not designed to meet the broad range of criteria for an evaluation. The aim was to assess the extent to which project-specific gender action plans (GAPs) or gender provisions in ADB loans contributed to gender equality results and overall project outcomes, and to share knowledge on the key features of GAPs and gender provisions that contributed to these results.

The three loan projects assessed in Viet Nam were:

(i) Central Region Urban Environmental Improvement Project (CRUEIP), loan 2034, approved 8 December 2003 for $44 million, completed 31 December 2009;

(ii) Health Care in the Central Highlands (HICH) project, loan 2076, approved 6 January 2004 for $20 million, anticipated completion, June 2010; and


This report is one of a series of four country reports that assess gender equality results in the following areas: participation in project activities; access to resources; practical benefits delivered to women; and changes in gender relations at individual, community, and institutional levels. A synthesis report compares results and summarizes lessons across all four countries, and provides recommendations to assist ADB to meet its commitments to gender equality as ADB outlined in Strategy 2020: The Long-Term Strategic Framework of the Asian Development Bank 2008–2020. This is the second round of RGAs carried out by ADB. The first series was undertaken in 2004 and 2005. It reviewed 12 loans in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, and Pakistan.

Findings for Viet Nam

Positive Gender Equality Results Were Achieved

Each of the projects achieved positive results for women and girls and addressed some of the key gender disparities identified in ADB’s Viet Nam Country Gender Assessment. In CRUEIP, women’s participation in project activities was very high with all the targets for women’s participation in training, committees, and management positions exceeded. This led to a range of practical benefits including improved living and environmental conditions due to small infrastructure activities managed by the Viet Nam Women’s Union (VWU) and changed attitudes and behavior on waste disposal and sanitation practices. Training increased the skills, confidence, and status of women. CRUEIP also achieved some important strategic and institutional results such as the strengthened capacity of the VWU to manage and monitor civil works activities and an increase in women’s participation in community decision making. Another strategic change is that more men participate in community sanitation activities.

The HICH project achieved several important practical benefits. New and upgraded medical facilities and equipment (including obstetric and pediatric wards and ultrasound machines) strengthened the capacity of health services to respond to women’s needs. These improvements in health services, the construction of
kitchen facilities and separate toilets for women, and the provision of food and travel allowances, led to increased use of health services by women—particularly for antenatal checks. Women’s participation in training was very high and priority was given to women from ethnic minority groups. Due to the training, female health staff have better skills and qualifications and staff at all levels have a better understanding of women’s health needs. An important strategic change was a reduction in the burden of care on women when looking after hospitalized family members, due to the provision of food and travel allowances.

USEDP also achieved some important practical benefits. There was a 7% increase in girls’ enrollments in secondary schools in disadvantaged provinces targeted for school improvements (such as the construction or upgrading of school classrooms and boarding facilities). Better quality school facilities and equipment substantially improved the learning environment for both boys and girls. Almost twice as many women participated in training activities, with 33,762 female teachers and 17,382 male teachers trained. The project also trained curriculum and textbook writers to review and revise the curriculum in a gender-sensitive manner. Boys and girls had equal access to vocational and career guidance.

Gender Equality Results and Quality

Gender Action Plans Contributed to Overall Development Outcomes and Effectiveness

GAP implementation and the achievement of gender equality results directly contributed to the achievement of overall loan objectives in each project. In CRUEIP, GAP implementation also increased the effectiveness of the project and is likely to increase returns on the loan investment and the sustainability of outcomes in the long term. In those provinces where the GAP was well implemented, overall project progress was much better, because GAP software activities enhanced community ownership of sanitation investments, contributed to changed attitudes and behavior on waste disposal, increased understanding of the links between environmental and household sanitation and good health, and facilitated community inputs into large sanitation infrastructure works. Some communities voluntarily increased their contributions to infrastructure construction to enhance its sustainability. Provincial project management units and the people’s committees valued and supported the work of the VWU and the GAP implementation, because they could see how it contributed to the overall effectiveness of the project, and because it helped them achieve the sanitation standards required for city status.

The HICH project’s gender and ethnic minorities action plan (GEMAP) directly contributed to the overall project objective of improved health status of the poor by addressing a range of constraints on ethnic minority women accessing health services; by targeting information, education, and communication materials to women; and by improving the capacity of health care providers to respond to women’s and children’s needs. It also helped to implement government policy in relation to better access to services for women and ethnic minorities.

USEDP aimed to improve access, quality, and equity in upper secondary education. USEDP targeted a key barrier to girls’ access to education—the physical proximity to school and the availability of boarding rooms. This resulted in increased girls’ enrollments in the most disadvantaged provinces.

The Quality of Gender Action Plans and Their Implementation Varied

All three projects had a GAP or GEMAP\(^1\) that was included in the loan covenants, but the quality, implementation, and monitoring of the plans varied. CRUEIP and the HICH project both had a GAP that was based on comprehensive and explicit gender analysis and both had GAP targets and strategies for every project component. USEDP’s GEMAP also covered every project component; however, the gender analysis underlying the GAP was not explicit in the project design and many of the GAP elements were broad statements of intent rather than specific strategies or targets. In all three projects, the GAPs provided an initial roadmap for implementers and some key features of the GAPs were integrated into the project designs and overall approach to implementation.

\(^{1}\) From this point in the document, the term “GAP” will be used to describe a specific gender action plan, or to describe gender action plans in the broad sense. “GEMAP” will only be used to describe specific gender and ethnic minority action plans.
CRUEIP and the HICH project invested in participatory approaches to develop and update their GAP with key stakeholders early during project implementation. As a result, GAP strategies and targets were relevant, implementable, and achievable. Most project team members were aware of and took ownership of the GAP, and they understood the rationale for focusing on women’s needs and ensuring their participation. USEDIP’s GEMAP was also updated early in project implementation, but the process was not participatory. As a result, few project implementers were aware of the GEMAP or its key elements, and there appeared to be little understanding of the need to systematically consider gender issues during implementation or monitoring. While the revised GEMAP included some important strategies, it was difficult to link many elements with either the original design GEMAP or with the project components, and overall it was a poor communication tool.

In CRUEIP and the HICH project, the GAPs were well implemented and monitored, although this was only the case for CRUEIP in some provinces. CRUEIP and the HICH project had project gender advisers to assist with implementation. In both cases, these advisers built ownership and capacity for implementation, and monitored the achievement of targets and GAP implementation. While some GEMAP elements for USEDIP were implemented, particularly those that were integrated into the overall project design, others were not. USEDIP only had a gender adviser to assist at the commencement of the project. This was a missed opportunity to build the gender capacity of the executing agency and project implementers.

Quality Gender Action Plans Produced Comprehensive Gender Equality Results

The first rapid gender assessment demonstrated that GAPs are effective tools for ensuring that both women and men participate in and benefit from loan projects, because GAPs promote a systematic and integrated approach to addressing gender issues in project design and implementation. The RGA in Viet Nam confirms this finding, with the GAPs from all three projects directly contributing to the achievement of gender equality results.

With its GAP and targets for women’s participation, CRUEIP ensured that women were able to participate in project activities and increase their skills. Furthermore the gender analysis conducted during project preparation shaped the design of the whole project and not just the GAP elements. Because of its high-quality GAP, its long-term project gender adviser, and ownership of the GAP by the provincial project management units, CRUEIP achieved comprehensive results, including a range of practical benefits and some strategic and institutional changes by enhancing women’s role in decision making.

The HICH project had a high-quality GEMAP and achieved important practical results by increasing women’s access to health services. It also achieved strategic results by reducing women’s burden of care for sick family members. By further building the capacity of staff, and with more input from the project gender adviser and sustained attention to the barriers to women’s access to health care, the HICH project has the potential to build on these results over the final year of the project.

USEDIP increased girls’ enrollments, and achieved practical benefits by upgrading facilities and equipment, providing vocational advice, and training female teachers. However because the GEMAP was not well targeted and was difficult to understand, it was not well monitored or understood by project stakeholders. As a result, project implementers missed many opportunities to enhance the gender results that were achieved.

Factors that helped to achieve gender equality results in Viet Nam included the following:

(i) **Comprehensive gender analysis during project preparation and implementation.** Loan designs for CRUEIP and the HICH project included an assessment of key gender issues and this helped to shape the project components. Further gender analysis during project implementation ensured that the HICH project’s GEMAP strategies were relevant and effective. While some gender analysis was undertaken for USEDIP, this could have been extended to more fully consider the barriers to both boys’ and girls’ access to school.

(ii) **A high-quality GAP.** The differences in the quality of the GAPs for CRUEIP and the HICH project, compared to the GEMAP for USEDIP,
underscore the importance of having a quality GAP that is well targeted, clearly linked to project components, easily understood, and able to be implemented.

(iii) **Targets for the participation of women.** All three projects included targets for women’s participation in training. CRUEIP and the HICH project also included targets for women’s participation in decision making, which in CRUEIP’s case helped to achieve strategic changes in gender relations.

(iv) **Ownership of the GAP.** Ownership and understanding of the GAP by project implementers was due to an investment by the executing and implementing agencies and ADB in gender capacity building and was highest in the HICH project, and in CRUEIP in some provinces.

(v) **GAP included in the loan covenants.** Loan covenants committed the government to implement the GAP in all three projects. While this was an important factor in CRUEIP and the HICH project, the experience with USEDP shows that ADB needs to assertively follow up on compliance.

(vi) **Capacity building of implementers.** Both CRUEIP and the HICH project invested in gender training for project implementers to build ownership and understanding of GAP activities. USEDP provided some gender training for teachers and curriculum developers but not for implementing staff. Consequently, few of them were aware of the project’s GEMAP.

(vii) **Gender advisers supported implementation.** CRUEIP and the HICH project had project gender advisers who provided gender capacity building to project implementers and critical support to implement the GAP and who fostered discussion and ownership of GAP elements. USEDP did not have a gender adviser for implementation and needs one to help revise and implement the GEMAP for the remainder of the project.

(viii) **Leadership from project implementers.** In CRUEIP, more comprehensive results were achieved in those provinces where provincial project management units demonstrated leadership and openness to implementing the GAP. In the HICH project, provincial government officials valued the GEMAP because they recognized that it assisted to implement Government of Viet Nam policy.

### Institutionalization of Gender Action Plans

More effort is needed to ensure that GAPs are institutionalized by both executing agencies and ADB through the inclusion of GAP elements and gender-sensitive indicators in the design and monitoring frameworks (DMFs) in reports and recommendations to the President (RRPs) and in project performance reports. Overall, ADB and executing agencies need to strengthen the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data including baseline and monitoring data. ADB also needs to pay more attention to the implementation and monitoring of loan covenants. ADB loan review missions need to engage in dialogue with executing agencies on results achieved for women, and executing agencies need to provide regular reports on overall GAP implementation, results, and challenges. Another important challenge, for executing agencies and ADB, is to move beyond monitoring of women’s participation, to monitoring and assessing results and outcomes such as practical benefits to women and men and positive changes in gender relations, particularly in midterm reviews, impact assessments, and project completion reports.

Participation by the ADB resident mission gender specialist in CRUEIP and the HICH project loan review missions, and in supporting project gender advisers, improved the quality of project implementation. The ADB resident mission gender specialist has an important role to play to ensure that GAPs are institutionalized. This requires explicit and active support from resident mission country directors and ADB headquarters and a clear mandate that is understood and supported by ADB team leaders. ADB could have further strengthened institutionalization by sharing knowledge on effective GAP strategies across projects and in priority sectors.
Recommendations

ADB’s country strategy and program for Viet Nam in 2006 commits ADB to including gender considerations in ADB projects and to improving gender-related capacity building, monitoring, and evaluation. *Strategy 2020* highlights gender equity as one of five drivers of change and commits ADB to design gender-inclusive projects and pay careful attention to gender issues across the full range of its operations. To achieve these aims, it is recommended that:

(i) GAPs should be prepared in sufficient detail to provide a guide for implementation and should include: strategies and targets for each loan component, project gender advisers throughout implementation, and gender capacity building with executing agencies and other stakeholders.

(ii) Terms of reference for project gender advisers should ensure that their inputs are used strategically to (a) build ownership of the GAP and ensure its implementation, (b) analyze the progress and effectiveness of overall GAP implementation, (c) address implementation challenges where women’s participation is limited, and (d) share lessons on effective strategies and how gender equality results contribute to overall loan outcomes.

(iii) Sex-disaggregated baseline data should be collected wherever possible on gender-related targets included in GAPs and on other DMF indicators.

(iv) Executing agencies should collect and report on sex-disaggregated data for DMF indicators. Reporting on the GAP and on gender equality results should be integrated into core project documents such as annual reports, midterm review, impact assessment, and project completion reports. They should assess gender differences in participation, access to project resources, and benefits.

(v) More attention should be paid to GAP implementation and monitoring, including the monitoring of gender equality results throughout project implementation. Enhanced dialogue with executing agencies by ADB on GAP implementation and gender-related loan covenants during review missions should be pursued.

(vi) The ADB resident mission gender specialist could be more involved in loan design, implementation and monitoring, and should be included in loan review missions for projects in high-priority sectors where it is possible to demonstrate the impact of a gender-responsive approach and where there are opportunities for lesson learning, replication to other projects, and building the gender capacity of partners.

(vii) The next Viet Nam country partnership strategy should include gender equality results in its results framework. This would enable project GAPs to be aligned with the country strategy and would provide a firm basis for dialogue on gender equality and GAP implementation with executing agencies.
Introduction

Background

The 1998 policy of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on gender and development identified gender mainstreaming as a key strategy for addressing gender equality and the empowerment of women in all ADB-financed activities (ADB 1998, 41). ADB has adopted several institutional mechanisms to ensure policy implementation, including the appointment of local gender specialists in ADB resident missions and the development of gender action plans (GAPs) for loan projects (ADB 2006a).

ADB undertook the first series of rapid gender assessments from 2004 to 2005 as part of ADB’s review of the implementation of the gender and development policy (ADB 2006b). The first RGA assessed 12 loans in four countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, and Pakistan) and found that GAPs were an effective gender mainstreaming tool because they provided a roadmap for implementing the projects’ gender design features (Hunt, Lateef, and Thomas 2007).

Strengthening the implementation of gender-related loan design features is a central aspect of ADB’s Gender and Development Plan of Action (ADB 2007). Several actions are identified to achieve this purpose, including institutionalizing the development and use of project-specific GAPs, incorporating gender-related targets and indicators in design and monitoring frameworks (DMFs) and evaluation for all projects, and promoting stricter compliance with gender-related loan assurances and covenants (ADB 2007, 7).

ADB’s Strategy 2020 highlighted gender equity as one of five drivers of change essential for achieving inclusive and sustainable growth, reducing poverty, and improving living standards² (ADB 2008, 1, 15). Under Strategy 2020, ADB will promote gender equity by designing gender-inclusive projects and paying careful attention to gender issues across the full range of its operations. ADB’s results framework (designed to monitor implementation of Strategy 2020), which includes a gender mainstreaming indicator, reinforces this commitment (ADB 2008a, 4–13).

As part of its commitment to aid effectiveness, ADB is a partner to the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (OECD 2005). To achieve greater development effectiveness in meeting the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, developed and developing member countries, and multilateral and bilateral development institutions, committed themselves to five principles: ownership, harmonization, alignment, results, and mutual accountability. With gender equality and women’s empowerment as one of the goals, aid effectiveness in gender equality has become an important part of the global development agenda. How to manage, achieve, and measure gender equality and women’s empowerment results is a topic of concern among donors and development partners. Managing for development results is also part of a broader commitment by ADB to demonstrate and increase aid effectiveness (ADB 2007a).

To monitor these commitments, the Gender and Development Plan of Action scheduled a second round of rapid gender assessments to assess the results achieved by projects with a gender and development theme and gender-related activities (ADB 2007, 11). This includes assessments of 12 loans in Indonesia, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, and Viet Nam. This report on Viet Nam RGAs is part of a series that includes four country reports and a synthesis report that consolidates findings from across the four countries.

Objectives

The objective was to assess the extent to which project-specific GAPs or specific gender provisions in ADB loans

² Other drivers of change are good governance and capacity development, knowledge solutions, and partnerships.
achieved gender equality results and contributed to projects’ overall outcomes and outputs. ADB planned to use the findings as follows:

(i) to assess the quality and implementation of GAPs, including compliance with gender-related loan assurances and covenants, and the incorporation of GAP elements into DMFs, and performance monitoring systems;
(ii) to assess how the achievement of gender equality results contributed to overall development outcomes, effectiveness, and sustainability—and to demonstrate these links, if they were found; and
(iii) to share knowledge on the core elements of quality GAPs that are critical for the achievement of gender equality results and overall development outcomes.

Methodology and Scope

The following criteria were used to select the loan projects for the RGA:

(i) projects were categorized with a gender and development theme or effective gender mainstreaming, preferably having gender targets in the framework or a project-specific GAP; in a country where a limited number of such loan projects existed, such as Mongolia, projects with some gender provisions were included;
(ii) projects were at an advanced stage of implementation of gender-related activities and outputs and preliminary outcomes could be assessed;
(iii) projects covered a mix of rural and urban locations and a variety of sectors, including the priority sectors highlighted in ADB’s Strategy 2020 (2008);
(iv) projects included some components that addressed the constraints and needs of marginalized people (for example, indigenous people and ethnic minorities); and
(v) the developing member country showed a willingness to participate.

A common methodological framework was developed to guide the assessments in each country, including overarching questions and indicators of process and outcome. This included an exploration of negative and positive changes, and intended and unintended results. Key gender-related results investigated were:

(i) the participation by women in project activities and access to project resources compared with men;
(ii) the practical benefits achieved for women compared with men;
(iii) progress towards strategic changes in gender relations, including at the individual, household, community, societal, or national level; and
(iv) other results such as institutional changes within executing agencies, implementing agencies, or other government agencies or programs.

The RGA consultants modified the questions and indicators as needed for each project. The overarching questions for assessment follow:

(i) What gender equality results were achieved?
(ii) Where gender equality results were demonstrated, how did these contribute to the achievement of overall loan objectives or outcomes, and the effectiveness and sustainability of the loan investment?
(iii) Where gender equality results were demonstrated, what caused or contributed to these results?
(iv) What were the key features of GAPs, gender strategies, and gender provisions that contributed to the achievement of positive gender equality results and overall development out-
comes, effectiveness, and sustainability? To what extent were GAPs, gender strategies, and gender provisions implemented?

(v) To what extent were GAPs, gender strategies, and gender provisions institutionalized into project management and monitoring systems and processes by ADB and executing agencies?

(vi) What are the implications of the findings, in all the above; and what are the areas for improving the focus on gender equality in ADB loan preparation, design, implementation, and monitoring?

An international gender specialist and ADB resident mission gender specialist carried out the field assessments. They visited project sites and interviewed project beneficiaries (women and men), staff, and local stakeholders individually and in groups (see Appendix 3) using questions from the methodological framework. Each RGA required the reviewing of project documents, including the report and recommendation of the President (RRP), the GAP, project administration memorandum where available, back-to-office reports from review missions, progress reports, ADB case studies, and other documents at the resident missions (see References).

The RGAs were systematic assessments that adhered to quality standards for data collection, analysis and validation (ADB n.d.). However, the focus was specifically on gender equality results and the causes of those results; with three loans selected from various sectors in each country, the RGAs were not designed to meet the broad range of criteria usually specified for an evaluation.4 Very few projects had adequate baseline or sex-disaggregated quantitative data for assessing results for women compared with men. RGAs were based on both qualitative and quantitative information. Qualitative assessments were cross-checked with a range of local stakeholders in Viet Nam and with ADB headquarters staff. Details for the three projects included in the Viet Nam RGA are set out in Table 1.

Table 1 Project Profiles

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<th>Gender Category1</th>
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<th>Loan Approval (A)</th>
<th>Effectivity (E)</th>
<th>Completion (C)</th>
<th>Loan Amount $ million</th>
<th>Executing Agency</th>
<th>ADB Division</th>
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<td>2034</td>
<td>Central Region Urban Environmental Improvement Project (CRUEIP)</td>
<td>Effective Gender Mainstreaming</td>
<td>Urban Infrastructure/Sanitation</td>
<td>A: Dec 2003; E: Jun 2004; C: Dec 2009</td>
<td>ADF: 44.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ministry of Construction and provincial people’s committees in each participating province</td>
<td>SESS, MKRD, VRM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2076</td>
<td>Health Care in the Central Highlands (HICH) Project</td>
<td>Gender and Development</td>
<td>Health, Nutrition, and Social Protection</td>
<td>A: Jan 2004; E: Aug 2004; C: Jun 2010</td>
<td>ADF: 20.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
<td>SESS, MKRD, VRM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Project administration memoranda were requested but were not always made available to the RGA consultants.

4 Evaluations are defined as comprehensive assessments of the design, implementation and results of all aspects of a project, including the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability (OECD 2002).
Fieldwork for the Viet Nam Rapid Gender Assessment

Fieldwork was carried out over 18 days in Viet Nam with approximately 5 to 6 days spent on each project. For CRUEIP, the team met with the national level project management unit (PMU), visited two project towns (Dong Ha and Ha Tinh), and interviewed stakeholders including the provincial project management units (PPMUs), community management committees (CMCs), Viet Nam Women’s Union (VWU), and beneficiaries in the community. The GAP has been regularly monitored and project data was readily available. The PPMUs in Dong Ha and Ha Tinh provided written and oral reports on GAP implementation including sex-disaggregated data against all GAP targets and an analysis of results and challenges. A recent monitoring report by the project gender adviser covering all project towns and the midterm review were available to corroborate the field data. The project gender adviser and ADB resident mission gender specialist provided additional information.

For USEDP, the team met with the ADB team leader and the national project implementation unit (NPIU) and visited the Hoa Binh province. The team met with the PPMU and visited two schools where they held discussions with project beneficiaries including school principals, teachers, and students. The NPIU provided sex-disaggregated data on some project activities and an update on GAP implementation.

Background on Viet Nam

Over the past decade, Viet Nam has made impressive progress in economic and social development. Between 1993 and 2002, Viet Nam doubled its economy, and almost halved the number of people living in poverty.
(World Bank, ADB, DFID, CIDA 2006, 17). The country’s key planning document, the Socio-Economic Development Plan 2006–2010, affirms the link between economic growth and social development (Ministry of Planning and Investment 2006). However, one of the ongoing challenges for Viet Nam is to manage the transition to a socialist-oriented market economy in a manner that is inclusive, pro-poor, and gender-responsive.

Viet Nam holds a reputation throughout the region for relative gender equality and has been able to close national gender gaps in areas such as education, access to health care, and some aspects of employment (World Bank, ADB, DFID, CIDA 2006, 17). However, ethnic minority women and girls lag significantly behind ethnic minority men and Kinh and Chinese women in accessing health and education services and economic opportunities. Women from ethnic minorities are particularly disadvantaged. At least one in four is illiterate; among those aged 15 to 17, only about 60% of ethnic minority girls are in school compared with over 72% of boys; some 20% of ethnic minority women never attended school; and ethnic minority women have much higher infant and maternal mortality rates. Gender stereotyping in textbooks is still a problem which perpetuates gender inequalities. Women lack access to equal opportunities for skills training, and face discrimination in recruitment. Increasing the number of women in decision making has been slow and inconsistent (World Bank, ADB, DFID, CIDA 2006, 11). Vietnamese women, while contributing equal time to income generating activities, bear the burden of the work in the home, impacting their ability to participate in and benefit from development interventions. Domestic violence and exploitation for prostitution and trafficking remain key concerns.

As Viet Nam’s growth continues, dramatic changes are taking place in the lives of both men and women. Continuous analysis and care is needed to ensure that women and men are able to avail themselves fully of the same opportunities to contribute to, and share in the benefits of, economic growth and decision making. Women from ethnic minorities continue to be the most severely disadvantaged. Focused efforts are needed to redress gender imbalances among ethnic minority groups (World Bank, ADB, DFID, CIDA 2006, 89). Two of the projects included in the RGAs (the HICH project and USEDP) were located in areas with high ethnic minority populations and aimed to address disparities in access to education and health care.

The government is addressing these issues through the recently adopted Gender Equality Law (Government of Viet Nam 2006). Viet Nam has a strong policy and legal framework to promote gender equality. Vietnamese women have legal rights including affirmative action policies for political participation, inheritance rights, generous maternity benefits, and the right to make reproductive decisions (ADB 2006, 10). However, traditional beliefs sometimes limit enforcement of these rights and turning the law into practice continues to present ongoing challenges.

It is within the context of these gender-related challenges that each of the selected projects was implemented. The RGA assessment affords an opportunity to analyze what measures have been taken by each of the projects to address these challenges and to ensure women, in particular those from ethnic minority groups, fully benefit from development investments.

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5 Kinh is the majority ethnic group in Viet Nam.
Central Region Urban Environmental Improvement Project

Project Description

The purpose of the Central Region Urban Environmental Improvement Project (CRUEIP) was to improve the quality of life and health status of urban residents, reduce poverty in six project towns and surrounding areas, promote balanced regional economic development, and reduce migration from the central region to Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City. The objective of the project was to improve urban environmental conditions in project towns.

The project’s outputs included (i) expanded and upgraded urban environmental infrastructure; (ii) improved autonomy and managerial and technical capacity of the urban environmental companies (URENCOs); (iii) improved urban management and planning capacities of the town people’s committees; (iv) strengthened urban management policies through support to the newly established Department of Urban Infrastructure in the Ministry of Construction; (v) cost-recovery mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of urban environmental services; (vi) increased community participation in planning and managing urban services, particularly by the poor; (vii) enhanced public health awareness; and (viii) an enhanced role for women in urban management and institutions (ADB 2003a).

The project comprised five components: (A) awareness and pro-poor sanitation; (B) drainage and flood protection; (C) wastewater and public sanitation; (D) solid waste management; and (E) implementation assistance and institutional strengthening. The project area included the provincial capital towns of Dong Ha, Ha Tinh, Quang Ngai, Tam Ky, and Thanh Hoa, as well as the district town of Lang Co. Component D also includes the urban area of Chan May, the district town of Phu Loc, and four communes in the Phu Loc district of the Thua Thien Hue province. The project executing agency was the Ministry of Construction and the project was managed locally by provincial program management units (PPMUs) (ADB 2003a).

Component A was implemented by the Viet Nam Women’s Union (VWU) and included a community awareness and participation program, community-based sanitation (CBS), and a household sanitation program. It targeted poor and low-income households, communities, and neighborhoods, as well as households without access to urban sanitation. The community awareness and participation program raised community awareness on sanitation and health and worked with URENCOs to benefit female staff, by educating landfill scavengers on occupational health hazards; raising awareness for protecting and conserving urban environmental infrastructure; motivating households to connect to and pay for urban environmental infrastructure and services; and informing potential beneficiaries of financial assistance available to improve community or household environmental sanitation. The CBS activities aimed to improve small infrastructure and community participation and ownership in urban sanitation, and provided small grants, technical advice, and training for demand-driven, small-scale environmental sanitation improvements in urban areas that were not covered by the other major infrastructure components of the project. The household sanitation program provided grants, mostly to women, to help poor and low-income households within urban wards build septic tanks and toilets, and/or to connect household wastewater to public drainage or sewage systems (ADB 2003a).

At the time of the rapid gender assessment (RGA), the progress of CRUEIP was considerably behind schedule—40% compared with the elapsed loan period of 72%. Elements of component A had been implemented in some provinces, including the
establishment of community management committees (CMCs) and awareness campaigns. These will be discussed in detail below in relation to gender action plan (GAP) implementation. Detailed designs for the large infrastructure components (B, C, and D) had been approved by PPMUs and bidding was underway to award the contracts. As major constructions had not been awarded, disbursement of the loan was low. Some resettlement had occurred but was also behind schedule in some provinces (ADB 2008e).

Gender Analysis and Gender Action Plan Included in the Loan Design

Gender equality was well integrated into the project design in the report and recommendation of the President (RRP), which included sound gender analysis, and a comprehensive and clear GAP. The design recognized that women were responsible for a variety of tasks relating to sanitation and waste collection at the community and household levels. More than half of the URENCO staff in project towns employed as sweepers and waste collectors were women. Scavengers, collecting waste in the landfill sites, were mostly women. By occupying low-level jobs in institutions and communities, most women lacked opportunities or capacity to hold managerial positions. The design built on lessons learned from the Second Provincial Town Water Supply and Sanitation Project by ADB and similar projects funded by other development partners (ADB 1997).

The main components of the GAP related to component A, which was implemented by the VWU. The main GAP provisions in the RRP (ADB 2003a, 33) are listed below.

(i) A community management committee (CMC) will manage component A of the project with at least 50% participation of women on the CMC.

(ii) The project will train and build the capacity of the PPMUs, the VWU chapters, the CMCs, the URENCOs, and communities, on gender roles and environmental sanitation, and the links between good health and a clean environment. With regards to training:

a. at least 50% of people offered training and employment as motivators will be women;

b. at least 50% of participants taking part in training, group discussions, workshops, and communication activities will be women;

c. both men and women will be consulted about communication strategy designs, and communication materials and campaigns will meet the needs and benefits of both men and women; and

d. both girls and boys will participate in sanitation awareness raising activities and sanitation training delivered by the VWU in primary and secondary schools within the project area.

(iii) The project will build the capacity of the VWU to effectively manage and successfully implement activities (e.g. training in community development activities).

(iv) More than 75% of beneficiaries of the household sanitation program (component A) will be women from poor and low-income households.

(v) Female heads of households and widows will not be excluded from the program based on their marital status, age, or land ownership.

(vi) About 30% of community group members will be women (for decision making on community-based sanitation activities).

Components B, C, D, and E also included GAP provisions, among which were consultation with both men and women in the design of wastewater and public sanitation; improvement of men’s and women’s awareness and practice of solid waste disposal; improvement of the conditions for women in the URENCOs; and gender awareness and development training workshops for PPMU staff, CMC members, and VWU members on project management,
operations and maintenance, community participation, and health awareness. The trainings would help these groups integrate gender issues into planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation for all these components.

The RRP included a provision for each PPMU, with the support of the VWU and a project gender adviser, to further develop the gender action plan and use gender-sensitive indicators for implementation and monitoring. It also included a provision for the gender adviser to work closely with resettlement consultants to ensure that the resettlement plan was gender responsive.

The GAP was included in the loan assurances and as a covenant in the loan agreement. In addition, the loan covenants specified the following provisions: at least one representative of the VWU will be included in each provincial steering committee; at least 50% of members of the CMC will be women; and CMCs will be headed by representatives of the VWU (ADB 2004c, 32).

Some elements of the GAP were included in the design and monitoring framework (DMF) for two of the eight project outputs (increased community participation and an enhanced role for women in the planning and management of sanitation services and institutions). Four gender-sensitive indicators were included:

(i) The CMC is established and operates efficiently with representatives from the VWU, town people’s committees, and URENCOs.

(ii) There is an increased number of women in URENCOs, including in management positions.

(iii) At least one member of the provincial steering committee is a woman.

(iv) The CMC is headed by representatives of the VWU and 50% of its members are women.

These outputs and indicators from the DMF were also included in the project administration memorandum (ADB 2004). Limited human resources, limited capacity of the women’s union, and poor participation by women and the poor were identified as risks in the RRP. Risk mitigation strategies included promoting participation, the gender action plan, and public awareness campaigns. The RRP included a provision for the GAP to be updated during implementation, with the assistance of an international gender adviser (2 person-months) and a national gender adviser (18 person-months).

Implementation of the Gender Action Plan

The international and local gender advisers updated the GAP early in project implementation based on consultation and comments from the CMCs and communities in six project towns. While the international gender adviser’s input was useful because it helped to develop an overall framework, delays in overall project implementation meant that her input occurred before work commenced. The work of the national gender adviser was extremely effective, since she worked with each PPMU, CMC, and VWU chapter to develop action schedules and gender indicators. The updated GAP improved on the plan in the RRP and developed specific implementable targets and guidelines to assist with practical implementation of the RRP provisions.

GAP implementation was varied due to delays in overall project implementation (in some areas up to 16 months behind schedule). However, GAP implementation in the two towns visited by the review team was progressing very well. It is also important to note that Viet Nam experienced inflation of up to 30% in 2008. Because no additional funds were available from the government or ADB, the original project scope of works was reduced by 40%. However, it was decided that the original scope of component A would be maintained, to take into account women’s participation and the need to provide assistance to poor and low-income people.

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6 The national gender adviser was also employed for 18 months as the community development adviser, so her overall input on the project was 36 months.
Gender Equality Results

Table 2 summarizes gender-related results for each project component. An analysis of major achievements, challenges, and the potential for sustainability follows. More details are provided in Appendix Table A1.1, which presents GAP elements and targets with the gender equality results achieved.

Participation, Access to Project Resources, and Practical Benefits

CRUEIP was an excellent example of how attention to gender equality through a comprehensive and well targeted GAP can lead to practical and strategic gender equality results. The development of the GAP, including targets for women’s participation, resulted in high levels of participation by women in CRUEIP activities, with all of the targets for women’s participation exceeded. Ninety percent of CMC members were women (compared with a target of 50%) and all CMC directors were women. The remaining 10% of CMC members were male staff members of the PMU who participated in the CMCs by providing technical assistance in areas such as planning and engineering and by supporting CMC activities. Eighty-nine percent of motivators in urban areas were women (compared with a target of 50%) and leaders of the management board for the CBS were women. Women’s participation in most CBS activities exceeded the target of 50%, with 70%–90% participation in some activities (Nguyen 2008).

Table 2  Central Region Urban Environment Improvement Project Summary of Gender Equality Results by Loan Component

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan Component</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Objective: Improved urban environment</td>
<td>Improved living and environmental conditions due to the success of the VWU at creating awareness among women and men about the links between health, the environment, and sanitation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: Awareness and Pro-poor Sanitation</td>
<td>• Project achieved high participation of women and exceeded targets in all activities and training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community awareness and participation program</td>
<td>• 75% of people trained in management skills were women (24 women and 8 men).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community-based sanitation</td>
<td>• 67% of people trained in gender and sanitation were women (30 women and 15 men).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Household sanitation program</td>
<td>• 74% of people trained on management and propaganda methods were women (23 women and 8 men).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• More than 12,000 students were trained in sanitation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 90% of CMC members were women; women participated in CBS boards of management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• All directors of community management committees were women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 89% of urban motivators were women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The project provided increased opportunities for women to participate in decision making at the commune and ward level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The project strengthened planning, project management, and monitoring capacity of VWU (managing credit funds and implementation of civil works for the first time).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The project brought about positive changes in community sanitation practices, including appropriate household waste disposal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• More middle-aged men actively participated in public meetings and trainings on sanitation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Over 75% of credit recipients for household sanitation improvements were women. Women received loans to build toilets and septic tanks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• CBS infrastructure was constructed (roads and drainage channels) according to priorities identified by both women and men.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Households headed by women were exempt from cost-recovery for CBS operation and maintenance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

continued on next page
There were high levels of participation by women in training that strengthened the capacity of the CMCs, the VWUs, the PPMUs and URENCO staff. This included training in management skills (in which 75% of those trained were women), management and information, education, and communication (IEC) methods (in which 74% of those trained were women) and gender and sanitation (in which 67% of those trained were women). On a practical level, the training provided women with new skills and knowledge and improved their own training capacity. Members of the CMC and the VWU in Dong Ha reported that the training helped them develop work plans and implement the revolving fund. VWU staff in Ha Tinh reported that they now have the capacity to implement civil works activities including planning, management, project implementation, and review. These are new skills that they did not have prior to the project.

There was a clearly defined gendered division of labor within the URENCOs. Men were traditionally given heavy work such as driving garbage trucks, dredging drains, working at landfills, and staffing the funeral division. Women swept roads, collected leaves, cut tree branches, or served in administrative roles as accountants, cashiers, or secretaries. More than half of URENCO staff were female but they were poorly represented at the management level (ADB 2003a, 7, 28). GAP activities were designed to target women who worked as manual laborers in the URENCOs so that the maximum number of female staff from the URENCOs benefited from project activities. Consistent with the GAP provision, the design of handcarts used by garbage collectors was changed to make them lighter and more suitable for women to use. The design of the garbage cans also changed and new technology was introduced so women did not have to manually lift the garbage. Both male and female URENCO staff participated in gender, HIV, and safety training. Due to lack of funds for full implementation of the GAP, the training was effectively prioritized and targeted to people at lower professional levels, such as administrative staff and sweepers, to ensure women were able to participate. Dong Ha PPMU had plans to train URENCO staff in labor safety, sanitation, environment, and management after the RGA field visit and intended to develop a target for women’s participation.

Under the community-based sanitation component, communities had funds to undertake activities like improving roads and building drains. These small infrastructure activities resulted in significant practical...
benefits for both women and men, such as better drainage, reduced flooding, and improved sanitation. In Dong Ha and Ha Tinh, the PPMUs, the CMCs, the VWUs and community members all confirmed that the process for the development, submission, and evaluation of all community-based improvements was comprehensive, participatory, and involved both men and women in the community. As part of the process, the CMC undertook surveys in the wards to assess community needs and held training for community members to inform them about their entitlements under the project and to seek their views on their preferred activities. Training and group discussions on gender roles and environmental sanitation (drainage, wastewater, and solid waste) for men and women were also conducted at the ward level. Communities were able to determine their own financial contribution to the project through a participatory process during proposal preparations. Women and men reported that people with more money were encouraged to contribute more and, in accordance with the GAP, special consideration was given to households headed by women who could not afford to contribute in cash, labor, or kind. This was all managed successfully by the VWU.

Community-based sanitation works were successful due to significant awareness-raising by the CMCs on community sanitation and to the high levels of involvement of women in these activities. Activities included public competition events on knowledge of the environment and sanitation; competition campaigns to keep the streets green, clean, and beautiful; talks at schools; and the production of TV videos. These activities led to increased awareness of the health impacts of environmental and sanitation conditions within households and within the community, and to significant changes in community sanitation practices. For example, in Dong Ha, Thanh Hoa, and Ha Tinh, the PPMUs and the CMCs reported that many residents in targeted areas were now appropriately disposing of solid waste. Beneficiaries also noted that households in project areas were now very aware of the importance of putting their rubbish out for collection. This improved living conditions for everyone in the community and reduced women’s burdens with regards to responsibility for household sanitation, another important practical benefit.

The burden of women’s domestic responsibilities was also reduced by CRUEIP’s household sanitation activities. The VWU was involved in providing and monitoring credit for the household sanitation program and in guiding households on how to use it. All credit workers responsible for distributing and collecting loan monies were women, and 75% of the beneficiaries were women from low-income households, including households headed by women (see Box 1).7 All family members benefited from loans, which were used to build toilets and septic tanks. Women benefited particularly from these inputs because it aided them in household sanitation, cleaning, waste disposal, and family health care—responsibilities which primarily fall to them.

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**Box 1 Improving Sanitation and Living Conditions for Women**

In Ha Tinh, Mme. Van, an elderly widow and mother of four children, was keen to show the team the improved facilities in her home. She received a loan to build a toilet and a drain was constructed alongside her home as part of CRUEIP’s community-based sanitation activities. She participated in community meetings and trainings on sanitation, and also received training from the Women’s Union about managing her loan.

She said the training improved her understanding of sanitation and how this contributes to good health. Her new toilet has improved household sanitation and the drain prevents her backyard from flooding, which has improved her living conditions. She is proud of her new toilet and her ability to borrow and successfully repay the loan.

Source: Interviews with beneficiaries conducted during fieldwork.

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Strategic Changes in Gender Relations

New and enhanced skills in management, training, and planning were very valuable for women. They were able to use the knowledge obtained from training courses to conduct their own training at the community level. Women from the local VWU chapter and the CMCs in Dong Ha and Ha Tinh reported feeling more confident

7 Nguyen 2008 and information provided by PPMUs during field visits.
in undertaking community activities and several female leaders in Quang Ngai, Tam Ky, Dong Ha, and Thanh Hoa have become effective trainers in their areas. This has increased their confidence and standing in the community.

The VWUs’ involvement in resettlement committees ensured that women received their entitlements when households were displaced due to the construction of drainage, flood protection, wastewater, and public sanitation infrastructure. This enhanced the way that women’s needs were considered and resulted in special provisions for households led by women. Women participated in meetings that disseminated information about implementation, construction schedules, and community participation on resettlement programs under parts B, C, and D. Women who were heads of relocated households were provided with additional allowances of VND2 million and were given land and assistance to build new houses with a toilet, water, and electricity. All households led by women received the land title deed to their new house regardless of whether they previously held the land title. The RGA team visited several households headed by women to inspect their new houses. The living and sanitation conditions had greatly improved and the women reported feeling proud of their new homes and more secure and happy about improved living conditions for themselves and their children.

Women’s participation in project activities was meaningful, enhanced the way women’s needs were considered, and led to good results. Not only did women attend meetings and participate in activities, they also managed and led activities as community motivators and as managers and implementers of component A. This increased the visibility of women in community management positions and led to more opportunities for women to participate in decision making within their communes and wards.

The activities were also successful because of an increase in the participation of middle-aged men in public meetings and community activities around sanitation. This is an important change in gender relations, since sanitation is usually seen as the responsibility of women. In addition, more young women had opportunities to take on positions in the CMCs, which increased their access to new skills and training.

**Institutional Changes**

In Viet Nam, women’s lack of capacity is often given as a reason for the lack of women’s participation in civil works, sanitation, and infrastructure activities. CRUEIP explicitly addressed this issue by having the VWU chapter implement awareness and pro-poor sanitation activities. The RRP acknowledged that to do this, local VWU members would have to undergo training on how to develop plans, undertake project management, manage credit funds, and manage civil works activities, and that training on gender issues in health, environment, and sanitation would also strengthen the existing capacity of VWU chapter.

As a result of capacity building, the local chapters of the VWU successfully managed project activities. Their visibility in the community increased and their role and profile was reinforced. Local community members, including men, have increased confidence in their ability: they trust the VWU and strongly support their activities. The role of the VWU was institutionalized and the chapters now have the capacity to implement small-scale civil works activities.

The local chapters of the VWU also gained the respect, trust, and confidence of the PPMUs and the provincial people’s committees (PPCs). Excellent working relationships were built with the PPMUs in particular, recognizing and valuing the work of the VWUs and the ways in which they enhanced the success of the project in their towns. The head of the PPMU in Ha Tinh noted that, although the financial value of component A was small, it had a big impact; and that he would like to see more funding allocated to these types of activities.

**Challenges**

While good progress was made in Dong Ha, Ha Tinh, and also Tanh Hoa, there were variations in the achievement of gender equality results across provinces. A report by the project gender adviser showed that in other provinces such as Tam Ky and Lang Co, component A, which constitutes a large component of the GAP, was not well implemented. There were several reasons for this. First, due to delays in project imple-
mentation, some PPMUs were much more focused on work under other components and paid less attention to component A, which was quite small in dollar value. One of the results of this was that fund disbursement from the province to the CMCs and the local VWUs was delayed by 5 to 6 months. This required the revision of the implementation schedules for component A by the CMCs and the VWU with support from the project gender adviser. At the time of the midterm review in August 2008, the Tam Ky CMC had not received funds for community awareness and participation activities. Some CMCs and VWU chapters such as in Lang Co, Tam Ky, and Quang Ngai had not conducted many communication and education activities because they had no funds or there was a slow and poorly synchronized fund disbursement.8

The Ministry of Construction as the executing agency had given limited attention to compliance with fund disbursement for the VWU-implemented awareness and sanitation activities (component A), despite the fact that timely fund disbursement from the PPCs to the local chapters of the VWU was a requirement of one of the loan covenants (ADB 2004c, 30). ADB needs to engage in continued policy dialogue with the executing agency and the PMU during loan review missions to stress the importance of component A activities, so that funds are disbursed to the VWU on a timely basis.

In several provinces, funds for community awareness and participation activities (component A) were not provided by the PPCs to the CMCs even when CMCs and the local VWU chapters had already received funds for the household sanitation program, which provides grants and loans for the construction of household sanitation infrastructure. This was not ideal since community awareness activities under part A were designed to support community and household sanitation activities. In several provinces, slow project implementation reduced community confidence in the VWU’s ability to undertake the sanitation activities. As a result, community support and participation in activities conducted by the CMC was minimal.9 For example, in Tam Ky, Lang Co and Quang Ngai, the project gender adviser reported that some households felt that the VWU lacked capacity and management skills because it had been nearly 2 years since the community was made aware of the community sanitation program but drains, sewerage, and household and public sanitary works had still not been constructed because funds for these activities were not disbursed to the VWU.

Another challenge was that revolving funds for household sanitation activities were not targeted to the poorest households, although most borrowers had low incomes. While the program aimed to provide assistance to the poorest, borrowers had to demonstrate a good history of credit repayment. Few very poor households could meet these requirements and credit officers did not select the poorest households, due to a fear that they would not be able to repay the loans. Further, many poor households were reluctant to borrow for the same reason and did not consider toilet construction a priority. In addition, the cost of toilet construction increased and loans were inadequate to cover construction costs. Consequently, the poorest women were less likely to access loans because they needed to borrow additional funds from other sources to construct a toilet.

Allocation of funds for full implementation of the GAP did not always occur. Due to limited funds, some GAP activities were scaled back. For example, the GAP provision for leadership and management training for female URENCO staff to assist women to qualify for management positions was not implemented. Consequently, the GAP design strategy to address inequalities in the gender division of labor within URENCOs was not implemented. Further, since the size of component A was small ($1.1 million) compared with other components (for example, component B, drainage and flood protection: $46.4 million), overall funds allocated for work on gender equality was relatively small compared to the overall project loan amount.

Monitoring of GAP implementation was mixed. In the towns visited by the RGA team, excellent monitoring was undertaken by the VWU and CMC. All data for part A was disaggregated by sex and the CMC had comprehensive records of all progress against the GAP, including an analysis of results and the challenges of GAP implementation. The project gender adviser also provided a report on overall GAP implementation. In contrast, there appeared to be limited ownership of

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8 Nguyen 2008 and information provided by PPMUs during field visits.
9 Nguyen 2008 and information provided by PPMUs during field visits.
the GAP by the executing agency. Very little monitoring of the GAP was conducted by ADB on a routine basis. Back-to-office reports did not include information on GAP implementation, other than to note a GAP had been developed. The four gender-sensitive indicators from the RRP DMF were not included in the monitoring framework for the project performance report. Three new indicators were included in their place: working with URENCOs to better reach female staff; training for URENCO management on gender and social issues; and training of local VWU chapters in public health awareness, community-based sanitation and the household sanitation scheme. While the latter two indicators are useful to measure, the four DMF indicators were specifically focused on assessing women’s participation in key decision-making positions across all project locations. Reporting against the project performance report indicators was very general with most reports noting that progress was ongoing (ADB 2004a, ADB 2004b, ADB 2006c, ADB 2007b). Lack of reporting by ADB meant that opportunities to analyze how gender equality results contributed to the overall effectiveness of the project were lost.

Gender mainstreaming in environmental sanitation activities requires staff to have a good background on gender equality issues, planning, and management. However, some of the six CMCs lacked this understanding. Sharing experience between the six provinces would be beneficial, particularly for those provinces that have achieved fewer results. However, no budget has been allocated for sharing the learning on how to improve project effectiveness.

While women’s participation in project activities in large numbers is a good result, it is not always a straightforward success. For example, an unintended consequence was an increase in women’s time burden and this applied both to women involved with the VWU and to women in the community. The CMC work was in addition to other VWU duties and there was no salary attached to this work. Each VWU chapter was entitled to a management fee based on the total funding allocated to the activities and CMC members had their expenses covered. However, success relied on their willingness to work in their own time and on weekends. While the women from the VWU were happy to do this, it does pose potential risks to the sustainability of some of the results achieved. In addition, while targets for women’s participation in community activities were exceeded, targets need ongoing monitoring and analysis. In this case, a better balance of both men and women from the community on CMCs and as credit workers may have helped to further encourage men’s participation in community sanitation activities (highlighted as an issue in the RRP’s gender analysis). This would have reduced the burden of responsibility for community and household sanitation on women, and in turn contributed to further changes in gender relations.

Sustainability

The GAP systematically addressed women’s practical needs (including their access to project resources) and also included activities to achieve the more strategic and institutional changes necessary to sustain positive results (for example, by building the capacity of the VWU). Where positive gender equality results have been achieved (such as in the provinces visited by the RGA team), the VWU believes it now has the capacity to apply its new skills to other work and activities in the community. Changes in gender relations in communities and households should be sustainable in the longer term as the VWU members and other women in the community use their new skills to remain engaged in other community activities.

The lack of timely disbursements to the local chapters of the VWU, a lack of results monitoring, and increased time burdens for women from the VWU and women in the household pose some risks to the sustainability of gender equality results and overall project benefits. Nevertheless, the high level of ownership from participating communities in part A activities—created by VWU involvement and the high participation of women—will contribute positively to sustainability. Community-based sanitation activities were so successful and so well owned and understood by communities that some wards had started to raise more money to undertake additional sanitation and community improvement activities, such as the sealing of roads. In another case, community members contributed an additional 20% of funds, on top of their initial 20% contribution, to make the road more durable and enhance sustainability. The project was a good example of cost sharing between government and communities with potential for replication in other
projects. It also demonstrated the importance of ownership by both men and women in the community and that positive unintended effects, like those mentioned above, can occur once people see the benefits of their contribution. Without the strong role of the VWU or the high levels of women’s participation, it is unlikely that the same levels of community ownership would have been achieved.

Contribution of Gender Equality Results to Overall Loan Outcomes and Effectiveness

CRUEIP is a good example of how gender equality results can contribute to the overall effectiveness of the project. In the towns where the GAP was implemented well, gender equality results directly contributed to the project objective of improving urban environmental conditions. Variations across provinces demonstrated this. In those provinces such as Dong Ha and Ha Tinh where the GAP was successfully implemented, overall project progress was also better. The GAP provisions—including the work of the VWU to get both men and women involved in community awareness and to ensure that their entitlements and needs were met in resettlement—enabled the sequencing of the larger infrastructure components to run more smoothly. In these towns, the PPMUs and the PPCs valued and supported the work of the VWU because they could see how they contributed to the overall effectiveness and sustainability of the project.

In other provinces where the GAP was not well implemented, overall project progress was much weaker. In the absence of activities that built the capacity of the local VWU chapter and the disbursement of funds that would allow VWU chapters to conduct community awareness, the way activities were sequenced during implementation was not as successful and results—such as more members of the community using proper sanitation and waste disposal services—have not been achieved. Community ownership of project activities was also much lower. This reduces the likelihood that the community will invest in ongoing operation and maintenance costs, and reduces the sustainability of benefits.

Factors Influencing the Achievement of Gender Equality Results

CRUEIP is a good example of effective GAP implementation, particularly in Hong Da and Ha Tinh provinces. The preparation and implementation of a GAP with specific activities and targets for improving women’s participation and benefits had a significant positive impact on improving overall project implementation and results for women. The main factor influencing the achievement of gender equality results was the quality of the GAP.

Gender analysis. Sound gender analysis was undertaken during project preparation. The project design reflected the recognition that women were responsible for a variety of tasks relating to sanitation and waste collection at the community and household levels. As a result, women’s participation in project activities was targeted. The RRP also recognized that women were underrepresented in sanitation management. It addressed this by building the capacity of the VWU to implement community-based awareness and sanitation components.

Building on lessons learned. The project design, including the GAP, applied lessons learned from ADB and other water supply and sanitation projects on the critical importance of community participation. The project design and GAP also reflected a recognition of the extensive experience of the VWU in implementing sanitation and environmental health awareness campaigns and built on this in part A.

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10 Comparison with other provinces (not visited by the RGA team) was based on the project gender adviser’s report (Nguyen 2008), back-to-office reports, project reports, and interviews with a range of stakeholders.
Targets for women’s participation. Targets clearly linked to the project activities were based on sound gender analysis. GAP targets were developed in consultation with partners and were well owned and understood in those towns successfully implementing the GAP.

Provisions for building the capacity of the Viet Nam Women’s Union. The project design recognized the need for building the capacity of the local chapters of the VWU to implement component A and included specific design features to achieve this. This was a critical element of the GAP and helped to ensure its effective implementation. It also led to substantial gender equality results, including improvements in the capacity of the VWU to manage revolving funds and the construction of small infrastructure.

A participatory approach to gender action plan revisions. While the design GAP was comprehensive, some of the elements were broad and the local chapters of the VWU were unsure about how to implement the GAP. The project gender adviser was able to assist each PPMU and VWU during implementation to develop more concrete targets, guidelines, and strategies that assisted with step-by-step implementation.

Support by gender specialists for gender action plan implementation. Project managers engaged a national project gender adviser on CRUEIP, who worked with each PPMU to develop concrete targets and guidelines for all community-based awareness and sanitation activities. Very detailed implementation plans were developed based on discussions with the CMCs and community members. The project gender adviser also developed training materials, delivered gender training, and helped to gain support for gender-related activities from other consultants, such as the environmental and financial specialists. The ADB resident mission gender specialist also worked closely with the project gender adviser, participated in review missions, and monitored the implementation of the GAP. The ADB team leader was supportive of this work.

Consistent monitoring of the gender action plan. The VWU chapters and CMCs monitored GAP implementation. All data for component A was disaggregated by sex and the CMCs had comprehensive records of all progress against the GAP. In each town visited, the CMC, in conjunction with the PPMU provided the RGA team with data for all the GAP targets as well as an analysis of the results and the challenges of GAP implementation. More attention to monitoring by the executing agency and by ADB could have further enhanced gender equality results by drawing out lessons and analyzing the contribution of gender equality results to the project’s overall effectiveness.

Institutional and Other Factors

Leadership by the executing agency. In the towns where comprehensive gender equality results were achieved, there was excellent leadership and support from the PPMU and in some cases also from the PPC. In Dong Ha and Ha Tinh, the PPMU recognized and supported the role and contribution of the VWU to the project and funds were disbursed to the VWU in a timely manner. In contrast, where this leadership was not demonstrated, GAP implementation and overall project progress was much weaker. For example, while the Thang Kí PPC stated that gender equality was important, it did not transfer funds to the CMC or the VWU. The VWU had to borrow funds from elsewhere to implement component A activities.

Capacity of the Viet Nam Women’s Union. In the provinces where the GAP was well implemented, the capacity of the VWU was strong and capacity building activities further enhanced abilities in areas such as management of civil works. In provinces where implementation was weaker, the capacity of the VWU was not as strong, and the PPMU was less supportive of capacity building activities.

Government policy. Both Dong Ha and Ha Tinh PPCs want to achieve city status and need to achieve sanitation standards to qualify. These provincial governments were supportive of VWU activities because their work contributed to achieving this goal.

The community-based nature of the project. The project was designed to maximize community participation under component A, thus had the potential to
include a range of activities led by the VWU to involve large numbers of women at the commune level.

Recommendations

In the limited time left for project implementation:

(i) The executing agency should disburse adequate funding for full implementation of the GAP. In provinces where GAP implementation has been slow or weak due to delayed funds transfers, the Ministry of Construction and ADB need to work with PPMUs to ensure funds are transferred.

(ii) The project gender adviser should work with the VWU in each town to develop strategies to encourage more men’s participation on the CMC and as credit workers.

(iii) ADB should include GAP monitoring in aide-mémoire of loan review missions. It should give attention to drawing out lessons on GAP implementation and analyzing the contribution of gender equality results to the overall effectiveness of the project.

(iv) Funding should be allocated as soon as possible for a meeting of all provinces on GAP implementation. Those provinces that have successfully implemented the GAP should share lessons about successful strategies with those that have not. This would provide an opportunity to demonstrate how gender equality results contribute to overall project performance and outcomes.

There are important lessons that can be learned from CRUEIP that should be applied to future urban environmental and sanitation projects. For example:

(i) The approach to building women’s capacity to implement civil works, sanitation and infrastructure activities that guided CRUEIP should be replicated in other projects, taking care to ensure that gender analysis considers the roles of both men and women in infrastructure activities and also includes activities to encourage men’s participation in household and community sanitation practices.

(ii) Projects should consider payment of CMC members for their time.
Health Care in the Central Highlands

Project Description

The aim of the Health Care in the Central Highlands (HICH) project was to support the health system and improve the health status of people—especially the poor and disadvantaged—in the four Central Highlands provinces: Dak Lak, Gia Lai, Kon Tum, and Lam Dong. ADB provided a loan of $20.0 million to cover capital expenditures and the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) provided a grant of $5.8 million to support “Health Care Funds for the Poor” under Decision 139 (Government of Viet Nam 2002), which supports and facilitates improved access to health services by the poor.

Specific project objectives were to (i) improve availability of, and access to, quality health services, especially for the poor and disadvantaged; (ii) improve affordability and utilization of health services, especially for the poor; and (iii) strengthen the capacity of the health system to effectively address the needs of the people. The project had three components: (A) upgrading facilities and equipment; (B) human resource development; and (C) strengthening financing and management. Component C called for a fund to assist the poor with access to health services, including the provision of food and travel allowances, assistance with direct treatment costs, and mobile health outreach services. Project implementation arrangement followed a partly decentralized approach, with provincial project management units (PPMUs) being the principle implementation units. A project management unit (PMU) at the national level, led by a project director, provided technical, coordination, and logistical support.

At the time of the rapid gender assessment (RGA), overall project progress was approximately 50%, compared to an elapsed loan period of 65%. After initial delays, the rate of activity had steadily improved and progress on the civil works activities and training was satisfactory and largely on track.

However, of all the components, the health care fund for the poor was proving the most complex and difficult to implement, due to difficulties with the development and adoption of the administrative arrangements necessary to disburse the funds. Under this component, the food allowance was widely dispersed but overall disbursement levels were less than planned; provision of travel allowance varied across provinces and was generally lower than planned; support for covering direct treatment costs was weakest, due in part to misunderstandings about eligible costs; and mobile outreach services met or exceeded planned levels of the number of services and funds disbursed, but often these services had not reached the poor, and management support for the implementation of this activity was weak. There was limited adoption of the monitoring and reporting system (ADB 2007g). Measures had been put in place to improve disbursement in all of these areas at the time of the RGA.

Gender Strategy Included in the Loan Design

Gender equality was integrated into the overall project design because the project aimed to raise the health status of about 2.2 million women, including 800,000 ethnic minority women, by focusing on reproductive health, obstetrics, gynecological care, and maternal and child health. Through access to reproductive health services, the HICH project aimed to halve maternal deaths per year by the end of the project, and significantly increase the proportion of deliveries in the region receiving improved pre- and postnatal care. The project also aimed to reduce the burden of disease for women, and to increase women’s social contribution to their families and communities (ADB 2003b).

A gender strategy was prepared and included in the loan design, supported by sound gender analysis.
The gender analysis addressed several key issues, including barriers to women’s access to health care, the gender division of labor within the health sector, women’s health seeking behavior and the opportunity costs for women seeking health care. A provision for the recruitment of a part-time gender adviser was also included in the report and recommendation of the President (RRP) (ADB 2003b, 36–39).

Loan covenants included implementation of the gender strategy, which also required that priority be given to women when selecting participants for all training activities. The intent was to achieve at least the same proportion of women trainees as in the overall pool of the targeted staff. The ultimate goal was to reach gender equality in the training, recruitment, and promotion of health workers. Elements of the gender strategy were included in the main text of the project administration memorandum and the strategy was also included as an appendix (ADB 2004d).

The design and monitoring framework (DMF) in the RRP included several gender indicators for the project goal, including the following: (i) maternal mortality rates should be reduced from 170 to 110; (ii) infant mortality rates should be reduced by 30% (from 64 to 40 per 1,000 live births); and (iii) coverage of prenatal care should be increased from 70% to 90%. The indicator for improved access to health services (an objective in the DMF) was that 80% of deliveries should be attended by a trained health worker (an increase from 60%) (ADB 2003b).

Review and Implementation of the Gender Action Plan

The project gender adviser was hired for 6 person-months over the duration of the project to support implementation and monitoring of the gender and ethnic minorities action plan (GEMAP). This person prepared a GEMAP in the early stages of project implementation that contained good gender analysis and targets for women’s participation. The gender adviser worked with each of the provinces to develop targets resulting in a well owned and understood GEMAP by all project staff. The GEMAP was regularly monitored. The main elements of the GEMAP were appropriate and implementable. These elements are as follows (ADB 2003b):

(i) **Upgrading facilities and equipment.** Implementers will consult with women when upgrading facilities and ensure new facilities provide adequate visual and auditory privacy for patients, especially ethnic minority women.

(ii) **Development of human resources**

(a) Medical facilities will have at least one staff member trained in women’s health.

(b) Women, including ethnic minority women in the Central Highlands, will have medical training opportunities. At least 33% of females, or a proportion equivalent to the number of female staff employed at health centers, will be encouraged to participate in short-term training courses. At least 20% of trained medical doctors will be women. For professional areas where male participation is needed but few men are participating, the project should provide similar support mentioned above for male as well as female staff.

(c) The capacity of staff in health facilities to implement gender equality activities will be strengthened through gender equality training and the dissemination of printed communication materials to the participating facilities. Implementers will conduct trainings for health care staff on local knowledge to better understand the health-seeking behaviors of women, especially ethnic minority women.

(d) Implementers will develop communication materials on health care that contain gender equality messages. They will consult with women, especially ethnic minority women, on evaluating and developing communication materials related to health care.

(e) Project managers will take steps to increase the numbers of female medical staff by recruiting more women,
especially ethnic minorities from the Central Highlands.

(f) The PPMU will have at least one female member trained in managing gender-specific issues, who may be a representative from the provincial Viet Nam Women’s Union (VWU).

(g) Gender capacity building will be provided to project implementation staff as needed, including in gender-specific health areas.

(iii) Strengthening financing and management

(a) Capacity building to implement Decision 139 (Government of Viet Nam 2002) will ensure that health services are culturally compatible, and that communication materials to change women’s health behavior, including with regards to gender-based violence, are available in the local language.

(b) Sex-disaggregated data—and, where possible, data disaggregated by ethnic minority—will be included in the reporting system.

(c) Project managers will ensure financial resources for activities that promote gender equality.

Gender Equality Results

Table 3 summarizes results to date for each project component. An analysis of major achievements, challenges, and the potential for sustainability follows. More details are provided in Appendix Table A1.2, which presents GAP elements and targets with the gender equality results achieved.

Participation, Access to Project Resources, and Practical Benefits

Specific attention to gender issues in several project activities led to an increase in women’s access to health services and many practical benefits that are likely to bring about significant improvements in women’s health status. Firstly, reduced distance to health facilities and better services meant that more women were able to be treated in hospitals. New facilities and equipment—such as obstetric and pediatric wards and ultrasound machines—and upgraded facilities greatly strengthened the capacity of the hospitals to better respond to the needs of women and children, who made up a very high proportion of patients. There were better facilities for mothers and expecting mothers, including separate delivery rooms and separate toilets for women. New canteens provided patients and their families with food. The project’s considerable investment in training medical staff is also likely to have had a positive impact on the delivery of improved health services to women and children. Provincial hospitals and communes had at least one staff member trained in women’s health. All staff interviewed by the RGA team had a good understanding of women’s health issues.

Women made up a large percentage of health workers and benefited from training relative to their employment levels. Provinces exceeded the gender target of 50% participation of women in training for midwives (77%)\(^{11}\) and primary health care workers (52%) and were close to achieving this target for training in information, education, and communication (IEC) (48%). Selection criteria for training gave priority to women and ethnic minority people. Female health care staff interviewed by the RGA team said they felt more confident about their jobs as a result. For postgraduate training for doctors, 26% of participants were women and for refresher training for doctors working at district and provincials level, 21% of participants were women (Ministry of Health 2008).

The health care for the poor component was successful at addressing non-medical barriers to women’s access to health services, such as the high opportunity cost of seeking care due to lack of time and money.

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\(^{11}\) Some male doctors also participated in midwifery training.
### Table 3  Health Care in the Central Highlands Project Summary of Gender Equality Results by Loan Component

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Loan Component</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
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| **Project Goal:** Improved health status | Increased access to health services by women and children  
• More women attending health centers for prenatal checkups and childbirth (e.g. access to prenatal care increased from 45% to 67% for one clinic near Da Lat). |
| **A: Upgrading Facilities and Equipment**  
• Curative services  
• Preventive services | • New and upgraded medical facilities and equipment (including obstetric and pediatric wards and ultrasound machines) strengthened the capacity of health services to respond to women’s needs.  
• Provincial hospitals and communes have at least one staff member trained in women’s health; staff had a good understanding of women’s health issues.  
• Separate toilets were built for women at hospitals and canteens provided food for patients and their families. |
| **B: Human Resource Development**  
• Clinical training  
• Primary health care training  
• Secondary medical schools | • Increased skills of female staff due to high women’s participation in training: 77% of midwife trainees; 52% of primary health care trainees; 48% of IEC trainees; 26% of postgraduate doctors trained; and 21% of doctors in refresher training. Priority was given to women and ethnic minority people.  
• Confidence of patients in hospital staff and services increased.  
• Increased gender awareness among health staff at all levels.  
• IEC campaigns targeted topics that directly affect women, including diarrhea prevention, breastfeeding, reproductive health, immunization, and safe pregnancy; women participated in development and distribution of IEC materials.  
• Construction workers received HIV training. |
| **C: Strengthening Financing and Management**  
• Capacity building for project staff  
• Health care fund for the poor | • PPMUs have a gender focal point with responsibility for implementing the GAP.  
• Gender training undertaken at PPMU level.  
• Women’s participation in training was: 32% for provincial planning and management training and 62% for financial management; women were 43% of district trainees; 60% of commune health workers; and 42% of hospital management staff.  
• Men and women aware of their rights under Decision 139 regarding free health care. Outreach work undertaken successfully in communities.  
• Food and travel allowance reduced women’s opportunity costs associated with accessing health services.  
• The burden of care for women when looking after sick family members in hospital decreased. |

GAP = gender action plan, HIV = human immunodeficiency virus, IEC = information, education, and communication, PPMU = provincial project management unit.

Note: Under component B, some men participated in the midwife training.


The provision of food allowances for patients and their families while at hospital and for transport costs for patients addressed critical indirect costs of accessing health care. While it is too early to gauge the long-term impact of these services, the project’s focus on the provision of facilities and services for women is likely to reduce women’s burden of disease in the Central Highlands, which is twice as high as that of average Vietnamese women in the same age groups (Ministry of Health 2006).
The IEC component of the project was well-targeted and directly addressed one of the reasons for women’s higher burden of disease—lack of knowledge and information on mother and children health. IEC materials directly targeted topics that affect women and children, including diarrhea prevention, breastfeeding, reproductive health, immunizations, safe pregnancy, and food safety. IEC material also focused on making both men and women aware of their rights in terms of health insurance and their entitlement to free health care under Decision 139 (Government of Viet Nam 2002).

IEC material developed by the project was prominently displayed at hospitals and health clinics and was in local languages. It included gender-sensitive pictures and information. A range of distribution methods were used to ensure accessibility to women with no or limited literacy. Methods included posters, mobile visits, community meetings, radio, TV, newspaper, and T-shirts. In the province of Dak Lak, the project funded a new IEC center to produce TV, radio, and other media. The project also collaborated with other local organizations such as the VWU to deliver its IEC messages.

All women and men interviewed at hospitals and health clinics by the RGA team were aware of their entitlement to free health care. This is a good measure of the success of the IEC campaigns. While it is was too early to assess the impact of IEC on health-seeking behaviors, anecdotal evidence from one health clinic near Da Lat suggests that there were a number of changes due to IEC activities. For example, 95% of pregnant women in the area at the time of the RGA were monitored by the health clinic and 67% of these women had three health checks during pregnancy. This compares to data included in the RRP, which notes that in 2000, only 45% of women in this region had pre-delivery health care because many women believe that having a baby is a natural phenomenon, and that there is no need to seek health care. When asked about the reason for this change in behavior, the officials said that there was an increased awareness amongst local communities about the value of using the hospital, especially women, who were beginning to come to the hospital to deliver their babies. Patients interviewed by the RGA team also said that the quality of care provided by the hospitals had improved (see Box 2 for examples).

Box 2 Increased Access to Hospital Services

A 23-year-old female farmer from the K’Ho ethnic minority was at the new Pediatric Department at Lam Ha District Hospital in Lam Dong with her 12-month-old son. She had brought him there for treatment about five to six times. At first she took him to Commune Medical Station for treatment, but he did not get better, so she came to the hospital. The travel allowance helped her to get to the hospital. She had health insurance and was aware of her entitlement to free health care. She was very happy that she had also received food at the hospital.

A 20-year-old Kinh woman was at the hospital waiting to give birth. She came to the hospital with her mother from a commune in Dam Rong District, about 30 km from the hospital. Her husband is a farmer and it is her first pregnancy. She has received checkups during her pregnancy. She said she came to the hospital because it is her first birth, there is no hospital in her district, and she felt Lam Ha’s services were better than her local health clinic. As a result of access to the new ultrasound equipment the doctors were also able to determine the size of her baby and advise her to deliver at the hospital due to potential complications.

In Madrak District Hospital in Dak Lak, patients were also very aware of their entitlements. A woman from the Ede ethnic minority group with four children was boarding at the hospital so that she could care for her 4-year-old son. Because of the health insurance cards issued by the village head, she and her family were able to have regular health checks. Each of her births had been at the local health clinic and she reported having a lot of trust and confidence in the doctors.

Source: Interviews with beneficiaries conducted during fieldwork.

Strategic Changes in Gender Relations: Individual, Household, and Community Levels

The health care for the poor component was particularly successful at addressing the direct, indirect, and opportunity costs for women seeking health services.
This reduced women’s reliance on their husbands and families to cover the costs of health care, such as transport and food for themselves and their children. Women interviewed said it was much easier for them to attend the hospital for treatment as they were less dependent on their husbands to provide them with money for transport to attend the hospital. As a result more women had been attending health centers for prenatal check-ups and childbirth. Regular accessing of health services by women may also result in developing a pattern of visiting hospitals and consulting health professionals in these communities. Over time, practices such as medically assisted childbirth and pre- and postnatal care may become a norm, resulting in reduced maternal mortality rates in the Central Highlands. Further, the training of female commune health workers may enhance the status of women in these communities.

Institutional Changes

The GEMAP was well understood by PPMU staff. They reported that it was a very useful tool to help them translate government policy on women and ethnic minorities into concrete actions. They reported increased confidence in their ability to integrate gender considerations into projects and their work in general in the future, as a result of their experience with implementing the GEMAP. Strategic changes at the institutional level are difficult to assess for the HICH project. But, if the design of hospitals with separate obstetric wards, canteens, and sanitation facilities are replicated across the sector in other hospitals, the project would contribute to institutional changes. Likewise, if food and transport allowances paid to women under the HICH project to cover indirect and opportunity costs of health care are continued after project completion, this too would be an important institutional result.

Challenges

While women were well represented in training, few women were eligible for postgraduate and refresher medical training. Those who could be trained were trained. More attention is needed by the project to develop a plan for addressing some of the underlying barriers to women’s participation in higher level training modules. For example, one of the barriers is that there are different eligibility criteria for men and women, with an age limit of 50 for women and 55 for men. This is in line with the labor law on retirement age. The project should consider removing age requirements when selecting training participants to be in line with the gender equality law, which notes that men and women should be treated equally when determining selection criteria for training (Ministry of Health 2006, 5). Other barriers to women’s participation include time constraints due to reproductive and childcare activities and the requirement to leave home for extended periods to participate in training.

While women make up more than half of the labor force in the public health sector, in the Central Highlands men dominate in higher qualified and management positions. It is too early to assess whether project training activities have had any impact on the gender division of labor in the health sector. However, it is unlikely that training of women alone will address this imbalance: other strategies will be needed.

The project was quite successful in promoting gender awareness and capacity among the PPMUs. The gender adviser reports that PMU and PPMU capacity is now stronger and they are diligent in data collection as required by the GEMAP. The PPMUs had a good understanding of the GEMAP and were able to discuss how it assisted them to translate policy into action. However, success of the GEMAP is measured only by quantitative data and little attention has been paid to qualitative indicators of change or to addressing more difficult issues, such as the gender division of labor in the sector. An important challenge is to move beyond monitoring of gender balance and participation to monitoring and assessing results and outcomes such as practical benefits to women and men and positive changes in gender relations. Reporting on qualitative gender equality results is included as an activity in the GEMAP, but it is not being done.13 To do this, further capacity building of the PPMUs is required. Further attention is also needed to the recruitment of more women at the PPMU level.

13 The GEMAP notes that progress reports should include a section on gender, highlighting any changes in access and utilization of health care by women and men. The section is to also include observations on the quality of training and appropriateness of equipment to women and men, especially from ethnic minority groups. Issues pertaining to affordability and appropriateness of health services, as well as care rendered, are also supposed to be recorded and included where appropriate.
The project gender adviser has provided important assistance with GEMAP development and implementation to date. However, in order to address the issues discussed above, more input is required by the gender adviser, who was only employed for 6 months for the duration of the project. PPMU and PMU staff will need further help and support from the gender adviser to develop concrete strategies and build their capacity.

Sustainability

There are several factors that are likely to contribute to the sustainability of gender equality results such as increased access by women to health services, the capacity of health care services to respond to women’s needs, and the training of female commune health workers. Attention paid to privacy issues in the construction and upgrading of facilities, including separate obstetric units and toilets for females, are factors that contribute to greater utilization of hospital services by women. The new IEC center, the quality of IEC materials and outreach activities are directly linked to improved understanding of health care entitlements by women and men. There is a good awareness of gender issues and PPMUs are aware of the importance of ensuring that women can access the services. Confidence of patients in the health staff and services provided by the hospitals was high. All these factors are in place due to the activities that were implemented under the GEMAP.

On the other hand, women’s increased access to health care under the project may be undermined if the opportunity costs of accessing health care are not addressed after project completion. While Decision 139 (Government of Viet Nam 2002) commits to covering the costs of health care for the poor (including ethnic minorities and all children under 6) it is unlikely that the provinces will be able to sustain the same level of financing after project completion. For example, while the PPC in Buon Ma Tuot has agreed to continue funding some services such as food and transport, it is unlikely to be able to sustain funding at current levels. Funds to continue supporting Decision 139 will depend very much on the situation of each province. ADB and the PMU will need to work with provinces over the remainder of the project to encourage them to continue addressing the opportunity cost for women to access health services, such as the provision of food and transport allowances, and to continue IEC activities targeting women.

Contribution of Gender Equality Results to Overall Loan Outcomes

The project aimed to improve the health status of about 2.2 million women, including 800,000 ethnic minority women (ADB 2003b), by improving access to services, particularly reproductive health services. The project also aimed to reduce the burden of disease for women, and to increase women’s social and economic contribution to their families and communities. PPMUs reported that the GEMAP helped them to achieve these overall objectives by identifying practical actions to ensure women had better access to services, and that services met women’s needs. Practical actions included: more health centers and hospital infrastructure closer to communities to improve physical access; gender inclusive design of physical infrastructure; setting targets for women’s participation in training; developing well targeted IEC activities and materials; delivering outreach medical services to remote villages; and targeting the ‘health care for the poor’ component to address the direct and opportunity costs of accessing health care. Government policy to improve services for women and ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands is very clear and PPMUs felt that the GEMAP also helped them to implement these policies in the Central Highland Region.

Factors Influencing the Achievement of Gender Equality Results

The GEMAP and Its Implementation

The main factor contributing to the achievement of gender equality results was the development and implementation of the GEMAP, which was owned and understood by project staff.

Gender analysis. Sound gender analysis was conducted and used to develop the gender strategy
during project preparation, and the GEMAP during implementation. This focused on key barriers to ethnic and minority women accessing health care, as well as the gender division of labor in the health sector. The analysis was directly applicable to the project objectives, and as a result, strategies in the GEMAP were relevant and well linked to project activities and to government policy.

**Targets included for the participation of women.** The HICH project worked with each of the provinces in a participatory way to develop targets for women’s participation. As the targets were developed by the PPMUs themselves, there was a high level of understanding, ownership, and commitment to achieving the targets.

**Gender design strategy included in the loan covenants.** Implementation of the gender design strategy was included in the loan covenants. The project administration memorandum also committed the government to preparing and implementing the GEMAP and to ensuring women’s equal participation in training.

**Gender specialists supported implementation.** Support from the HICH project gender adviser assisted with fostering ownership of the GEMAP, and meant that it was well monitored. The gender adviser played a critical role in raising capacity to ensure GEMAP elements were implemented. The ADB resident mission gender specialist also assisted in some project review missions.

**Regular monitoring of women’s participation.** The project recorded and reported sex-disaggregated data in accordance with the GEMAP. This helped to ensure a focus on women’s equal participation in all capacity building activities.

**Institutional Factors**

**Government policy and leadership.** The government has clear policies on women and ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands and staff are aware of the requirement to include gender provisions in programming. This helped to reinforce ownership of the GEMAP by all stakeholders. The HICH project director also participated in an ADB lateral learning initiative, which increased his understanding of gender equality issues and the efficacy of the GAP implementation.

**Recommendations**

In the limited time remaining of project implementation, the HICH project should consider the following actions:

(i) Convene a gender workshop so that provinces can share lessons on GEMAP implementation. Strategic issues such as the barriers to women’s participation in some training modules and the gender imbalance in health sector staffing should be discussed, and strategies and actions developed. A gender workshop would also consolidate knowledge, lessons learned, and capacity that could be applied to other health activities supported by ADB in future.

(ii) Share lessons from the HICH project implementation, including effective strategies and results, with other ongoing health projects.

(iii) Remove the age difference between women and men that determines eligibility for project training.

(iv) Assist the provinces during the remaining implementation period to develop strategies that reinforce the sustainability of results, including improved access to services. The project should encourage provinces to continue providing funds for food and transport, and to continue targeting IEC activities to women.

(v) Improve monitoring and evaluation to analyze gender equality results. Monitoring should assess the different impacts of the project on men and women, including changes in the use of health services by women and men, the quality of training, appropriateness of equipment for women and men, and ongoing affordability of health services for women and men. Lessons should be considered in the design of other health projects in future.

(vi) Consider engaging a long-term gender adviser so project implementers can develop the capacity to address more strategic gender issues, such as the division of labor in the sector.
(vii) Consider options for addressing barriers to women’s participation in training in future projects by providing funds to help women meet household and childcare responsibilities while they prepare for exams and transitional/bridging courses that will help them meet eligibility standards. Implementers should also consider more flexible training options, such as splitting up the training over longer periods to accommodate women’s other responsibilities and time pressures.
Upper Secondary Education Development Project

Project Description

The goal of the Upper Secondary Education Development Project (USEDP) was to help the Government of Viet Nam expand and improve the quality of upper secondary education. The broad objective of the project was to contribute to poverty reduction in Viet Nam through development and improvement of upper secondary education. Over the medium term, the project aimed to improve quality, efficiency, access, equity, and management capacity in upper secondary education, by strengthening quality support systems nationwide, and by targeting some of the most economically and educationally disadvantaged areas in the country.

The project objectives were (i) to improve quality and efficiency of upper secondary education by supporting the government effort to diversify curriculum, textbooks, and other instructional materials; and by developing quality support systems such as trained teachers, improved libraries, equipped laboratories, improved evaluation, better student assessment, and more effective quality assurance systems; (ii) to improve access, equity, and participation in upper secondary education in disadvantaged areas through school construction and replacement, provision of furniture and equipment, and study support programs for the poor, ethnic minorities, and girls; and (iii) to strengthen institutional capacity to manage upper secondary education, from the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) to local administration—including provincial departments of education and training, district bureaus of education and training, and schools—by examining possible approaches to decentralized management (ADB 2002).

The project had three components: (1) supporting conditions for quality improvement in upper secondary education; (2) improving access, equity, and participation in upper secondary education in disadvantaged areas; and (3) strengthening management of upper secondary education. While components 1 and 3 were implemented in all provinces, component 2 was implemented in the 22 most economically and educationally disadvantaged provinces. The executing agency was the MOET through a national project implementation unit (NPIU) and provincial project implementation units.

At the time of the rapid gender assessment (RGA), overall project progress was behind schedule and project completion had been extended to June 2011 (ADB 2008j). In terms of financial performance, disbursements were at 54%; however, ADB considered overall project implementation to be satisfactory. The project had provided textbooks based on the new curriculum, teaching material, and equipment to schools. The civil works component was considered to be the best performing component with the last of 2,000 classrooms under construction. Vocational training had been provided to teachers and information, education, and communication (IEC) modules were developed in the areas of gender equality and life skills. With loan

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14 Provinces included Ha Giang, Cao Bang, Lao Cai, Bac Kan, Dien Bien, Lang Son and Bac Giang in the North East; Lai Chau, Son La, and Hoa Binh in the North West; Quang Binh on the North Central Coast; Quang Ngai on the South Central Coast; Kon Tum, Gia Lai, Dak Nong, and Dak Lac in the Central Highlands; Ninh Thuan in the South East; and Dong Thap, Kien Giang, Soc Trang, Bac Lieu, and Ca Mau in the Mekong River Delta. Selection criteria for these 22 provinces were (i) lowest net enrollment ratios in the country, (ii) low gross enrollment ratios and female gross enrollment ratios, (iii) a large number of very poor communes and/or low human development index rating, (iv) a high number of ethnic minority people, and (v) relatively high completion rate in lower secondary education but low transition rate to upper secondary education (ADB 2002).
savings, the NPIU had been developing additional modules on children’s rights, against drug usage, and for environmental and HIV/AIDS protection. The project was conducting pilot studies that looked at various areas of school financing and management and community participation. The project also developed a new education management and information system. ADB considered this project to be one of the more successful projects in Viet Nam, due to the large number of teachers trained, the successful distribution of the new curriculum, and the impact of the school facilities and equipment upgrades (ADB 2008).

Gender Analysis and Gender and Ethnic Minority Action Plan Included in the Loan Design

There was some gender and poverty analysis related to disparities in secondary school enrollments presented in the report and recommendation of the President (RRP), which included a gender and ethnic minorities action plan (GEMAP). The main GEMAP elements were broad statements of intent regarding the need to have a gender-sensitive approach for each project component with no concrete targets for women’s participation. However the RRP included a provision for the recruitment of a social development, gender, and ethnic minority specialist for 6 person-months over the life of the project, to further develop the GEMAP with concrete actions and targets. In addition, the terms of reference for advisers on study support programs and curriculum and textbook development required them to address gender issues during implementation. Gender provisions were also integrated into the project design for upgrading the curriculum and the education management and information systems. Other GEMAP design features included the following (ADB 2002):

(i) **Curriculum development.** Curriculum development specialists were to be trained in gender and ethnic minority issues and diversity. The new diversified curriculum would be sensitive to gender and ethnic minority issues (social, cultural, and economic diversity). The curriculum would include optional topics related to gender and ethnic minority issues, preservation of indigenous knowledge, and economic development of ethnic minority areas.

(ii) **Teaching methods.** Teaching methods for the diversified curriculum were to be sensitive to ethnic and cultural diversity and gender issues.

(iii) **In-service teacher training.** Teachers would be trained on gender issues, ethnic and cultural diversity, indigenous language instruction, and the learning styles of girls and diverse ethnic minority groups. In selecting participants for in-service teacher training, implementers would give priority to women to achieve at least the same proportion of women’s participation as in the overall pool of in-service trainees.

(iv) **Construction and facilities upgrading.** Construction would include efforts to locate schools as close to ethnic minority communities as possible and to include amenities such as separate toilets to attract girls.

(v) **Study support programs.** These targeted poor, ethnic minority, and female students. Project implementers would carry out the study support programs in 22 disadvantaged provinces, using materials designed to enhance academic skills and knowledge of gender, and cultural and ethnic diversity.

(vi) **An IEC program.** Project implementers would conduct an IEC program in target communities, especially among ethnic minority groups, to convince parents of the benefits of educating children—particularly girls.

(vii) **Pilot initiatives.** Project implementers would complete pilot initiatives in eight provinces and would feed lessons learned back into the education system to increase access and participation in upper secondary schools, especially among the poor, ethnic minorities, and girls.15

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15 Five pilot initiatives would explore new approaches to financing schools, improving school-community partnerships, identifying appropriate administrative roles and responsibilities, managing schools in difficult areas, and cost sharing in upper secondary education.
(viii) **Training of education managers.** Project implementers would provide trainings at provincial, district, school, and commune levels, including for parents’ associations, to raise awareness of gender and ethnic minority issues.

(ix) **Student-based education management and information systems.** The project would strengthen education management and information systems, so that education authorities could carry out disaggregated data tracking and analyses.

The design and monitoring framework (DMF) included two gender-sensitive indicators. In relation to access and equity, the indicators were that there would be “increased participation of the poor and ethnic minorities, especially ethnic minority females,” and that there would be an “increase in the gross enrollment rate from 24% in 2000 to 30% by 2005 in 22 selected project provinces.” The indicator for study support programs was that “study support programs [would be] set up for 22,500 poor, ethnic minority, and female students” (ADB 2002, 21). There was no requirement in the DMF for other indicators to collect or analyze sex-disaggregated data. GEMAP implementation was included in the loan assurances and in the loan agreement (ADB 2003c).

### Gender Equality Results

Table 4 summarizes gender equality results to date for each project component. An analysis of major achievements, challenges, and the potential for sustainability follows. More details are provided in the appendix (Table A1.3).

#### Participation, Access to Resources, and Practical Benefits

Overall girls’ enrollment in upper secondary schools increased by about 7% (20,495) in the 22 most educationally disadvantaged provinces where project implementers delivered targeted activities to increase access and equity. In 2005, there were 313,229 girls enrolled compared with 333,724 in 2007. Boys’ enrollments reduced slightly over the same period by less than 1%.17

It is reasonable to assume that USEDP’s activities have contributed to increased enrollments. For example, in the case of one school visited by the RGA team in Hoa Binh province, school authorities reported that the construction of new classrooms had increased school enrollments—including the enrollment of girls—because it had substantially reduced the distance required by students to travel to school. Two of the fundamental barriers to girls accessing upper secondary

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16 Information on gender specialists was provided in an email from ADB.

17 Data provided by Viet Nam Resident Mission Gender Specialist via email 12 May 2009. Source MOET.
education are the distance to the school and the lack of sanitation facilities.

It is anticipated that by the end of the project, 2,000 rooms will have been constructed including classrooms, libraries, science laboratories, computer rooms, and boarding rooms. This is a significant result for both boys and girls, as the upgrading and construction of new classrooms and facilities have provided additional school spaces and improved the learning environment for all students.

A large part of the project was to improve the quality of teaching through training and curriculum development. The project trained more than 50,000 teachers and curriculum developers. Table 5 provides women’s and men’s participation in all project training. Overall, women’s participation in training was high,

Table 4  Upper Secondary Education Development Project Summary of Gender Equality Results by Loan Component

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan Component</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal:</strong> Poverty reduction through improved quality, access, and equity in upper secondary education</td>
<td>• Increased girls’ enrollment in upper secondary schools by 7% (from 313,229 to 333,724) in the 22 poorest provinces between 2005 and 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: Supporting Conditions for Quality Improvement in Upper Secondary Education</td>
<td>• Women’s participation in curriculum and teacher training averaged 66% (33,762) compared with 34% of male teachers trained (17,382). This was in proportion with the percentage of teachers in upper secondary schools who are women (65%). However, there were only 37 women (20%) compared with 152 men (80%) who participated in overseas training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Curriculum development</td>
<td>• Curriculum developers were trained in gender equality after curriculum and textbooks were revised, but this will assist with further curriculum revisions in future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher training</td>
<td>• MOE’s Committee for the Advancement of Women was invited to curriculum development workshops. MOE’s curriculum committee reviewed curriculum materials for gender sensitivity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Instructional materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Improving Access, Equity, and Participation in Upper Secondary Education</td>
<td>• Project implementers constructed facilities and provided equipment that improved the learning environment for boys and girls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Construction of facilities</td>
<td>• New boarding schools facilitated girls’ access to upper secondary schools. Schools were built close to ethnic minority communities, addressing the constraints of distance and physical access for girls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Study support programs</td>
<td>• The Handbook for Upper Secondary Schoolgirls was provided to 90,000 female students in selected provinces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information, education, and communication (IEC)</td>
<td>• Male and female students were provided with access to vocational educational support: 9,567 students received guidance using vocational training software (5,123 girls and 4,444 boys); and 5,000 students took courses on vocational orientation (2,925 girls and 2,075 boys).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: Strengthening Management</td>
<td>• Vocational education training was provided to 110 core teachers and 880 other teachers (535 female and 455 male).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pilot initiatives</td>
<td>• Project implementers developed life skills, gender education, and ethnic minority materials, which they will provide to teachers in 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Education management information system</td>
<td>• No information was available to assess gender equality results from pilot initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sex-disaggregated data was not routinely included in project reports.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IEC = information, education, and communication, MOE = Ministry of Education and Training.
Sources: ADB resident mission gender specialist email (12 May 2009) with data on upper secondary students provided by MOE; NPIU email, 9 January 2009; NPIU 2008a; MOE 2009; and field visits.
Table 5  Women’s and Girls’ Participation in the Upper Secondary Education Development Project Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Contents</th>
<th>Total Number Trained</th>
<th>No. of Male</th>
<th>No. of Female</th>
<th>% Female</th>
<th>% Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-service Training</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training on pilot curriculum and materials streamlined in technical upper secondary schools for teachers</td>
<td>7,223</td>
<td>3,070</td>
<td>4,153</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationwide training courses on textbooks over 3 years</td>
<td>15,500</td>
<td>4,650</td>
<td>10,850</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111 training courses for grade 12 core teachers</td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>1,650</td>
<td>3,850</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training courses on new teaching methods in 22 selected provinces</td>
<td>18,228</td>
<td>5,873</td>
<td>12,355</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training courses on new teaching methods for grade 11 teachers</td>
<td>1,568</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>1,070</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training courses for lecturers</td>
<td>944</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overseas Training</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for 101 curriculum development, textbook and material compilation, teaching methods, and evaluation and quality assurance experts</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas short-term training courses for 88 people</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Training</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed education leadership materials including nine modules and provided training on pilot for administrators of selected provinces</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for provincial core teachers.</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training courses for qualified teachers on career orientation in phase 1</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training courses for teachers on providing career orientation and advice to students</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for upper secondary education administrators in 22 provinces</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number and percent of education staff trained</strong></td>
<td>51,144</td>
<td>17,382</td>
<td>33,762</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocational Services Provided to Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation services on career orientation for students in 22 provinces</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>2,075</td>
<td>2,925</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students provided with career orientation and advice using project-developed software</td>
<td>9,567</td>
<td>4,444</td>
<td>5,123</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of students who received vocational services</strong></td>
<td>14,567</td>
<td>6,519</td>
<td>8,048</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NPIU email, 9 January 2009.
with women comprising up to 70% of participants in some cases. In total, project implementers trained 33,762 female teachers (66% of teachers trained) and 17,382 male teachers (34% of teachers trained). This was a significant practical benefit for women and achieved the overall target set in the loan covenant that women’s participation be proportionate to women’s representation among candidates (65% of teachers in upper secondary education are women). However, women’s participation was lower in high-level training such as for lecturers, provincial core teachers, and administrators, and very low for overseas training opportunities (20% overall compared with 80% for men).

Girls had equal access to vocational centers, which provided career orientation and advice to 5,123 girls and 4,444 boys. Female and male teachers were trained to provide career orientation advice to students (see Table 5), but there was no information available on whether this training or advice addressed gender-based stereotypes. Originally, it was intended that a study support program be included in schools to target girls’ participation. However, this was not implemented. Nevertheless, the vocational support that was provided was a positive benefit for both girls and boys, and was a good first step that helped them transition from school to work.

As part of its IEC program, the project provided 90,000 copies of the *Handbook for Upper Secondary Schoolgirls* (MOET 2005) for female students in selected provinces. The handbook provided information on gender equality; international instruments such as CEDAW\(^\text{19}\) and laws in Viet Nam; information about sex, marriage, HIV, prostitution, women’s health care, and pregnancy; as well as folk songs, traditional poems, short stories, and Vietnamese history and geography. The RGA team worked with a translator to identify the content of the handbook, but it was not possible to fully assess the quality of the material. However, girls who had read the handbook said that it was very useful. The project also developed a television documentary film about an ethnic minority girl overcoming difficulties to do well in school, but no information was available from project implementers about how this was used, or how often.

One GEMAP activity was to train curriculum and textbook writers to ensure that new curriculum materials are gender-sensitive. Due to delays in project implementation, much of the curriculum and textbooks were developed before the training occurred. However, the training will assist curriculum developers to review and revise the curriculum if necessary after materials have been tried. MOET’s Committee on the Advancement of Women participated in curriculum development workshops, and MOET’s curriculum committee checked newly developed instructional materials for gender sensitivity. The project also developed life skills, gender education, and ethnic minority materials that will be provided for teachers in 2009. It was not possible for the RGA team to assess the quality or gender sensitivity of any of these materials.

Strategic Changes in Gender Relations

Some USEDP initiatives have the potential to contribute to strategic changes in gender relations. For example, the construction of schools and boarding facilities closer to remote communities, which enabled girls to increase participation, may lead to changing attitudes toward girls’ schooling. Further, revisions to curriculum and textbooks from a gender and women’s rights perspective, the provision of gender equality materials to teachers (planned for 2009), distribution of gender equality handbooks to school girls, and vocational and career advice to girls and boys (particularly if there was attention to gender stereotyping) could have positive impacts on attitudes about women’s and girls’ rights in the household and in the community if both boys and girls were exposed to gender equality messages. Special measures (such as the construction of toilets and safe boarding facilities for girls) would also send important messages to families regarding the importance of equal access to education for ethnic minority girls. These messages could be expected to have broader impacts in the family and community over the medium and long term. There is considerable evidence that the

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\(^{18}\) Percentage provided by ADB resident mission gender specialist in email, 12 May 2009.

\(^{19}\) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), an international human rights treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, and devoted to gender equality.
provision of secondary education to girls can have a range of positive empowerment effects, particularly where other legal and institutional factors are in place (UN Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality 2005).

Challenges and Factors Influencing the Achievement of Gender Equality Results

The main factors that helped to achieve the gender equality results are the inclusion of a GEMAP in the project design, the loan covenant on equal access to training resources by women, and the implementation of some GEMAP elements. For example, the construction and upgrading of classrooms and boarding facilities in areas where girls were underrepresented in schools contributed to higher girls’ enrollments, by directly addressing the key barrier of the distance from home to school.

However, it is also clear that more comprehensive results could have been achieved if project implementers had paid more attention to developing ownership of the GEMAP and ensuring that it was implemented and monitored. There were a number of key challenges that contributed to difficulties with GEMAP implementation. The gender analysis underlying the key gender strategies was not explicit in the project design; and the updating of the GEMAP was not a participatory process. As a result of both these factors, the rationale for a focus on women and girls was not well understood by MOET or by project implementation staff. There was little knowledge, understanding, or ownership of many GEMAP elements. In addition, the GEMAP was not a strong communication tool. A long-term project gender adviser could have addressed these difficulties and assisted with GEMAP implementation and monitoring. ADB, MOET, and the project implementers missed an important opportunity to educate project staff about the relevance of gender equality to their work, and to build their capacity to integrate gender equality activities into this and other projects.

Reporting on GEMAP implementation by ADB and the NPIU was minimal. NPIU reports did not include sex-disaggregated data on training despite the requirement of the loan covenant. ADB reported that the GEMAP was being complied with and that the GEMAP was updated on several occasions, although there was no supporting evidence to verify this. ADB did not follow up with NPIU on the failure to implement some of the GEMAP elements. In addition, the structure of the DMF in the RRP was different from the monitoring framework used in project performance reports, which monitored activities rather than outputs and, as a result, used different indicators than the DMF. The indicator on study support programs remained and was reported against. However, the indicator on girls’ enrollment was not included and hence this critical data was not regularly reported. Overall, it was very difficult for the RGA team to get information on how GEMAP provisions were implemented.

Some barriers to girls’ enrollment, such as proximity to schools, were very well addressed by the project and improvements in the quality of education benefited both boys and girls. However, other barriers to increased enrollment of girls from ethnic minorities such as attitudinal change and parent support were insufficiently addressed, despite the fact that there was potential to do so through the five pilot initiatives, IEC, and vocational programs. The pilot studies offered an opportunity to explore important gender equality issues such as women’s involvement in school, and community partnerships in school management. It was not possible to get a copy of the pilot studies; however, the NPIU informed the RGA team that gender considerations were not included in them. This was a lost opportunity for learning about the possible contributions of women at the school level and the ways in which this may lead to higher enrollment and retention of girls and boys in school, as well as how to sustain higher enrollments.

Aside from the production of the video documentary, a lot more work could have been done to develop IEC materials to address attitudinal barriers to the enrollment of girls and boys from ethnic minorities, with particular emphasis on more outreach to parents. The NPIU noted that it was difficult to find authors to develop curriculum and IEC who have the skills to develop content that would adequately address the needs of girls and ethnic minority students (NPIU 2008a, 11). The enrollment data reported above shows that there has been a decrease in boys’ enrollments, albeit a minor one. This suggests that barriers to boys’ enrollments from ethnic minority communities also need to be analyzed and addressed.
Contribution of Gender Equality Results to Loan Outcomes and Sustainability

The project achieved some very good practical benefits for both boys and girls that contributed to improvements in the quality of education and to increases in girls’ enrollment in the 22 project provinces. However, opportunities were missed to enhance the practical gender equality results that were achieved and thereby to further improve quality, access, and equity in upper secondary education. The overall return on the loan investment and the sustainability of project outcomes could have been enhanced if the project had addressed gender issues more thoroughly.

Recommendations

To address the missed opportunities over the remainder of the project period, the following recommendations should be considered:

(i) A project gender adviser should be engaged to review and update the GAP to ensure it is relevant to the remaining work and that it is implemented. This should be done in a participatory manner to build ownership and understanding of the relevance of gender equality to education projects.

(ii) It should be ensured that gender disparities are addressed in follow-up activities developed out of the pilot studies, and that every opportunity is taken to ensure women’s equal participation, particularly in school management initiatives. Gender analysis of the different barriers experienced by boys and girls from ethnic minority communities should be considered and strategies developed for increasing enrollment and retention rates of both girls and boys in upper secondary education for the remainder of the project.

(iii) Systems should be put in place or upgraded to enable the routine collection and reporting of sex-disaggregated data. ADB loan review missions need to systematically investigate and analyze differences in participation and benefits between girls and boys, and between women and men.

(iv) The project completion report and impact study should include sex-disaggregated data for all project indicators. These reports should also include information and analysis of gender equality results—that is, differences in participation, access to project resources, and practical benefits for males and females, as well as evidence of progress towards changes in gender relations.

(v) Future education projects supported by ADB in Viet Nam should give specific attention to gender equality issues in the loan design and to the preparation of project GAPs that are systematically monitored during implementation.
Findings, Issues, and Conclusions

Summary of Gender Equality Results and Links to Loan Outcomes

Participation in Project Activities

All three projects achieved good results in the area of women’s participation. The implementation of the gender action plan (GAP) for the Central Region Urban Environmental Improvement Project (CRUEIP), with its focus on capacity building for the Viet Nam Women’s Union (VWU), resulted in high levels of participation by women in all project activities and training with all targets for women’s participation exceeded. Women participated as decision-makers on management boards for community-based sanitation programs, as managers of revolving loan funds, and as directors of community management committees. Women were involved for the first time in the implementation of civil works projects; in public consultations on community-based sanitation and large-scale environmental activities on drainage, floodwater protection, and public sanitation; and in consultations about, and monitoring of, the impacts of resettlement activities.

The Health Care in the Central Highlands (HICH) project’s gender and ethnic minority action plan (GEMAP) set targets for women’s participation in training, and in most cases the project achieved or exceeded these targets. Women participated in the development and distribution of information, education, and communication (IEC) materials, which helped to improve their effectiveness and impact. In the Upper Secondary Education Development Project (USEDP), a positive result from the GEMAP was the participation of the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)’s Committee for the Advancement of Women in curriculum development workshops. Women’s participation in in-service training was also high for most courses.

Access to Project Resources

Due to implementation of GAPs, CRUEIP and the HICH project achieved good results by ensuring women’s access to project resources and high levels of participation in project activities. In CRUEIP, over 75% of credit recipients for household sanitation works—such as the construction of toilets—were women. Priority was given to households headed by women for exemptions from cost-recovery for community-based sanitation works. Female garbage collectors benefited from changes to the design of handcarts; women in the community benefited from sanitation and hygiene training; and female workers at urban environmental companies (URENCOs) benefited from management and skills training.

In the HICH project, implementation of the GEMAP resulted in increased access by women and children to health care services, particularly for ante- and postnatal checkups and for assisted childbirth. This was a direct result of GEMAP strategies that addressed the non-medical barriers to women’s access to health services, by providing outreach services and food and transport allowances, which significantly reduced the opportunity costs of accessing health services. Women benefited from increased access to health information due to IEC materials that informed them about their rights to health insurance and health care.

The construction of school facilities under USEDP—including boarding facilities in disadvantaged provinces where girls were underrepresented in upper secondary schools—increased girls’ access to, and participation in, schooling. Girls and boys had equal access to career orientation and guidance, and girls benefited from the schoolgirl’s gender handbook (MOET 2005).
Practical Benefits

Due to GAP implementation, all three projects achieved a range of important practical benefits. In CRUEIP, the major benefit was improvements in living and environmental conditions at the community and household levels, due to improved drainage, sanitation, and waste disposal practices; and better awareness among women of the links between health, environmental conditions, and sanitation practices—the result of IEC activities. Female staff from URENCOs (mostly administrative workers, sweepers, and garbage collectors) benefited from training and new equipment designed specifically to take their needs into account.

In the HICH project, new equipment and the construction of new facilities such as obstetric and pediatric wards, canteens, and separate sanitation facilities for women strengthened the capacity of hospitals to better respond to the needs of women. The project upgraded the skills and qualifications of female health staff, resulting in increased confidence. Staff at all levels now have a better understanding of women’s health needs. Female commune health workers received skills training, and women in the community improved their knowledge on health through IEC programs.

In USEDP, the upgrading and construction of new classrooms and facilities provided better physical access for girls and an improved learning environment for all students and teachers. These were important practical benefits. The provision of career and vocational counseling, the handbook for girls, and training for teachers also delivered practical benefits for girls and women. Girls’ participation in upper secondary school may lead to increased household income in the medium and long terms as girls complete their schooling.

Strategic Changes in Gender Relations at Community Level

CRUEIP achieved strategic changes in gender relations at the community level, because the GAP explicitly increased women’s participation in decision making about infrastructure, where women had previously not played a strong role; and built their capacity to do so. These changes were only evident in provinces where the GAP was implemented. The involvement of the VWU in CRUEIP implementation ensured that women attended meetings and participated in activities and led activities as community motivators, managers, and implementers. This increased the visibility of women in community management positions, and led to more opportunities for women to participate in decision making at the commune and ward level. High levels of women’s participation resulted in community ownership, support for community sanitation improvements, and significant changes in community sanitation practices. Healthy household waste disposal in areas targeted by the project is now supported by residents, reducing women’s burden and responsibility for household sanitation. More middle-aged men
participated in public meetings, surveys, trainings, and community activities around sanitation. This is an important change in gender relations, as sanitation is usually seen as the responsibility of women. It was not possible to assess strategic changes in gender relations at the community level due to increased access to health and education under the HICH project or USEDP. However, both projects have the potential to contribute to such changes in the medium or long term.

Other Positive Results and Institutional Changes

Due to ownership and understanding of the gender action plans by project implementation teams, CRUEIP and the HICH project have the potential to contribute to institutional changes that could increase the effectiveness of investments. Project managers now have an increased understanding of why gender issues need to be addressed in their respective sectors and practical experience with how this can be done. In CRUEIP, due to the capacity building activities included in the GAP design, the VWU now has the ability to implement small civil works activities. In those provinces that have implemented the GAP, the VWU’s role, visibility, and profile have been reinforced with local governments and communities. The local VWU chapters have also increased their capacity to implement community-based projects and to represent women’s interests in decision-making forums.

Project managers have signaled their intention to apply the learning on GEMAP implementation from the HICH project to future activities. If separate obstetric wards, canteens, and sanitation facilities are replicated in the design of hospitals in future, the project would contribute to institutional changes. If food and transport allowances paid to women to cover indirect and opportunity costs of health care—piloted under the HICH project—are continued after the project ends, this would be an important institutional result. There was little understanding of the GEMAP in USEDP, so opportunities were missed to promote similar institutional changes. However, as in the HICH project, if some of the GEMAP design features of USEDP (such as separate toilets for males and females, and boarding facilities) are institutionalized by MOET and replicated across the sector, these would be important institutional results.

Contribution of Gender Equality Results to Project Outcomes, Effectiveness, and Sustainability

The implementation of the GAPs and the achievement of gender equality results contributed directly to the achievement of overall loan outcomes for all three projects. In CRUEIP and the HICH project, this was recognized and valued by the executing agency and by project managers. There is strong evidence in CRUEIP that the software activities undertaken due to the GAP increased the effectiveness of the loan investment. GAP implementation directly enhanced community ownership of sanitation investments and contributed to changed attitudes and behavior on environmental sanitation. Provinces that fully implemented the GAP and achieved significant gender equality results are making far better progress towards overall project objectives, compared with those where GAP activities have been delayed. The high levels of community ownership and increased awareness on the importance of sanitation that resulted from GAP activities are also likely to increase the sustainability of project outcomes.

In the HICH project, GAP activities increased women’s use of health services (by addressing the opportunity costs and other non-medical barriers) and this directly contributed to the project goal of improved health status. Gender equality results such as improvements in girls’ enrollments in schools and more gender-sensitive curriculum directly contributed to USEDP’s goal of improved quality, access, and equity in upper secondary education.

The HICH project and USEDP contributed to increasing women’s access to health and education in ethnic minority areas. USEDP also directly contributed to a more gender-sensitive curriculum. CRUEIP contributed to building women’s capacity and increasing the number of women in community and local government decision-making. They also contributed to the Viet Nam country partnership strategy’s strategic objectives related to inclusive social development in the areas of health and education and enhanced women’s roles in urban environmental management (ADB 2006).
The Quality and Effectiveness of Gender Action Plans

All three projects had a GAP or a GEMAP but there were significant differences in the quality of design GAPs and their implementation. CRUEIP and the HICH project GAPs were based on sound gender analysis, and developed in a participatory manner with project stakeholders. As a result, team members were familiar with the design features and had ownership of the GAP. For CRUEIP, this was only the case in some provinces. CRUEIP and the HICH project also had project gender advisers to assist with GAP implementation. In contrast, while USEDP’s design GAP included some important gender strategies, the revised implementation GAP was long, complicated, and not well linked to overall project activities. Comparing the approaches taken by the three projects provides clear evidence that GAPs are a useful gender mainstreaming tool when they are based on quality gender analysis, are clear and simple, include realistic targets, are closely aligned with project components, and have strategies in place to ensure project staff are aware of GAP requirements and can implement them. Further, it is important that project GAPs are implemented from the outset of project implementation, and not midway through the implementation period as occurred in USEDP, and which led to many GAP activities being carried out too late.

All three projects achieved gender equality results. But the findings demonstrate that a more comprehensive range of results could be achieved when quality GAPs are fully implemented in sequence with project outputs. Since the CRUEIP gender adviser worked with all the provincial project management units (PPMUs) to build capacity and to develop targets, guidelines, and clear action plans for implementation; all GAP targets were exceeded; the GAP was regularly monitored; and CRUEIP achieved a comprehensive range of results in the provinces where the GAP was implemented. The gender specialist input for the HICH project was less than for CRUEIP, and more work is needed to build further capacity and understanding of more qualitative and strategic gender equality issues. Nevertheless, the HICH project GAP provided a roadmap for implementers. In contrast, the USEDP GAP was difficult to implement due to its complexity. Specific elements of the GAPs that helped to achieve results are discussed below.

**Gender analysis.** Comprehensive gender analysis was undertaken during the project design for CRUEIP. The HICH project also undertook gender analysis during project implementation, when the GEMAP was developed. The design GAP for USEDP was not based on solid gender analysis, and as a result, implementers missed opportunities to address key strategic gender issues, such as women’s involvement in school committees and gender stereotyping in vocational and career guidance.

**A quality GAP.** CRUEIP and the HICH project achieved better gender equality results than USEDP, due to their better quality GAPs. It is not sufficient just to have any GAP. It must be based on a high quality gender analysis, well targeted, and closely linked to project components. It must be relevant, easily understood, and implementable.

**Targets included for the participation of women.** CRUEIP and the HICH project GAPs had realistic targets for women’s participation in most project components. CRUEIP and the HICH project targets were developed using a participatory process that included the gender specialist and the PPMUs. Both the HICH project and USEDP had training targets for women. Comparing the use of targets across the projects provides evidence that targets are useful as long as implementers understand and take ownership of them. Targets help to focus attention on women’s participation and can enhance strategic gender benefits.

**Ownership of the GAP.** Not surprisingly, ownership and understanding of the GAP emerges as a key factor in the achievement of gender equality results. The most comprehensive gender equality results were achieved in those provinces of CRUEIP and the HICH project that had the highest level of ownership and understanding of the GAPs by project staff and other stakeholders. In contrast, few USEDP project implementers were aware of the GAP elements.

**GAP included in the loan covenants.** The GAP was included in the loan covenants of all three projects.
However, the experience with USEDP shows that ADB needs to more assertively follow up on compliance with loan covenants.

**Capacity building of implementers.** Both CRUEIP and the HICH project invested in gender training for project staff, which helped to build ownership and understanding of GAP activities. CRUEIP also targeted capacity building of the VWU to facilitate the implementation of GAP activities. USEDP provided gender training for curriculum developers, but not for project implementing staff. Consequently, the latter were unaware of key GAP provisions.

**Institutionalization of Gender Action Plans in Loan Design, Implementation, and Monitoring**

In general, more effort is needed to ensure that GAPs are institutionalized by both executing agencies and ADB. Institutionalization was good in CRUEIP, with an excellent level of awareness and understanding of the GAP by the executing agency in some provinces, and GAP targets were included in project monitoring and evaluation. Institutionalization was also good in the HICH project, with monitoring of women’s participation in training and good understanding of the GEMAP. ADB monitoring also reported on the HICH project GEMAP. There was no institutionalization of the GEMAP in USEDP, with very little monitoring and reporting of GEMAP implementation by the executing agency or ADB.

Monitoring of GAP implementation and gender equality results was most comprehensive in CRUEIP and the HICH project. Data was collected at the provincial level for both projects, and the project gender advisers regularly monitored and reported on overall GAP implementation. In contrast, there was little monitoring of GAP implementation or key gender equality results in USEDP. While all three projects’ design and monitoring frameworks (DMFs) included some gender indicators; overall, there was inadequate attention in DMFs to differences in the participation of, and benefits to, men and women; and DMFs did not include indicators for monitoring GAP targets.

Institutionalization of GAPs is also linked to engagement on gender issues by ADB project staff. ADB staff and executing agencies need to engage in more dialogue on GAP implementation. ADB loan review missions need to systematically investigate and analyze differences in participation and benefits, and report on this in back-to-office reports and aide-memoire. A challenge for all stakeholders is to monitor and assess results and outcomes, such as practical benefits to women and men and positive changes in gender relations.

**The Role of Gender Specialists**

Each project took a different approach to the use of project gender advisers. In CRUEIP and the HICH project, gender advisers helped to familiarize project staff with the GAP and to ensure its implementation. While USEDP had a gender adviser to update the GEMAP, it had no project gender adviser to support implementation, so there was little ownership or capacity to implement the GEMAP. The CRUEIP gender adviser provided critical support to the PPMUs and local VWU chapters—to build capacity and to enable effective ownership, implementation, and monitoring of the GAP. She helped to develop strategies and guidelines to implement the GAP, and fostered discussion and ownership of GAP elements. CRUEIP is the only project with a long-term gender and community development specialist. This was instrumental to the results achieved. The HICH project’s gender adviser also assisted with the development of the GEMAP and worked with each of the PPMUs to develop targets. He helped to build capacity of provincial staff and is involved in the monitoring of the GEMAP. To improve results in the HICH project, the gender adviser needs to further build the capacity of project staff to understand qualitative gender issues. USEDP did not have a project gender adviser, so project implementers missed an opportunity to build the capacity of project staff to address gender issues in the education sector in USEDP and in other education projects.

Participation by the ADB resident mission gender specialist in both CRUEIP and the HICH project has been useful. For both the HICH project and CRUEIP, she participated in some review missions and provided
support to the project gender adviser. She was not involved in the implementation of USEDP. The ADB resident mission gender specialist could play a key role in the collection and dissemination of results and lessons learned across projects. For example, while CRUEIP has undertaken some good monitoring of the GAP, this monitoring could be disseminated more widely across the project. For all three projects, the resident mission gender specialist could document and disseminate results and effective strategies for addressing gender equality during project implementation. This would also strengthen the ability of all stakeholders to ensure that gender equality is better integrated into project implementation.

Other Contextual or Institutional Factors

In CRUEIP, the GAP was well implemented and more comprehensive results were achieved where there was leadership from the PPMUs and provincial people’s committees (PPCs), and good relationships between the VWU and the PPMU. Capacity of the VWU was also a critical factor. Both Dong Ha and Ha Tinh PPCs were supportive of the project and the VWU activities because these contribute to their plans to achieve city status. In the HICH project, the GEMAP was valued at the provincial level, because PPMUs recognized that the GEMAP was a very useful tool for them to help them translate government policy on women and ethnic minorities into implementable actions. In contrast, there was no leadership in USEDP to promote GAP implementation, and little apparent understanding of the relevance of gender issues to the project.

Another contextual factor that impacted implementation of GAPs and the achievement of results was overall delays in project implementation. The variation between provinces in CRUEIP was a good example of this. Delays in some provinces meant that the PPMUs were focused on hardware components that enabled them to disburse funds quickly, and therefore they did not disburse funds for GAP implementation. As a result, in these provinces, the gender aspects of the project were given little attention to date.

Overarching Recommendations for Viet Nam

The following recommendations are suggested:

(i) GAPs should be prepared in sufficient detail to provide a guide for implementation and should include: strategies and targets for each loan component, project gender advisers throughout implementation, and gender capacity building with executing agencies and other stakeholders.

(ii) Terms of reference for project gender advisers should ensure that their inputs are used strategically to (a) build ownership of the GAP and ensure its implementation, (b) analyze the progress and effectiveness of overall GAP implementation, (c) address implementation challenges where women’s participation is limited, and (d) share lessons on effective strategies and how gender equality results contribute to overall loan outcomes.

(iii) Sex-disaggregated baseline data should be collected wherever possible on gender-related targets included in GAPs and on other DMF indicators.

(iv) Executing agencies should collect and report on sex-disaggregated data for DMF indicators. Reporting on the GAP and on gender equality results should be integrated into core project documents such as annual reports, midterm review, impact assessment, and project completion reports. They should assess gender differences in participation, access to project resources, and benefits.

(v) More attention should be paid to GAP implementation and monitoring, including the monitoring of gender equality results throughout project implementation. Enhanced dialogue with executing agencies by ADB on GAP implementation and gender-related loan covenants during review missions should be pursued.
Findings, Issues, and Conclusions

(vi) The ADB resident mission gender specialist could be more involved in loan design, implementation and monitoring, and should be included in loan review missions for projects in high-priority sectors where it is possible to demonstrate the impact of a gender responsive approach and where there are opportunities for lesson learning, replication to other projects, and building the gender capacity of partners.

(vii) The next Viet Nam country partnership strategy should include gender equality results in its results framework. This would enable project GAPs to be aligned with the country strategy and would provide a firm basis for dialogue on gender equality and GAP implementation with executing agencies.

Findings and Conclusions from All Four Countries

Lessons, findings, and recommendations from the Viet Nam RGA are confirmed and reinforced by the RGAs in Mongolia, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia, which also validated the findings from the first series of RGAs: projects with detailed GAPs had the most comprehensive gender equality results, including better participation rates by women in project activities, access to project resources, practical benefits, and progress towards equal gender relations. In some cases, the implementation of GAPs and the achievement of gender equality results also promoted or reinforced institutional changes within executing agencies that are expected to support future gender mainstreaming efforts.

Findings from the RGAs also demonstrated that, where comprehensive gender equality results were achieved, these directly contributed to overall loan effectiveness and the achievement of loan outcomes. The following design and implementation features were critical for achieving comprehensive gender equality results.

(i) GAPs should be prepared during loan preparation. They should be incorporated into loan designs to provide a roadmap for executing and implementing agencies to ensure equal participation and benefits. The projects that achieved the most comprehensive results had loan designs that were informed by good quality and integrated gender and social analysis.

(ii) GAPs should have achievable targets and strategies that are relevant to each loan component and project outcomes. Projects with the most comprehensive results had achievable targets and inclusive community participation and mobilization strategies.

(iii) Executing agencies should systematically monitor GAP implementation and gender equality results. Consistent monitoring by executing agencies was a strong feature of those projects that achieved the most comprehensive results.

(iv) GAPs need to be owned and understood by executing and implementing agencies. Projects where key stakeholders understood the rationale for ensuring that women participated and benefited, and how this contributed to the achievement of loan outcomes and/or the implementation of government policy, achieved the most comprehensive results.

(v) Gender capacity building and gender and social development expertise during implementation is needed to enhance understanding and ownership of GAPs and to ensure that they are fully implemented and regularly reviewed. These were also key features of the projects that achieved the most comprehensive results.

(vi) ADB needs to continue to invest in lateral learning through peer exchanges on effective strategies for achieving gender equality results. Some of the projects with the most comprehensive results had project directors who had participated in ADB lateral learning events on gender mainstreaming.

There were also some common challenges evident across all four countries. The findings highlight the importance of developing and implementing quality GAPs. In addition to the features listed above, GAPs
need to be effective communication tools. Many of the GAPs included in the second series of RGAs focused on women’s participation in project activities. While this is essential, more attention is also needed on higher-level results (such as benefits and outcomes), including clear strategies for how to achieve these.

ADB monitoring of GAP implementation, and the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data by executing agencies and ADB, need to be improved. Even where gender-related loan covenants were in place, reporting on compliance was often cursory and sometimes inaccurate. In some projects, particularly those with poor quality GAPs or no GAPs, collection and reporting of sex-disaggregated data were inadequate.

Executing agencies and ADB need to better support monitoring by integrating key gender-related outputs and gender-sensitive indicators for each component into design and monitoring frameworks and ADB project performance reporting. The institutionalization of GAPs into ADB design and monitoring frameworks and project performance reports was weak across all four countries. This needs to be considerably improved if ADB is to demonstrate its Strategy 2020 commitments to promote gender equity as a driver of change, and to increase aid effectiveness by managing for development results.

The findings from the first series of RGAs demonstrated that the involvement of the ADB resident mission gender specialists was critical for improving the quality of loan design and implementation. These findings were reinforced in the second series of RGAs, which also point to the need for resident mission gender specialists to be used as strategically as possible throughout the project cycle to ensure that quality GAPs are designed, implemented, and monitored. For this to occur systematically and consistently, ADB project team leaders need to be open to the involvement and inputs of resident mission gender specialists. This requires ADB country directors and headquarters staff to actively promote the inclusion of gender considerations in all loans, and to support the role of resident mission gender specialists, particularly during project preparation, design, and loan review missions.
# Appendix 1
## Gender Action Plan Elements and Gender Equality Results

Table A1.1  Gender Action Plan Elements and Gender Equality Results by Loan Component: Central Region Urban Environmental Improvement Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan Component</th>
<th>GAP Elements</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
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| Project Objective: Improved urban environment | - Participation of women is identified as a priority.  
- Women are identified as beneficiaries. | - Living and environmental conditions improved due to VWU success at creating awareness among women and men about the links between health, the environment, and sanitation. |
| Component A: Awareness and Pro-poor Sanitation |  
A1: Community Awareness and Participation Program  
- VWU will be responsible for implementation.  
- Training and group discussions on gender roles and environmental sanitation will be held for men and women at the ward level.  
- URENCO workers will be trained.  
- 50% of motivators will be women.  
- Men and women will be consulted to provide input on other subcomponents. |  
- 90% members of CMC members were female, all CMC directors were female, and 89% of motivators in urban areas were female.  
- There was over 50% female participation in CBS activities and training (70%–90% in some activities).  
- There was 75% female participation in training on management skills for CMC (24 female, 8 male).  
- There was 74% participation of women in management and IEC methods training for CMC (23 female, 8 male).  
- There was 67% female participation for training on gender and sanitation for CMC (30 female, 15 male)  
- There was over 60% participation by women and girls in training in schools and community on sanitation (more than 12,000 students).  
- Living and environmental conditions for women and men in the community improved due to better sanitation and waste disposal collection.  
- Women and men were more aware of the links between health, the environment, and sanitation.  
- Women’s presentation, public consultation, and supervision and monitoring skills improved.  
- Community sanitation practices improved, with appropriate household waste disposal now supported by many households.  
- The roles of the VWU and of female project staff were seen as very beneficial. There was high trust and support for VWU activities. |
More middle-aged men participated in public meetings and training around sanitation.

Fund disbursement for CMCs and the VWU was delayed by 5 to 6 months. This required the revision of the implementation schedules for component A by CMCs and the VWU with support from the project gender adviser.

At the time of the midterm review in August 2008, Tam Ky CMC had not received funds for community awareness and participation activities (missed opportunity).

Some CMCs and VWU chapters such as in Lang Co, Tam Ky, and Quang Ngai had not conducted many communication and education activities, due to no funds or slow and poorly synchronized fund disbursement (missed opportunity).

The executing agency gave limited attention to compliance with fund disbursement for this component despite timely fund disbursement from provincial people’s committees to VWUs being a requirement in the loan agreement (missed opportunity).

Poor sequencing of funding in several provinces. Funds for community awareness and participation activities (component A1) were not provided, even when CMCs had already received funds for the household sanitation program (component A3) (missed opportunity).

In several provinces, slow project implementation in the components reduced community confidence in the VWU’s ability to undertake sanitation activities. Community support and participation in activities conducted by the CMC was minimal (missed opportunity).

Women’s participation led to an increase in women’s time burden, because CMC work was in addition to other VWU duties and there was no salary attached. While CMC members had their expenses covered, success relied on their willingness to work in their own time, and on weekends (unintended consequence).

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**A2: Community-based Sanitation**

- The VWU and CMC will evaluate proposals for community-based improvements. Proposals will be reviewed within a gender-sensitive framework. 30% of community or neighborhood group members will be women.

- Communities will determine their own contribution to the project through a participatory process. Exemption consideration will be given to households headed by women.

- Communities determined their own contributions to CBS activities through participatory processes that involved men and women.

- Exemptions from contributing financially to CBS works were given to households headed by women.

- All proposals for CBS activities were reviewed and monitored by the VWU.

- Communities took the initiative to raise money to undertake additional sanitation and community improvement activities such as the sealing of roads.

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Table A1.1 continued
Some communities contributed an additional 20% of funds on top of their initial 20% contribution to make the roads stronger and enhance sustainability.

- There were increased opportunities for women to participate in decision making at commune and ward level.
- The government and communities successfully shared the costs to develop infrastructure.

### A3: Household Sanitation Program

- The project will build the capacity of the VWU for effective management and successful implementation.
- More than 75% of beneficiaries will be women from poor and low-income households.
- Widows and women who are heads of households will not be excluded.
- Women will be trained in sanitation and environmental issues when obtaining a grant.

- Revolving funds managers were members of local VWU chapters.
- The capacity of the VWU chapters to develop plans, undertake project management, and manage credit funds increased.
- The VWU participated in civil works implementation for the first time.
- All community members received training when obtaining a grant.
- Despite the fact that revolving funds for household sanitation activities were not targeted to the poorest households, most borrowers were low-income households.
- Credit officers did not select the poorest households due to a fear that they would not be able to repay the loans. In addition, many poor households were reluctant to borrow for the same reason and did not consider “toilet construction” a priority (missed opportunity).

### Component B: Drainage and Flood Protection

- IEC will be targeted to men and women.

- Resettlement was enhanced through participation of the VWU, which ensured that households headed by women were given extra compensation and received land titles regardless of whether or not they previously held a title.

### Component C: Wastewater and Public Sanitation

- The project will address the different needs of men and women in the design and operation and maintenance of wastewater and public sanitation.

- Women participated in resettlement meetings and in consultations about the project.
- The VWU participated in the monitoring of the quality of the construction.

### Component D: Solid Waste Management

- IEC will improve men and women’s awareness and practice of solid waste disposal, use of collection services, and payment of monthly sanitation fees.
- Women’s concerns will be addressed in URENCOs.

- Gender training was conducted for ward leaders and community members.
- The design of carts for garbage collectors was changed to make them lighter and more suitable for women to use. The design of the garbage cans was also changed and special transportation mechanisms were introduced for garbage collection so women did not have to manually lift the garbage.
- Female URENCO staff participated in gender, HIV, and safety training.
Appendix 1

Loan Component GAP Elements Gender Equality Results
Component E: Implementation Assistance and Institutional Strengthening
- Gender awareness and development training workshops for PMU and PPMU staff, CMC members, and VWU members on project management, operations and maintenance, community participation, and health awareness.
- The PMU will build upon the GAP and use gender-sensitive indicators for implementation and monitoring.
- Project implementers will ensure the resettlement plan is gender responsive.
- Female URENCO staff will receive training on leadership.

- The GAP was updated early in implementation and was well monitored.
- The capacity of VWU increased, and the importance of their role in communities was reinforced.
- The project strengthened the VWU’s capacity to develop plans, undertake project management, and manage credit funds.
- URENCOs, community leaders, PPMUs, and CMCs were trained on gender issues.
- The project gender adviser provided support and training.

CBS = community-based sanitation, CMC = community management committee, GAP = gender action plan, IEC = information, education, and communication, PMU = project management unit (national level), PPMU = provincial project management unit, RGA = rapid gender assessment, URENCO = urban environmental company, VWU = Viet Nam Women’s Union.

Sources: Nguyen 2008; and information provided by PPMUs during field visits.
Table A1.2  Gender and Ethnic Minorities Action Plan Elements and Gender Equality Results by Loan Component: Health Care in the Central Highlands Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan Component</th>
<th>GEMAP Elements</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
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| Project Goal: Improved health status  | • Increased access to health services by women and children is identified as a priority.  
• Women’s participation is identified as a priority. | • The project increased access to health services by women and children.  
• More women attended health centers for prenatal check-ups and childbirth. |
| Component A: Upgrading Facilities and Equipment | • The project will strengthen the capacity of health services to better respond to the needs of women.  
• Each medical facility will have at least one staff member trained in women’s health.  
• The project will ensure adequate visual and auditory privacy for women in new or upgraded facilities. | • Anecdotal evidence from field visits suggested that improved medical facilities and equipment increased women’s access to health services.  
• New facilities strengthened the capacity of the provinces to better respond to the needs of women.  
• Provincial hospital buildings had new obstetric and pediatric wards. New equipment included ultrasound machines.  
• Hospitals and health centers had better facilities for mothers and expecting mothers, including toilets and canteens that provided patients and their families with food, and a travel allowance that assisted with getting to hospital.  
• IEC campaigns targeted disease topics that directly affected women, including diarrhea prevention, breastfeeding, reproductive health, immunizations, safe pregnancy, and food safety.  
• Provincial hospitals and communes had at least one staff member trained in women’s health (usually more than one), and all staff had a good understanding of women’s health issues. |
| Component B: Human Resource Development | • The project will support medical training opportunities for women. At least 33% of females will participate, or a proportion equivalent to the number of female staff employed at health centers.  
• At least 20% of trained medical doctors will be women.  
• The project will avoid the selection criterion that female trainees must be younger than males.  
• For professional areas where male participation is needed but few men are participating, the project should provide similar support mentioned above for male staff.  
• The project will strengthen capacity on gender equality for staff in participating health facilities. | • Women’s participation in training was high. Provinces exceeded the gender target of 50% participation by women in training for midwives (77%) and primary health care workers (52%) and were close to achieving this target for training in IEC (48%).  
• For postgraduate training for doctors, 26% of participants were women, and for refresher training for doctors working at district and provincials level, 21% of participants were women. Although the 33% target for women’s training was not achieved, good attempts were made to recruit women to participate in these modules. Most eligible women had already been trained.  
• Women’s participation in management training modules varied. Women made up 32% of provincial staff trained in planning and management, 62% of those trained in financial management, and 43% of district staff trained in planning and financial management. Sixty percent of commune health workers trained were women and 42% of hospital management staff trained were women.  
• The instructional documents developed by the central project management unit for participant selection gave priority to women and ethnic minority people. |
The project will develop communication materials on health care, integrating gender equality messages; will encourage the participation of women in the development of health materials; and health promotion materials will focus on the needs and knowledge of men and women.

- The project will increase the numbers of female medical staff by (a) recruiting more women, and (b) building capacity in gender-specific health areas.

The project will increase the numbers of female medical staff by (a) recruiting more women, and (b) building capacity in gender-specific health areas.

More attention was needed to develop a plan for addressing underlying barriers to women’s further participation in high level training modules (missed opportunity).

- The project reduced the burden of care for women when looking after sick family members in hospital due to food and travel allowances.

Patients’ confidence in hospital staff and services increased.

- Gender awareness was widespread among the health staff interviewed by the RGA team, PPMUs had a staff member with responsibility for gender.

A large number of women participated in the development and distribution of IEC.

- IEC materials were displayed prominently in all hospitals and health centers. A range of distribution methods were used to target people with different literacy levels.

There was good collaboration with VWU members experienced with delivery of IEC messages.

- Female health care staff became more confident about their jobs due to the training received.

All construction contracts included a requirement for contractors to ensure workers received HIV training.

- More attention was needed to address the gender division of labor in the sector (missed opportunity).

Men and women were aware of their entitlements under Decision 139 on free health care. Outreach work was undertaken successfully in communities.

Gender training was undertaken at the PPMU level. PPMUs had a gender focal point with responsibility for implementing the GEMAP.

- Sex-disaggregated data on women’s participation in training was collected regularly.

The project gender adviser was in place to assist with GEMAP implementation (a long-term project gender adviser could have enhanced results).

The ADB resident mission gender specialist assisted with the development of the GEMAP during project implementation and assisted the project gender adviser to review and adjust targets and monitor the GEMAP.

Midterm review and progress reports could have given more attention to gender-specific challenges (missed opportunity).

### Table A1.2 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan Component</th>
<th>GEMAP Elements</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Component C:</strong> Strengthening Financing and Management</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The PPMUs will have at least one female member trained in gender. Gender capacity building will be provided to project implementation staff as needed.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- A domestic social development specialist will be employed on the project for 6 person-months.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Sex-disaggregated data will be included in the reporting system.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Project implementers will ensure enough financial resources for activities that promote gender equality.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Project implementers will ensure equality between males and females in recruitment, priority given for ethnic minority women.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The midterm review will consider the gender-specific challenges and concerns in accessing appropriate health services.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Loan Component | GEMAP Elements | Gender Equality Results
--- | --- | ---
Progress reports will include a section on gender, highlighting any changes in access and utilization of health care by women and men. The section might also include observations on the quality of training and the appropriateness of equipment for women and men, especially from ethnic minority groups. Issues pertaining to affordability and appropriateness of health services, as well as care rendered, will be recorded and included. | Further attention was needed for the recruitment of more women at the PPMU level (missed opportunity). Further attention was needed to collect and analyze qualitative indicators of change. Further capacity building of PPMU staff was required. |
**Table A1.3  Gender and Ethnic Minority Action Plan Elements and Gender Equality Results by Loan Component: Upper Secondary Education Development Project**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan Component</th>
<th>Revised GEMAP Elements</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal:</strong> Poverty reduction through improved quality, access, and equity in upper secondary education</td>
<td>• The project identified poor and ethnic minority girls as beneficiaries.</td>
<td>• Girls’ enrollment in upper secondary schools increased by 20,495 students or 7% in the 22 provinces between 2005 and 2007. In contrast, boys’ enrollments decreased by 3,071, less than 1%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Component 1: Supporting Conditions for Quality Improvement in Upper Secondary Education</strong></td>
<td>• The project will develop indicators and implementation guidelines for ensuring the new curriculum is culturally sensitive and gender neutral.</td>
<td>• Curriculum developers were trained in gender equality. This occurred after the curriculum and textbooks were revised but should assist with future revisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Curriculum and textbook writers will ensure that the new curriculum (grades 10–12) and curriculum guides are sensitive to gender and ethnic minority group issues and do not carry negative gender or cultural biases.</td>
<td>• Materials were developed for students and teachers on life skills, gender equity, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Curriculum and textbook writers will incorporate ethnic knowledge and gender-specific information (e.g., anti-trafficking awareness) into the new curriculum.</td>
<td>• Newly developed instructional materials were checked by the MOET’s curriculum committee for gender sensitivity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The project will include gender- and ethnic-specific targets for student learning outcomes and assessment.</td>
<td>• No information was provided to assess the gender sensitivity of the new instructional materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The project will develop criteria to ensure that all curricula, textbooks, and teaching methods are gender- and socioculturally sensitive.</td>
<td>• MOET’s Committee for the Advancement of Women was invited to and attended curriculum development workshops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Curriculum and textbook writers will develop a gender neutral curriculum and materials for life skills learning to be included in the main school curriculum.</td>
<td>• It was difficult for the NPIU to find authors to develop curriculum and IEC materials who had the skills to develop content that would adequately address the needs of girls and ethnic minority students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The project will develop guidelines and teaching/learning methods that foster gender equity and acknowledge that learning is gender and culturally sensitive.</td>
<td>• No data or information was provided to the RGA team to assess the gender sensitivity of overseas short-term training materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• MOET and provincial department of education and training committees for the advancement of women will be key stakeholders invited to national workshops on curriculum development.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gender Action Plan Elements and Gender Equality Results

In-service teacher training

- The project will develop indicators and implementation guidelines for ensuring that assessment systems and education leadership materials are culturally sensitive and gender neutral.
- The project will design strategies to improve the cost-effective delivery of education to poor and rural areas for ethnic minorities and girls.
- The project will ensure that the curriculum remains manageable for teachers and pupils especially girls and ethnic minority students, allowing for flexibility for different academic ability levels and aptitudes.
- The project will design an assessment of learning achievement to identify the strengths and weaknesses of individual students in specific skills areas and to provide feedback to the teacher about how to pace and structure lessons that demonstrate inclusiveness, and sensitivity to gender and ethnic minority issues.

- Women’s participation in curriculum and teacher training was high. The number of female teachers trained was 33,762 (See Table 3, p.44 for full details).
- No data or information was provided to the RGA team to verify whether the other GEMAP elements in this component were undertaken or assess whether the results were achieved.

Provision of instructional materials and equipment

- Develop indicators and implementation guidelines for ensuring instructional materials and users’ instructions for equipment are culturally sensitive and gender neutral.
- Provide gender neutral and culturally sensitive instructional materials.
- Provide library books for 22 ethnic minority schools of 64 provinces.
- Strengthen career orientation, curriculum, and teaching methods for technical and vocational activities. Support the extension of the 11 existing centers.
- Develop instructional materials, curriculum and teaching methods for technical and vocational activities, supporting the 11 existing centers and transforming them into comprehensive career orientation for boys and girls, especially for girls in non-traditional female vocational and technical areas.
- Provide technical and practical training for upper secondary students undertaking optional topics in career orientation in a gender neutral and non-stereotype manner.

- The provision of equipment improved the learning environment for boys and girls.
- Male and female students were given equal access to vocational education support.
- Life skills, gender education, and ethnic minority materials were developed and will be provided for teachers in 2009.
- No data or information was provided to the RGA team to verify or assess whether the other GEMAP elements in this component were undertaken or the results achieved.

Table A1.3 continued on next page
Component 2: Improving Access, Equity, and Participation

- Help 22 disadvantaged provinces to improve access, equity, and participation through provision of civil work, furniture, equipment and sanitary facilities.

- Construct facilities conducive to increasing female enrollment by providing construction and replacement on a priority basis starting in the poorest provinces, where females from ethnic minorities are significantly underrepresented in upper secondary education.

- The civil works component constructed 2,000 rooms including classrooms, libraries, science laboratories, computer rooms, and boarding rooms. Upgrading and construction of new classrooms and facilities have improved the learning environment for all students.

- In the case of one school visited in the Hoa Binh province, the construction of new classrooms increased school enrollments including enrollment of girls, as it had substantially reduced the distance required by students to travel to school.

- New boarding facilities have also directly tackled the issue of distance to schools by allowing more children to live at school.

- Overall girls’ enrollment in upper secondary schools increased by 20,495 students or 7% in the 22 provinces between 2005 and 2007. This is compared to 2.7% for students as a whole.

Support study programs

- Develop indicators and implementation guidelines for ensuring that study support programs with vocational orientation are culturally sensitive and gender neutral.

- Design support programs, including tutorials and vocational orientation to be provided annually for 5,000 very poor, female, and ethnic minority students to help them with their studies.

- Provide training for key teachers of vocational centers (110 teachers).

- Target key teachers to provide training for provinces: teachers of technique, head teachers and volunteer teachers: 45 people per province × 22 provinces = 990 people.

- Provide vocational orientation for 5,000 students in grade 12.

- Hold supporting courses on vocational orientation and teaching occupation for female ethnic minority students in two summer occasions (2007, 2008).

- Develop materials for short-term occupational training to deliver in project locations in the summers of 2007, 2008.

- Hold training for 220 teachers from vocational orientation centers.

- Hold courses in 22 locations: 150 students × 22 provinces = 6,600 students.

- Male and female students were given access to vocational education support. 9,567 students provided with advice using vocational training computer software (5,123 girls and 4,444 boys). Courses on vocational orientation were provided to 5,000 students (2,925 girls and 2,075 boys).

- Training to conduct vocational education was provided to 110 core teachers and 880 other teachers (535 female and 455 male). However, there was no information on whether this advice addressed gender-based stereotypes. In addition, it was originally intended to have a study support program at the school level and target girls’ participation; however, this was not implemented (missed opportunity).

- Vocational centers provided with computer software and information to conduct vocational training.

- No data or information was provided to the RGA team to verify or assess whether the other GEMAP elements in this component were undertaken or the results achieved.

### Table A1.3 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan Component</th>
<th>Revised GEMAP Elements</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Component 2:</strong> Improving Access, Equity, and Participation</td>
<td>• Help 22 disadvantaged provinces to improve access, equity, and participation through provision of civil work, furniture, equipment and sanitary facilities.</td>
<td>• The civil works component constructed 2,000 rooms including classrooms, libraries, science laboratories, computer rooms, and boarding rooms. Upgrading and construction of new classrooms and facilities have improved the learning environment for all students.</td>
</tr>
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<td>• Construct facilities conducive to increasing female enrollment by providing construction and replacement on a priority basis starting in the poorest provinces, where females from ethnic minorities are significantly underrepresented in upper secondary education.</td>
<td>• In the case of one school visited in the Hoa Binh province, the construction of new classrooms increased school enrollments including enrollment of girls, as it had substantially reduced the distance required by students to travel to school.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• New boarding facilities have also directly tackled the issue of distance to schools by allowing more children to live at school.</td>
<td>• Overall girls’ enrollment in upper secondary schools increased by 20,495 students or 7% in the 22 provinces between 2005 and 2007. This is compared to 2.7% for students as a whole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop indicators and implementation guidelines for ensuring that study support programs with vocational orientation are culturally sensitive and gender neutral.</td>
<td>• Male and female students were given access to vocational education support. 9,567 students provided with advice using vocational training computer software (5,123 girls and 4,444 boys). Courses on vocational orientation were provided to 5,000 students (2,925 girls and 2,075 boys).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Design support programs, including tutorials and vocational orientation to be provided annually for 5,000 very poor, female, and ethnic minority students to help them with their studies.</td>
<td>• Training to conduct vocational education was provided to 110 core teachers and 880 other teachers (535 female and 455 male). However, there was no information on whether this advice addressed gender-based stereotypes. In addition, it was originally intended to have a study support program at the school level and target girls’ participation; however, this was not implemented (missed opportunity).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide training for key teachers of vocational centers (110 teachers).</td>
<td>• Vocational centers provided with computer software and information to conduct vocational training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Target key teachers to provide training for provinces: teachers of technique, head teachers and volunteer teachers: 45 people per province × 22 provinces = 990 people.</td>
<td>• No data or information was provided to the RGA team to verify or assess whether the other GEMAP elements in this component were undertaken or the results achieved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide vocational orientation for 5,000 students in grade 12.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loan Component</td>
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<td>Gender Equality Results</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Support student grants for ethnic minority females that have excellent achievement in study and social work.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IEC development</strong></td>
<td><strong>Develop indicators and implementation guidelines for ensuring that IEC materials are culturally sensitive and gender neutral.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Develop IEC programs and materials to encourage families and girls, especially from ethnic minorities and other socioeconomic disadvantaged backgrounds to enter and remain in upper secondary schools.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Identify barriers and sociocultural factors that mitigate against enrollment and participation and develop IEC strategies to minimize or remove these barriers, increasing enrollment of the poor, ethnic minorities, and girls.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Develop strategies for dissemination of information through a variety of media, texts, and technologies to reach students (especially ethnic minority female students) families and communities in ethnic minority poor and socioeconomic areas.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Develop screenplays to disseminate ethnic minority female students who are in difficult circumstances but have excellent achievements in study.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Hold competition of screenplay writing about ethnic minorities who are in difficult circumstances but have excellent achievements.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Contract to disseminate upper secondary education promotional material in newspapers and magazines.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Coordinate with MOET’s committee on the advancement of women to hold seminars for leaders, professionals, female teachers of 22 provinces that discuss training material for key members, teachers, and volunteer teachers and modules for supporting material for female students in upper secondary education.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Develop materials for teachers in-service that integrates gender issues into the curriculum and textbooks of upper secondary education, gender education through life skills approach, reproductive health education, drug and unsound custom, social evils and education prevention, and family education.</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>90,000 copies of the Handbook for Upper Secondary Schoolgirls were provided to female students in selected provinces. The handbook provides information on gender equality, international instruments such as CEDAW and laws in Viet Nam. It also included information about sex, marriage, HIV, prostitution, women’s health care, and pregnancy; and includes folk songs, traditional poems, short stories, and Vietnamese history and geography.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>The project developed a TV documentary film about an ethnic minority girl overcoming difficulties to do well in school.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Barriers to girls’ enrollment, such as proximity to schools, were well addressed by the project. Improvements in the quality of education benefited both boys and girls. However, other barriers to increased enrollment of girls from ethnic minorities such as attitudinal change and parents support were not adequately addressed although there was potential to do so through the pilot activities, IEC, and vocational programs (missed opportunity).</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>No data or information was provided to the RGA team to verify or assess whether the other GEMAP elements in this component were undertaken or the results achieved.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Develop extra reading material for female students to teach disadvantaged female students about life skills and covering gender equality, environment protection, reproductive health, prevention of social evils, and family education.

- Select teachers and train them.
- Train key members and trainers.
- Teach male and female students.
- Train volunteers and provide 3,600 education teachers with awareness training.
- Develop IEC programs focusing on learning needs of girls.

Component 3: Strengthening Management of Upper Secondary Education

- Pilot initiatives
- Student-based education management information system

- Develop indicators and implementation guidelines for ensuring that pilot initiatives and special programs are culturally sensitive and gender neutral.
- Conduct pilot initiatives on school management in difficult situations and socializing of upper secondary education in rural and remote areas especially for ethnic minorities and girls.
- Gender and ethnic minority specialist to develop indicators and implementation guidelines for ensuring that instructional materials for the use of new information technology in school management are culturally sensitive and gender neutral.
- Develop student-based education management information system that provides opportunities to identify students who are in danger of dropping out or have learning difficulties and use data for remedial actions, especially targeting ethnic minority, poor, and female students that are underrepresented.
- Gender and ethnic minority specialist to develop indicators and implementation guidelines for ensuring that all materials pertaining to special features are culturally sensitive and gender neutral.

- There was no project gender adviser to assist with GEMAP implementation (missed opportunity).
- NPIU reported that gender issues were not considered in the pilot studies. This was a lost opportunity for learning about the possible contributions of women at the school level and how this may lead to higher enrollment of girls and boys in school, or how to sustain higher enrollments.
- There was little ownership or understanding of the GEMAP and reporting on the GEMAP by the NPIU and ADB was minimal. NPIU reports did not include sex-disaggregated data (missed opportunity).

### Table A1.3 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan Component</th>
<th>Revised GEMAP Elements</th>
<th>Gender Equality Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop extra reading material for female students to teach disadvantaged female students about life skills and covering gender equality, environment protection, reproductive health, prevention of social evils, and family education.</td>
<td>• There was no project gender adviser to assist with GEMAP implementation (missed opportunity).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Select teachers and train them.</td>
<td>• NPIU reported that gender issues were not considered in the pilot studies. This was a lost opportunity for learning about the possible contributions of women at the school level and how this may lead to higher enrollment of girls and boys in school, or how to sustain higher enrollments.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Train key members and trainers.</td>
<td>• There was little ownership or understanding of the GEMAP and reporting on the GEMAP by the NPIU and ADB was minimal. NPIU reports did not include sex-disaggregated data (missed opportunity).</td>
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<td>• Teach male and female students.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Train volunteers and provide 3,600 education teachers with awareness training.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop IEC programs focusing on learning needs of girls.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Develop indicators and implementation guidelines for ensuring that pilot initiatives and special programs are culturally sensitive and gender neutral.</td>
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<td>• Conduct pilot initiatives on school management in difficult situations and socializing of upper secondary education in rural and remote areas especially for ethnic minorities and girls.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Gender and ethnic minority specialist to develop indicators and implementation guidelines for ensuring that instructional materials for the use of new information technology in school management are culturally sensitive and gender neutral.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop student-based education management information system that provides opportunities to identify students who are in danger of dropping out or have learning difficulties and use data for remedial actions, especially targeting ethnic minority, poor, and female students that are underrepresented.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Gender and ethnic minority specialist to develop indicators and implementation guidelines for ensuring that all materials pertaining to special features are culturally sensitive and gender neutral.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Sources: ADB resident mission gender specialist email (12 May 2009) with data on upper secondary students provided by MOET; NPIU email, 9 January 2009; NPIU 2008a; MOET 2009; and field visits.
## Appendix 2
### Project Data

Table A2.1  Participation of Women and Men in Training Courses by Location: Central Region Urban Environmental Improvement Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Training Course</th>
<th>Male/Female Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thanh Hoa</td>
<td>• 7 courses on gender, water-borne diseases, sanitation and environment</td>
<td>• 450 participants including motivators, ward staff, community representatives, women’s groups, and URENCO workers (70% female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 10 courses for motivators on communication skills</td>
<td>• 300 participants (65% female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 5 training courses on gender and gender issues in sanitation</td>
<td>• 176 participants (65% female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ha Tinh</td>
<td>• Information session on CRUEIP</td>
<td>• 81 participants, mostly head of agencies and local authorities (72% male)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 6 courses for motivators</td>
<td>• 234 participants (62% female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 2 courses on gender and gender issues in urban environmental sanitation</td>
<td>• 82 URENCO workers (80% female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 12 courses on communication for motivators</td>
<td>• 246 participants (100% female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dong Ha</td>
<td>• Gender and public information on CRUEIP</td>
<td>• 53 community officers, motivators, and VWU staff (66% female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Awareness of the relationship between health and environment and sanitation</td>
<td>• 50 community officers, ward leaders, and motivators (100% female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lang Co</td>
<td>• Workshop presenting project information</td>
<td>• 100 participants. Male participation was reported as high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 1 course on gender and gender issues in urban environmental sanitation</td>
<td>• 75 participants, including URENCO workers and representatives of VWU (75% female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 3 training courses on communication</td>
<td>• 120 participants, including motivators and ward management staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tam Ky</td>
<td>• Public information on project activities</td>
<td>• Representatives from community, VWU, Viet Nam National United Front, and households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 1 course on communication skills and environmental sanitation</td>
<td>• 50 participants (90% female; 5 male, 45 female)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CRUEIP = Central Region Urban Environmental Improvement Project, URENCO = Urban Environmental Company, VWU = Viet Nam Women’s Union.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Thanh Hoa</th>
<th>Ha Tinh</th>
<th>Dong Ha</th>
<th>Lang Co</th>
<th>Tam Ky</th>
<th>Quang Ngai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge, attitudes, and practices survey</td>
<td>108 households</td>
<td>110 households</td>
<td>110 households</td>
<td>112 households</td>
<td>124 households</td>
<td>No data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9% male</td>
<td>39% male</td>
<td>25% male</td>
<td>54% male</td>
<td>16% male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>91% female</td>
<td>61% female</td>
<td>75% female</td>
<td>46% female</td>
<td>84% female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kick-off meetings</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>No data</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>No total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>48% male</td>
<td></td>
<td>72% male</td>
<td>40% male</td>
<td>36% male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>52% female</td>
<td></td>
<td>28% female</td>
<td>60% female</td>
<td>64% female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings with communities and ward level/local authorities officers to disseminate information on CRUEIP</td>
<td>1050 people</td>
<td>Integrated in VWU meetings</td>
<td>Integrated in sanitation activities by the VWU</td>
<td>Integrated in gender training and project introduction activities</td>
<td>100 people</td>
<td>No total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29% male</td>
<td></td>
<td>39% male</td>
<td>40% male</td>
<td>60% male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>71% female</td>
<td></td>
<td>61% female</td>
<td>60% female</td>
<td>40% female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information for community participation in sanitation activities and delivery of leaflets in 12 wards/communes</td>
<td>19,000 people</td>
<td>2,680 people</td>
<td>Leaflets for more than 2,000 households</td>
<td>Information on mass media. 40 posters for town</td>
<td>As no funds disbursed at time of RGA, dissemination of project information carried out through loudspeakers. No public meetings</td>
<td>Not yet carried out at time of RGA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No sex-disaggregated data</td>
<td>39% male</td>
<td>61% female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition on green-clean-beautiful streets</td>
<td>12 wards/communes</td>
<td>Not yet carried out at time of RGA</td>
<td>6 wards/communes</td>
<td>Awaiting funds</td>
<td>Not yet carried out at time of RGA</td>
<td>Not yet carried out at time of RGA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talks on environmental sanitation at primary schools/secondary schools and information on sanitation and the environment</td>
<td>24 schools with total of 1,750 pupils</td>
<td>Not yet carried out at time of RGA</td>
<td>10,300 pupils</td>
<td>Not yet carried out at time of RGA</td>
<td>Not yet carried out at time of RGA</td>
<td>Not yet carried out at time of RGA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51% male</td>
<td></td>
<td>41% male</td>
<td>45% male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49% female</td>
<td></td>
<td>59% female</td>
<td>59% female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition on knowledge about environmental sanitation and health at the city level/Women with environmental sanitation activities</td>
<td>1,082 people</td>
<td>Not yet carried out at time of RGA</td>
<td>600 people</td>
<td>Not yet carried out at time of RGA</td>
<td>Not yet carried out at time of RGA</td>
<td>Not yet carried out at time of RGA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10% male</td>
<td></td>
<td>35% male</td>
<td>100% female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90% female</td>
<td></td>
<td>65% female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CRUEIP = Central Region Urban Environmental Improvement Project, RGA = rapid gender assessment.
Appendix 3
Meetings Undertaken for Viet Nam
Rapid Gender Assessment

12 January–30 January 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Meetings and Key Persons Met</th>
<th>Loan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>RGA-II team meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>Fly to Da Lat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>Meeting with PPMU Lâm Đồng province</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hoàng Mạnh Hùng, director of provincial IEC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hoàng Xuân Thu, accountant of PPMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Kim Hải, Health Care for the Poor unit of PPMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nguyễn Thị Vinh, chief accountant of PPMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Trần Thị Cẩm Vi, PPMU staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Trần Ngọc Trung, PPMU staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Đoàn Thị Thu Huyền, PMU staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with Lâm Hà district health center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hoàng Xuân Thu, accountant of PPMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Đoàn Minh Cương, deputy director of Lâm Hà hospital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nguyễn Xuân Ban, deputy director of Lâm Hà hospital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Female project beneficiaries, including women at the hospital with sick children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with Đạ Đờn commune health center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Đoàn Minh Cương, deputy director of Lâm Hà hospital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hoàng Xuân Thu, accountant of PPMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nguyễn Thị Nhật Thu, assistant doctor leader of Đạ Đờn commune health center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mme. Thu, midwife</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mme. Hiển, midwife</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

continued on next page
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Meetings and Key Persons Met</th>
<th>Loan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 13 Nov</td>
<td>Meeting with PPMU Lam Dong (ADB review mission)</td>
<td>HICH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ngọc Quý, deputy director of PPMU Lâm Đồng</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Võ Kim Hải, Health Care for the Poor unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hoàng Xuân Thu, accountant of PPMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Trần Thị Cẩm Vi, PPMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Phạm Mạnh Hùng, architect, civil works</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Vũ Văn Hưng, deputy director of PMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Đậu Thị Phương Thuỷ, accountant of PMU</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nhâm Thị Thảo, PMU</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Đoàn Thị Thu Huyền, PMU</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lisa Studert, ADB team leader</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drive to Buon Ma Thuot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 14 Nov</td>
<td>Meeting with PPMU Đăk Lăk province</td>
<td>HICH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nguyễn Phi Tiến, director of department health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nguyễn Hữu Huyên, chief of planning unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lê Văn Thanh, planning unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nông Thị Thanh Xuân, provincial IEC staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nguyễn Thị Ánh, chief accountant of PPMU</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Vũ Văn Hưng, deputy director of PMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Đậu Thị Phương Thuỷ, accountant of PMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nhâm Thị Thảo, PMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Khúc Thị Lan Hương, ADB assistant project analyst</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Đoàn Thị Thu Huyền, PMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with Madrak district health center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nguyễn Quang Thùa, director of Madrak district hospital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lê Thị Thủy, doctor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• H’Glen Nier, doctor - specialist I (Ê Đê ethnic)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nguyễn Thị Ánh, chief accountant of PPMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Y Ngô MLô, deputy director of Madrak district hospital (Ê đê ethnic)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Trần Thị Kim Khánh, accountant of Madrak district hospital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Meetings and Key Persons Met</td>
<td>Loan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat 15 Nov</td>
<td>Meeting with PPMU Dak Lak (about gender and ethnic minorities)</td>
<td>HICH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nguyễn Hữu Huyên, chief of planning unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nông Thị Thanh Xuân, provincial IEC staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bùi Văn Hinh, planning unit staff (health department)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Phạm Thị Tuyết Nhung, planning unit staff (health department)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ninh Tiên Hoàng, accountant of PPMU (Health Care for the Poor unit)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Doctor Hà, deputy director of provincial preventive health center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fly to Hồ Chí Minh City</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun 16 Nov</td>
<td>Fly to Hue</td>
<td>CRUEIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drive to Dong Ha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 17 Nov</td>
<td>Meeting with PMU, CMC, VWU Dong Ha</td>
<td>CRUEIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nguyễn Thị Lai, chairperson of Dong Ha VWU, chairperson of CMC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Vo Thị Hoa Hang, vice chairperson of VWU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pham Thị Bích Ngọc, head of office of PPC, Dong Ha, CMC member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Trần Vai Chanh, vice director of urban management Unit, CMC member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Phạm Thị Thu Hà, secretary youth union, CMC member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hrang Vai Duc, vice director of PMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• He Bao Giang Chau, PMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Nguyễn Thanh Tam, project gender specialist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus group discussion with beneficiaries of CBS activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 10 participants: 4 women, 6 men (including Ha Thị Hong Nhan, chairperson of VWU Ward 5, and Trần Ngọc Huy, Veterans Association, Ward 5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visit some CBS works</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*continued on next page*
### Meetings and Key Persons Met

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Meetings and Key Persons Met</th>
<th>Loan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Tues 18 Nov | • Interviews with households headed by women  
              • Follow-up meeting with CMC and VWU | CRUEIP     |
| Wed 19 Nov  | **Drive to Ha Tinh**  
              Meeting with PMU, CMC, and VWU of Ha Tinh  
              • Nguyen Cong Nguyen, director of PMU  
              • Ho Thach Sun, vice director of PMU  
              • Bui Thi Cuc, chair of VWU  
              • Tran This Ha, VWU  
              • Ngo Thi Hoai, VWU  
              • Vo Thu Thinh, VWU | CRUEIP     |
| Thurs 20 Nov| **Focus group discussion with beneficiaries of CBS**  
              • 17 participants, 11 women, 6 men  
              Visit CBS works, including new houses for households run by women  
              **Drive to Ha Noi** | CRUEIP     |
| Fri 21 Nov  | • Document review and table preparation | CRUEIP     |
| Sat 22 Nov  | • Document review and table preparation | HICH and CRUEIP |
| Sun 23 Nov  | • Document review and table preparation | USEDP      |
| Mon 24 Nov  | • Ministry of Finance  
              • Debrief CRUEIP with Ministry of Construction | All        |
| Tues 25 Nov | • Meeting with NPIU  
              • Tran Nhu Tinh | USEDP      |
| Wed 26 Nov  | **Field visit to Hoa Binh province**  
              Meeting with DOET  
              • Dang Quang Ngan, vice director of DOET  
              • Dinh Thi Huong, vice head of Secondary Education Division, DOET  
              • Pham Van Kien, specialist of Finance and Planning Division, DOET  
              Meeting with provincial ethnic boarding school  
              • Nguyen Van Chap, principal  
              • Quach Dinh Hai, assistant principal | USEDP      |

*continued on next page*
### Meetings Undertaken for Viet Nam Rapid Gender Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Meetings and Key Persons Met</th>
<th>Loan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nguyen Manh Hung, head of youth union</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus group discussion with 22 female students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tour of school facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thach Yen Upper Secondary School, Cao Phong District, Hoa Binh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bui Thi Thai, principal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nguyen Viet Hung, assistant to principal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pham Van Tuan, head of youth union</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus group discussion with 8 female students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tour of school facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 27 Nov</td>
<td>Debrief HICH PMU</td>
<td>HICH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with gender adviser Loi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri 28 Nov</td>
<td>Debrief USEDP, Tran Nhu Tinh, and NPIU staff</td>
<td>USEDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat 29 Nov</td>
<td>Document review and table preparation</td>
<td>USEDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun 30 Nov</td>
<td>Document review and table preparation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 1 Dec</td>
<td>Fly to Manila</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ADB = Asian Development Bank, CBS = community-based sanitation, CMC = community management committee, CRUEIP = Central Regional Urban Environmental Improvement Project, DOET = Department of Education and Training, HICH = Health Care in the Central Highlands, IEC = information, education, and communication, NPIU = National Planning and Implementation Unit, PMU = project management unit, PPMU = provincial project management unit, PPC = provincial people’s committee, RGA = rapid gender assessment, USEDP = Upper Secondary Education Development Project, VWU = Viet Nam Women’s Union.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glossary Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender action plan (GAP)/gender</td>
<td>A comprehensive framework for addressing gender issues in the design and implementation of an Asian Development Bank loan project or program based on the social and gender analyses undertaken during project preparation. A gender action plan identifies strategies, activities, resources, gender capacity building initiatives, targets, and indicators for ensuring that both women and men participate in and benefit from all components of the project or program. A gender and ethnic minorities action plan (GEMAP) is one type of gender action plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender analysis</td>
<td>A form of social analysis that requires the collection, analysis, and application of sex-disaggregated information, including on women’s and men’s participation and benefits; the process of considering the different impacts of a development project or program on women and men, and on the economic and social relations between them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality and equity</td>
<td>Gender equality refers to equal opportunities and outcomes for women and men. This involves the removal of discrimination and structural inequalities in access to resources, opportunities, and services. It also encompasses the promotion of equal rights between men and women. Gender equity refers to fairness in access to resources and in the distribution of benefits from development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality results</td>
<td>Results achieved for women compared with men, including participation in project activities, access to project and other resources, practical benefits, and strategic changes in gender relations (see next page). For the purposes of the second rapid gender assessment, gender equality results may be immediate or process results, intermediate results or outputs, or medium- or long-term results or outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender mainstreaming</td>
<td>A strategy to achieve the goal of gender equality by ensuring that gender issues and women’s needs and perspectives are explicitly considered in all ADB operations, so that both women and men participate as decision makers and beneficiaries in all activities, and so that both women’s and men’s needs and interests are addressed in all project components and activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender provisions</td>
<td>Specific requirements included in a project design to address women’s needs or ensure that women participate in the project, such as targets for women’s participation in training. In rapid gender assessments, this refers to design features that are not integrated into an overarching gender action plan or gender strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender-sensitive, gender-responsive,</td>
<td>This means that women’s different needs and priorities have been considered, and that efforts have been made to ensure that women participate in, and benefit equally from, development activities. For example, a gender-sensitive indicator is one that disaggregates information by sex and enables monitoring of any differences in participation, benefits, and impacts between women and men; or that assesses changes in gender relations between women and men.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gender-inclusive</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Outcome – The likely or achieved effects from a development intervention; may refer to short-term effects but usually refers to medium-term effects.

Output – The products, capital goods, and services that result from a development intervention; changes resulting from the intervention that contribute to the achievement of outcomes.

Practical benefits – Benefits that meet the practical needs women have for survival and livelihood. They do not challenge existing gender relations of culture, tradition, the gender division of labor, legal inequalities, or any other aspects of women’s status or power.

Results – The output, outcome, or impact (intended or unintended, positive or negative) of a development intervention.

Software – Social development activities like social mobilization, information, training, technical support, and livelihood activities that ensure that women and disadvantaged groups participate in and benefit from program and project components; and mitigation activities associated with resettlement and addressing the risks of HIV/AIDS and human trafficking associated with large-scale infrastructure construction and operation. In contrast, hardware refers to procurement and construction activities.

Strategic changes in gender relations – The progress toward equality between women and men, created by transforming social or economic power relations between them.

Sustainability – The continuation of benefits after the development project or program has been completed. Given that all the loans included in the rapid gender assessments were either under implementation or recently completed, in this report sustainability refers to the reasonable likelihood that benefits will continue to be enjoyed beyond the life of the project.

Sources: Development Assistance Committee (2002); ADB (2006a); and Hunt, J., S. Lateef, and H. T. Thomas (2007).
References

General Documents


Central Region Urban Environmental Improvement Project


References


Nguyen Thi Thanh Tam, CRUEIP Gender Specialist. 2006. CRUEIP Gender Streaming Plan for 6 towns. Ha Noi.


Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for the Health Care in the Central Highlands Project. Manila.


Upper Secondary Education Development Project


Gender Equality Results in ADB Projects: Viet Nam Country Report

Rapid gender assessments of 12 projects in four countries were undertaken as part of the Asian Development Bank's commitment to improving aid effectiveness. The assessment of three loans in Viet Nam found that positive gender equality results were achieved due to the implementation of gender action plans. Gender action plans were effective tools for ensuring that both women and men participated in and benefited from projects. Gender equality results and gender action plans contributed directly to achieving loan outcomes and improved project effectiveness.

This report discusses the gender equality results achieved for each project, summarizes factors that enhanced the quality of project design and implementation, and makes recommendations to maximize gender equity as a driver of change.

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB’s vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries substantially reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region’s many successes, it remains home to two-thirds of the world’s poor: 1.8 billion people who live on less than $2 a day, with 903 million struggling on less than $1.25 a day. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

Based in Manila, ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.