

Promoting gender equality for sustainable development of the forestry sector in Viet Nam

GIZ/Binh Dang

Funding institution	BMZ
Country	Viet Nam
Political counterpart	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forest Protection Department• Management Board of Forestry Projects
Duration	2021 - 2025
GIZ involvement in sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainable Forest Management• Timber Legality/FLEGT

Context of the projects

Recognising the global challenges with trade in illegal timber and the growing role of Viet Nam's timber industry, Viet Nam and the European Union signed the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) in 2018. GIZ advises Vietnamese policy makers and practitioners to ensure timber legality and due diligence in timber trade. In addition, forest owners in Central Viet Nam are supported in transitioning from conventional short-rotation timber plantations to a more sustainable forestry model. In Viet Nam, few women work in the forestry sector. Three fourths of leadership positions are occupied by men. Women have less opportunities for career development and are confined to tasks with low income. Stereotypical beliefs, that forestry work is not suitable for women, as well as less access to up-skilling opportunities for women remain key barriers.

Gender objectives

Promoting gender equality plays an important role in shaping a sustainable forestry industry. Recognising the different roles, needs, and experiences of women and men in forest management and protection is a first and important step towards a sustainable and socially just future. Gender equality is also a crucial factor in the long-term viability and success of the forestry sector.

Target groups

- State forestry companies, Protection Forest Management Boards, forest smallholders
- Forest Protection Department, Customs, national and provincial authorities
- Women Unions, forest owner and timber associations, civil society actors



In the diverse spectrum of forestry activities disparities in labor, wages, and job opportunities can emerge. Women are particularly affected by these inequalities, facing significant obstacles in their journey towards advancement.

- Mr. Tran Quang Bao, Director, Department of Forestry of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development



Activities promoting gender equality

• S&G guidelines

The projects have developed a Gender Equality and Social Safeguard (S&G) Guidelines to steer the project team and stakeholders in project planning and implementation. They provide concepts, principles, and methods for mainstreaming gender in all the projects' activities.

• Gender situational analysis

The situational analysis of gender and forestry in Viet Nam from 2023 provides an overview of available statistical evidence on the current situation of gender-related aspects in the forestry sector and forestry industries. It examines critical issues and trends while identifying opportunities to advance gender equality in the sector.



• Gender Forum

In collaboration with the partnering Vietnamese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, GIZ organised a gender forum to foster dialogue, share experiences, and promote gender equality in the forestry sector. The BMZ representative from the German Embassy to Viet Nam shared insights into the Feminist Development Policy.

• Gender action planning

GIZ supported two forestry companies in developing their gender action plan to mainstream gender equality in their operation. Through trainings and participatory planning, staff have expanded their understanding of gender concepts. Outreach events delivered by newly skilled master trainers of the company have increased awareness for gender equality among nearby communities and company staff.



✓ Results

- **The S&G Guideline** provides a meaningful reference for the project team, including partners, to integrate S&G aspects in project implementation. While awareness on the topic has been raised for all actors involved in the process, concrete steps to mainstream gender into the projects' operational plans have been designed.
- **The situational analysis of gender and forestry in Viet Nam** specifically informs the impact monitoring of the VPA FLEGT implementation. Based on the analysis, policy recommendations will be developed to avoid and mitigate unintended negative impacts on women and marginalised groups in the forestry sector.
- **The Gender Forum** developed recommendations for strengthening gender equality in policy and practice. Participants had the opportunity to connect and forge alliances with like-minded peers in the sector. It inspired over 150 stakeholders of all levels to take more concrete action.
- **Gender equality aspects are now considered in two forestry companies' recruitment and promotion regulations** to ensure equal opportunities for women and men. These efforts also contribute to fulfilling the requirements of the companies for forest certification, *inter alia* increasing the value of their timber produce.



"It is true that women working in forestry may have more hurdles to overcome than men. But the work is not purely men's work. If I can do it, other women can do it, too."

- Ms. Lai Thi Nhung, Technical Official, Song Kon Forestry Company, Binh Dinh Province

💡 Challenges and recommendations

- While promoting gender equality might not be high on the agenda partners, mobilising high-level engagement from partnering ministries and funding agencies (BMZ, German embassy, etc.) can give the cause the attention it deserves.
- To enhance efforts for promoting gender equality in the forestry sector, engaging communication materials, e.g. in form of an [exhibition](#) or [documentary](#), can be helpful.
- Dedicated activities for the promotion of gender equality are needed as part of the project concept and operational plan. This is instrumental in shifting the approach and results from gender-sensitive to a gender-transformative approach.
- To adequately advise on the topic of gender equality, capacities of staff of implementing organisations and partners need to be further enhanced.

Further information and materials can be found [here](#).

