

**GENDER ISSUES IN FORESTRY:  
KEY FINDINGS FROM A VPA IMPACT MONITORING BASLINE SURVEY  
IN 4 PROVINCES**

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As one of the first countries in the world to sign The International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Vietnam has been making efforts to ensure economic growth associated with social justice and women's rights. The issue of gender equality has an essential meaning in the development of the rural agricultural economy in Vietnam. Significant advances in women's rights have been recorded in all fields in recent years. However, there are still some problems related to gender equality. This report presents several of gender-related findings in forestry production, which derived from the baseline survey for the VPA-FLEGT's impact monitoring on households and micro, small enterprises (MSEs) funded by FAO, implemented by SRD and VNGO-FLEGT Network in 2018.

Women do not often have names in the forestryland use certificate, their husbands name are in most of these certificates. During the baseline study, forestland use certificates were recorded three cases named on the paper: (i) the husband and wife named; (ii) husband's name; or his wife's name. The cases, where both husband and wife are undersigned, are not as common as cases where only the husband's name. Survey data on 4 provinces show that 25% of interviewed households having forest land use certificate named for both husband and wife while 64% of households interviewed only the husband's name appears. The absence of women' name on the land use certificate is explained that in the past, only name of the husband appears in the forestland use certification and if the women want to add women' name on former land certificates, they have to pay a fee. Therefore, women do not want to pay this fee and are not aware of the necessity to undersign the land use certificates. In reality, if a woman is not named on the certificate, it will be very disadvantageous for them, especially in cases when they are forced to divorce and assets will be divided.

In forest planting, although both men and women participate in discussions and decide to plant trees, women do over 50% of the work with activities to carry out for a whole plantation cycle. During the implementation of these activities, depending on the Kinh or ethnic households, the division of laborwork in activities is relatively different. However, activities that require much of time and relatively heavy work such as clearing, seeding and weeding, women often have to do 2-3 times more work than men. Women often take on household tasks such as taking care of their children, collecting firewood and getting water, along with having to spend much of time on forestry production which is actually a significant burden for them.

MSEs in timber processing use more long-term male workers than female workers. Survey of 36 enterprises in 4 provinces shows that up to 64% of long-term workers in enterprises are male, besides the monthly salary paid to male workers is 500 to 700 thousand VND higher than female workers. From the enterprises' point of view, they have a higher demand for male workers than female workers because the jobs in wood production and processing are often very heavy and need muscle. Therefore, the number of male workers in MSEs is also much higher, and due to heavy work, the salary of enterprises paid to male workers is also higher than that of female workers. Another aspect that businesses often do not want to mention directly that they are also afraid of hiring female workers because women have to give birth to baby, thus affecting their businesses.

Women are less likely to attend advanced professional training courses in timber processing. Enterprises that recruit female workers mainly based on their physical conditions, strong women are prioritized to have jobs. When working in enterprises, female workers often have very few opportunities to attend training courses to improve their skills as well as training courses on occupational safety in production. Due to the lack of advanced training, it is rare for women to hold an essential position in the company such as the managers or supervisor of the enterprises, men hold most of these positions. In the other side, due to lack of adequate training on safety skills, there are occupational safety issues that occur to many female workers and harm their health seriously in some cases.

Conclusion: within the scope of the above mentioned IM VPA baseline survey, gender issues in forestry households and MSEs are in four main areas: 1-the name on the forest land use certificate, 2- the division of labor work at household scale, 3-employment opportunity and wages at MSEs, 4-training opportunities for female workers.

To ensure equity, gender equality in the forestry sector, all stake holders as government, private sector and CSOs need to continue to have assessments, studies and propose appropriate solutions in addressing those issues.