Gender Responsive Equitable Agriculture and Tourism Phase Two (GREAT 2) Design Update
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Poverty rates in Son La and Lao Cao provinces remain higher than the national average. Due to social norms, often ethnic minority women do not contribute equally to decision-making processes in the household or community. Approximately 76% of ethnic minority women work in the agricultural and forestry sector. If the Government of Vietnam is to realise their 2035-2045 ambitions, the “last mile” of remaining pockets of poverty and inequality including those in ethnic minority communities need to be considered.

The GREAT Program Phase 1 is an AUD 33.7 million initiative (2017-2022) which aims to improve the social and economic status of ethnic minority women living in two provinces of Northwest (NW) Vietnam. It has a specific focus on: ensuring ethnic minority women can better engage in agriculture and tourism markets; enhancing women’s voices in decision-making; promoting partnerships with the private sector; and supporting more inclusive and gender-responsive government policies and services.

From January to June 2021, DFAT commissioned a Mid-Term Review (MTR) of GREAT to assess progress to date and make recommendations in support of a possible five-year extension. The MTR concluded that GREAT and its market systems development (MSD) and women’s economic empowerment (WEE) approach remain highly relevant to Australia’s strategic policy frameworks, Vietnam’s development priorities, and the situation of ethnic minority women in NW Vietnam.

In August 2021, DFAT commissioned a Design Update for GREAT Phase 2 (GREAT 2). The Design Update confirmed that women’s economic empowerment remains the primary objective of GREAT and that inclusive market development is the primary vehicle to achieve it. Accordingly, the goal for GREAT 2 had minor revision: Women living in North West Vietnam have improved social and economic status and increased resilience.

GREAT 2 will continue to directly support Australia’s strategic priorities in Vietnam through the intertwined strategies of economic development and women’s empowerment. The Design Update has found relevance and alignment with Australia’s national and global policies and strategies such as the Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Strategy, the Strategy for Australia’s Development Investments in Private Sector Development, Partnerships for Recovery: Australia’s COVID-19 Development Response, and the recently released Australia-Vietnam Enhanced Economic Engagement Strategy (EEES).

GREAT 2 will contribute to making Australia visible to the Government of Vietnam as a trusted partner and the largest grant donor supporting Vietnam’s inclusive development. The Design Update has identified opportunities for GREAT 2 to influence policy reform in Vietnam, including but not limited to well-informed formulation, implementation, and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of several National Target Programs (NTPs) and the National Gender Equality Strategy (2021 – 2030). GREAT 2 will share and advocate with central ministries and agencies successful models from the two provinces, which can be scaled up regionally and nationwide for positive, long-lasting changes in inclusive development.

The end-of-program-outcomes (EOPOs) for GREAT 2 are:

EOPO 1:
Women, particularly ethnic minority women living in Son La and Lao Cai, have improved economic benefits.

EOPO 2:
Women, particularly ethnic minority women living in Son La and Lao Cai, have increased confidence and social status, including more balanced workloads and greater decision making within the home, workplace, and community.

EOPO 3:
Women, particularly ethnic minority women and household members living in Son La and Lao Cai benefit from more gender responsive, inclusive, and effective provincial and national policies, plans, strategies, and programs.

GREAT 2 will continue its focus on agriculture and tourism, identifying specific sectors that lend themselves to opportunities for women’s economic empowerment and work with multiple stakeholders to address constraints, generate opportunities, drive market growth and increase productive value of the sector. A limited number of agriculture sectors will be selected, in addition to tourism. Cross sector strategies such as women’s leadership, access to finance, digital transformation and behaviour change communication will also be delivered, complementing the sector strategies. Each sector and cross sector will have its own intervention strategy, which will include a sector Theory of Change (ToC) and Results Framework.

Competitive grants from GREAT 1 will be replaced by more proactive co-design process with implementing partners, though there will be room for “calls for proposals” for innovative ideas. The enabling environment for women’s empowerment will be strengthened by targeted policy and institutional engagement with government agencies at both local and central levels. There is a need to continue and scale up outreach and work within communities to shift social attitudes around gender equality, with a view to enhancing women’s participation in decision-making and leadership, promoting a more equal division of unpaid work, and reducing gender-based violence (GBV).

The M&E System from GREAT 1 will be updated to align with the revised ToC for GREAT 2. However, it will incorporate many of the indicators and data collection methods from GREAT 1 because they remain relevant, are easy to apply, and enable data from GREAT 1 to be utilised for comparative purposes.

The Provincial People’s Committees of Lao Cai and Son La will remain GREAT 2’s primary government counterparts, supported by their respective Project Management Units (PMUs). Cowater will remain the MC for GREAT 2. The program needs to achieve strong alignment with the priorities of Lao Cai and Son La, especially in supporting local, provincial level implementation of the National Target Programs (NTPs), namely NTPs for Socio-Economic Development in Ethnic Minority Areas (SEDEMA), New Rural Development (NRD), and Sustainable Poverty Reduction (SPR). GREAT 2 will continue to work across all districts of Lao Cai and Son La provinces.

GREAT has an established and ongoing risk assessment process and maintains an active risk register which was reviewed during the Design Update process and appraised as adequate. Key risks include: the likelihood of ongoing underspends, especially if COVID-19 restrictions are re-instated; domestic and international travel restrictions which affect progress in the tourism sector, the MC’s recruitment of experts, and field travel; and the potential for backlash for women participating in GREAT 2 if not supported by their families.

It is imperative that GREAT 2 optimises opportunities for institutionalising capacity, lessons, models and beneficial impacts beyond the investment. To deliver sustainability, the exit strategy entails building credible capacity in permanent institutions within the provinces on the approaches implemented by GREAT 2, GREAT team actively seeking opportunities to support provincial stakeholders to showcase and promote to central level stakeholders the gender-responsive models for implementation of the NTPs and the National Gender Equality Strategy. GREAT 2 will develop a Sustainability and Exit Strategy within the first year of implementation.

GREAT 2 will continue to be managed by Hanoi Post, Development Cooperation Section specifically: A Senior Program Manager (1.0 FTE), with oversight from the First Secretary (0.3 FTE), with support from a Program Officer (0.5 FTE).

Although this is an update and continuation of GREAT 1 from DFAT’s perspective, for the Vietnamese system, as advised by the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), the next five years of GREAT are best considered as a new program for approval purposes.
1. DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT AND SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

1.1 DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

Vietnam background: Vietnam’s transformation from one of the world’s poorest nations to a middle-income economy in one generation is due to economic and social reforms launched in 1986. World Bank (2021) data indicates that between 2002 and 2020, gross domestic product (GDP) per capita increased 2.7 times while poverty rates declined from over 32% in 2011 to below 2% in 2020. Vietnam continues to show its capability as a regional leader, with its successful management of COVID-19 supporting this view. Vietnam has become increasingly integrated into global production and value chains, with female-intensive export-oriented manufacturing being a major stimulus of GDP growth.¹

Vietnam has 54 ethnic groups with the Kinh group being the majority population. Ethnic minority and mountainous areas are recognised as important geographic locations with regard to socioeconomic development, national defence and security, and ecological preservation; however, these areas are the most disadvantaged with a poverty rate significantly higher than the national average.² The Government of Vietnam’s NTP-SEDEMA and NTP-SRD confirm a commitment to address the remaining concentration of poverty and inequality in ethnic minority and rural communities. The success of these NTPs will be key in realising ambitious goals for economic growth in Vietnam’s 2035 vision.

Gender equality: In Vietnam, women enjoy formal equality under the law, have relatively high workforce participation and access to economic opportunities, and have high health quality and higher education attainment by Asia Pacific regional standards.³ Vietnam’s commitment to gender equality is evidenced by the government’s adoption of a dedicated Gender Equality Law in 2006 (currently under revision) and its 2nd National Strategy on Gender Equality for the period 2021-2030. The Strategy aims to foster gender equality and women’s entrepreneurship during this period and builds on the progress made from the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2011-2020. Targets of the 2021-2030 Strategy relevant to GREAT 2 include:

- Increase the proportion of women waged workers to 50% by 2025 and approximately 60% by 2030;
- The rate of female directors or owners of businesses is expected to reach at least 27% by 2025 and 30% by 2030;
- The average time women spend doing unpaid housework compared to that of men will be reduced to 1.7 times by 2025 and 1.4 times by 2030; and
- By 2025, 80% of women suffering from domestic and GBV will have access to at least one basic support service, and increasing to 90% by 2030.

Despite progress made in narrowing gender gaps, women in Vietnam face challenges due to entrenched gender stereotypes and a gendered economy that hinder women’s economic empowerment. Addressing the barriers and biases that limit women’s access to and participation in socio-economic and political opportunities is required if women’s empowerment is to be realised.

The provinces in the NW region, including Lao Cai and Son La, have limited socio-economic development. For the majority of ethnic minority groups in the NW region, women and girls experience more socio-economic disadvantage than men and boys. This includes: gaps in educational attainment and literacy rates; access to vocational and technical training; and access to resources such as finance and land and property title. Social norms

continue to reinforce the subordinate role of women and girls, prioritising female reproductive roles, including early and multiple childbearing and home-based production. There are significant gender gaps within and between ethnic minority groups and the Kinh ethnic group. Due to social norms, many ethnic minority women do not contribute to decision-making processes in the household or community. Harmful practices, such as child marriage, are prevalent in some ethnic minority groups, despite being banned under the Law on Marriage and Family. The National Survey on Violence against Women in Vietnam 2019 suggests that a lower proportion of ethnic minority women experience physical and/or sexual and emotional violence perpetrated by their husbands or partners compared to the national rate and the rate of Kinh women; however, the study suggests that ethnic minority women are more accepting of violence perpetrated by their husbands or partners than Kinh ethnic women, which may affect this data. The proportion of ethnic minority women exposed to behavioural and economic violence was higher than the national rate and the rate of Kinh ethnic women.5

Many ethnic minority women are hindered in accessing employment with better conditions and protections due to barriers, such as: gender roles which situate ethnic minority women’s primary role in the household; stereotypes that limit their ability to work away from the home; as well as lower literacy rates, including in the Kinh national language, low education levels, and limited access to skills development in information and communication technology. Approximately 76% of ethnic minority women work in the agricultural and forestry sector – the majority informally with few protections - a rate twice as high as that of female workers nationwide.6 Approximately 52% of ethnic minority women engaged in economic labour also do unpaid household work compared to 26% of ethnic minority men and 19% of female workers nationwide.7 The national Labour Force Survey (2019) found that 52% of ethnic minority women noted ‘unpaid domestic work’ as their job, as compared with 26.6% of ethnic minority men. This rate is 2.5 times higher than women workers nationally, at 19.4%.8

Programming context: There are three important changes in the development context for GREAT 2:

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has had substantial and prolonged impacts on livelihoods, specific sectors and the wider economy. It has had disproportionate impacts on women, including ethnic minority women, by increasing pressure on already-vulnerable workers, worsening gender inequalities in the division of labour, increasing women’s burden of care, and contributing to a probable increase in GBV.

Impacts on two of GREAT’s focus sectors are notable:

a. Tourism has seen dramatic impacts. In Lao Cai alone, in 2020, domestic tourist numbers were down 40-60% on expected levels, and international tourists down by around 87%. These changes have had a disproportionate impact on women given their concentration in the sector. However, there is increasing expectation that the sector will bounce back strongly, starting with the domestic market. In November 2021, Vietnam also began its step-by-step reopening of the international market.9

b. Shifts in agricultural trends: On the one hand, most of agricultural value chains have been disrupted by COVID-19. On the other hand, the shift to modern, online food retailers has been accelerated by COVID-19, which has badly affected traditional food retailers’ sales through local markets and trade, where women traders working in the vegetables sector are concentrated. It will be important to support ethnic minority women traders’ ability to adapt to varying COVID-19 restrictions, including by effectively leveraging e-commerce platforms.

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7 Ibid
2. **Climate change crisis and response is increasingly prominent in Vietnam.** In NW Vietnam, future scenarios predict an increase in temperatures accompanied by lower and more variable rainfall. Developing a more resilient rural economy and sustainable natural resource management that considers the needs and the knowledge, observations and practices that ethnic minority women are currently using to adapt to their changing environment is increasingly urgent and demands greater focus in GREAT 2. Vietnam’s COP26 pledges include commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 9% with domestic resources and 27% with international support. The Government is also committed to stopping deforestation by 2030 and has requested international assistance in sustainable development and green finance and technology.

3. **Digital transformation is accelerating.** The World Bank notes this transformation, “which was already underway, has become much more broad-based in recent months. Up to 60% of local businesses in Vietnam have by now established or increased their online presence so they can provide services and sell goods to increasingly connected customers”. It is estimated that 53% of the population has shopped online using social media or e-commerce platforms. It will be important for Phase 2 that ethnic minority women are supported to equitably access e-commerce and online tools as business owners, managers, producers, or employees.

**Continuing support to the tourism sector remains an important strategic opportunity for GREAT 2, despite COVID-19 disruptions.** Prior to COVID-19, tourism in Lao Cai and Son La had been growing strongly as had the wider industry in Vietnam. In 2019, Vietnam welcomed a record number of international arrivals, reaching over 18 million, up 16% against 2018. Lao Cai tourist numbers reached 3.51 million in 2019 up from 1.25 million in 2015 – equivalent to annual growth of almost 30%. In 2019, revenue from tourism reached around VND 10 trillion\(^{10}\). Son La tourist numbers reached 2.5 million in 2019, of which international visitors were 110,000, and total tourism revenue reached VND 1,915 billion.

Due to COVID-19, in 2020 visitor numbers collapsed – nationally falling to around 3.8 million international tourist arrivals, down almost 80%. In Lao Cai domestic tourist numbers in 2020 were down 40%-60% on expected levels and international tourists down by around 87% and more than 3,000 employees in the sector either lost or temporarily quit their jobs. This continued into 2021. In Son La in 2020 visitor numbers decreased by around 24% to 1.9 million tourists and total tourism revenue decreased similarly.

Despite this short-term disruption, provincial and national authorities remain highly committed to the industry’s recognising its long-term value. Lao Cai People’s Committee Resolution No. 11 targets tourism to be a key driver of the local economy by 2030 and a competitive destination in Vietnam and the wider region. In line with this, Lao Cai province remains committed to a US$ 70 million tourism infrastructure loan project likely to be financed by ADB. Similarly, Son La provincial resolutions identify tourism as one of nine priority missions for the period 2021-2025. At the local level, People’s Committees in key destinations such as Sa Pa and Moc Chau and others have made a series of resolutions and substantial budget commitments to develop the industry locally in the period 2021-2030.

While the pandemic has caused large scale disruption to the sector for the last two years it continues to be a promising sector for impact during the five-year time horizon for GREAT 2 and beyond. It is a significant economic sector in the target provinces, which is labour intensive and a high employer of women – both in the mainstream and community-based tourism segments. With the right support, it is also one of a small number of sectors that has genuine comparative advantages in some remote and resource-poor areas that can provide attractive incomes to ethnic minority women and their communities. While the pandemic has been highly disruptive in the short term, it may also be creating favourable structural changes in the market to the potential benefit of ethnic minority communities and women in the northwest:

• It has stimulated greater appetite among the domestic market, which is often more profitable, for the kind of products and experiences that Lao Cai and Son La can offer.

• The sudden and prolonged absences of many visitors helped communities and governments at both central and local rethink how tourism could be sustainably planned and managed. The importance of tourism for employment has been re-enforced, but local communities have also had a chance to experience life without the negative impacts of tourism such as overcrowding.

Complementary Australian Government investments in Vietnam: While remaining the flagship bilateral investment on women’s economic empowerment, GREAT 2 also complements a portfolio of bilateral, regional and global investments on the theme of gender equality and women’s empowerment. (NB The bilateral investments are currently consolidated under the ‘Aus4Equality’ grouping.)

Women’s economic empowerment is the principal objective of the SE Asia regional Investing in Women (IW) initiative, co-funded by the Embassy (Phase 2, 2019-2023). With a focus on urban women workers and entrepreneurs, this program supports business coalitions for workplace gender equality, gender lens impact investment, and social norm change campaigns to promote women’s economic engagement and improved workplace and business environments for women.

GREAT 2 also has synergies with two pillars of the Australia World Bank Strategic Partnership II (the gender pillar focused on women’s economic empowerment, and inclusion pillar focus on ethnic minority groups). Both pillars are engaged in strategic analysis for central level policy dialogue, reform and financing. The gender pillar is concentrating effort on provincial level planning and budgeting for child care provision, thereby addressing a major barrier to women’s economic empowerment. The inclusion pillar includes analysis and capacity building to support effective implementation of NTP-SEDEMA, and analysis to inform sustainable economic recovery for rural and urban ethnic minority people.

Through a joint UN program on Ending Violence Against Women and Children in Vietnam (2021-25), Australia is supporting efforts to prevent these forms of violence, including through national communications campaigns to challenge social norms that justify and perpetuate them. This program, and recently confirmed funding from the Gender Equality Branch (as of January 2022), will also support the comprehensive revision of Vietnam’s Law on Gender Equality, and the Law on the Prevention and Control of Domestic Violence – key pieces of legislation for reinforcing standards and obligations on women’s empowerment and safety.

Beyond Aus4Equality, Australia also supports women in business, agricultural production, science and technology and leadership through the following initiatives: 1) the long-standing (28 years) Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) program in Vietnam ($4.8 million FY 21-22, with 26 current projects, including in Lao Cai and Son La and in the areas of agribusiness, forestry, social sciences, and climate change adaption; 2) the Advancing Women in Leadership (AWIL) Component of the Aus4Skills program (Phase 2, 2021-25) with support to women in the public sector with aspirations to leadership or to a leading contribution in their field; and 3) and Aus4Innovation program (Phase 2 currently under design) whose remit includes support to science and technology solutions for application in the agriculture sector. Phase 2 is seeking to increase its focus on gender equality in its processes, and in development outcomes. The Aus4Reform program is working with MARD and IPSARD on agricultural restructuring, including work on land, rural labour, the impact of Free Trade Agreements on specific value chains, and the impact of COVID-19 on agriculture.

Finally, these investments are complemented by the new, $232 million Mekong Australia Partnership (MAP). Work in Vietnam includes investment in rice, rural development, and water resource management.

Given the above synergies, GREAT 2 has a critical role to play in the active exchange of policy, programmatic and technical lessons with other investment partners. It offers a unique ability to elevate the profile of women as
important actors in markets, and a convening platform for the exchange of approaches to build DFAT’s and others’ knowledge base on what works for promoting and measuring women’s economic empowerment, including in helping to shift social norms that constrain women.

Complementary development partner investments: Historically, the World Bank, UNDP, Irish Aid have been long term funders of poverty alleviation and community development programs in ethnic minority regions. For more than a decade, UN Women has also supported small scale research and projects for ethnic minority women, including gender analysis of national census and labour force data on ethnic minority groups. Global Affairs Canada (GAC) has discrete projects engaging with ethnic minority groups, including in the Central Regions. As of 2021, GAC is also funding a Social Impact Business scheme to provide employment options to ethnic minority groups.

GREAT 2, with a cumulative investment value of $67.4 million over the two phases, is now a leading funder of socio-economic development policy and programming for ethnic minority groups, albeit focused on the women and communities of NW Vietnam. Australia is the foremost grant-based donor on women’s economic empowerment in Vietnam, and a leading funder if the relevant loans of the World Bank Group and ADB are taken into account.

1.2 LESSONS LEARNED

There are important learnings from GREAT 1 that have contributed to and informed the design update process.

Mid-Term Review (MTR) (June 2021): The program’s MTR indicates that GREAT remains highly relevant to Australia’s strategic policy framework and Vietnam’s development priorities. The review suggests that by working with the private sector to enable ethnic minority peoples’ participation in markets to improve income, the program has contributed to the Government of Vietnam’s interest in MSD approaches as an effective alternative to the handout approach often utilised in ethnic minority areas. Phase 1 has contributed to positive changes compared with baseline data: changes in some gender roles and norms, an increase in women’s participation in income-generating work, and the appointment of women to leadership positions within cooperatives and community groups. The program’s response to COVID-19 demonstrated the strength and depth of the program’s relationships with partners and stakeholders. GREAT’s development and use of evidence highlights progress made in women’s economic empowerment. While the program’s partner projects did not have sufficient time to fully meet the program’s goal, the MTR recommendations provide useful direction on areas for improvement in GREAT 2. These include:

- Need for a new Program-level Theory of Change (ToC);
- Development of sector-level strategies, using an MSD\(^\text{11}\) approach that promote women’s empowerment in sectors that have potential to scale up;
- Re-design approaches for building Vietnamese stakeholders’ understanding of and support for women’s economic empowerment and tactically support subnational governments in implementing the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2021-2030; and

\(^\text{11}\) A market system development (MSD) approach contributes to the development of ‘market systems so that they function more effectively, sustainably and beneficially for poor people, building their capacities and offering them the opportunity to enhance their lives’. An MSD approach focuses on creating change in the behaviour of different market actors so they are motivated and able to effectively perform market functions. The approach recognises that each actor in the market system does not operate in isolation of each other but are part of an interacting system so it is required to address the detected market issues systematically and coherently as the related parts of a system.
Consideration of strategies to better incentivise businesses to engage on women’s empowerment by identifying and promoting successful business models of women’s engagement that other businesses could adopt.

**Midline assessment (December 2020):** Like the MTR, the midline assessment indicated that GREAT’s projects remain relevant to the needs of the two provinces. The midline assessment, however, highlighted some programming gaps:

- Variation in performance across sectors, with vegetable, tourism and bamboo shoot sectors having the lowest percentage of households who had been trained;
- Some households did not achieve profits in 2020, with the tourism sector greatly impacted by COVID-19; and
- Persistence of gender stereotypes about women’s primary role being within the household, which contributed to lower productivity and income when compared to men.

**Longitudinal Study (May 2020 – ongoing):** GREAT’s Longitudinal Study of women’s economic empowerment tracks the changes taking place in ethnic minority women’s lives with regards to their agency, access to opportunities, information and networks within households, community, markets and sectors. The study highlights the importance of social and collective approaches that support women’s empowerment. Women’s producer and savings groups have provided women with access to knowledge and finances, as well as provided a social support for women by enabling them to share their concerns and perspectives in their communities. Women’s leadership skills in groups and cooperatives have been developed by increasing their access to information, particularly in local languages. In addition, when men were involved in project activities, women’s access to knowledge and the sharing of resources and productive work between men and women was enhanced.

The study suggests, however, that several factors constrained the achievement of women’s empowerment. These include:

- The level of literacy and numeracy in Kinh language limited ethnic minority women’s access to opportunities to increase their engagement in markets,
- Lack of access to quality inputs, such as seeds, loans, and fertiliser, limited women’s production ability and therefore limited their opportunities to sell and earn an income,
- Limited access to reliable market information reduced women’s access to livelihood opportunities, inputs, and markets,
- Productive work needs to contribute to women’s aspirations in terms of stabilising or increasing women’s income and creating healthy lives for women and their family, and
- Limited involvement of men in activities needs to be better addressed in GREAT’s women’s empowerment model.

**Systemic Market Change Study (August 2021):** The study identified that GREAT’s projects in the cinnamon, ramie, vegetables, and tourism sectors have facilitated changes in market systems, which have delivered positive financial and empowerment impacts. The study shows that ethnic minority women have benefited from the projects in terms of increased incomes. The success of the projects had been due to their ability to address similar system constraints and opportunities in the sectors, such as focusing on products and market segments where there is immediate demand and opportunities for financial gain; promoted proven profitable production systems and technologies to farmers; mobilised producer organisations (POs) to act as the bridge between buyers and small-scale producers; and ensured better access to essential technical advice and inputs.

The study also highlighted that the interventions were still too small or too early to trigger systemic change at the sector level, that interventions were fragmented, and all lacked a clear sector-level Theory of Change to guide
interventions and assess progress. MSD approaches on their own have limited applicability for women's empowerment, and closer integration of inclusive market development and women's empowerment is required.

Other DFAT program lessons on engaging women in markets: Beyond Vietnam, GREAT 2 also draws on lessons from other DFAT programs. In 2021, GREAT held a three-part online seminar series on Engaging Women in Markets which brought together DFAT’s major programs on women’s economic empowerment and market system or private sector engagement. The partner programs included: Investing in Women; Partnerships for Promoting Rural Incomes through Support for Markets in Agriculture (PRISMA); the Market Development Facility (MDF); and the Cambodia-Australia Value Chain Program (CAVAC). Key lessons documented from the series\(^{12}\) included the identification of factors that support gender-transformative, markets systems programs: 1) being a gender aware organisation, with sensitised staff supportive of gender equality; 2) conducting and using good gender analysis and diagnostics across all market system levels; 3) having a robust Theory of Change that integrates women’s economic empowerment and market system development; 4) engaging with men and boys to achieve lasting gender equality change; 5) engaging with market systems stakeholders to determine incentives, entry points and allies; and 6) measuring change. These elements have been explicitly reflected in the delivery approach, Theory of Change and resourcing sections of the GREAT Design Update.

### 2. STRATEGIC INTENT AND RATIONALE

The GREAT 2 program will continue to directly support Australia’s strategic priorities in Vietnam through the intertwined strategies of economic development and women’s empowerment. Building on the findings of the MTR, the Design Update process has found sustained and significant relevance and alignment with DFAT’s global strategies such as the Partnerships for Recovery: Australia’s COVID-19 Development Response, Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Strategy, the Strategy for Australia’s Aid Investments in Private Sector Development, and the Strategy for Australia’s Aid Investments in Agriculture, Fisheries and Water. The GREAT 2 program will contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals 8 (Decent Work), 5 (Gender Equality) and 2 (Sustainable Agriculture).

GREAT 2 will directly support the economic recovery pillar of Australia’s Vietnam COVID-19 Development Response Plan by increasing women’s economic empowerment, encouraging greater female participation in the labour market and global value chains, as well as supporting male and female Vietnamese farmers, logistics providers and tourism operators to revive and improve their livelihoods, especially businesses led by women, as well as women and men from minority groups. GREAT 2 will contribute to the objectives of the Australia-Vietnam Enhanced Economic Engagement Strategy (EEES) in helping both countries take advantage of emerging market opportunities and accelerate post-pandemic economic recovery. The EEES priorities of education, skills and training; agriculture, forestry and fisheries; tourism; and the digital economy are of particular relevance with gender equality and women’s economic empowerment as important cross-cutting priorities. The Australian Embassy is also planning to update its Australia in Vietnam Gender Equality Strategy to include considerations for COVID-19.

At the national level, the GREAT 2 program will align effectively with the Government of Vietnam’s Vision 2035 which focuses on inclusive sustainable development, economic modernization and private sector development, and equity and social inclusion. The World Bank’s analysis underpinning Vision 2035 identifies the persistent and substantial gap in socioeconomic outcomes between ethnic minority groups and the Kinh majority as the single greatest equity challenge for the country. Vietnam is doing well in terms of economic growth, trade and investment. Addressing the unfinished poverty reduction agenda is critical to maintaining the current growth

trajectory, realising an inclusive Vision 2035 and fulfil the goal of “no one left behind”. GREAT delivers on this agenda and strengthens recognition of Australia as a lead donor supporting gender equality and social inclusion.

The new National Target Programmes (NTPs) 2021-2025 with orientation to 2030 creates an increasingly favourable framework at the national, as well as local level, for the empowerment of ethnic minority women through inclusive market development approaches. The prominent role of central institutions leading these NTPs, such as the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs (CEMA) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) for NTP SEDEMA and NTP NRD respectively, which, during the consultations for this design updated, demonstrated they are keen to learn from GREAT’s models, represents a strategic opportunity for the GREAT 2. GREAT 2’s program outcomes continue to complement the implementation of Vietnam’s National Strategy on Gender Equality 2021 – 2030.

The NW region and particularly, Lao Cai and Son La provinces, are strategically important as they are part of an important trade route linking Hanoi/the north of Vietnam with China, and the provinces are on the most strategic growth corridors in the NW region of Vietnam. Both provinces are rich in natural resources (ecological and mineral). Australia has enjoyed a strong history of a sustained collaborative relationship with both provinces. For example:

- In Son La, ACIAR engagement started in the 1990s, with more than $32 million in investment. This has recently been complemented by CSIRO investments under Aus4Innovation.
- In Lao Cai, ACIAR engagement has been longstanding. There is also an Aus4Transport grant to the Northern Mountain Provinces Transport Connectivity Project to connect Lao Cai with Lai Chau and Yen Bai. Lastly, DFAT also funded an NGO consortium to implement the Women’s Empowerment through Agricultural Value Chain Enhancement ‘WEAVE’ project, including in Lao Cai (2016-2021).

Lao Cai and Son La provinces continue to be appropriate investment contexts for GREAT 2 due to the potential for further economic growth. These opportunities can be fully realised with the participation of women in the agriculture and tourism sectors. Furthermore:

- Lao Cai has been an historic highland tourist destination,
- Son La has emerged as a leading province in agricultural production of Vietnam and drawn a lot of attention from central Ministries as an example of agriculture restructure, and
- But two provinces still report high level of poverty, mainly within ethnic minority groups.

The strong engagement and support of the respective provincial governments and the recognition that work remains to shift entrenched inequality of women from ethnic minority communities provides a solid foundation for GREAT 2 to extend and scale its program portfolio.

Other donor-funded programs: GREAT is one of few remaining donor grant programs of this type and demonstrates Australian commitment to ending ‘last mile’ poverty in line with provincial and central government policy.

a. The Advancing Women Economics’ Empowerment in Vietnam (AWEEV) is a gender-responsive and integrated project designed to contribute to increased economic wellbeing for ethnic minority (EM) women in Vietnam. AWEEV is funded by the Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and has been designed in full alignment with GAC’s Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP). AWEEV is implemented by CARE International in Vietnam in two provinces of Lao Chau and Ha Giang.

b. Irish Aid program in Vietnam is at early stage of designing a similar on the ground investment (but at much smaller compared to GREAT 2) that aims at women’s economic empowerment, poverty reduction within ethnic minority groups.
c. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is finalising a large tourism project focusing on resilient infrastructure, livelihoods and provincial connectivity in Lao Cai to maximize opportunities for local ethnic minorities and women and to promote an inclusive, sustainable tourism sector.

d. USAID just launched a program titled “Improving Private Sector Competitiveness” (IPS-C) (2020-2025) in partnership with MPI. Among expected results, IPS-C will support ethnic minority women-led small and medium enterprises

There are opportunities for GREAT 2 to first share its lessons learnt and then jointly support and influence central policies by GoV, including but not limited to NTPs.

3. PROPOSED OUTCOMES AND INVESTMENT OPTIONS

The Theory of Change (ToC) for GREAT 2 was designed to ensure a smooth transition and trajectory for the program whilst also recognising and reflecting successes and lessons learned from Phase 1. The ToC retains a focus on the key stakeholders through which change occurs and to whom benefits accrue:

- The intended beneficiaries are women, particularly those from ethnic minority groups with Son La and Lao Cai Provinces of Vietnam. This investment seeks their increased economic empowerment.
- Market sector stakeholders (including businesses, cooperatives, producer groups, etc) are key actors that can be incentivised towards women’s economic empowerment.
- Gender norms, attitudes and behaviours at household and community levels need to change to enable women’s economic empowerment, particularly men and other household members.
- Government policies and practices at multiple levels (central level and in Lao Cai and Son La), are critical to the creation of a more conducive enabling environment for women’s economic empowerment.

The ToC for GREAT 2 reflects the fact that economic empowerment cannot occur in a vacuum but relies upon changes to gender attitudes, behaviours, and relations in the home, in communities, at work and in marketplaces, and with the support of governments.

3.1 GOAL STATEMENT

The goal of GREAT 2 is:

Women living in North West Vietnam have improved social and economic status and increased resilience.

The goal statement retains its focus on women’s economic empowerment (WEE) and introduces a focus on increased resilience. This addition recognises the ongoing economic constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the effects of which will continue throughout the life of the Program, as well as other challenges such as the impacts of climate change. The goal statement recognises that women’s economic empowerment cannot be siloed from the broader challenges associated with women’s empowerment and goes hand in hand with improved social status.

GREAT 2 will contribute to the achievement of the Program Goal, but the program will not be held accountable for its achievement – since it sits above the line of program accountability. GREAT 2 is expected to achieve the EOPOs and will be accountable for demonstrating results.

3.2 END OF PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The End-of-program outcomes (EOPOs) and Intermediate Outcomes (IOs) have been updated to reflect the lessons from Phase 1 and to simplify the ToC. The program logic chain for GREAT 2 has been simplified to reduce the
number of outcomes and encourage greater flexibility of approach and to make the ToC more accessible to a wide audience.

The EOPOs for GREAT 2 are:

**EOPO 1:**

Women, particularly ethnic minority women living in Son La and Lao Cai, have improved economic benefits.

**EOPO 2:**

Women, particularly ethnic minority women living in Son La and Lao Cai, have increased confidence and social status, including more balanced workloads and greater decision making within the home, workplace, and community.

**EOPO 3:**

Women, particularly ethnic minority women and household members living in Son La and Lao Cai, benefit from more gender responsive, inclusive, and effective provincial and national policies, plans, strategies, and programs.

EOPO1 is focused on the intended beneficiaries for this investment, and their economic well-being. It recognises that ethnic minority women disproportionately experience poor living standards and exclusion – economically, politically, and socio-culturally – and are therefore the primary intended beneficiaries of the program. Other women will also benefit from the program through changes achieved in the enabling environment, including through changes to gender norms, market systems and government policy and actions.

EOPO2 articulates the specific changes that women will experience if the outcome is achieved. It acknowledges that women themselves require more confidence in order to take the best possible advantage of improved economic opportunities and a more inclusive enabling environment for women. It recognises that women’s workloads are already high and opportunities for greater income can sometimes lead to an increased burden of work if household norms do not change. Similarly, increased income does not necessarily translate into greater equality in decision making in the home, workplace, or community. This EOPO draws attention to the practical and fundamental changes that need to happen at numerous levels (home, workplace, and community) in order for women to experience empowerment.

EOPO3 recognises the role of government in creating and sustaining an enabling inclusive environment that promotes women’s empowerment at home, within the socio-cultural life of communities, and within economies. The program will support governments to learn from the program and lead on reforms that have been shown to produce good results for women. This includes at all levels (including central level) and across all relevant government agencies, particularly in the formulation, implementation, and M&E of the NTPs. EOPO3 also draws attention to other community and household members and the benefits they will accrue through women’s economic empowerment.

### 3.3 PROGRAM LOGIC

The ToC diagram is presented below and will guide the implementation, M&E, and communication for GREAT 2.
Figure 1: GREAT 2 Theory of Change

Notes: 1. Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) indicators and targets will be developed during Phase 2 inception.

2. The TOC is a living document to be revisited and updated as necessary, based on evidence, during the life of the program. Activities are indicative.

The ToC is broad enough to provide an over-arching set of outcomes that accommodates both agriculture and tourism sectors. Sector scoping studies with a gender analysis will inform the development of sector ToCs, strategies and plans. Sector ToCs will include more detailed outcomes and causal linkages, and will be developed by the GREAT 2 implementation team. This tiered approach will allow for a more nuanced and precise theory of change at the sector level.

The six intermediate outcomes work together to achieve the three program outcomes, reflecting the multi-dimensional nature of change that needs to occur on several fronts, including systemic, normative, behavioural and policy changes. More detail on the intermediate outcomes is at Annex C.

3.4 ASSUMPTIONS

Every ToC has an underlying set of assumptions that, if demonstrated to be true, ensure that the changes identified are likely to also be true. However, if the assumptions are not realised, then the outcomes are at risk of not being delivered. Evidence from GREAT Phase 1 suggests that the below assumptions are true and therefore should support achievement of the outcomes. Each of the EOPOs carries assumptions as follows:

EOPO 1: Women, especially ethnic minority women living in Son La and Lao Cai have improved economic benefits.
• COVID-19 impacts will continue to diminish over the life of the program and thereby enable women to engage in higher value production in agriculture and tourism.
• Women, particularly ethnic minority women, are willing to engage in the program activities.
• Businesses, cooperatives, and producer groups are incentivised to engage with the program for mutual benefit of women and other sector stakeholders.

EOPO 2: Women, especially ethnic minority women living in Son La and Lao Cai, have increased confidence and social status, including more balanced workloads and greater decision making within the home, workplace, and community.
• Women, particularly ethnic minority women, are willing to engage in the program activities.
• Household and community resistance can be addressed and overcome with the right engagement and awareness raising activities.

EOPO 3: Women, especially ethnic minority women and household members living in Son La and Lao Cai benefit from more gender responsive, inclusive, and effective provincial and national policies, plans, strategies, and programs.
• GREAT 2 can recruit staff with right skills and expertise in political economy analysis, with access to decision makers, change agents/ champions.
• GREAT 2 has the PMUs support, credibility, and networks to establish direct working relationships with targeted agencies.
• Government of Vietnam continues its inclusive development agenda.

Details on the intermediate outcomes are at Annex C

Whole of Program Assumptions:
• The GREAT 2 program will be able to recruit the necessary technical expertise to support implementation of the program, including in relation to senior gender and women’s economic empowerment, MSD expertise.
• GREAT 2 and its staff have in-depth understanding of relevant policy issues, change pathways in Vietnam, and gender equality and women’s empowerment issues.
• DFAT continues to support and resource the program to achieve its outcomes and draws upon independent technical advice to review and advise on Program directions.

3.5 WAYS OF WORKING

Achieving the outcomes identified in the ToC requires that the GREAT 2 team operationalise the program in certain ways, therefore this ToC is underpinned by defined ways of working that articulate specific principles, approaches and good practices that need to be adopted across the program. They are:

Be relevant: Too often solutions to development challenges are supply driven rather than by the real needs and capabilities of women, men, and systems. GREAT 2 will need to facilitate market system stakeholders, including those representing women, to identify their own solutions, ensuring the voices of ethnic minority women are represented and responding to the needs of women and men, with the benefit of technical expertise. This includes bringing technical expertise (sector specific and WEE expertise), resources to test ideas and solutions (where needed) and facilitating dynamics of groups to be inclusive of women’s voices and needs.

Know the context: The context includes socio-cultural, economic, gender and political factors, as well as incentives and drivers for change across different groups and institutions. GREAT 2 will need to draw upon highly specific and gender-sensitive technical expertise for each sub-sector, which is relevant to the context.
Build multi-stakeholder sector platforms: GREAT 2 will nurture and facilitate multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs) with willing market system stakeholders (women, businesses, governments, etc) who have different yet complimentary roles and responsibilities for creating change and achieving results. MSPs are a rolling process of action-oriented brokering, dialogue, and investment facilitation among the key actors in each sector to catalyse investments and remove bottlenecks to increase trading and profits, and to make the most of practical growth opportunities. The MSPs will initially be facilitated by the GREAT team but later handed over to producers/service groups and businesses.

Encourage gender-sensitive evidence-based decision-making: Gender-sensitive data and evidence are essential ingredients in successful policy and program design and implementation at all levels of government and needs to be supported by influence gained through strong relationships and clever culturally relevant communication strategies. Widespread adoption of gender-sensitive, evidence-based decision making within government agencies and amongst sector stakeholders, reduces the scope for biased influences and incentives to shape policy. GREAT 2 will encourage this by resourcing innovation, research, and analysis, and by communicating evidence in appropriate ways to target audiences.

Deepen integration of gender equality and women’s economic empowerment in market systems: GREAT 2 will need to intensify efforts to put gender equality and women’s economic empowerment at front and centre of all of activity and acknowledge that achieving the EOPOs requires the program to adapt and broaden traditional market systems approaches.

4. DELIVERY APPROACH

GREAT 2 will continue its focus on agriculture and tourism but with a different delivery approach. In Phase 1, GREAT largely utilised a competitive grants process to select and then partner with different sector stakeholders. GREAT 2 will focus its interventions on a limited number of specific sectors that lend themselves to opportunities for women’s economic empowerment and work with the multiple stakeholders in that sector to address market constraints and generate market opportunities. There will be a strategy for each sector, cross sector. Interventions underneath will be co-designed with partners to test and refine throughout implementation. Sectors will be selected using the criteria outlined in 4.3 below. There will be a smaller amount of funds for innovative ideas generated through call(s) for proposals.

GREAT 2 will put at the centre of its efforts women-centred producer and service groups (particularly those from ethnic minority groups established using a collective or cooperative model) to build and/or strengthen systems that support their increased economic engagement and productivity, and support gender equality principles. A women-centred approach will ensure GREAT 2 can provide the necessary inputs and support to facilitate women’s engagement in circumstances where that support cannot be found through existing market systems.

GREAT 2 will seek to work with sector stakeholders and communities to build gender awareness and shift the norms that underpin women’s lower economic status – in the household, in market systems, and through government policies and the enabling environment. This work will run in parallel with the sector strategies, helping to create change in knowledge, attitudes and practices amongst the different market stakeholder groups in ways that will benefit groups and organisations more broadly.
4.1 AGRICULTURE PORTFOLIO

GREAT 2 will adopt a sector-specific approach informed by rigorous gender-aware sector analysis for each supported sector that will inform specific theories of change for each sector. The following workstreams will build on and complement local programs, policies, plans, including but not limited to NTPs:

a) **Market linkage development and private sector engagement**, including establishing accessible multiple-stakeholder business platforms for the sector, brokering business to business/service relationships, supporting investments that address identified opportunities, innovations, or bottlenecks and providing capacity building on business management to local Micro and Small Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) with weak capacity

b) **Strengthening support markets for gender-responsive technical and financial services**. Among other interventions with existing service providers and businesses, this will include gender-sensitive training of agricultural extension workers to support the producer groups and focus sectors, including prioritisation of ethnic minority women in these training courses. Where such services (e.g. financial services) are cross-cutting serving multiple sectors, ToCs for specific cross-cutting service sectors will be developed and used to guide interventions in a coordinated manner to achieve more systemic change.

c) **Incubation of dynamic women-centred producer groups** anchored to market opportunities in their chosen sectors, including mentoring of women leaders of these groups.

d) **Foundational skills and capacity strengthening** for ethnic minority women and their groups, especially business skills, financial and digital literacy, including skills and knowledge required to adapt to the changing and uncertain pandemic environment.

Private sector engagement will remain central to the ToC, linking women-supported groups to the market. In GREAT 2, the emphasis will shift to fostering networks of relationships between multiple different women producer groups in each location with multiple competing buyers and service providers. This cluster-based approach (see Annex F: Clustering for inclusive growth and women’s empowerment) will replace the previous emphasis on working only with a small number of lead firms. The program will then broker and facilitate the establishment of the new trading relationships, e.g., between women’s producer groups and buyers or service providers choosing to do business together. Within the agriculture portfolio, the clustering will operate at four levels: i) provincial market level covering several road corridors; ii) road corridor level covering several clusters typically that form a buying route of competing buyers (e.g. for the trucks); iii) local-cluster level covering one or more producer groups, typically in a few nearby communes; and iv) producer group level.

Sector development processes will be driven by primary actors themselves, principally producer groups (women-centred and others), agri-businesses, commercial service providers, financial service providers, and governments. Producers and businesses are the ones who must make their investments successful, drive the process, and carry the risk of failure. Furthermore, to achieve genuine empowerment, women producer groups must be able to choose who they do business with. Facilitating an ongoing process of action-oriented brokering among these key actors is a central element of the approach. The initial focus of these dialogue processes is grounded in immediate opportunities for actions and improvements that build trust and momentum in the cluster. As momentum and trust begin to emerge it is feasible to jointly consider longer-term aspirations and begin to tackle them. The brokering process among key cluster actors should establish jointly owned, albeit informal, action plans and progress tracking for growth of their cluster. Commune, district and provincial authorities should be fully engaged during the cluster development processes as key supporters, including via the multi-stakeholder platforms – for example they will be invited to participate in the regular Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs) meetings as key supporters, enabling them to understanding the market opportunities and constraints for the producer groups and business in their area and, thereby, to better target public investment in public goods and service to respond to these opportunities and constraints. Local authorities at the commune level will also have important roles in mobilizing local producers and also facilitating dialogue between businesses, service provider and producer groups.
The activities detailed below will improve linkages between women producers, buyers and service providers to better exploit market opportunities and create the economic engine for women’s empowerment. Facilitation of rolling multi-stakeholder platforms and associated business-to-business/business-to-service (B2B/B2S) follow-up is a central element of this process.

4.1.1 Market-orientated Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs)

Market-oriented multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs) will be a key mechanism for building new and productive business relationships between women-centred producer groups, agribusiness and service providers. They will also serve as forums for these private actors to engage with local government and other supporters to help prioritise public support to the sector. An important role for GREAT will be to build the capacity of women-centred producer groups and their leaders to be able to confidently and effectively participate in these processes to represent their interest and those of the women in their community.

MSPs are a rolling process and are action-oriented. MSPs are market-focused with an agenda driven by the primary actors in the supply chain (i.e. producer groups, agribusinesses, commercial service providers, input and equipment suppliers and financial service providers). These platforms will convene actors to identify constraints and opportunities, broker relationships, identify roles and responsibilities, create ongoing dialogue and communication, and facilitate investment into the common objectives among the Platform’s key actors.

GREAT 2 will develop and nurture MSPs to facilitate:

- Primary actors to jointly identify practical opportunities and bottlenecks for developing their supply chains and priorities for individual or joint actions, favouring market-based solutions where feasible,
- Trust among different players,
- Common understanding of opportunities and challenges among critical suppliers, such as research and financial institutions, and
- Local coordination with various public investment initiatives, including NTPs.

Where there are gaps in resourcing for the priority actions emerging from an MSP, GREAT 2 can step in, provide technical assistance, facilitate access to finance to ensure success.

These are expected to result in the realisation of practical plans between women-centred producer group, buyers and service providers to do more business together. MSPs will be initially facilitated by the program team and its implementing partners but later jointly by the women producer groups and businesses themselves. Initial handover of the facilitation role typically begins after two or three years depending upon the program implementation and once there is momentum in the supply chain, maturing trust among actors, and experience of the MSPs process. MSPs for regularly traded products (e.g. vegetables) tend to mature more quickly than for products with one annual crop – due to more frequent interaction among producers, buyers, and service providers. (See Annex F: Clustering)

4.1.2 Brokering

Brokering and support to individual deals and partnerships between women producer groups, businesses and service providers will include the following:

Bilateral business meetings: Will be facilitated by a particular project partner, typically between a business (either a buyer and/or supplier) and a women producer group, typically who have met through an MSPS, who are interested to potentially do business together. The business to business bilateral meetings will focus on developing and negotiating practical trading plans between producers and businesses to do business together. This will also identify what technical services and support are required by the producers to fulfil the requirements of the new trading plans. Experience suggests meeting two or three different agribusinesses before selecting a preferred business partner, and that it may then take three or more follow-up meetings before a final agreement is
negotiated. In turn, the agreed trading plans will often lead to the need for specific actions or investments to be made by the producers, businesses or both. The investments and actions may be taken individually or jointly, depending on what has been agreed.

**Investment planning:** Good quality, straightforward investment plans will often need to be prepared by the women producers and businesses in response to their agreed trading plans or for their own business development purposes. It is important that such plans are well informed, credible and realistic and based on sound technical and business foundations without being unduly complicated.

In many cases, small farmers and women-led SMEs may require specific technical support to prepare well-informed investment plans that can be presented to banks for financing. The project will facilitate those requiring such support to acquire it from suitably experienced service providers, with a strong preference for commercial service providers to stimulate development of critical support markets.

Women producers will already be participating in business skills training in their producer group by this stage of the process. They will have growing confidence in understanding the financial aspects of the investment plans they are now considering. Where the investments rely on new or unfamiliar technologies or are known to be sensitive to climate risks, the project will arrange additional pre-investment technical advice to the farmers to ensure the plans are sound. Local SMEs and women-led agribusinesses requiring additional technical support in developing their detailed investment plans will also be supported by the project to identify and buy-in the necessary advice. Where the investments are expected to require additional technical or business advice during implementation, the costs of such advice must be included in the investment plans themselves.

**Access to finance:** The project will facilitate cluster participants, particularly women producers and women-led businesses who tend to have less access to finance, to link to partner financial institutions (FIs) to apply for loan finance if needed for their investments. GREAT will identify those FIs operating in the local area that have an appetite to increase lending to commercially sound farm level investment linked to confirmed market opportunities and then seek to establish collaborations with them at province or central level, to strengthen their understanding of opportunities for financial services to supported groups. FI officers will be routinely invited to participating in the MSPs and cluster process so they are increasingly familiar with the market opportunities and risks by the time the loan applications begin to be received. Where investments are to be made as multiple small investments by several cooperating farmers in a community, the loan applications and investment proposal may be aggregated and pre-screened to ensure adequate quality and completeness before they are submitted to interested banks.

**Execution of investments and trading plans:** Investments will be implemented by farmers and women-led SMEs themselves who will carry the risks and rewards of their own investments. However, investment implementation will be supported by the project through the ongoing process of women producer group mentoring and incubation. The project will provide farmers with technical advice and links to suitable suppliers for them to buy the necessary quality inputs and technical services they need for success. Where adjustments are needed to their plans during implementation, they will be supported to consider the cost and benefits of the different options and prepare revised plans that best suit their situation.

Technical advice required by farm or non-farm enterprises to implement their plans will be provided where feasible by commercial service providers or as an embedded service within the supply chains with the costs of the services already allowed for in their investment plans. The project will assist in identifying and screening of such service providers.

### 4.1.3 Sector Development Facility (SDF)

A sector development facility (SDF) will be operated by GREAT as a small flexible internal facility to make small “public good” investments (excluding large physical infrastructure) to address issues that emerge from the supply
chains that cannot be addressed by other programs or initiatives. To increase sustainability and ownership, wherever feasible, GREAT will seek financial contributions to these investment from the private actors. These will primarily be "software" type investments (e.g. market research, varietal trials, sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) protocol development, improved technology demonstration, support market development) that cannot otherwise be financed by private investments. For large public good investments (e.g. market infrastructure, irrigation), these may be identified through the program, including via the MSPs, but are expected to be considered for financing by local, province and central government investment programs, such as via the NTPs.

4.1.4 Gender-Responsive Services

**Strengthening support markets for gender-responsive services** will form a vital part of the cluster development process (e.g. technical, financial) as they are essential for sustaining competitive clusters and for enabling other clusters to emerge to copy the initial successes ("crowding in"). Within profitable clusters and supply chains, the costs of such services and inputs should be an affordable routine business cost for women producers and businesses and should not require external subsidy.

Informed by the early MSPS meetings, GREAT 2 will identify the essential services needed by producers and producer groups to respond to their chosen market opportunities. The program will then facilitate investments by SMEs and individual private service providers to establish or improve services in response to this demand from producer groups and the local industry. These may include paying for technical training to service providers on improved services. As required by each sector, GREAT 2 will partner with local authorities, women producer groups and buyers to identify, train and mentor suitable technical service providers in each cluster – operating as either embedded or independent service providers. Individuals involved may also be offered the opportunity of additional training as agriculture/livestock technicians with education provider partners, such as Lao Cai College, prioritizing women for training wherever possible.

In addition, where appropriate to local market conditions, the program will partner with the provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) to ensure the Agriculture Service Centres (and similar), who have more higher qualified staff, to provide gender-responsive technical backstopping to the communes and local service providers supported by the program.

4.1.5 Incubating women-centred producer organisations

Two closely related intervention areas will focus on building the business capacity and foundational skills of individual women producers and their producer groups to transform themselves into successful farm businesses, empowered and capable of being resilient and reliable actors in their supply chains. These groups and their leaders will be mentored so that they can effectively participate in the MSPS to find and build profitable new business relationships as well as effectively representing their interest in policy discussions with local authorities and other stakeholders.

Firstly, incubation of women-centred producer groups anchored to confirmed market opportunities will replicate the best practice approaches from the first phase of GREAT for mobilising market-oriented and empowered groups, augmented where needed with best practice techniques from elsewhere.

Groups should only be mobilized and supported for specific commodities where they are in potential cluster areas, and where the selection criteria are met [see Figure 3 below], notably that there is confirmed interest from buyers to increase sourcing from these locations and sufficient numbers of women are interested in working together to respond to the market opportunity with these buyers. This is typically after they have met through an initial road-corridor MSPS meeting.

Incubation processes are expected to take around three years for most groups to become reliable independent market-actors with strong internal dynamics for women’s empowerment. Incubation will include support to the
initial mobilization and governance of groups as well as sustained mentoring of group leaders over several business cycles while they build experience of working together and with buyers and suppliers.

GREAT 2 will identify one or more national service providers with proven capacity in this area to coordinate this process and support local province/district level partners to implement a consistent quality process across all producer groups in the agriculture portfolio. The lead service providers will work with local implementing partners, for example the relevant local line agencies/service centres, to strengthen their capacity in these best practice processes as part of GREAT 2’s scaling-up and exit strategy.

4.1.6 Foundational skills training for individual women

Foundational skills include skills for farming as a business, and financial and digital literacy. Foundational skills training will be available for all members of women producer groups. The ‘enhanced’ business skills courses will cover: essentials of financial literacy and household finances; managing your own farm as a business; and managing a group enterprise. It will also include the relevance of gender equality to women’s empowerment outcomes. ‘Enhanced’ training elements will include aspects such as climate change and COVID adaptation. It is envisaged that the courses will include approx. 60-70 hours of training, typically conducted for a few hours each week over several months. To deepen capacity in the women’s producer groups, the training should ideally be delivered on a peer-to-peer basis by “Business Skills Mentors” nominated from among the women themselves and then provided with Training of Trainers (ToT) training and backstopping by the program. Such training should also encourage the use of Farm Business Diaries, either in digital or paper format as a key tool to foster more entrepreneurial mindsets.

4.2 TOURISM PORTFOLIO

The anticipated recovery of the sector in Lao Cai and Son La and the opportunities this will create, alongside the strategic areas for improving competitiveness require an evolution under GREAT 2 to focus on an inclusive destination-based approach to tourism development in the two provinces - moving beyond the standalone smaller projects that were a main focus in GREAT 1.

At a national level the global tourism competitiveness index (2019) provides a good indication of areas where GREAT 2 can support strategic improvement. Vietnam ranks 63rd in the index, being most competitive on price, cultural and natural resources. It performs weakest in terms of environment sustainability, tourism service infrastructure, health and hygiene, digital inclusion and the priority given to the industry – highlighting opportunities where investment may make the greatest impact in the overall performance of the industry. Achieving systemic change in these areas that more broadly spreads the benefits of tourism to women and ethnic minorities requires sustained and well targeted support, especially at the destination level to strengthen the positioning of the local sector and its management. GREAT 2 can make important contributions to addressing these strategic issues in flagship rural tourism destinations in the north-western mountains, helping build more sustained and sustainable inclusive future growth of the industry.

There are anticipated to be significant job opportunities in the mainstream sector due to staff shortage as the industry opens, with many former workers having left the industry over the last two years. This has been the experience in countries worldwide in the last 18 months, with staff shortages estimated at 12%-18% in Europe and 11% in the US in the second half of 2021 during initial reopening of the sector. With an estimated 32,000 people directly working in the Lao Cai sector and around 5,000 people on Son La prior to COVID-19, similar levels of staff shortages would create 3,000 to 5,000 job opportunities. Well-designed professional training, such as expansion of the successful schemes with Lao Cai college from GREAT 1, plus management and apprenticeship-

14 See: World Tourism Council (Dec 2021) Staff Shortages [https://wttc.org/Portals/0/Documents/Reports/2021/WTTC-Staff-Shortages.pdf]
style schemes with the mainstream industry could prepare a new generation of ethnic minority women to take up these opportunities and transform the nature of the local industry.

Within the tourism sector GREAT 2 will intensify and scale-up activities around four main areas:

a) **Inclusive and Gender-Responsive Destination Management and Governance,**

b) **Upscaling Inclusive and Gender-Responsive Product Development,**

c) **Upscaling Inclusive and Gender-Responsive Skills Development,** and

d) **Supporting replication of good practices and experience from Lao Cai and Son La into other programs at national and NW regional level.**

In addition to the above, in Lao Cai there is a strong likelihood of a large tourism project to be financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), focusing on resilient infrastructure, livelihoods and provincial connectivity to maximize opportunities for local ethnic minorities and women and to promote an inclusive, sustainable tourism sector. Should this project go ahead, GREAT 2’s interventions in Lao Cai that focus on aspects other than hardware and infrastructure, such as sector governance, destination management, and product and skills development, will complement the investments under ADB’s infrastructure focused tourism project. There will be close coordination between the two projects and the provincial authorities in support of this.

Given the continued uncertainty in the outlook, especially as the situation with COVID-19 evolves and timing of re-opening of the industry, the project will adopt a flexible approach to interventions to regularly review and adjust the strategies and action plans in response to emerging opportunities and constraints. In particular, GREAT 2 will adopt a phased approach to the delivery of activities to reflect recovery in specific market segments. For example, skills training of women in community-based tourism for new products and services will coincide with returning tourism numbers so the women can apply new skills and knowledge within a reasonable time-period to re-enforce their knowledge and build confidence in their new approaches.

### 4.2.1 Inclusive and gender responsive destination management and governance

GREAT 2 will strengthen destinations – from small rural destinations (e.g. in one commune) seeking to expand or develop more consistent and inclusive tourism products, to road corridor or regional destinations wanting more coordinated development of multiple complementary local destinations in one area e.g. along the Y Ty circuit route or provincial level destination management. Such planning needs to be interlinked between the levels of government.

The tourism sector in Lao Cai and Son La and in each destination is made up of many stakeholders including micro and small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) providing services to visitors, travel agents, tour operators, training institutions and government agencies among others. Due to the number of stakeholders in tourism, a destination-based approach is required to connect disparate actors and facilitate better management of a destination and its development. To be inclusive, destination management must actively identify and promote opportunities to spread the benefits of tourism more widely, lending itself to a focus on creating opportunities for ethnic minority women.

In this way destinations and destination management processes share similarities with the inclusive clusters and multi-stakeholder platforms in the agriculture portfolio. However, an important difference is that in tourism destinations the public sector has a more prominent role as a partner to the private sector in the active governance and promotion of the local industry, for example in destination promotion, human resource training, provision of infrastructure, management of natural resources and setting of standards for service providers.

GREAT 2 will work with government and private sector partners as well as representatives of local communities in each destination, including women-centred tourism service groups, to establish multi-stakeholder destination
management arrangements similar to those adopted at the national level for the Tourism Advisory Board\(^{15}\) (TAB) with a strengthened focus on inclusion of representatives from ethnic minority businesses and service groups, especially women. Such arrangement should complement and not replace the formal governance and regulatory oversight by the competent authorities. Attention will be given to ensure ethnic minority women are fully represented in these processes, including through mentoring of women leaders of tourism service groups to actively participate in the destination management and policy dialogue processes to ensure their priorities and concerns are reflected in policies and plans for the local industry.

GREAT 2 interventions will include i) capacity development and facilitation with key partners in setting-up and managing inclusive destination management systems and mobilising stakeholders to participate, including cross learning with experience of Australian regional level tourism bodies that have successful or innovative approaches to engaging indigenous communities and indigenous business in destination management ii) directly supporting the development of inclusive destination management strategies and action plans for each supported destination, iii) working with the partners involved in destination management to support implementation of key actions from the agreed destination management plans, including linking to other initiatives of GREAT 2 (e.g. skills training via Lao Cai College) and other programs (e.g. Rural tourism project of NTP NRD). At the provincial level, GREAT 2 will support the ongoing process of development and implementation of province-wide, inclusive and gender-sensitive destination management plans and tourism policy in both Lao Cai and Son La as well as in key destinations within the province, e.g. support to develop Moc Chau (Son La) as a smart destination. At the commune level, inclusive destination management arrangements will include scaling-up the successful experience of GREAT 1 in Ta Phin commune, where a new women’s tourism service cooperative has contributed to more inclusive management of the destination that is well regarded by its members.

As well as actionable inclusive destination management and development plans for each destination, a direct output from these processes will be new and strengthened relationships between a range of tourism businesses (travel agents, tour operators, other tourism service providers) and local communities and women’s tourism groups and cooperatives.

To support an accelerated pandemic recovery for destination, the following additional specific activities will be implemented in coordination with the destination management partners:

- providing technical and possibly financial support to coordinated marketing campaigns for the NW region to promote tourism destinations (that benefit women) to the domestic market as soon as the pandemic permits,
- further strengthening the capacity of the destination management structures to develop crisis management plans and coordinating cross-agency and multi-stakeholder task force COVID-19 response, and
- implementing a specific “Get Connected” program to support businesses, especially those that are women-owned and led, to connect to online booking platforms and promote their services via social media channels.

On the enabling environment for destination development, GREAT 2 will build on its current partnerships, including with the Vietnam Bank of Social Policies (VBSP), and with additional financial service providers to improve access to financial services, particularly adapted to the needs and constraints faced by ethnic minority women.

\(^{15}\) The TAB is represented by Vietnam’s leading tourism stakeholders and has entered into a partnership with the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT). TAB comprises representatives from a broad base of industry leaders and stakeholders in Vietnam’s travel and tourism sector. All stakeholders are working together to support international tourism promotions in Vietnam’s key markets. TAB currently manages Vietnam’s national tourism website (www.vietnam.travel) and its social media channels on behalf of VNAT.
4.2.2 Upscaling Inclusive and Gender-Responsive Product Development

Using the multi-stakeholder inclusive destination management arrangements above, GREAT 2 will facilitate tourism businesses and women’s tourism groups working together to identify and develop new and improved tourism products and service to respond to identified market opportunities in line with the destination management and development plans. This will consider the growing opportunities with domestic tourists who are, in many cases, more profitable than international tourists. Domestic tourists in the region typically buy more local products, especially local foods and medicinal and aromatic plant products. This provides opportunities for broader benefits within communities beyond accommodation and food services which can be prohibitively expensive for poorer ethnic minority families to invest in.

Such product development will broadly follow the principles of public private partnership, with GREAT 2 acting as the ‘honest broker’ in linking women’s tourism groups to interested tourism businesses and then facilitating access to financial and technical support to these partners to execute their plans through defined sub-projects. These sub-projects may target support individually to women’s groups or businesses or be arranged on a tri-partite basis with more formally defined arrangements between the women’s groups, partner business and GREAT under a single agreement. This will be done in collaboration with the local communities and government. GREAT 2 will support the incubation of women-centred tourism groups and cooperatives in supported destinations to respond to the market opportunities emerging from the inclusive destination management processes. It will apply a similar approach to that used for the incubation of women centred producer groups in the agriculture portfolio (see 4.1.5 above). For new destinations, there will be a considered process to develop and make it market ready – women-centred tourism groups will be a key part of this process alongside other aspects such as training, access to finance and marketing.

Within individual community-based tourism destinations, inclusive product development is expected to cover: i) sustainable expansion of the number and range of products and services in the destination, ii) improvements in the quality and consistency of products and services, iii) support for service providers and destination managers to develop more differentiated product offerings aligned to destination development plans.

At the corridor/regional destination level, it is expected that activities will include working with public and private sector partners to develop new and improved circuits and multi-destination products – such as “Sapa beyond” village strategy and the Y Ty circuit (Lao Cai).

As well as directly supporting product development in specific locations, GREAT 2 will implement measures that facilitate replication and scale-up by businesses and tourism groups in other destinations, within Son La and Lao Cai as well as beyond. This is expected to involve, among other things: i) preparing documentation, guides and multi-media communication materials on successful approaches, the business case for each and step taken to achieve it; ii) strategic communication of these successful models to other potential destination and industry actors, iii) provide targeted advisory support and capacity building to those wanting to replicate the success, and iv) facilitating linkages to other programs and service providers, including with central agency partners.

4.2.3 Upscaling Inclusive and Gender-Responsive Skills Development

There are expected to be significant job opportunities in the mainstream tourism sector as it re-opens, especially for skilled and semi-skilled workers. Similarly, the development of products and community-based destinations also require significant increases in skills and knowledge of individuals. In response, GREAT 2 will substantially scale-up its efforts on inclusive and gender responsive skills development prioritizing ethnic minority women in the following ways:

- Improved formal vocational skills training through scaling-up the successful project with Lao Cai College in Phase 1 for vocational skills training and jobs placement. This is expected to include i) increasing the range and number of courses offered by Lao Cai collage using similar approaches to improved course
design as in Phase 1, and ii) establishing new partnerships with other training institutions serving the NW region to replicate similar types of improved training courses. In addition, through its central level partnerships, GREAT will explore opportunities to support replicating the development of similar improved vocational skills training courses with other training institutions e.g. those serving the rural tourism component of the NTP NRD or skills development project of NTP SEDEMA.

- Professional and management training: Piloting and scaling-up management training and apprenticeship-type courses jointly between businesses and training institutions targeting management, administration and professional roles across the mainstream tourism industry in the region. It is expected that the requirements and opportunities for these schemes will be defined and developed through multi-stakeholder destination management structures supported by GREAT 2, especially at provincial level.
- Informal skills training for women-centred tourism groups and their members in support of improved product and service development, building on the best practices from Phase 1 which included important transferable skills such as digital literacy and language skills for tourism service providers.

### 4.2.4 Supporting replication of good practices and experience from Lao Cai and Son La into other programmes at national and NW regional level

Building on the experience and lessons from Lao Cai and Son La, including from Phase 1, GREAT 2 will support the implementation of the rural tourism component of the NTP NRD by providing technical assistance, capacity building and facilitation. Detailed collaboration arrangements and action plans with key government agencies leading the rural tourism component, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, will be finalised by the project during the inception phase.

While detailed action plans are subject to agreement with partners, activities are currently expected to include, among others: i) policy engagement and support to review and update relevant policies, including the integration of gender considerations; ii) human resource capacity development for rural tourism, with a focus on building women’s capacity, building on the experience with Lao Cai College and the other Phase 1 skills training activities; and iii) support to develop gender-responsive strategies and plans to leverage digital technologies and strategic communication to promote inclusive rural tourism. GREAT 2 will also support the piloting and scale-up of models to improve destination management and increase private investment in rural tourism products and services, particularly those that benefit women, including building on the successful model from GREAT Phase 1 on destination management. The potential for GREAT 2 to work with Vietnam National Administration of Tourism in a similar way will be further explored.

### 4.3 SELECTION CRITERIA FOR SECTORS IN PHASE II

GREAT 2 interventions will drive genuine empowerment for ethnic minority women by utilising intervention strategies that demonstrate the following characteristics (illustrated in Figure 3 below):
Figure 3: Criteria for the selection of agriculture and tourism sectors in GREAT 2.

1. **Market demand is credible**, buyers are interested, and sufficient market depth is achievable:
   - Clear, current market demand for the specific product/service - sufficient to absorb the expected increase in supply.
   - Credible commercial partners and intermediaries engaged from the start and interested to increase trading with producer organisations/service providers in the target areas PLUS route to achieve market depth within two to three years (i.e. genuine competition among buyers in the local area).
   - Support markets for essential technical services, inputs/equipment and financial services exist or can be established within the necessary time as part of project and other interventions.

2. **Small producers/service households are interested, can compete, and make a good living, especially ethnic minority women**:
   - Aspirational fit: Product/service that is of interest to sufficient numbers of ethnic minority women and fits with their own aspirations for themselves and their households.
   - Proven business case for small scale producers for the target product/service, technology plus affordable transition/investment pathway, including financing plan. E.g., compare ramie (new product, easy fast
transition) versus. organic cinnamon (improved existing product, moderate transition) versus benzoin (new product, long/difficult unproven transition).

3. **Producer/Service Groups add value in the supply chain** so can enable wider empowerment of ethnic minority women:

   - A clear "business case" for Producer/Service Groups creating "added value" to their local supply chain e.g. reducing transaction costs for buyers, coordination of plans to provide consistent volume/standard of supply, increasing access, particularly for women, to critical services (financial, technical) that cannot be accessed through other means (a good example is stick cinnamon processing groups, that can supply primary-processed product to buyers so they can expand their trading of this high demand product).

4. **Sustainable production is viable in local conditions (current + future)**

   - For agricultural commodities, the targeted smallholder-based production systems must be viable and competitive in target production areas under current and future agro-climatic conditions, including via the adoption of climate smart agriculture practices.
   
   - For tourism, products and services should be designed to meet expected market demand and managed in ways that do not degrade the local cultural, social or natural resources and ideally provide positive impacts in these areas.

5. **Affordable investment pathways exist** for interested individuals, especially ethnic minority women, and their associated producer/service groups to invest and upgrade their individual and group enterprises to take advantage of the market opportunities identified. Credible upgrading pathways are those in which interested individuals, especially if working within a producer/service group:

   - Can make affordable yet profitable initial investments in their own household enterprise in their chosen sub-sector, and
   
   - Such initial investments generate sufficient increased incomes and profits, part of which can be reinvested after each production/business cycle so they can gradually grow and improve their business and income to a desired level.

4.4 **ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT**

GREAT 2 will pave the way for Australia to assist and then influence sustainable and inclusive agenda and aspiration at provincial and national levels of Vietnam.

GREAT Phase 1 has successfully influenced policies and implementation practices at the provincial, district and commune level – as can be evidenced in numerous progress reports. During 2020, GREAT began to increase its relationships and influence at the central level, with some successes. However, the experience of GREAT Phase 1 highlights that central level engagement is best undertaken via the development of Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with individual central-level agencies relevant to the national policy or plan. This complements rather than displaces the Subsidiary Agreement and relationship with the two provinces. The GREAT program team will need to ensure that provincial level government stakeholders (particularly PPCs and PMUs) are engaged in policy influencing at national levels and drawing upon their own experiences and expertise to sustain an ongoing policy relevant relationship. A detailed policy advocacy strategy will be updated in the GREAT 2 inception phase, including specified roles for the program team and the Embassy in supporting policy advocacy.

The scope and focus of each partnership will be developed between relevant provincial government actors and GREAT to respond to the opportunities and support needed by each partner for implementation of NTPs, ensuring
that the experience and built expertise at the provincial level and within the project can inform policy and guidance. Within this context, GREAT may mobilise additional technical assistance and other service providers to support the delivery of agreed activities.

4.4.1 Central Government National Target Programs

GREAT 2 will be initiated and implemented during the design and launch of three NTPs: The National Target Program on Socio Economic Development in Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas (NTP–SEDEMA), the National Target Program on New Rural Development Program (NTP-NRD), and the National Target Program on Sustainable Inclusive Poverty Reduction and Social Protection (NTP-SPRSP). All three create an opportunity for GREAT 2 to influence policy in Vietnam.

The NTP-SEDEMA 2021 – 2030: is a “pulling together” of all relevant current policies and programs of the Government of Vietnam for ethnic minority groups. The expectation underlying this integration is to coordinate resources under SEDEMA to produce breakthroughs to “basically end” poverty for ethnic minorities by 2030. Consequently, NTP-SEDEMA is the most important initiative to address persistent poverty among ethnic minorities. The NTP-SEDEMA comprises of 10 component projects, with two of these projects, Project 3 and Project 8, being particularly relevant to GREAT. Project 3 aims at “Developing agricultural and forestry production, promoting the regional potential strengths of cash crop production to participate in value chains”, and Project 8 is envisaged to “boost gender equality and to address urgent issues for women and children”. The Program was approved by the National Assembly (Resolution 120/2020/QH14) in June 2020 and approved by the Prime Minister in November 2021.

The NTP-NRD and NTP-SPRSP 2021-2025: based on the reviews of these two NTPs for the period 2016-2020, Vietnam, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA), has developed proposals for the next phase 2021-2025. It is proposed that the NTP-NRD will be largely the same as 2016-2020, however the NTP-SPRSP is being restructured to avoid potential overlap with the NTP-SEDEMA. The proposals for these two NTPs were approved by the National Assembly in July 2021.

GREAT has developed a list of key national policy influencing opportunities for the program and the Embassy to engage with, identified through discussions with relevant ministries, including CEMA, MPI, and MARD.

See Annex B for further details

4.4.2 Central-level agencies for policy engagement

GREAT 2 is an important vehicle for Australia to assist and influence the implementation of national level strategies so that they are supportive of opportunities for ethnic minority women’s empowerment, and for women engaging in agriculture and tourism markets.

With the recent approval of the NTPs and the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-30 (NSGE) – GREAT 2 is well positioned for an increased engagement in policy dialogue. GREAT 2 will be able to offer models and lessons to central-level stakeholders on ways to translate these policy commitments to action, ensuring the creation of opportunities for ethnic minority women, and for women in agriculture and tourism markets. The mandate holders of the NTPs and the NSGE comprise the priority stakeholders for GREAT 2’s policy dialogue. Additional influential stakeholders are also noted so that GREAT 2 can monitor opportunities for engagement, where they arise.

The intention for GREAT 2 to engage more concertedly in policy advocacy also prescribes the need for a more defined process of engagement with DFAT in this endeavour. A Policy Dialogue Strategy will be therefore be
updated in the first six months of GREAT 2, based on the findings of the review and consultation with DFAT. This will be the tool for articulating an agreed and joint approach. (See Annex B for further details).

4.4.3 Sub-National Levels

The enabling environment for women’s empowerment will be strengthened by targeted policy and institutional engagement with provincial, district and commune government agencies. Activities are expected to include training and capacity building support of government staff in partner agencies to ensure a foundational understanding of gender equality and women’s empowerment processes, and to support gender-responsive delivery of the supported NTPs.

Working at the household and community level will be required to support women’s empowerment via activities that address gender stereotypes and social norms that limit women’s engagement in markets. Potential activities could include behaviour change communication campaigns that raise awareness about the benefits of gender equality; working through existing men’s groups and other established community structures to directly challenge entrenched inequality in a supportive environment; and engaging male and female role models who champion women’s empowerment and gender equality in ethnic minority communities.

To complement the activities at the provincial level, GREAT 2 will work with key central level stakeholders and potentially develop a small number of strategic partnerships with lead agencies for each supported NTP, principally CEMA for NTP SEDEMA and MARD for NTP NRD. Strategic central partnership would be prioritized with the central coordinating offices for the two priority NTPs both of which have expressed a desire to partner with GREAT.

5. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS AND STRUCTURE

GREAT 2 will continue to be implemented in accordance with the Australia/Vietnam bilateral MoU. Ongoing ownership of the program is held by the PPCs of Lao Cai and Son La which will maintain and strengthen GREAT 2’s relevance to socio-economic development plans and links and leverage points to the NTPs and other development partners and programs.

The single, joint province GREAT Steering Committee will be maintained and comprised of key stakeholders representing:

- The Provincial People Committees (PPCs) of Lao Cai and Son La (alternating Co-chairs),
- District level authorities,
- Australia’s aid program at the Australian Embassy (Co-chair),
- Provincial Department Representatives – Department of Planning and Investment (DPI), Department of Finance (DOF), Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), Department of Culture, Tourism and Sports (DCST), Department of Labour-Invalids and Social Affairs (DOLISA), Provincial Committee of Ethnic Minorities (PCEM), and the Vietnam Women’s Union (VWU),
- The GREAT 2 MC (Cowater) and the Lao Cai and Son La Program Management Units (PMUs) are not formal members of the Steering Committee but will serve as secretariat support and observers.

The GREAT Steering Committee will continue to be responsible for program oversight and governance with formal meetings every twelve months. Final approval of the annual GREAT Work Plan and budget will be retained by the

16 This structure will be maintained irrespective of any additional subsidiary agreements.
Steering Committee. GREAT 2 offers an opportunity for Lao Cai and Son La PMUs to contribute beyond their current coordinating role; building from their increased capacity, experience, and expertise gained from Phase 1. (See Annex E: Governance)

5.2 MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

GREAT Phase 2 will continue to be implemented by the current MC (Cowater), with a reporting line to the First Secretary-Development Cooperation and the Senior Program Manager for GREAT at the Australian Embassy.

Concurrent to the Design Update process and informed by MTR recommendation 7, the management team is being refined. Whilst still at conceptual stage, the emerging structure proposes enhanced gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) expertise and capacity at a senior level, recommending an international appointment. GREAT 2 also needs to recruit senior MSD expertise.

The program will be delivered through sector and cross sector strategies. The delivery approach in GREAT 2 requires more sector specific depth as well as the program team shifting from the contract and partner management in Phase 1 to a more facilitative, relationship brokering role in GREAT 2. It is understood a capacity development approach to build this internally will be required as it is likely to be challenging to find these skills in the labour market. The proposed management structure is included in Annex G.

5.3 EARLY ACTIVITIES

GREAT is currently in an extension phase through to June 2022 and activities are continuing per the approved Work Plan, with adjustments related to ongoing COVID-19 considerations. Several reviews are planned for the first half of calendar year 2022, including a review of the access to finance activities and the policy and advocacy work. The findings from these will also contribute to the directions taken in GREAT 2. It will be vital to ensure all required approvals are received for GREAT 2 well in advance of June 2022 so that the program can continue to deliver without interruption or loss of momentum.

5.4 PROFILE AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Findings from the MTR demonstrated GREAT has taken an innovative and proactive approach to communications and public diplomacy by generating knowledge products and hosting learning events to foster partnerships in support of ethnic minority women’s empowerment and promote Australia’s support in this area. Whilst outside of the scope of the Design Update, the effective use of video technology and social media in raising GREAT’s profile and Australia’s support has been noted. GREAT 2 offers an opportunity to pioneer emerging digital production models, to place more emphasis on women and women’s groups to represent themselves in communications, and further promote Australia’s support of innovative agriculture and tourism in Vietnam.

5.5 SUSTAINABILITY

By 2027, GREAT 2 will represent an investment of 10 years and AUD 67.4 million in supporting women’s empowerment through market systems engagement in NW Vietnam. It is imperative that GREAT 2 optimises opportunities for institutionalising capacity, lessons, models and beneficial impacts beyond the investment. To deliver sustainability, the exit strategy entails two primary approaches:
1) Building credible capacity in permanent institutions within the province on the improved approaches implemented by GREAT 2. This demands an increased and more meaningful role for provincial and district partners and building their capacity within the province and for their uptake and implementation in other locations; and

2) By the GREAT team actively seeking opportunities to support provincial stakeholders to showcase and promote to central level stakeholders the gender-responsive models for implementation of the NTPs and the National Strategy on Gender Equality.

GREAT 2 will develop a Sustainability and Exit Strategy within the first year of implementation, for endorsement by the Steering Committee.

6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In Phase 1, GREAT developed a sophisticated M&E system, including a Framework and Plan, MIS, tools, guidance notes and training. The system has generated a rich data set that has been utilised to adapt the program approaches and inform decision making. The MERL Framework and MIS system will need to be updated new approaches adopted by GREAT 2, particularly given the approach to having sector-based ToCs, cross-cutting themes, national scale up and replication efforts, and supporting the strengthening of the enabling environment.

The M&E Framework update (see Annex C) has been tailored for the revised ToC (see Annex A), however the designers have tried to incorporate many of the indicators and data collection methods because they were a) relevant, b) enable ease of application, and c) ensure that data from GREAT Phase 1 can be utilised for comparative purposes.

Evidence from the consultations held to inform this Design Update suggest that M&E for GREAT 2 should be streamlined and made more user-friendly for participating groups. To that end, the annexed framework relies more heavily upon the existing research studies (baseline, mid-line and end-line surveys and the longitudinal study) that can be extended in Phase 2.

Targets included in the first phase proved to be difficult to manage and sometimes forced the program into directions that were not in the best interests of outcomes achievement. Therefore, targets should not be included in the second phase design. Instead, targets can be developed by MC, in consultation with the PPCs and multi-stakeholder platforms. Stakeholder developed targets encourage greater program ownership by key implementers and beneficiaries. Targets should remain flexible for stakeholders in order that unforeseen circumstances (such as COVID-19) can be accounted for and targets adjusted to suit the operating environment.

The attached M&E Framework will require refinement and detailing by the GREAT 2 program team. An early deliverable for the MC, Cowater, will be the updated M&E Framework and Plan for GREAT 2 within the first six months of implementation.

A mechanism for independent periodic review of program progress led by DFAT will also be established for Phase 2.

7. GENDER, DISABILITY AND OTHER CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Women’s economic empowerment is the primary objective of GREAT 2, with inclusive market development being the approach and vehicle to achieve this. Women’s economic empowerment is defined as women having the ability to succeed and advance economically and the power to make and act on economic decisions. Over Phase
1, the goal of women’s economic empowerment has progressed from focusing on matters such as income generation, goods or services produced by women, and participation in markets to acknowledging the importance of women from diverse backgrounds having power and control over resources to actively participate in decision making at all social levels.\(^{17}\) This shift in focus, therefore, requires the program to pay attention to the non-economic dimensions of change,\(^{18}\) by recognising and addressing the barriers that perpetuate gender inequality in the economy as well as wider society. To achieve women’s economic empowerment, therefore, the underlying factors that contribute to this need to be addressed, namely norms and institutions, and individual and community resources.

GREAT 2 recognises the interconnected nature of market system actors and emphasises that addressing women’s agency requires changes in gender norms and power structures to support women’s participation in markets, as well as sustainable shifts in market roles, relations, and responsibilities of all market actors to enable women to perform better within them.

Figure 4: Model for Women’s Economic Empowerment using Market Systems Development Approach

For GREAT 2, this will mean working at and across multiple levels of the agriculture and tourism market systems to increase ethnic minority women’s opportunities to better engage in their chosen market. Working through women producer groups and service organisations, the program will strengthen ethnic minority women’s foundational skills and capacity, in particular their business skills, financial and digital literacy. Female-group leaders will be supported with ongoing mentoring and training to develop leadership and business management skills. This focus will require an implementing partner to work with and provide ongoing support to women groups. To facilitate a supportive environment in which women can effectively engage in these groups and markets more broadly, the team will work at the community level to address social norms that limit progress on ethnic minority women’s empowerment.


Working with men and households, therefore, will be an important component of this work, given men need to play a key role in supporting women to access resources and opportunities that are essential to women’s empowerment and the realisation of gender equality in general. A Do No Harm framework will guide program implementation, monitoring and exit to identify potential risks of the program for women and men, such as the risk of backlash from men, local powerholders and family members to various women’s economic empowerment activities, and GBV, and will design activities that mitigate any identified risk. This will ensure that the program’s objective of women’s economic empowerment is achieved safely.

GREAT 2 will update its GEDSI in the first year of implementation to specify the contractor-specific, team-specific and programmatic commitments to GEDSI and women’s empowerment, including across the domains of partnership, research, communications and advocacy.

In addition, GREAT 2 will explore ways to increase the participation of women and men with disabilities in program activities. An important starting point is that GREAT 2 includes the requirement to consult with at a minimum one local or national disabled people’s organisation on formative assessments and analysis, such as sector assessments. Consulting with relevant community organisations and key stakeholders will help GREAT 2 to understand the barriers and opportunities for people with disabilities, in particular ethnic minority women with disabilities, to engage in market systems via culturally appropriate approaches that support their participation in program activities. All TORs for technical assistance should include a question or requirement for information on ways to increase the reach or accessibility of the program for people with disabilities. GREAT 2 will also engage CBM International – DFAT’s disability inclusion advisory service – to provide input and review of GREAT 2’s GEDSI Action Plan. GREAT 2 will also host annual disability inclusion sensitisation training. If travel is permitted, within the first six months, GREAT 2 will also conduct a visit to the two provinces with a disability inclusion adviser (ideally a national consultant) who can provide direct advice on connections, partners and modifications that can be made to the GREAT premises, programs and communication materials to be more disability inclusive. This will be a time-bound action in the GEDSI Action Plan.

Finally, to ensure that the program is well positioned to address the multiple factors of systemic economic inequality and exclusion that ethnic minority women and men may face (e.g. ethnicity, language, age, geographic location/isolation, education level, ability etc), GREAT 2 will also carefully examine and mainstream social inclusion considerations across program interventions. In this way, interventions will be designed to ensure that all members of society, in particular those most marginalised and vulnerable, are able to access resources and opportunities, develop required capabilities, and participate in economic activities.
8. BUDGET AND RESOURCES

The indicative budget for GREAT 2 (July 2022 – June 2027) is AUD 33.7 million.

Table 5: Summary budget for GREAT 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total indicative budget (AUD) July 2022 – June 2027</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management Fee &amp; Performance Payments</td>
<td>3,266,875 (approx. 10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel Costs (including long-term and short-term advisers (ARF) and personnel (non-ARF); Long Term Adviser support costs)</td>
<td>7,663,580 (22.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam Office Recurring costs</td>
<td>1,250,975 (3.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership funding at provincial level</td>
<td>14,000,000 (41.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy advocacy at national level and Technical Assistance</td>
<td>5,000,000 (14.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program support costs: Technical assistance, Communication, Training, MERL, workshops, communication, travel</td>
<td>2,518,570 (7.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33,700,000 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cost assumptions

The budget will be refined by DFAT and Cowater during the contract amendment negotiations.

The indicative budget includes the following allocations to support the achievement of GREAT 2’s EOPOs:

- Salaries for personnel positions will be equivalent based on work level, and therefore avoid GEDSI-based pay gaps.
- Provision for international travel by STAs has been factored in, subject to COVID-19.
- The DFAT’s Adviser Remuneration Rates (ARF) will be referenced to in GREAT 2.
- Government of Vietnam contributions are in-kind.
- The phasing of expenditure within each financial year in GREAT 2 will be more gradual, with GREAT 2 not pursuing a competitive grants model whereby expenditure peaks around granting deadlines and tranche cycles. This will contribute to more gradual phasing across all financial years of the program.

Resources

While final arrangements for the staffing profile will be negotiated by DFAT and Cowater for GREAT 2, it is to be noted this Design Update includes specific recommendations for key personnel, including:

- GEDSI / Women’s Empowerment Adviser costed as an international adviser at 1.0 FTE.
- The appointment of a senior MSD adviser, as well as overarching Agriculture and Tourism Portfolio Managers at 1.0 FTE each.
For DFAT, GREAT 2 will continue to be managed daily by a Senior Program Manager (1.0 FTE), with oversight from the First Secretary, Development Cooperation (0.3 FTE) and support from a Program Officer (0.5 FTE).

9. PROCUREMENT AND PARTNERING

GREAT 2 was developed as a Design Update for a program that is currently performing well, as verified by DFAT’s 2021 Investment Monitoring Report. GREAT 2 is not a new program, and so DFAT will continue to use the MC model for program delivery. There will be not a new agreement for GREAT 2 but a contract amendment between DFAT and the current MC (Cowater). As the MC, Cowater will provide project management, quality assurance, financial management services, procurement, M&E, recruitment and contract management services for all components of GREAT 2.

Cowater’s performance was affirmed in DFAT’s 2021 Partner Performance Assessment, whereby Cowater was rated as either good or very good against all criteria. Cowater was selected via an open tender, and participatory procurement process in 2017 (Lao Cai and Son La PPCs, Hanoi Post, and Contracting Services Branch in Canberra provinces participated in the selection process). This implementation arrangement represents value for money for DFAT.

The current model satisfies DFAT’s value for money criteria. This arrangement allows immediate program commencement upon approval of the design, saving significant time and money. Program procurement and establishment processes can take between 4-6 months before the program commences delivery; so, this is a more cost-effective solution limiting the contracting and transaction costs for DFAT.

In Phase 2, GREAT will also be approved by and implemented in Vietnam through Subsidiary Arrangement(s) with the Provincial Peoples’ Committees of Lao Cai and Son La.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT AND SAFEGUARDS

GREAT has an established and ongoing risk assessment process and maintains an active risk register. This was reviewed and revised during the Design Update process (see Annex H). The MTR found GREAT has sound risk management processes.

The Design Update process has identified the following risks for GREAT 2, and arising from the transition between Phases 1 and 2:

- COVID-19 restrictions will continue to impact the final period of GREAT 1 and transition to GREAT 2, causing delays in implementation and creating uncertainty for viability of sectors.
- GREAT 2 approval takes longer than expected and leads to an implementation gap.
- Ongoing underspends, especially if travel restrictions persist.
- The program does not demonstrate strong alignment with the priorities of Lao Cai and Son La, especially in supporting local, provincial level implementation of the NTPs.
- GREAT 2 does not demonstrate or clearly articulate lessons and achievement of outcomes in order to effectively influence policies and programs at central government and inter-provincial level.
- GREAT 2 staff do not have the required technical (e.g. women’s empowerment promotion) or sectoral and market systems skills and experience to move from a contract management role to a more facilitative, brokering role.
- Negative social attitudes around gender equality and women’s participation in the economy remain entrenched within households and communities in Lao Cai and Son La provinces.
Goal: Women living in North West Vietnam will have improved social and economic status and increased resilience.

EOP Outcome 1: Women, particularly ethnic minority women living in Son La and Lao Cai have improved economic benefits.

EOP Outcome 2: Women, particularly ethnic minority women living in Son La and Lao Cai, have increased confidence and social status, including more balanced workloads and greater decision making within the home, workplace and community.

EOP Outcome 3: Women, particularly ethnic minority women and household members living in Son La and Lao Cai benefit from more gender responsive, inclusive and effective provincial and national policies, plans, strategies and programs.

IO 1: Women use assets, services, and networks to gain increased income and/or employment.

IO 2: Women have more economic choices and are more resilient.

IO 3: Men and household members are more supportive of women’s roles, economic choices and participation.

IO 4: Markets in agriculture and tourism are developed and are more gender responsive and inclusive.

IO 5: The socio-cultural enabling environment better facilitates greater gender equality and enhanced roles for women in economic and community life.

IO 6: Provincial /national policies, plans, strategies, and programs are more gender responsive and inclusive and provide more space for private sector engagement.

Activities work across all intermediate outcomes.

Women’s entrepreneurship, start-ups and leadership

Gender awareness & behaviour change strategies

Multi-stakeholder platforms and partnerships

Sector ToCs, strategies and plans

Co-investment, leveraging finance

Research, evidence and analytics

Access to finance and literacy skills

Digital transformation

Gender and WEE technical leadership

NTP Implementation support

Innovation funding

Technical advice
ANNEX B: POLICY DIALOGUE MATRIX

As outlined in section 4.4.2 above, GREAT 2 is an important vehicle for Australia to influence the implementation of national level strategies so that they are supportive of opportunities for ethnic minority women’s empowerment, and for women engaging in agriculture and tourism markets. Based on the findings of current Review of GREAT’s Policy Advocacy Process, GREAT 2 will develop a detailed Policy Dialogue Strategy within the first six months of implementation. This will identify, in detail, priority policy issues and stakeholder audiences for dialogue (including down to the level of individual offices or officials), and it will articulate the agreed, respective roles of DFAT and the GREAT 2 (MC) team. At this stage, it is anticipated that the policy dialogue will be based on experience and lessons derived from provincial level implementation of the three NTPs, and the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2021-30. However, windows of opportunity for additional policy influencing activity with central level agencies may well emerge, and GREAT 2 should be well placed to respond – based on the increased policy advocacy expertise and the dedicated strategy available under phase 2. The following matrix serves as a summary of key elements for consideration in the development of the Policy Dialogue Strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Related End-of-Investment Outcome</th>
<th>Problem/ Issue</th>
<th>Policy outcome sought</th>
<th>Program entry points for policy dialogue</th>
<th>Influential stakeholders</th>
<th>Resources required</th>
<th>Policy dialogue lead</th>
<th>Partnership engagement lead within MC/implementing partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women, particularly ethnic minority women and household members living in Son La and Lao Cai benefit from more gender-responsive, inclusive, and effective provincial and national policies, plans,</td>
<td>With reviews noting a gap between policy and implementation for both the NTPs and the NSGE, there is a value in offering for practical, affordable models to show how the NTPs (SEDEMA, NRD, SPR) can be implemented in ways that promote opportunities for women’s engagement and empowerment. There is also a need</td>
<td>1) More gender-responsive NTP delivery and more effective implementation of provincial Gender Equality Strategies on the basis of models and lessons from Lao Cai and Son La. 2) Recognition of Australia as a partner of choice for</td>
<td>Steering Committee Meetings  Provinicial field visits  DFAT to consider whether any scheduled bilateral meetings, including on the Strategic Partnership between Australia and Vietnam and the EEES, are an appropriate</td>
<td>NTP Coordination Office of under CEMA (for NTP SEDEMA), of MARD (for NTP NRD) and for MOLISA (for NTP SPR and the NSGE).  Vice Minister Nguyen Thi Ha-MOLISA and Deputy Director Tran Bich Loan, Gender Equality Department</td>
<td>Human resources: Appointment of new Policy adviser positions (national), and a Senior Gender and Advocacy Adviser (title tbc – international) Budgetary resources to finance policy related knowledge products and policy dialogue activities. Robust M&amp;E data and evidence on what has worked at</td>
<td>DHOM and DFAT Counsellor, supported by selected engagement of HOM.  First Secretary, Sustainable and Inclusive Development (SID), and Senior Program Manager, GREAT will proactively identify and propose dialogue opportunities for Embassy leadership and GREAT management.</td>
<td>Team Leader, supported by senior management team including Senior Gender and Advocacy Adviser and portfolio leads.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
strategies, and programs. for provincial authorities to be supported to prioritise and have the capacity to implement Gender Equality Strategies effectively at the provincial level.

3) Women’s economic role and empowerment given more profile in agriculture and tourism policies.

- Vietnam on women’s economic empowerment.
- President and Head of Ethnic Minority and Religious Affairs Department, VWU MPI
- DARD and DCST
- Chair - Social Affairs Committee of the National Assembly
- Gender Equality Department of MOLISA
- Vietnam Women’s Union and Farmers Union

- Implementation to inform dialogue and advocacy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President and Head of Ethnic Minority and Religious Affairs Department, VWU MPI</th>
<th>DARD and DCST</th>
<th>Chair - Social Affairs Committee of the National Assembly</th>
<th>Gender Equality Department of MOLISA</th>
<th>Vietnam Women’s Union and Farmers Union</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Investment Monitoring Review and Partner Performance Assessment</td>
<td>Convening of meetings between provincial counterparts, central level and DFAT/GREAT team.</td>
<td>Side meetings attached to provincial visits and Steering Committee sessions.</td>
<td>implementation to inform dialogue and advocacy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Priority stakeholders

The Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs (CEMA) was assigned to be the lead agency for the preparation of detailed design and feasibility study report of the NTP-SEDEMA in cooperation with 10 other ministries and is responsible for the overall management of the program’s implementation. CEMA has recently gained more influence within the Government, largely because of its role managing the NTP-SEDEMA which has 10 projects and over 30 sub-projects, with some that are new to CEMA (such as agriculture production support through value chains). However, CEMA needs to strengthen its capacity to guide, manage, and effectively coordinate the implementation of such a large and complex program at both the national and provincial levels. GREAT 2 is well placed to support implementation of projects # 3 (on developing sustainable agriculture and forestry production), # 5 (on developing education and training to improve human resources) and # 8 (on gender equality), with a focus on the promotion of opportunities for women’s economic empowerment.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) was the lead agency for the coordination and implementation of agriculture production support projects under the NTP Sustainable Poverty Reduction (SPR) and NRD for the period 2016-2020. Under NTP-SEDEMA 2021-2025, MARD will lead Sub-Project 3.1 on forestry development. MARD is open to new approaches such as value chain development, market system development and women’s economic empowerment and may benefit from the lessons learned in GREAT 2. Furthermore, MARD leads the National Coordination Office for the NTP-NRD. NTP-NRD with its significant component on rural tourism development means that MARD is a core audience for GREAT 2 implementation lessons on approaches that promote women’s economic empowerment.

The Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) is the “coordination” agency for NTPs with a mandate to establish the implementation mechanisms (e.g. planning, budget allocation, implementation procedures and M&E). MPI is responsible for the management mechanisms that underpin public investment funding and has identified the need to streamline the NTPs implementation procedures and regulations by streamlining one mechanism to be applied for all NTPs.

The Ministry of Labour – Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA) coordinated the implementation of the NTP- SPR 2016-2020 and will continue to manage the design and implementation of the NTP-SPRSP 2021-2025. With NTP-SEDEMA, MoLISA will lead the management of Sub-Project 5.3 on vocational training for ethnic minority youth. MoLISA is also the state management agency for the implementation of the NSGE, through the Gender Equality Department (GED). The GREAT MTR highlighted that the program should seek to influence and connect with the GED, as well support the government DOLISA offices in Son La and Lai Cai to implement its obligations under the NSGE. GED has also commenced revision of the multi-sector Law on Gender Equality, which will include provisions on women’s economic opportunities, leadership, and safety. The law revision process provides GREAT 2 with an opportunity to advocate for provisions and ‘breakthrough solutions’ for ethnic minority women. DFAT is a co-funder of the NSGE and the law revisions, and so can support GREAT 2 in opening channels for dialogue.

Vietnam Women’s Union (VWU) is one of the six mass organisations in Vietnam and has a mandate to promote gender equality and provide feedback on policy though a “gender lens”. With the NTP- SEDEMA, VWU is in charge of designing and implementing Project 8, which is the first time it has been involved directly with any NTPs. During the design process for Project 8, VWU has been proactively seeking technical support from CARE and other development partners, including requesting support on developing the implementation guidelines. GREAT 2 can build upon its growing engagement with the Vietnam Women’s Union to support effective implementation of Project 8 in Lao Cai and Son La.

Additional policy stakeholder:

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) will be responsible for developing regulations for managing recurrent budgets for all NTPs. For NTP-SEDEMA in particular, MoF will issue guidance for recurrent budget use and management for projects.
1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 10 (i.e. components not related to public investment for infrastructure and facilities). Although MoF has an important role in how NTPs are implemented, it has been resistant to proposed recommendations for inclusive and innovative approaches in NTPs. GREAT 2 will monitor opportunities for MoF engagement with DFAT given these factors.
## ANNEX C: MINIMUM SUFFICIENT MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desired result</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Data collection method &amp; frequency</th>
<th>Risks</th>
<th>Who will collect and analyse the data</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Target and Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOAL:</strong> Women living in North West Vietnam will have improved social and economic status and increased resilience.</td>
<td>Women have better living standards, are more respected as contributors and leaders in their households, communities and in the economy.</td>
<td>Increase in women’s Income. Percentage and number of women that report increased ability to influence family income, community, and business-related decisions.</td>
<td>GREAT longitudinal study. Baseline, mid-line and end-line studies. Government population data.</td>
<td>COVID-19 impedes data collection and undermines outcomes.</td>
<td>GREAT Baseline study</td>
<td>Target: Beneficiary groups Use: DFAT, PPCs, PMUs, central government agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EOPO 1</strong> Women, particularly ethnic minority women living in Son La and Lao Cai have improved economic benefits.</td>
<td>Women have better living standards and more decision making.</td>
<td>Increase in women’s average income, including ethnic minority women. Number of women participants who are utilising new skills (from program activities) for income generation. Percentage of women participants who are utilising new skills (from program activities) for income generation.</td>
<td>Beneficiary data collected through baseline, mid-line and end-line studies. Longitudinal Study Government population data.</td>
<td>COVID-19 impedes data collection and undermines outcomes. COVID-19 and/or other disasters constrain agriculture and tourism opportunities. Gender norms within some cultural groups are too difficult to shift.</td>
<td>GREAT Baseline study</td>
<td>Target: Beneficiary groups Use: DFAT, PPCs, PMUs, central government agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EOPO 2</strong> Women, particularly ethnic minority women</td>
<td>Women are more confident in engaging with economic stakeholders, are more</td>
<td>Reduced hours worked daily for women over time.</td>
<td>Data collected through the M&amp;E system.</td>
<td>COVID-19 impedes data collection and GREAT contracted</td>
<td>GREAT Baseline study</td>
<td>Target: Beneficiary groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate outcomes</td>
<td>Women use assets, services, and networks to gain increased income and/or employment.</td>
<td>Increase in the number of women participating in skills development opportunities.</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussions Surveys (including ongoing midline and end line survey) Longitudinal Survey Network mapping</td>
<td>COVID-19 impedes data collection and undermines outcomes. COVID-19 and/or other disasters constrain agriculture and tourism opportunities Gender norms within markets are too difficult to shift.</td>
<td>GREAT contracted research partners. GREAT M&amp;E team. PPCs and PMUs. GREAT M&amp;E data from phase 1.</td>
<td>Target: Beneficiary groups, multi-stakeholder platforms, businesses and cooperatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IO 2: Women have more economic choices and are more resilient.</td>
<td>Women as producers and workers are more prominent and have more influence within market systems. Women-led and co-managed businesses have increased income.</td>
<td>Number of women identify increasing opportunities (to work and markets) post program activities. Percentage increase in ethnic minority women’s access to markets (including through digital literacy). Number and value of new business opportunities extended into target areas to open opportunities to ethnic minority women. Percentage and number of women reporting increased productive activity and income from tourism and agricultural activities related to the program.</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussions Surveys (including ongoing midline and end line survey) Longitudinal Survey Network mapping Field missions Data collected through the M&amp;E system. Govt data.</td>
<td>COVID-19 impedes data collection and undermines outcomes. COVID-19 and/or other disasters constrain agriculture and tourism opportunities. Gender norms impede or constrain changes required for WEE. GREAT contracted research partners. GREAT M&amp;E team. PPCs and PMUs. Great baseline data. GREAT M&amp;E data from phase 1.</td>
<td>Target: Beneficiary groups, multi-stakeholder platforms, businesses, and cooperatives. Use: DFAT, PPCs, PMUs, central government agencies, multi-stakeholder platforms.</td>
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<tr>
<td>IO 3: Men and household members are more supportive of women’s roles, economic choices and participation.</td>
<td>Government agencies are engaged with market stakeholders, better understand their needs, and provide improved policy and guidance to support their needs. More women are in leadership roles in market systems and in communities.</td>
<td>Knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours surveys demonstrates greater gender awareness and equality over the life of the program for men, women, and other household members.</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussions Surveys (including ongoing midline and end line survey) Longitudinal Survey Field missions</td>
<td>COVID-19 impedes data collection and undermines outcomes. COVID-19 and/or other disasters constrain agriculture and tourism opportunities. Gender norms impede or constrain changes required for WEE. GREAT contracted research partners. GREAT M&amp;E team. Great baseline data. GREAT M&amp;E data from phase 1.</td>
<td>Target: Beneficiary groups, multi-stakeholder platforms, businesses and cooperatives. Use: DFAT, PPCs, PMUs, central government agencies, multi-stakeholder platforms.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant central government agencies improve their approach to NTP implementation such that it benefits women's economic empowerment.</td>
<td>Influence of women voices in decision making at household and economic levels.</td>
<td>Data collected through the M&amp;E system.</td>
<td>tourism opportunities. Gender norms impede or constrain changes required for WEE.</td>
<td>PPCs and PMUs.</td>
<td>Use: DFAT, PPCs, PMUs, central government agencies, multi-stakeholder platforms.</td>
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<tr>
<td>There is more relevant and quality training for women. Gender equality is a discussion at household, market systems, and government levels. Multistakeholder platforms are functioning effectively. Evidence and lessons are communicated effectively and taken up by target audiences.</td>
<td>Businesses, cooperatives, and producer groups involved in the program can demonstrate how the GREAT program has contributed to their business growth / expansion and place a $ value on the growth. Number and value of multi-stakeholder forums demonstrating increased $ value to contributing market stakeholders. Business perception and attitudes towards inclusion of ethnic minority women is increasingly positive and confident. Number of active multi-stakeholder platforms working cooperatively for mutual benefit. Increase in percentage of women and men who demonstrate greater gender awareness because of program activities. Number and percentage increase of ethnic minority women employed in or servicing the agriculture and tourism businesses.</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussions Key informant interviews Surveys (including ongoing midline and end line survey) Longitudinal Survey Network mapping Field missions Population surveys from Govt</td>
<td>COVID-19 impedes data collection and undermines outcomes. COVID-19 and/or other disasters constrain agriculture and tourism opportunities. Gender norms impede or constrain changes required for WEE.</td>
<td>GREAT contracted research partners. GREAT M&amp;E team. PPCs and PMUs.</td>
<td>GREAT baseline data. GREAT M&amp;E data from phase 1.</td>
<td>Target: Beneficiary groups, multi-stakeholder platforms, businesses, and cooperatives. Use: DFAT, PPCs, PMUs, central government agencies, multi-stakeholder platforms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### IO 5: The socio-cultural enabling environment better facilitates greater gender equality and enhanced roles for women in economic and community life.

| Market stakeholders, community groups and others are more flexible and responsive to women’s work and aspirations. Women are supported to engage in the economic and social life of the community on an equal footing with men. | Percentage of women leaders in businesses, cooperatives, and community organisations. Increase in women’s participation (number of women and percentage of women in senior positions) in businesses, business groups and cooperatives. Increase in women’s participation (number of women and percentage of women in senior positions) in businesses, business groups and cooperatives. Number and percentage increase of women-led and co-managed businesses as a result of program activities. | Surveys (including ongoing midline and end line survey) Longitudinal Survey Population surveys from Govt Focus Group Discussions Key Informant Interviews. | COVID-19 impedes data collection and undermines outcomes. COVID-19 and/or other disasters constrain agriculture and tourism opportunities. Gender norms impede or constrain changes required for WEE. | GREAT contracted research partners. GREAT M&E team. PPCs and PMUs. | GREAT baseline data. GREAT M&E data from phase 1. | Target: Beneficiary groups, multi-stakeholder platforms, businesses, and cooperatives. Use: DFAT, PPCs, PMUs, central government agencies, multi-stakeholder platforms. |

### IO 6: Provincial /national policies, plans, strategies, and programs are more gender responsive and inclusive and provide more space for private sector engagement.

| Government agencies at all levels are adopting more informed gender equality and women’s empowerment attitudes and approaches, and these are reflected in policies, plans and strategies. Extent of GREAT 2 influence on targeted policies and guidance at central and provincial levels. Participation by government in evidence sharing and policy development at central level and between sub-national government agencies Increase in number of government officers with understanding of gender equality and women’s empowerment in target locations. | Focus Group Discussions Surveys (including ongoing midline and end line survey) Longitudinal Survey Network mapping Field missions Data collected through the M&E system. Govt data. | COVID-19 impedes data collection and undermines outcomes. COVID-19 and/or other disasters constrain agriculture and tourism opportunities. | GREAT contracted research partners. GREAT M&E team. PPCs and PMUs. | GREAT baseline data. GREAT M&E data from phase 1. | Target: Beneficiary groups, multi-stakeholder platforms, businesses, and cooperatives. Use: DFAT, PPCs, PMUs, central government agencies, multi-stakeholder platforms. |
Intermediate Outcomes

Intermediate Outcome 1 speaks to the need to generate more opportunities and resources for women to enable their economic empowerment. Assets include skills, networks, resources, support services, and may include social and/or physical infrastructure. The types of activities associated with achieving this outcome include incubating and accelerating women’s entrepreneurship and leadership, digital transformation to access markets, access to finance and financial literacy that enables women to grow their businesses and networks and empowers them to obtain the best possible price for their goods and services. GREAT 2 will also provide access to knowledge and skills development to increase the value of produced goods and services.

Intermediate Outcome 2 broadens the landscape of economic choices for women and improves their resilience in the face of constraints and challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic. GREAT 2 will achieve this by building linkages between different market system stakeholders such as cooperatives, producer groups, agriculture and tourism businesses, value chains and others. GREAT 2 will facilitate the development and strengthening of multi-stakeholder platforms (or partnerships) that work together to solve market system constraints and strengthen the value of production in agriculture and tourism. For example, a multi-stakeholder platform (or partnership) in homestays tourism might include women and households who host tourists in their home; tourism operators and booking agents; local government representatives who can provide basic infrastructure; and promote destination, training providers to assist with skills development. Together, these stakeholders identify a pathway forward and action plan to work together to realise their goals.

Intermediate Outcome 3 ensures the GREAT 2 program focuses resources and attention to changing those gender norms, attitudes and behaviours that undermine and act as barrier to women’s economic empowerment. These constraints are most prolific at the household and community level and GREAT 1 has demonstrated the importance of raising awareness of gender inequality and promoting gender dialogues that seek to change attitudes and provide women with more opportunities. The types of activities that will support the achievement of this outcome include a range of gender awareness and behaviour change strategies that include but not limited to awareness raising campaigns and events in communities. GREAT 2 will work together with partners that have demonstrated success through GREAT phase 1.

Intermediate Outcome 4 focuses on market systems development in agriculture and tourism, and the importance of working with market system stakeholders to create an improved enabling environment for women’s economic empowerment. Activities to support this work include working with specific sector stakeholders to develop strategies and plans for the sector (or sub-sector), leveraging and incentivising market sector stakeholders such as businesses to co-invest in market system development, providing gender and WEE technical support and insights to support growth that is inclusive and responsive to the needs of women, and providing research, evidence and analytics to demonstrate the economic benefits of inclusive business practices.

Intermediate Outcome 5 looks to systemic change within the enabling environment for women’s economic empowerment, particularly the socio-cultural environment beyond the household level (addressed in IO 3). The broader environment includes gender awareness raising with communities, businesses, producer groups and cooperatives, and government at all levels to facilitate greater gender equality and enhanced roles for women in economic and community life. Activities to support achievement of this outcome include: gender awareness and behaviour change strategies; gender and WEE technical leadership; NTP Implementation support; research, evidence and analytics; women’s entrepreneurship, start-ups and leadership; access to finance and literacy skills; and embedding gender and WEE awareness and goals through sector strategies and plans.

Intermediate Outcome 6 directs attention to the role of government (at all levels) in creating an inclusive enabling environment through policies and their implementation. GREAT 2 will seek to inform and influence policies and strategies that can benefit women’s empowerment at national level through the NTPs, at provincial level through budgets and plans, and building capacity for leaders on WEE and GE, and at district and commune levels through multi-stakeholder platforms. GREAT 2 will draw upon research, evidence, and analytics to support governments develop policies, and provide technical advice to influence the implementation guidance that assists government agencies to translate the policies into practice.
**MERL Activities**

GREAT 2 will design a MERL Framework focusing on the expected changes and targets. Key MERL Activities throughout GREAT 2 include:

- Prepare a Progress Report on semi-annual and annual basis and a Completion Report to submit to DFAT. These reports will be used as a basis to appraise the program’s progress from which budget will be allocated.
- DFAT at the Australian Embassy to Vietnam will conduct an independent Mid-Term Review on progress and results of the program, it will generate lessons learned and recommendations to improve the quality and effectiveness of the program.
- Conduct baseline, midline and end line assessments, and studies on systemic market change to measure the achievement of intermediate and end-of-program outcomes. These studies will identify direct and indirect benefits of the Program, unintended consequences (positive and negative); and successful models and lessons learned to be shared widely and to inform scale-up and replication.
- Consolidate and upgrade the web-based MIS to be used for quarterly reporting and data synthesis for related stakeholders to monitor the progress of the program timely and quickly.
- Consolidate and upgrade the Rapid Reporting App for smart phones to enable project activities to be reported in a timely manner following completion.
- Train partners and PMUs on MIS, Rapid Reporting App and project management and monitoring. In addition, train relevant partners to document success stories and stories of change, undertake participatory monitoring approaches.
- Strengthen the capacity in monitoring, evaluating, research and learning for related stakeholders, especially the PMUs so that they will join in the program and projects’ monitoring activities together with the GREAT 2 team.
- Conduct joint monitoring missions on a semi-annual basis, with the participation of all related sides, including Steering Committee, PMUs, Management Contractor, authorities, mass organizations, implementing partners and beneficiaries.
- Design and apply developmental evaluation as an integrated activity in the program management cycle that will facilitate GREAT 2 team, DFAT and PMUs to appraise and document changes of the program’s intermediate outcomes and EOP outcomes, lessons learned, and evidence on what works and does not work, to then identify necessary adaptations for the program.
- Facilitate and monitor the program’s implementation of the V4M principles, results-based management and adaptive management.
- Conduct Reflect/Refocus workshops on semi-annual basis to review the program, good practices and discuss emerging issues. Develop online platforms and forums to promote exchanges, sharing and continuous learning.
- Conduct necessary studies e.g. longitudinal studies on changes of women’s social status and improvement of socio-cultural barriers for WEE for ethnic minority women. There will be also a study on Knowledge-Attitude and Behaviours (KAB) of related stakeholders on gender equality and WEE and participation of private actors.
- Collaborate with other projects in the region or in the world to conduct Learning Workshops/Seminars to disseminate good practices and contribute to the intellectual knowledge on MSD and WEE.
- Develop a Knowledge Management Action Plan based on which knowledge products will be produced to share lessons learned and successful models to support the replication and improvement of policies to be more inclusive and gender responsive.
Key Evaluation Questions

Key evaluation questions are high level questions designed to frame the analysis of progress and performance of the program. They will be used by the program to help structure regular reflection and refocus workshops, and to guide reporting. These questions will also guide the MTR and end of program review of the program.

The GREAT 2 Key Evaluation Questions have not changed from Phase 1 and are as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relevance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the Program respond to the most pressing needs of ethnic minority women?</td>
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<td>Does the Program address the multi-dimensional nature of women’s empowerment?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the Program Outcomes and Logic still valid?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How relevant is the program to ethnic minority women, producer groups, businesses and government (central, provincial, district and commune)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the selection of activities the most relevant for achieving the program outcomes in the context?</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent have the Program Outcomes been achieved, or are in progress towards achievement?</td>
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<tr>
<td>To what extent has the Program influenced policy within the Government of Vietnam?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How effectively does each activity contribute to its stated program outcomes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What were the key factors contributing to successful achievement of outcomes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the Program bring additional income and agency to ethnic minority women?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What were the key factors contributing to lack of progress or failure to achieve the outcomes?</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Efficiency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent has the program achieved value for money in its investments and management?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Has the program selected options for implementation that use resources efficiently compared to alternatives?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the Program progressing on time and on budget?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where are there overlaps and inefficiencies in the program?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where have efficiencies been achieved in program delivery?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the program leveraging resources from private sector and to what extent?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the program achieving scale and/or replication through government policy initiatives?</td>
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<th>Impact</th>
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<tr>
<td>What has changed because of each activity and of the Program overall?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the lives of women improved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have business and government attitudes and behaviours changed towards ethnic minorities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many women have been impacted?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the unintended consequences of the Program?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Sustainability**

How likely will the outcomes from the Program be sustained beyond the life of the Program?

How likely will the activities continue beyond the life of the Program?

What are the major factors contributing to sustainability?

What are the factors undermining sustainability?

What is the likely legacy of Australia’s 10-year investment in GREAT?
### ANNEX D: BUDGET AND RESOURCING REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Management Fee &amp; Performance Payments</td>
<td>882,057</td>
<td>751,381</td>
<td>751,381</td>
<td>784,050</td>
<td>98,006</td>
<td>3,266,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Personnel costs</td>
<td>1,230,276</td>
<td>1,608,326</td>
<td>1,608,326</td>
<td>1,608,326</td>
<td>1,608,369</td>
<td>7,663,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a)</td>
<td>Long-term ARF</td>
<td>426,075</td>
<td>477,300</td>
<td>477,300</td>
<td>477,300</td>
<td>477,300</td>
<td>2,335,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b)</td>
<td>Long-term non-ARF</td>
<td>610,201</td>
<td>937,026</td>
<td>937,026</td>
<td>937,026</td>
<td>937,026</td>
<td>4,358,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c)</td>
<td>Short term ARF</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2d)</td>
<td>ARF support costs</td>
<td>154,000</td>
<td>154,000</td>
<td>154,000</td>
<td>154,000</td>
<td>154,000</td>
<td>770,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vietnam Office Recurring costs</td>
<td>307,065</td>
<td>223,334</td>
<td>231,378</td>
<td>239,988</td>
<td>249,210</td>
<td>1,250,975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a)</td>
<td>General On-Going Costs Hanoi</td>
<td>167,361</td>
<td>173,432</td>
<td>179,883</td>
<td>186,740</td>
<td>194,034</td>
<td>901,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b)</td>
<td>General On-Going Costs Provinces</td>
<td>38,453</td>
<td>39,902</td>
<td>41,495</td>
<td>43,248</td>
<td>45,176</td>
<td>208,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c)</td>
<td>Office setup: Hanoi</td>
<td>86,250</td>
<td>3,125</td>
<td>3,125</td>
<td>3,125</td>
<td>3,125</td>
<td>98,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3d)</td>
<td>Office setup: Provinces</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>6,875</td>
<td>6,875</td>
<td>6,875</td>
<td>6,875</td>
<td>42,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Partnership Funding</td>
<td>3,160,000</td>
<td>5,785,000</td>
<td>5,760,000</td>
<td>4,510,000</td>
<td>2,303,570</td>
<td>21,518,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a)</td>
<td>Partnership funding at provincial level</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>14,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b)</td>
<td>Policy advocacy at national level and Technical Assistance</td>
<td>700,000</td>
<td>1,250,000</td>
<td>1,250,000</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4c)</td>
<td>Unallocated technical assistance</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>118,570</td>
<td>668,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4d)</td>
<td>Program Communications</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>105,000</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>105,000</td>
<td>450,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4e)</td>
<td>Program Workshops, Meetings, Training</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4f)</td>
<td>Program MERL, MIS</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4g)</td>
<td>Program Travel</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Items</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>DFAT administered costs for performance management and contract administration (including policy engagement and dialogue) – include FTE (A based and LES)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Drawn from Vietnam bilateral program fund’s Aid Effectiveness and Partnership investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Estimated additional funds leveraged from partner government, multilaterals, other partners, private sector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In-kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>5,379,398</td>
<td>8,368,041</td>
<td>8,351,085</td>
<td>7,142,364</td>
<td>4,259,112</td>
<td><strong>33,700,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Budget: 33,700,000**

**Cost Assumptions**

- This indicative budget is based on actual implementation costs the first phase of the GREAT Program and aligned with the new requirements of the Design update. For example, it comprises the inclusion of full-time gender expertise positions embedded in the program team, as well as technical assistance and grants support for policy and advocacy at the national level.
- The detailed budget will be further negotiated between DFAT and Cowater during the amendment process of the current contract for GREAT 2 implementation, taking into account feedback from Vietnamese counterparts.
- Management fee remains the same as the Original Head Contract amount for Phase 1.
- Increase in fees for long term personnel is directly related to retaining long-term staff to start immediately for Phase 2, opposed to Phase 1 where recruitment occurred gradually. In addition, a second LTA position has been indicatively added (including allowances) and there is an additional six-months to the Phase 2 contract term, compared to the original Contract amount for Phase 1. (Note: personnel fees will be further negotiated between DFAT and Cowater)
- Operational and implementation costs have been reduced compared to original Contract amount for Phase 1 considering that the majority of office renovations were completed during Phase 1 and cars and office equipment purchased during Phase 1 can be used for Phase 2.
- Partnership Funding includes a total of $19 million to support both provincial and national-level interventions.
- Overall Program Costs/Partnership Funding approximately $700,000 higher than actual estimated disbursement in Phase 1 because of lower operational and implementation costs (see above)
- DFAT administered costs for performance management and contract administration will be drawn from the Vietnam bilateral program fund’s Aid Effectiveness and Partnership investment.
ANNEX F: CLUSTERING FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT

Clusters are a geographic concentration of interconnected producers, buyers, suppliers, and associated support institutions that create direct and indirect synergies among them, resulting in market linkages and efficiencies. For the purposes of the project, this will typically be defined geographically by zones of production which form distinct buying zones for several competing buyers/traders.

Key actors in a cluster include:

1. primary actors such as producers, buyers, input suppliers, commercial service providers (e.g., technical services, financial services) who are directly involved in production, processing, trading or distribution of products or services in the supply chain, and
2. secondary supporting actors such as government and non-government agencies.

A cluster-based approach will geographically group key actors along the supply chain for a specific product in the same geographic area. This means that for a single commodity the project is likely to support several different clusters each in a different location. It also means that one commune may have farmers participating in several different clusters, each for a different commodity. A cluster-based approach is useful when the supply chain is highly fragmented or unstructured throughout its segments (production, transportation, distribution, enabling environment, etc.), thus requiring interventions by numerous stakeholders who could not resolve any single issue alone.

A cluster-based approach also creates a more enabling environment in which small producers can invest, get organized and develop as reliable actors in the supply chains by facilitating coordinated action on critical issues from production to market linkages or access to critical inputs and services. Women, who tend to be small producers and have limited access to resources and markets, can especially benefit from this approach. Equally, it creates a concentration of reliable producers, including women, that encourages other buyers and service providers to ‘crowd-in’ to the local market.

A central part of the cluster-based approach is a rolling cycle of multi-stakeholder platform business meetings at which the primary actors and supporting actors fully participate. Through these processes, key actors are able to discuss arising issues and develop action plans together to advance their cluster for mutual benefit. These processes build trust among stakeholders and strengthens coordination of the multiple stakeholders and supply chain segments. With women as leaders of their producer groups, the MSPs also create a space for them to engage in substantive dialogue and decisions affecting the future of their chosen sector.

For each priority commodity (e.g., vegetables, cinnamon), potential for a local cluster will be re-confirmed by initial rapid scans including confirming buyer demand and mapping and analysis of the different players (buyers, suppliers, banker, and service providers) and attractiveness to women producers and younger farmers, based on consultations.

The gender-responsive multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs) are a central networking process within the clusters, linking producers, buyers and service providers. These are informal networking processes which drive joint cluster action plans, but which do not necessarily require the formalization of the cluster networks into their own permanent organization, though formalization is possible if it delivers clear benefits and is desired by the cluster actors themselves.

MSPs, and the associated business-to-business/service follow-up activities, will initially be facilitated by the project teams and the implementing partners. Over time, this cluster facilitation role is taken on by primary actors in the cluster themselves, typically a joint working group of several leading buyers and leaders of women’s producer groups. Initial handover of the facilitation role typically begins after around 3 years of cluster growth, once there is momentum in the cluster, maturing trust among different actors and experience of the MSPs and cluster development process. Clusters for regularly traded and short cycle products (vegetables, chicken, pig) tend to mature more quickly than products with one annual crop – due to more frequent interaction among producers, buyers and service providers.

In some case, clusters can also be the hubs for public investment in critical public market infrastructure and services, as is increasingly being prioritized by MARD and others in Vietnam. The project will not expect to finance these directly, but the MSPs and cluster development process can help provincial and local authorities identify and delivery such investments, including those with particular benefit for ethnic minority women, for greatest impact.
ANNEX G: MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE
ANNEX H: RISK REGISTER

(separate document)