

SECTOR BRIEF

PROVINCIAL POLICY SUPPORT

About GREAT

The Gender Responsive Equitable Agriculture and Tourism (GREAT) program is building the social and economic resilience of ethnic minority women in Northwest Vietnam. GREAT partners with the private sector, government agencies and civil society to unlock opportunities for women's economic empowerment in the agriculture and tourism sectors. Funded by the Australian Government, GREAT is delivered in partnership with the Provincial People's Committees of Son La and Lao Cai provinces. GREAT began in 2017 and is a 10-year program with an investment of AUD 67.4 million.



Enhancing livelihood and business environment in Son La and Lao Cai provinces

Women's economic empowerment has been afforded a high priority by the Government of Vietnam in recognition of the critical contribution made by women to economic and social development in the country. This prioritisation also recognises the challenges faced by many women – not least those from ethnic minority communities – in accessing the opportunities and benefits offered as Vietnam's economy grows. High poverty rates persist amongst ethnic minority communities in Northwest Vietnam, disproportionately impacting women, and holding back the pace and equitability of growth and development in provinces like Son La and Lao Cai, home of a large number of ethnic minority households.

The Government of Vietnam recognises that effective development must nevertheless be locally driven, and has delegated leadership of key aspect of socio-economic development initiatives such as the National Target Programs (NTPs) to provincial and district-level stakeholders. Production support is a key pillar in the NTPs given its main source of livelihood for many ethnic minority communities. With this opportunity,

however, comes challenges for provincial and district stakeholders in putting into place the strategies, guidance and resources needed to operationalise, monitor and manage social and economic development projects and programs, and to ensure they deliver for local communities, including ethnic minority women.



GREAT AND POLICY SUPPORT

Work to date

During Phase 1, GREAT collaborated with both private sector and government partners to pilot several inclusive and sustainable agricultural value chain models that incorporated production support activities targeting ethnic minority women producers. Support focused on improving production skills and quality, as well as leveraging market opportunities and private sector resources for ethnic minority producers and cooperatives.

GREAT's support enabled lead firms and government partners to integrate improved production support services to enhance the competitiveness of ethnic minority women producers and foster sustainable business linkages. Throughout Phase 1, emerging lessons and experiences were shared amongst relevant provincial agencies and lead ministries responsible for NTP production support policy development.

GREAT also worked with Department of Planning and Investment (DPI) in both provinces to test and roll-out an innovative local economic governance performance survey tool – the District and Department Competitive Index (DDCI) – designed to capture, assess and improve the quality and outreach of public services to support business. The program supported DDCI methodology development and design – including its gender lens – and its subsequent report development and dissemination to inform service review and improvement provided by districts and departments. Informed by DDCI findings, significant improvements in terms of service perception and ranking were recorded during Phase 1.

GREAT 2 strategy and partnerships

In Phase 2, GREAT is building on its successful partnerships with departments in Lao Cai and Son La with the aim of consolidating improved capacity and service provision, and scaling-up policy benefits across both provinces in order to extend outreach and impact for greater numbers of ethnic minority women and their communities.



Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) in Son La

Technical support to the implementation of production support NTP policies in Son La province. Support includes building capacity of relevant implementing authorities of DARD at provincial and district levels to effectively guide and implement NTP production support projects to ensure activities and outcomes are both gender-responsive and market-oriented.



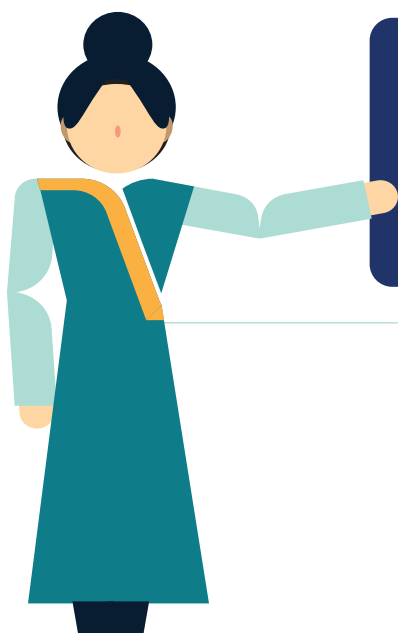
Center for Investment, Tourism and Trade Promotion Son La and Department of Finance Lao Cai

Technical assistance for gender responsive and inclusive District and Department Competitiveness Index (DDCI) in Son La and Lao Cai provinces. Building on the work done in GREAT 1, this second phase focuses on empowering two provinces through gender-responsive DDCI surveys, strengthening local capacity to implement DDCI improvement plans, establishing a monitoring system for the DDCI process, and enhancing communication of DDCI results to foster greater business community participation.





KEY EXPECTED RESULTS



Provincial guidance for implementing market-based and gender responsive production support policies in the NTP-SEDEMA 2026-2030 are formulated

DARD can design and manage production support initiatives that are both inclusive and gender-responsive



Private sector including companies, cooperatives have access to and benefit from production support policies in the NTPs



The business environment in Son La and Lao Cai is improved through building and improving competitiveness indices at provincial, sectoral and district levels. As a result businesses, especially those owned by ethnic minority women, have better access to and use of public services



Number of new registered businesses increase by 10% compared to baseline



85% interviewed household businesses and formal businesses indicate an improved quality of state management and support to businesses

Contact information

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