

# FWF GENDER FACT SHEET - VIETNAM

## FACTS & FIGURES

- Human Development Index: 116 of 189 countries (UNDP 2018)
- Gender Inequality Index: 67 of 160 countries (UNDP 2018)
- Gender Gap Index: 77 of 149 countries (WEF 2018)
- Women's labour force participation: 73.2% - high in the region (UN Women 2013)
- Women in vulnerable/informal employment: 69% (2012) – women have limited access to formal employment and thus limited access to social security.
- Domestic violence prevalence: 3 in 5 ever married women experience some form of violence in their lifetime by their intimate partner. (UN Women)

### Gender-based violence (GBV)\*

- Lifetime prevalence of physical and/or sexual partner violence: 34%
- 32% of ever-married women aged 15-49 had experienced physical violence by a partner and 10% had experienced sexual violence.
- 54% of women experienced emotional abuse in their lives.
- 58% of women experienced at least one form of abuse in their lifetimes, and violence had occurred in the past year for half of those women.
- 10% of women survived non-partner violence, and 3% of women had been sexually abused before the age of 15.
- GBV survivors were more likely to report poorer health outcomes and were three times more likely to have attempted suicide

*\*GBV data from Vietnam General Statistics Office National Study on Domestic Violence*

### General:

- Population: 92.70 million persons (2016)
- Urbanisation: 34.51% (31.99 million) urban, 65.49% (60.71 million) rural
- Sex ratio: 49.31% (45.71 million) male, 50.69% (46.99 million) female
- Ethnic groups: 54 ethnic groups. Majority (90%) are Kinh (Viet).
- Sex ratio at birth: 113 boys to 100 girls (2013)
- Birth rate: 15.5 births/1,000 population (2017)
- Death rate: 5.9 deaths/1,000 population (2017)
- Maternal mortality: 54 deaths/100,000 live births (2015)
- Infant mortality rate: 17.3 deaths/1,000 live births
- Life expectancy at birth: 73.7 years
- Literacy: 94.5% - male: 96.3% and female: 92.8% (2015)
- Education expenditure: 5.7% of GDP (2013)
- Labour force: Estimated at 54.45 million persons (15 years and older)
- Child labour: 2,545,616 children aged 5-14.

## COUNTRY CONTEXT

Vietnamese culture is rooted in Confucianism, which is characterised by patrilineal descent, male privilege and hierarchical relationships that support gender inequality.

- **Patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted gender stereotypes** with respect to the responsibilities and roles of women and men in the family and in society result in subordinate roles of women.
- **Harmful practices such as child marriage** in certain areas greatly hinder the health of women as well as women's ability to be economically independent.
- Common understanding behind **son preference** is the belief that only sons can carry on family lineage and are responsible for ancestral worship. **Sex ratio at birth is highly skewed** (113 boys to 100 girls in 2013) due to son preference.
- These gender biases and gender stereotypes are promoted in **education curriculum and through the media** with limited government intervention to counter prevailing beliefs and harmful practices.

### Gender-based violence:

- Related to the subordinate role of women **domestic violence occurs in all sectors of society**. 58% of ever married women have experienced sexual, physical, or emotional violence according to a national survey. (NSDVVN)

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- As patriarchal values are entrenched, **some women are not aware of their right to live free from violence and accept the belief that violence in a relationship is 'normal'**. Some women feel it is their duty to endure the violence to have family harmony.
- Unfortunately there is **very little data on gender-based violence, especially in the public sphere and in the workplace**, as well as lacking data on crime, human trafficking, and violence against children (at home and school).

### Employment:

- Although **women have a high labour participation rate**, they work in sectors where they are **poorly paid and undervalued**.
- At the same time, they are **responsible for productive work in the household**, which often forces women to take informal jobs that pay little and are insecure but have flexible hours.
- Women are likely to **work in agriculture or small business** run by their own families. In such work, health and social insurance is not covered and employees must cover it themselves if they choose to. Thus **few women working in these areas have any form of social security**.
- On average, Vietnamese women spend 19.7 hours on 'market work' and **38.7 hours a week on unpaid care and housework** (traditionally referred to as 'women's work'), while for men this is 25.1 hours and 26.2 hours, respectively.

### Education:

- **Women face barriers in access** to resources and productive assets and technical and vocational training.
- 85.4% of the Vietnamese labour force was unskilled or unqualified in 2010. From 2011 to 2015, this rate decreased gradually, to reach **80.1% in 2015 (77.6% male; 82.7% female)**.
- As recently as September 2017, the National Assembly Standing Committee called for an investigation into reports by the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour of a spate of firings from industrial zones, 80% of whom were women workers under 35 years of age (VNA, 2017). This suggests **a friction between women's ability to work and their traditional status as carers, as well as the precariousness of their work status overall**.

## LEGAL CONTEXT

### National legislation:

National laws to prevent and respond to violence against women in place include (among others):

- **The Law on Gender Equality (2006)**, with provisions for social and family life.
- **The Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control (2007)**, providing for measures to prevent and combat domestic violence, and details the acts of violence in the family.
- **The Marriage and Family Law (2014)**. This law provides for the principle of gender equality in property and inheritance in cases of divorce and death.
- **Law on Elections (2015)**. This law introduced a gender quota for female candidates for election.
- **State Budget Law (2015)**. This law directs that gender equality, hunger eradication, poverty reduction, and ethnic policies are to be prioritised in budgetary allocations.
- **Vietnam's National Gender Equality Strategy (2011-2020)** and supporting Action Plan specify a range of targets on women and work.

### International legislation:

- Vietnam is a signatory to a range of international conventions, including the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**, the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1982), and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the ASEAN Region (2004).

## SOURCES

ILO Better Work programme

OECD Social Institutions and Gender Index (2014)

UN WOMEN report on 'Prevalence Data on Different Forms of Violence against Women'

UNDP Human Development Report 2018: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>

Vietnam General Statistics Office conducted the National Study on Domestic Violence in Viet Nam (NSDVVN) from late 2009 to mid-2010, in collaboration with other ministries and UNJP

WEF Global Gender Gap Index 2018: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2018/results-and-analysis/>