



## An ILO-TICW Project Overview in Viet Nam:

### The situation:

In Viet Nam most trafficked victims are impoverished women and children. Most have received only limited education. They face few opportunities for employment and have very little access to information which would help them recognize the subtle tricks used by domestic traffickers who bring women and children from rural and remote areas into cities and industrialized areas. In the north of the country, traffickers move women and children across the border to China while Cambodia serves as the main cross-border destination in the south. The Government is also concerned that young Vietnamese women are being exploited by unscrupulous marriage brokers who traffic them abroad under the guise of finding a foreign husband.

### Prevention framework:

The Government of Viet Nam acknowledges trafficking in children and women is a serious problem and has been working with the ILO-TICW project since 2001 (Phase I). In 2004, the Government adopted a new National Plan of Action Combating Crimes of Trafficking in Children and Women covering prevention, protection and support to trafficked victims (2004-2010). In 1997 it issued Directive No 766 “Assigning Responsibility for Carrying Out Measures to Prevent the Illegal Sending of Women and Children Abroad” which called for a multi-sectoral response. In 2000, the Government ratified the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (C182), identifying child trafficking as a worst form of child labour.



### ILO-TICW: Working with Stakeholders and Partners in Viet Nam

In 2005, the Government of Viet Nam signed two letters of agreement allowing the expansion of the ILO-TICW Project (Phase II) in both northern and southern provinces. Activities in these new project areas, including Ho Chi Minh City, focus on the prevention of trafficking through awareness raising of target groups and fresh research to determine the extent of the problem in high risk migrant sending and receiving areas.

The ILO-TICW project is working in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA), the Viet Nam Women’s Union (VWU), and other partners at all levels.

ILO-TICW has also partnered with Save the Children UK, UNIAP, IOM and other organizations to advocate for the consultation and meaningful participation of children in future policy-level decisions to counter human trafficking.

Map courtesy UNIAP

### Socio-economic Overview

#### Demography:

Total population (2004): 82,069,000  
(Urban: 26% Rural: 74%)  
Population below 20 years: 40%

#### Education (2001/2002):

Adult literacy rates: 91%  
Primary school enrolment: M 98% F 92%  
Secondary school enrolment: M/F 62%  
Total student population: 17,865,800

#### Economy:

GDP per capita (2003): US\$ 533.27  
Percentage of those living below the national poverty line:  
7% (U) 36% (R)

#### Unemployment (2004):

16.5% (15-19); 30% (20-24)

Source: Basic Facts about Viet Nam, UNDP, March 2005, UNESCO (UIS) 2000-1, UNESCAP Statistical Yearbook, 2004, Statistical Data of Labour – Employment in Viet Nam (MoLISA 2004)

## ILO-TICW Phase II – Viet Nam

### The workplan (2006 – 2008):

#### Building the knowledge base..

In 2005, the project received Government authorization to work in Ho Chi Minh City, a major destination for many migrant workers including children and women from rural areas. This has opened up new potential avenues for research into destination areas for migrant workers and their families and to examine their vulnerability to human traffickers. Can Tho and nearby industrial zones are also popular destinations for young migrants and has been identified by the project as a potential 'receiving area' for internal trafficking.

Thanh Hoa is a source area for vulnerable young women and children, some of whom have been trafficked across the border to China. Quang Ninh is both a sending and transitional area for trafficking of women and children to China. It has been learned that the southern provinces of Tay Ninh, Hau Giang and Can Tho are the main source areas of young women and children trafficked to Cambodia. Girls and women from all of these areas are also approached by 'marriage brokers' with Taiwan as a main destination.

Rapid assessments were carried out in some of these areas in Phase I of the project and fresh research is ongoing in 3 southern provinces of Can Tho, Tay Ninh and Hau Giang.

#### Advocating and raising awareness..

A programme to raise public awareness about trafficking and the link to ill-prepared migration is being rolled out through various partners, both at village level through the Viet Nam Women's Union, and through mass media exposure at national level.

Though mass media penetration varies from rural to urban areas, the national average for access to TV is 1 set for every 5 viewers. For radio, the ratio is 1 listener for every 9 receivers. (UNESCAP Statistical Yearbook, 2004)

In 2004, the ILO-TICW project collaborated with Viet Nam Television to produce a documentary and discussion about human trafficking of Vietnamese women and children and to promote the opening of a national children's forum on human trafficking. The documentary aired in prime time across the country. (see advocacy campaigns below)

#### Advocacy campaigns – Viet Nam Children's Forum

ILO-TICW continues its work on advocacy and communication campaigns, raising public awareness on prevention of human trafficking with a focus on children. The Viet Nam children's forum: **"Children Speak Out on Prevention of Child Trafficking and Labour,"** organized in August 2004, in collaboration with the Young Pioneers' Council, Save the Children UK, UNICEF, and IOM, provided a platform for the children to deliver their views about trafficking directly to policy makers.

The 156 children (aged 12 - 17) from areas of Viet Nam worst affected by human trafficking developed a 15 point agenda for action, including their desire to be heard and their voices and views respected. They also highlighted a need for special protection from traffickers, their right to life in a happy family environment, freedom from poverty, and encouragement to complete their education. The young participants selected 5 representatives to attend the sub-regional Mekong Children's Forum on Human Trafficking in Bangkok in October of that year.

The Vietnamese project staff later collaborated with the Australian Embassy in Viet Nam to organise the **"Children's Concert Against Child Trafficking and Labour,"** with participation of 50 Australian children and 50 Vietnamese children in Hanoi the same month.

#### Building capacity to tackle the problem..

While work at policy level is in the early stages, the ILO-TICW project is mapping out a work plan following the 2005 approval of Phase II. Its key partners are the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA) and the Viet Nam Women's Union.

The Viet Nam Women's Union (VWU) plays a major role in Phase II following the signing of an LOA relating to a series of coordinated interventions. The activities aim to prevent human trafficking both within and across borders at the community level in the three southern provinces of Tay Ninh, Hau Giang and Can Tho. The Project emphasizes building community capacity to prevent trafficking through the setting up and maintenance of holistic community-based preventive interventions against trafficking. Meanwhile, a programme of improved coordination and collaboration of the various provincial anti-trafficking authorities is also underway.

## **Providing targeted assistance and support..**

In the target provinces, through the work of the Viet Nam Women's Union, and in collaboration with the Provincial People's Committee, Department of Public Security, Committee for Protection and Care of Children, Border Guard Command and other agencies in the Project Provincial Steering Committees, hundreds of young women and teenagers are being taught about the dangers of trafficking and ill-prepared migration. Through the national and provincial consultation process, it was decided that the project would target in total 24 communities.

In the southern provinces, children and teens who have dropped out of school are taking part in courses to upgrade their learning skills. This non-formal education is designed to help them reach a stage that they may soon return to the classroom and complete their schooling.

## **Collaboration and partnerships:**

During Phase I (2001 – 2003) the project established a relationship of trust with the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA) under whose auspices a National Project Advisory Committee (PAC) has been established with a membership composed of other key ministries. Phase II sees the enlargement of the PAC, with new memberships of Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI), Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL) and Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA). Similar committees were established under the responsibility of the Departments of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (DoLISA) in the three target provinces of Thanh Hoa, Quang Ninh and Ho Chi Minh City.

In September 2005, the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs took part in a five-country sub-regional advisory group meeting (SURAC) which also included representatives of worker and employer groups from Viet Nam and the other countries. The meeting agreed that this sub-regional tripartite approach in the consultation and direction of ILO-TICW activities should become a regular event and contributed well to the overall sub-regional fight against trafficking of children and women and inherent labour and sexual exploitation.

Viet Nam has ratified 15 ILO Conventions, including 4 of the 8 core Conventions (100, 111, 138 and 182). The latter two, C138 and C182, set out minimum age for employment and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour which includes that derived from child trafficking (defined as anyone under 18 in exploitative working conditions or sexual exploitation). Conventions 29 and 105 relating to elimination of forced labour are currently being considered for ratification and an Inter-Ministerial Task Force has been established to oversee the process.

## **Working with Employers' and Workers' Associations:**

Phase II of this project places a greater focus on the identification of solutions to trafficking in children and women from a labour policy perspective and a greater role for Employers' and Workers' Organizations in addressing trafficking in children and women is actively encouraged.

The Project Advisory Committee has been expanded with new memberships extended to the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI), the Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL) and the Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA). Similar committees were established under the responsibility of the Departments of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (DoLISA) in the three target provinces of Thanh Hoa, Quang Ninh and Ho Chi Minh City.

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[www.childtrafficking.net](http://www.childtrafficking.net) 



International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)