



GENDER EQUALITY: A GOAL IN AND OF ITSELF, AND A QUALITY FEATURE OF OUR WORK

Small steps toward gender transformative approaches

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The names of partner ministries in this document are listed according to Vietnam's government structure before the political system reform, effective from 1 March 2025.

Preface



It is my great pleasure to share with you the booklet “**Gender equality: a goal in and of itself, and a quality feature of our work.** *Small steps toward gender transformative approaches*”. This compilation showcases good practices of integrating gender equality into every aspect of our work at GIZ Viet Nam.

Gender equality is one of the key values of our company and of the work we do. Promoting gender equality within the organization and in service delivery are two strategic pillars in GIZ’s Gender Strategy. This book reflects the commitments and collective efforts of the GIZ Viet Nam staff to translate this strategy into actionable practice. Within these pages, you will find different examples demonstrating how gender integration is embedded in project operations, as well as in our daily practices at the organization.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the project teams and members of the Gender & Diversity Working Group for their dedication and innovation in advancing gender equality. I invite you to reflect upon the insights in this booklet and unite in promoting gender equality and equal opportunities at GIZ and around the world.

Together, we can make change happen.

Dr. Michaela Baur
Country Director
GIZ Viet Nam



Gender equality and social inclusion in TVET: a pathway to a more diverse and skilled workforce for the future

Background

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) makes a significant contribution to improving the strength and resilience of economies by ensuring a diverse and skilled workforce. To make this a reality, it is important to integrate gender equality and social inclusion into the TVET system. In Viet Nam, women, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups (e.g., ethnic minorities, migrants) are underrepresented in the TVET system, particularly in highly skilled technical and “green” occupations, which limits their career prospects. This is due to a persistent perception among students, parents, teachers, and employers that technical professions are unsuitable for these groups. Moreover, their diverse needs, experiences, and socio-economic backgrounds are often overlooked when designing the learning environment and facilities. Additionally, gender equality and social inclusion are insufficiently integrated into both the legal framework and corporate HR policies.

Interventions

Recognising these structural barriers, the “[Programme Reform of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Viet Nam](#)” (TVET programme) has adopted gender-responsive and intersectional approaches to ensure all learners, regardless of gender, ability, ethnicity, or socio-economic background, have equitable access to high-quality education and training. The interventions have been implemented at various levels, including:

- **Outreach & enrollment:** Supported partner colleges in introducing training programs for girls and people with disabilities, exposing them to technical workshops and career information sessions through inclusive Open Days and Girls’ Days. Providing scholarships for these groups also motivated them to pursue their desire to study in technical fields. Additionally, [information on enrollment](#) and scholarship were promoted via [local media](#) and social media platforms (particularly the [YouTube](#) and Facebook page) to reach more potential students.
- **Learning environment:** Managers and teachers at partner colleges were supported in enhancing their capacity for gender-responsive and inclusive teaching, career guidance, and school management through training workshops, technical guidelines, practical models, and cooperation with the private sector. For example, the programme collaborated with Siemens Viet Nam and TVET partner colleges to develop gender-sensitive and inclusive training modules and materials for smart manufacturing. Additionally, the [Digital Accessibility Toolkit](#) guides TVET teachers and managers in creating learning materials, virtual classrooms, and platforms accessible to all.
- **Awareness raising:** Collaborated with CSAGA, a local NGO, to support TVET partner colleges in promoting the annual 16-day campaign against gender-based

The project [Future-Oriented Labour Market Policy and TVET for a Twin Transition in ASEAN \(RECOTwin\)](#), a part of the TVET cluster, has been developing gender transformative instruments for labour market policy and TVET with selected ASEAN member states, including Viet Nam. Particularly:

- **Transformative coaching program for inclusive Design Thinking and action in TVET:** This intervention aims to equip TVET personnel and practitioners of all genders with gender-transformative mindsets and competencies. The approach begins with training local consultants and selected GIZ staff as coaches in Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion (GDI) in the ASEAN region. The local consultants will then support TVET personnel and practitioners in integrating GDI into their work by applying inclusive Design Thinking. Lessons learned will guide a follow-up process to scale capacity-building efforts on GDI within the TVET system. 14 local consultants and GIZ staff completed the coaching program in late 2024, strengthening their ability to design and implement programs that drive systemic change toward gender equality. The coaching phase concluded at selected TVET colleges in Indonesia in March 2025 and will be implemented with four SEAMEO Centres by the summer of 2025. The solutions developed will be tested, implemented, and evaluated for impact.
- **Knowledge base for decision-making:** Conducted [a needs assessment survey on gender equality in TVET in Viet Nam](#) and Indonesia and used the findings as a baseline for the discussion with selected TVET colleges in 2024 to promote a gender-responsive and inclusive learning environment as well as for the overall project design.
- **Technical guidelines:** Developed [a toolbox](#) to support business leaders of enterprises in Vietnam and the Philippines in reskilling and upskilling toward a gender transformative approach. This toolbox was then shared with VCCI Ho Chi Minh for further dissemination.



violence, which was organized in interactive formats (e.g., school tours, virtual runs, online talk shows, and mini-games). Additionally, inspiring stories of girls and people with disabilities (Humans of TVET) in technical fields were collected and promoted through social media.

- **Evidence-Based Policy Development:** Conducted studies and surveys on gender equality and/or the inclusion of people with disabilities in TVET. The key findings and recommendations were used as input for policy development at the national level (e.g., development of the TVET strategy) and at TVET colleges. For example, key findings from surveys on gender equality and the inclusion of people with disabilities were integrated into discussions with five TVET colleges in 2024 to enhance the gender-responsive and inclusive learning environment and facilities (e.g., inclusive clubs or entrances for people with disabilities).

Achievements:

- The enrollment of vulnerable groups in TVET across 11 partner colleges has steadily increased from 2022 to 2024. Specifically, ethnic minority enrollment surged from 13 students in 2022 to 146 in 2024, while the number of students with disabilities rose from 0 to 46, driven by Decree 81 and inclusive teaching. Female participation increased steadily, from 11 to 46, thanks
- to improved gender-responsive and inclusive pedagogy. Meanwhile, the number of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds grew from 0 in 2022 to 24 in 2023 but dropped slightly to 22 in 2024. These trends highlight notable progress in bridging equity gaps and empowering diverse communities, with continued support essential for sustaining the impact.
- Five partner colleges developed initial frameworks for inclusive TVET, led by teachers, prioritizing gender equality, disability inclusion, and ethnic minority participation. Additionally, students developed plans for five student-led inclusive clubs and a peer support network for underrepresented students.
- The annual 16-day campaigns against gender-based violence, which have been taking place for the past three years, attracted approximately 2,000 direct participants and up to 10,000 people who responded to online activities.
- The technical advice on inclusion and gender equality from development partners (including GIZ) was considered in the development of the [“Vocational & education training development strategy for the 2021-2030 period with a vision to 2045”](#), which included specific gender and inclusive indicators.

A graduate's perspective

“In the summer of 2018, I was enrolled in the LILAMA 2 International College of Technology and received a scholarship for female students worth 24 million VND (equivalent to 900 EUR) for three years from GIZ. Recalling that time, I was the only female student in the whole faculty, so at first I was a bit overwhelmed and afraid that I could not keep up. With the support and encouragement from teachers and friends, I did my best to study and gradually became enthusiastic about the subject of automation. I was then selected to participate in the national vocational skill competition on automation. The greatest joy that marked my successful learning journey was to become a lecturer at the Industrial Engineering Faculty of LILAMA 2 college in January 2022. Since then, I have had opportunities to participate in training courses supported by GIZ, in which I was able to gain a lot of practical experience from enterprises -- something that I didn't have as a student. I really appreciate that experience”.

Thai Thuy Bao Tran

an alumnus of the Faculty of Industrial Electronics (2018-2021), LILAMA 2 International Technology College.





Working in alliance: *An accelerated effort to advance gender-responsive and transformative climate policy and actions*

Background

Vietnam is among the world's most vulnerable countries to climate change. Rising sea levels, coastal erosion, saline intrusion, and the increased frequency of extreme weather events are threatening food security, livelihoods, and the lives of millions of people. Depending on the socio-economic backgrounds within the communities and societies, there are varying opportunities and capacities to take preventive measures and cope with adverse impacts and shocks. Compared to men in Vietnam, Vietnamese women often have less access to and control over resources, and also have a limited voice in decision-making processes related to climate change response, which consequently exacerbates their vulnerability. Furthermore, their active roles and indigenous knowledge in climate response are often overlooked and undervalued. This is due to gender stereotypes, policy gaps, limited capacity, and a lack of resources to integrate gender equality into climate actions. Moreover, the budget for gender-responsive climate actions is unlikely to be adequately considered by authorities, as climate finance is not yet able to cover priority tasks, and gender mainstreaming is not mandatory.

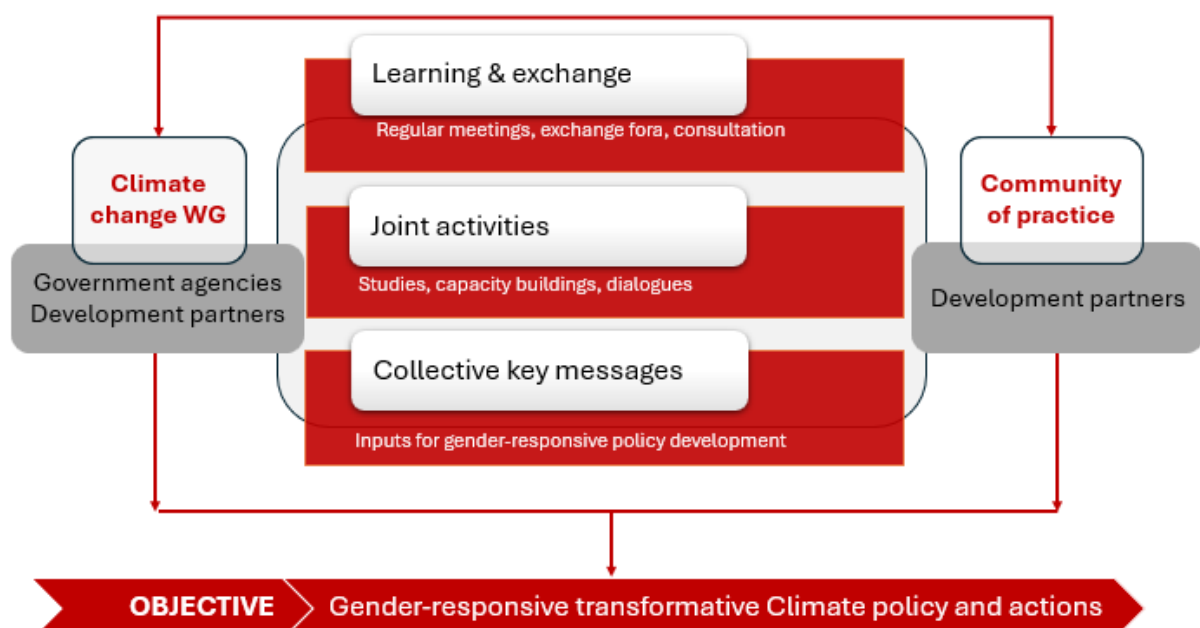
Interventions

Taking gender-responsive climate actions requires continuous efforts and collaboration among various actors

(including government, the private sector, CSOs, think tanks, and development partners). Development partners must also work together and pool resources to provide efficient, targeted, and impactful technical support to the government. With this in mind, GIZ has joined forces with other organizations (e.g., UNDP, UN Women, the Climate Change Working Group, IKI implementers) to promote gender-responsive and transformative climate actions in Vietnam.

Partnership in actions:

- The “Support to Viet Nam for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement (VN SIPA II)” project (often called the IKI Interface Project) has facilitated the establishment and operation of the IKI Gender Community of Practice (COP) in Vietnam since September 2024. This community aims to strengthen coherence and cooperation among IKI implementers in the implementation, promotion, and scaling up of gender-responsive and transformative climate actions in Vietnam.
- GIZ (specifically the Mekong Delta Climate Resilience Programme (MCRP) commissioned by BMZ & VN SIPA II funded by IKI), UNDP, UN Women, and Care International co-initiated the establishment of the Gender and Climate Change Working Group (CCWG)





in late 2023, aimed at promoting coordination among government partners to enhance gender mainstreaming in Vietnam's climate change policies.

- GIZ/ VN SIPA 1 teamed up with [UN Women, UNDP, Care International, and NGOs' Climate Change Working Group \(CCWG\) to provide technical support for the government partner in mainstreaming and advancing gender equality](#) in the review and update of Vietnam's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) 2020 through (i) sharing international experience and national good practices; (ii) identifying gender gaps in current NDC; (iii) building capacity for key stakeholders (iv) developing a policy paper and entry points for gender integration.
- GIZ/MCRP collaborated with UN Women to conduct a study on [climate change and gender equality](#) in Viet Nam. The study's findings and recommendations were presented to the drafting team for the development of the National Climate Change Strategy towards 2050.
- GIZ/MCRP and UN Women collaborated with the Vietnam Disaster and Dyke Management Authority of MARD (VDDMA) to conduct a study on the status of gender-responsive budgeting in public investment projects related to climate change and disaster risk response. The findings of this study were used to develop a technical guideline for integrating gender into these types of projects. Both documents were developed in close consultation with national and local government

officials from various agencies responsible for gender, climate change, or planning. The study report and guideline are expected to be published soon.

Achievements:

- Vietnam NDC Update 2020 records a step in moving from being gender blind to [acknowledging disproportionate adverse effects of climate change on gender](#). It specifies "several negative impacts of climate change on women's health include increased prevalence of diseases and epidemics, especially among pregnant women, girls, women with chronic diseases and elderly women. Regarding the socio-economic aspect, as female farmers usually have lower levels of education and less access to information and finance than men, their livelihoods depend mainly on natural resources and have high sensitivity but low adaptive capacity in the context of climate change". According to [a study conducted by Care International](#), Viet Nam belongs to the progressive group showing notable improvement.
- The [National Climate Change Strategy toward 2050](#) has become more gender responsive. Specifically, this strategy emphasizes strengthening the role, capacity, and participation of women and youth in climate change adaptation and disaster risk management activities.
- The establishment of the Gender & Climate Change Group and IKI Gender COP has laid the foundation for further cooperation in the future.

A partner's perspective

"The NDC is one of the most important documents reflecting Vietnam's commitment and efforts to respond to climate change together with the global community. To achieve the promise of "No one left behind", we, during the review and update process of Vietnam's NDC, proposed to GIZ, UNDP, UN Women and CCWG for providing technical support of gender integration in the NDC technical report. With the support of these organizations, we believe gender has been mainstreamed in this document (NDC update report). And through these activities, we, as the NDC Task Force, have also increased our gender knowledge and capacity"

Pham Van Tan
Deputy Director General,
Department of Climate Change, Ministry
of Natural Resources and Environment
(MONRE)





Promoting gender equality: *A crucial factor in shaping a sustainable forestry industry*

Background

In Viet Nam, women have played a significant role in the widespread adoption of farm forestry systems and the rapid growth of the forest economy over recent decades. However, rural women are still often disadvantaged by gender disparities in access to the benefits of policies and services, such as the Payment for Forest Environmental Services policy. The gender wage gap in some areas of the forestry industry is substantially wider than in other economic and industrial sectors in Viet Nam, with notable fluctuations even within the forestry sector itself. Social welfare provisions for employees—especially female workers—in certain parts of the forestry industry lag behind those in other sectors of the economy. Women in forestry industries continue to face disadvantages in terms of access to professional and technical training opportunities, and they remain underrepresented in leadership positions. Gender stereotypes and gaps in gender policy are structural barriers that prevent women from equally participating in and benefiting from the forest economy.

Interventions

Promoting gender equality plays an important role in shaping a sustainable forestry industry. In recent years, the Forestry and Biodiversity (FOBI) unit of our Green Cluster (particularly the Sustainable Forest Management Project & the Timber Legality/FLEGT project) has actively integrated gender equality into project operation, particularly:

- Gender & safeguard guideline:** Developed a gender & safeguard guideline for the project team and stakeholders in project planning and implementation.
- Gender action plan:** Supported two forestry companies in developing their own gender action plans through a series of training workshops and participatory planning sessions. The key staff of these companies were then coached to organize outreach events for raising awareness on gender equality in forest protection and management among company employees and within nearby communities.
- Showcasing women's stories:** Collected [inspiring stories of women in forestry sector](#), from students, members of village forest protection patrol teams, technical staff of management boards, scientific researchers, and enterprises, to those working in the field of forest conservation and policy development. These stories highlight the vital roles and contributions of women in the development of the forestry sector in Viet Nam, offering authentic accounts of their daily lives, challenges, passions, and achievements as relate to their work in forest management. A photo exhibition featuring these women was displayed at the national gender forum, Viet Nam National University of Forestry's conferences and was promoted in the media.
- Gender study:** Conduct a [situational analysis on gender & forestry in Viet Nam](#) to understand the current situation and identify opportunities for and challenges to promoting gender equality in the forestry sector. The key findings of this analysis were used as one of the inputs for policy discussion at the gender forum as well as in the VPA FLEGT impact monitoring.



- **Gender forum:** Cooperated with government partner to organize a national forum “[Promoting gender equality for sustainable forestry development](#)” with participation of 150 participants from different stakeholders (e.g. government, NGOs, private sector, media, development partners). The forum was organized in different formats, including presentation of gender policies, research findings, group and panel discussions, photo exhibition and field visit. A representative of the German embassy was invited to deliver the opening speech and present Germany’s Feminist Development Policy at the forum. The key results of policy discussions and photo exhibition at the forums were captured by [a number of newspapers](#).
- The knowledge, attitudes, and practices of forest company managers and employees toward gender equality have changed positively. For example, since 2023 Song Kon Company has increased its female staff in technical positions related to forest management and protection. Additionally, the company has paid more attention to strengthening the role and voice of women in community engagement. For instance, in 2023 they signed contracts with 377 households on forest protection, 82 of which were signed by female representatives.
- The national gender forum served as a platform for various stakeholders to share, discuss, and propose specific recommendations for promoting gender equality in the forestry sector. It was also an opportunity for participants to connect and forge alliances with like-minded peers in the sector. More importantly, while promoting gender equality might not have been high on the agenda for all partners, the high-level engagement of the partner ministry and the German Embassy gave the cause the attention it deserves.

Achievements

- Two forestry companies (Song Kon Company & Quy Nhon Company in Binh Dinh Province) developed their own gender action plans in 2024, which identify specific activities to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in recruitment and career promotions. These efforts also contribute to fulfilling the companies’ requirements for forest certification, including increasing the value of their timber production.



A woman’s perspective

“Forestry is not just for men. Currently, I have everything I need. That is to say, I have a happy family and a stable job that aligns with my abilities and qualifications. Many people still say that for a woman, going deep into the forest or mountains would be miserable - “It is men’s work.” It is true that women working in forestry may have more hurdles to overcome than men. But the work is not purely ‘men’s work’. If I can do it, other women can do it too! In my opinion, broader communication is needed to change social prejudices about women working in the forestry sector. In addition, there needs to be further investment in physical training facilities, accommodation and improvements in living quarters to meet the basic needs at forest management and protection stations, taking into account the comfort and needs of both men and women.”

Lai Thi Nhung
Technical Officer, Song Kon Company.



A perspective from the press

“...At a forum on promoting gender equality for sustainable forestry development in October, we found that there were many, many women who are excellent examples of how women can work in forestry and carry out very valuable work in many different areas. For example, I met Be from a minority group, and a member of a village forest protection patrol team. She really cares about the sustainable management of forests and emphasized that she is ready to protect them for the entire village.”

Santiago Alonso Rodriguez
First counselor for Germany in Vietnam
(quote taken from the [interview with Viet Nam Investment Review](#))



Gender responsive budgeting: *A step towards greater equality and better public financial management in Viet Nam*

Background

Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) is recognized as a sound budgeting approach and a crucial condition for sustainable and inclusive growth. GRB does not involve creating a separate budget for women; rather, it ensures that the national budget is fair, inclusive, and meets the diverse needs of all genders. GRB leads to smarter, more effective public spending, contributing to a more inclusive society. In the context of Viet Nam, there is a legislative basis for integrating gender equality into the Public Finance Management (PFM) system. However, in practice, gender considerations are largely ignored throughout the budget cycle. For example, although the State Budget Law (SBL) of 2015 stipulates gender equality as a basis for preparing the annual state budget estimate, the budget circulars do not require estimates to include gender-related impacts in spending proposals. There are several key reasons for gender gaps in Viet Nam's PFM system, processes, and institutions, including limited knowledge and capacity of policymakers and civil servants on GRB; a lack of sex-disaggregated data and empirical evidence for policy development; the absence of secondary legislation promoting gender integration in the budget cycle; and poor linkages between planning and budgeting.

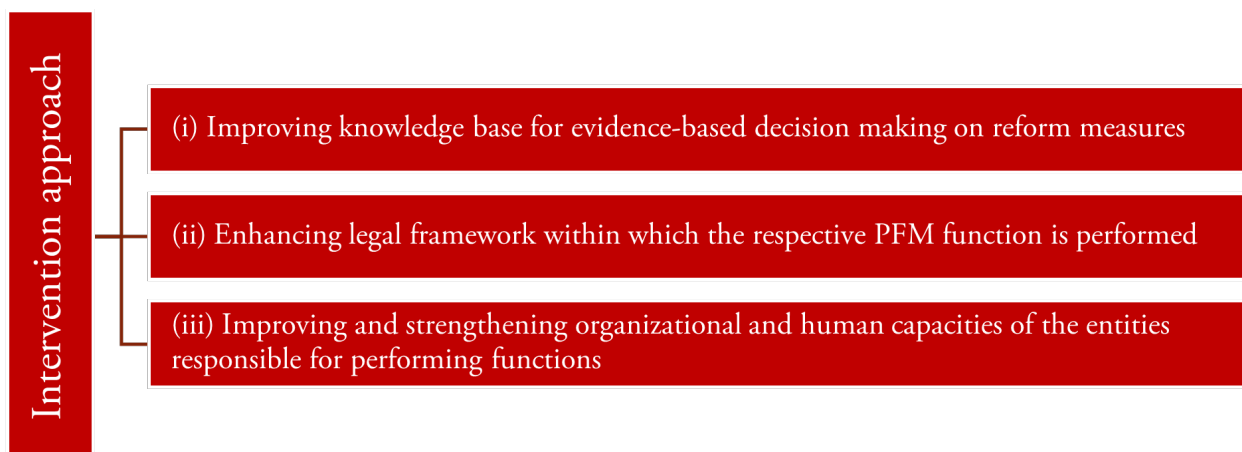
Interventions

Based on the analysis of Viet Nam's context, the Public Finance Management (PFM) developed a gender strategy for

project operation, which identified three key intervention approaches

After 1.5 years of project implementation, the project has carried out several key activities, including:

- Conducted a study on international best practices in gender-responsive budgeting and its relevance for Vietnam. This study identifies successful examples and lessons learned from GRB implementation in various countries as well as analyzes the status of GRB application in Vietnam and proposes specific recommendations for adapting GRB to the Vietnamese context, particularly legal reforms. For example, international best practices suggest institutionalizing gender-responsive budgeting through a Budget Circular and introducing a gender budget statement as part of the budget documents, as well as establishing a medium-term fiscal framework for gender budgeting. The key findings of this report were used to design the GRB training sessions for government partners and a subsequent TV talk show. These findings will continue to be shared with partners in the future.
- Provided specific recommendations for the revision of the VAT Law and CIT Law, with technical advice from international experts. Specifically, it was recommended that reduced tax rates be imposed on certain products, such as sanitary products and contraception, in the revision of the VAT Law. These recommendations were





Dr. Michaela Baur, Country Director, had an interview with VOV TV program

submitted to the Ministry of Finance for consideration. For the revision of the CIT Law, the international expert proposed that the revised tax incentives not primarily benefit larger enterprises, where women are underrepresented, but should instead focus on SMEs, which are the primary drivers of women's entrepreneurship. Besides, in addressing base erosion and profit shifting (BEPS), Vietnam could reclaim lost tax revenues from multinational enterprises. These funds could then be redirected to finance public services or social protection programs that benefit women, such as enhanced healthcare, education, and social welfare programs targeting low-income women.

- Organized two training sessions on GRB for government officers from the Ministry of Finance and selected ministries, as well as representatives from the Vietnam Women's Union. The training equipped participants with knowledge and understanding of key GRB concepts, practical tools, and international best practices, as well as enabled them to identify their roles and actionable steps for further implementing GRB in the Vietnamese context.
- Collaborated with the Voice of Vietnam (VOV) TV program to conduct a talk show on [the experience of gender-responsive budgeting implementation](#). In addition to an interview with the Project Team Leader

about the benefits and methodologies of integrating gender into the budget process, as well as key GRB methodologies, the EU Ambassador to Vietnam and the Country Director of GIZ Viet Nam also shared experience from the EU and Germany in applying GRB. Furthermore, the Deputy Director of the National Institute for Finance recommended some steps for ensuring GRB application in Viet Nam. The talk show was then promoted on GIZ's social media pages (Facebook, LinkedIn) to raise public awareness.

Achievements:

- The gender recommendations for the revision of the CIT Law were taken into consideration. The most significant change in the draft CIT Law, which was submitted to the National Assembly in November 2024, is the reduction of tax rates for SMEs: 15% for enterprises with an annual turnover of VND 3 billion (118,000 EUR) or less, and 17% for those with an annual turnover between VND 3 billion (118,000 EUR) and VND 50 billion (2.0 million EUR), respectively.
- Thanks to close coordination with project partners to ensure women's participation across all events, the majority of participants were female (890 out of 1,733 participants, equivalent to 51.4%).
- The TV talk show on gender-responsive budgeting was broadcast with an estimated 100,000 viewers.



Building Safe Workplaces: *Preventing sexual harassment in manufacturing factories*

Key Figures



333,020 (231,304 women)

workers benefitted from prevention, mitigation or remediation measures for sexual-harassment risks



125

manufacturing facilities participating



353 (210 women)

officers (CSR, HR, Trade Union...) trained to address sexual harassment in the workplace

114 (63 women)

public authority representatives trained to address sexual harassment in the workplace

Background

Sexual harassment (SH) and gender-based violence (GBV) remain critical issues within the global garment industry, threatening workers' safety, dignity and productivity. In Vietnam, SH is widespread, affecting women, who often remain silent for fear of retaliation, job loss or because of a power imbalance. A survey by Better Work Viet Nam in 2023 across the garment industry found that verbal harassment and unwanted touching are common, yet many incidents go unreported. These issues not only violate workers' rights but also hinder business sustainability and competitiveness in a sector that is desperate for qualified labor. In term of legal framework, Vietnam's 2019 Labor Code, which aligns with ILO Convention No. 190, strengthens worker protections against SH at the workplace. At the same time, emerging global supply chain requirements like the German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (LkSG) and EU Directives are requesting companies to address risks, including SH and GBV, in their supply chains.

Interventions

By promoting safe, dignified, and respectful workplaces, the Initiative for Global Solidarity (IGS) program in Viet Nam has taken a holistic approach, emphasizing prevention, response, and support measures. The interventions have not only enhanced legal enforcement but also strengthened enterprises' reputations and competitiveness in the supply chain.

Specific interventions:

- Developed the manual on preventing and addressing sexual harassment at the workplace in partnership with the ILO, Fair Wear Foundation, and Ministry of Labor, Invalids & Social Affairs (MOLISA). With an inclusive consultation process in 2021, the manual reflects insights from different stakeholders (including government officials, CSOs, industrial park management boards, Labor Federations, Trade Union, enterprises etc.).
- Conducted pilot implementation of the manual throughout 2022, featuring targeted trainings and advisory services, to ensure practical impact of the manual. These activities focused on reviewing internal policy and regulations against sexual harassment; identification of sexual harassment risks; educating workers on the subject; setting up and/or improving internal procedures for receiving and addressing complaints/concerns internally.
- Building on pilot implementation, the manual was finalized and approved by MOLISA for rolling-out in 2023. Thereafter, the project conducted a number of enterprise trainings for mid-level managers, human resource officers, workers' representatives, and compliance and training officers. These trainings employed a blended approach, incorporating in-person training, online sessions and on-site services, as needed. Training content encompass issues of sexual harassment within the human resource development framework; policy and regulations;

Translate the legal requirements into a practical manual



Pilot the implementation of guideline through training & advisory services



Roll-out the training program & promote employees' initiatives



Handover the training program to brands for further deploy in their supply chains



complaint and redress procedures; as well as training and communication at factory level.

- Empowered employees to lead initiatives to expand outreach and awareness against SH within the facilities. Communication tools including posters, videos, and social media content were created by trained participants and used to effectively engage a wider factory audience.

Achievements

- **Improve workplace safety:** Over 330,000 workers across 125 companies benefited from prevention and risk-mitigation measures regarding sexual harassment.
- **Stronger legal enforcement:** Supported enterprises and public authorities to effectively implement anti-sexual harassment (ASH) provisions under the Labour Code of 2019.
- **Enhanced capacity and skills:** Over 350 compliance/HR/Trade Union officers, along with 114 representatives from public authorities were equipped with knowledge on ASH policies and handling of complaints, enabling them to address SH more effectively.
- **Mindset shift:** Facilitated open communication and proactive approaches among managers and workers to tackle SH.
- **Sustainable impact:** The “Manual on Prevention and Addressing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace” was introduced to key stakeholders, accompanied by training on its implementation. Additionally, the GIZ ASH training program was adopted by various brands to be extended into their supply chains.



Ngo Thi Hoai Thuong talking with workers Dang Van Ty and Le Ho Nhat Anh during lunchtime at Scavi Hue factory^[1]

Perspectives from Scavi, Hue Factory, Thua Thien Hue, Vietnam

“People talk about these issues more openly and without hesitation now, and even the soccer team and others in the factory have responded well to this information. The factory also uses educational materials like video clips and posters on sexual harassment to foster understanding and encourage open conversation about harassment”

Dang Van Ty
Technician

“While Scavi has general workplace policy and regulations in place, this programme provided us with deeper and more practical insights on ASH subject that inspired management team to enhance our commitment to change. With expert guidance from the labour lawyer, a GIZ consulting team member, we developed a comprehensive ASH policy that includes detailed regulations for receiving, handling, and addressing reports of sexual harassment. This approach dives into greater detail, preparing management to respond to cases more sensitively and effectively”.

Ngo Thi Hoai Thuong
Head of HR Department

“Before the training, I wasn’t entirely clear on what constitutes harassment—whether it’s verbal, physical, or non-verbal. The session and hands-on practices helped me recognize these behaviors and understand the importance of addressing them. I also learned how to support others who might experience harassment.”

Le Ho Nhat Anh
Material manager

[1] *Note: See their impact stories in the Annex



Women Network in Energy Sector: *A way forward toward gender equality in the just energy transition*

Background

In Vietnam, women are often underrepresented in the energy sector. For example, the Labour Force Survey 2021 shows that in this sector, there were 23,634 female employees, accounting for 21.1%, with only 0.01% of women in leadership positions. Moreover, gender equality is not well integrated into energy policies and programs, and gender norms are a significant barrier preventing girls and women from pursuing studies and careers in technical fields, including the energy sector. Additionally, a lack of access to financial resources, career support, and other resources (e.g., information, technology) presents challenges for women's active participation in the energy transition. Despite these barriers, many Vietnamese women have been breaking gender stereotypes in engineering and serving as role models in creating a clean and sustainable energy future. Furthermore, studies show that gender diversity in the energy sector can foster innovation and accelerate the energy transition process. Meanwhile, the Vietnamese government has recently committed to an environmentally and socially sustainable development strategy, including the ambitious goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. This presents a significant opportunity for Vietnamese women to position themselves as key players in this transition. In this context, GIZ Viet Nam's Energy Support Program (ESP), through the Energy Partnership Project funded by BMWK, and the BMZ-funded project "[Promoting the Transition of the Energy Sector in Viet Nam \(TEV\) project](#)" has provided technical support for the establishment and operation of the network [Women in Energy Viet Nam \(WEVN\)](#).

Interventions

The objective of this network is to create a platform for women in the energy sector to inspire one another, exchange ideas, learn, and cooperate, as well as to enhance their roles and positions in the energy transition process.

On the occasion of Vietnamese Women's Day, ESP held a [kick-off meeting](#) in October 2022 to mobilize women from different sectors to discuss and exchange views on the idea of establishing a women's network in the energy sector in Vietnam. The network was then officially founded in early 2023. Four working groups were formed to facilitate the implementation of the network's activities. The leaders of these groups possess strong expertise in specific areas. For example, the head of the capacity-building working group is currently a lecturer at Hanoi University of Science and Technology, while the network operation and management working group is led by the director of a law firm. Additionally, three members of the Coordination Board are responsible for the overall management and coordination of the network. As EWVN's Secretariat, GIZ ESP supports the Coordination Board members in organizing the network's activities and connects EWVN with other organizations and networks to promote collaboration and create synergies. Furthermore, a communication package—including the logo, [a landing page](#), and social media pages ([Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#)))—has been created to communicate the network's activities. In addition to strengthening activities planned for 2023 and 2024, there are plans to develop a network handbook with regulations on membership and a code of conduct.

Achievements

Within two years of implementation, WEVN has achieved some initial results, including:

- **Expansion of the network:** By January 2025, the network had reached 144 members from various sectors, including companies, academic institutions, students, development organizations, and the media. The members come from diverse backgrounds, ranging from managers and office staff to lecturers, researchers, and



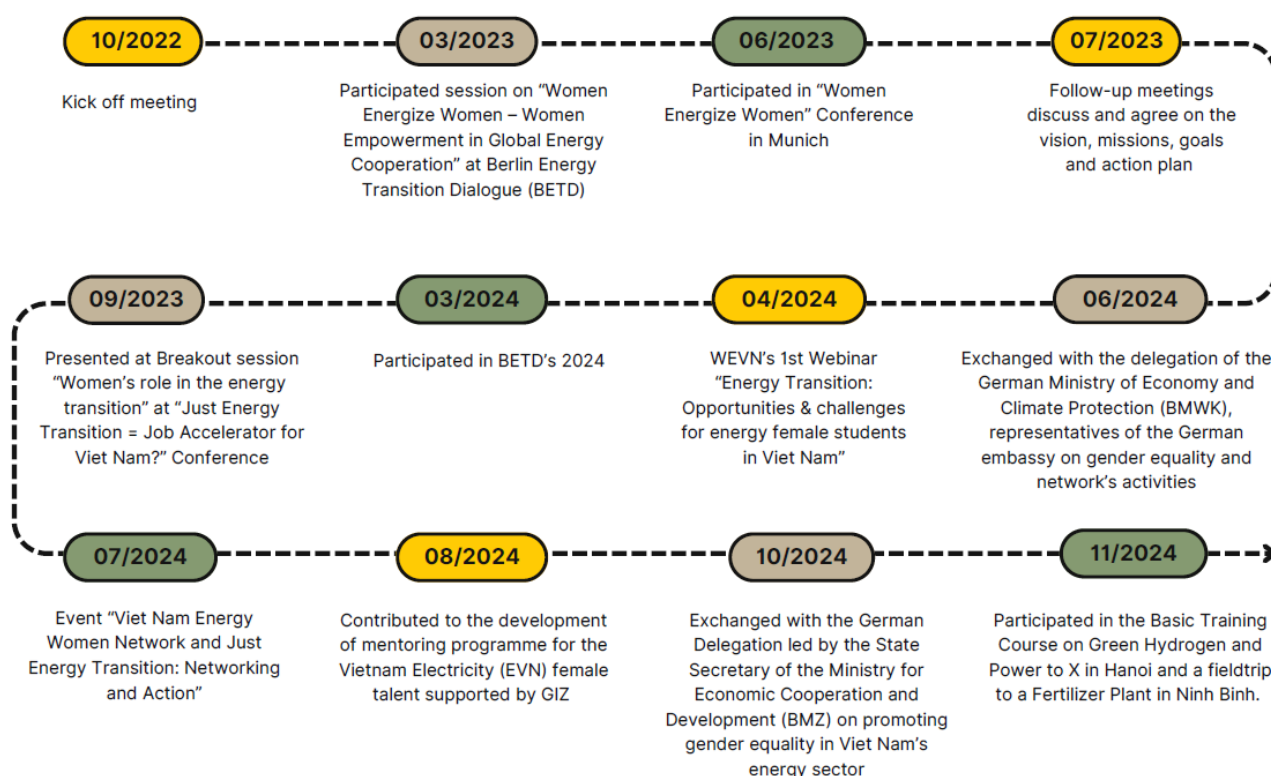


students. Many of them have extensive experience in the energy sector. For example, one member received the [Encouragement Award from the 2023 Hitachi Global Foundation Asia Innovation Award](#), while the company of another member was awarded at [Citypreneurs Ulsan 2024 with Green Roof Solution](#) and the [UN Women's Empowerment Principles Awards 2024](#). A student member also received second prize in the 2024 Science and Technology Awards. These achievements offer great encouragement for members, motivating them to share and learn from each other's experiences. They also lay

the foundation for members to voice their perspectives on the energy transition in the future.

- **Enhanced visibility of the network:** WEVN is recognized as the first network in Viet Nam to connect women working in the energy sector. In addition to enhancing their visibility on social media channels and at energy-related conferences, the exchange with high-level German delegations provided a valuable opportunity for network members to share their opinions and views on gender equality in Viet Nam's energy sector.

Highlights from the Network's Activities



Perspectives from network members



From the first days, when I was reached out about the idea of the Network, I felt very excited and eager. Today, seeing the new faces and the sisters who have been enthusiastic since the founding days, I feel very grateful to everyone for contributing to the development of the Network.

Mrs. Tran Thi Thu Phuong

Founder of Viet Nam Sustainability Social Enterprise (VSSE)



Through Women in Energy Viet Nam, GIZ has given me a valuable opportunity to learn, exchange, support each other in professional work and life, and connect with female colleagues in Viet Nam as well as around the world.

Mrs. Nguyen Thi Hanh An

Senior Specialist of Organization and Human Resource Department, Viet Nam Electricity (EVN)



Building a Diverse and Inclusive Workplace: *Multiple Approaches, One Goal*

Background

Vietnamese culture is strongly influenced by Confucianism, which supports male privilege and hierarchical relationships. This is clearly reflected in the workplace, where women and people with diverse gender identities often have limited opportunities to maximize their potential and take on leadership roles. They are also at risk of gender-based violence or harassment, further exacerbating gender inequalities. Despite significant progress in legal reforms in recent decades, cultural and structural barriers continue to hinder the advancement of gender equality in Vietnam's workplace.

Interventions

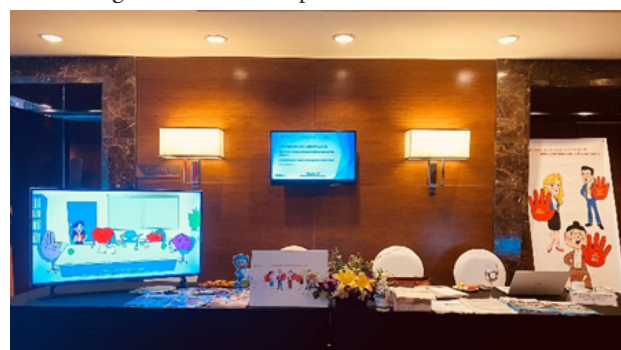
With strong commitment and support from the country management team, the Gender & Diversity Working Group, under the coordination of the Senior Gender Specialist, has been implementing various initiatives to promote gender equality, diversity, and inclusion within the organization.

Process & procedure:

- Integrated gender topic in the annual country planning with a specific objective and/or indicator.
- Worked closely with the HR department to develop and update [the policy on anti-harassment in the workplace](#).
- Collaborated with the C&P department to develop [code of conduct on anti-sexual harassment in the workplace](#), which is included as an annex of the contract with local service providers.
- Worked with the Country Office team to develop [low-threshold access to GIZ's infringement and misconduct reporting system in GIZ Viet Nam](#) (including STOP-IT topic).
- Worked with the senior HR officer to develop a checklist of integrating gender and social inclusion in the HR recruitment process, providing a recommendation note for hiring managers, and updated the national personnel recruitment form with a diversity perspective.

Awareness raising & capacity building:

- Developed [a communication package on anti-sexual harassment in the workplace](#) (including a video, standee, backdrop, etc.) to explain and demonstrate GIZ's policy of zero tolerance on sexual harassment in the workplace. Many projects displayed the standee at the registration desk and showed the animation during the registration and tea break time at the trainings and workshops with project partners.
- Organised the [annual 16-day campaign against gender-based violence](#) and [annual Pride Month](#) through group photos and video, a talk show, the display of pride flags at country and project offices, etc.
- Jointly produced a video to share our views and perspectives on "[what does a safe, diverse and inclusive workplace look like?](#)" to support the global 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence and to celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2024.
- Participated in the Hanoi Pride Event in 2023 and 2024 through "[Riding4Pride](#)" and "[Team Europe Booth](#)".
- Mobilized more than 100 GIZ Viet Nam staff members to participate in the MenstruAction photo campaign during the COVID-19 pandemic.



SEAH communication products were displayed at a project workshop



Promoted the Pride Month at Annual Staff Meeting



Team Europe Booth at Hanoi Pride 2024

- Initiated various activities to promote the International Women's Day and Vietnamese Women's Day through [talk show](#), [podcast](#), [photobook](#), etc.
- Organized five gender training courses for GIZ staff at both the project and portfolio-wide levels.
- Conducted a training course on anti-sexual harassment in the workplace at SED cluster as well as integrated this topic in the introductory session for new staff.

Taking initiatives:

- Joined force with CHM working group to take the initiative of including napkins and tampons included in the first aid kits at the country and project offices.
- Set up the milk pumping rooms for nursing mothers at the country office and green cluster.
- Submitted the idea "[think diversely, act inclusively](#)", which was among the 10 winning ideas in the community voting for the Innovation Fund 2023 and submitted

the idea "[GIZ Viet Nam Small Acts Big Impact Final.mp4](#)" for the Sustainability Challenge 2024, ultimately ranking among the three countries with the highest number of community votes.

Achievements

- LGBTIQ colleagues feel motivated and inspired by the support from managers and colleagues.
- [The animation on anti-sexual harassment in the workplace](#) has been taken over by GIZ Cambodia. They adapted it with [Khmer voiceover](#) and use it for their awareness raising activities. It was also widely utilized by project partner enterprises as a communication tool. Two projects plan to adapt the video before sharing it with manufacturing enterprises and forest owners.
- GIZ Viet Nam's good practices of promoting gender diversity and inclusion within the organization were highlighted company-wide (e.g. [GIZ's diversity site](#), [IDA page](#), [News](#), and [publication](#))





ANNEX: Stories of Changes

From Logistics to Leadership: *How the Anti-sexual Harassment Training Empowered Le Ho Nhat Anh*

As someone who interacts frequently with both workers and managers of all levels at Scavi Hue's factory, Le Ho Nhat Anh understands the need of a safe, supportive workplace. By participating in and disseminating the information from GIZ's anti-sexual harassment training programme, she continues to support her colleague and make discussion about sexual harassment become more open and impactful.

When Le Ho Nhat Anh finished school, she was certain of one thing: she did not want to attend university. At just 19 years old, she was eager to start working and earning her own money. In early 2020, Anh began her career at Scavi, the industrial subsidiary of the French group B'Lao, which specializes in lingerie, swimwear, sportswear, and protective clothing. Located on a large factory site outside Hue, Scavi has been Anh's workplace for over four years.

Anh started in Scavi's logistics department, where her role involved sorting fabric rolls and distributing them to seamstresses. Now 23, she has advanced to a position that focuses on efficiently managing materials. "I handle the organization of incoming materials," Anh explains. "When a new order arrives, I review the technical documents and materials, assign resources to the production line, and ensure everything is ready for smooth production. I also take care of the disposal of leftover materials after a production run has been completed."

Anh lives in central Hue with her parents and younger brother. "Mornings are usually quiet," she says with a laugh. "Everyone has their routine before heading out for work." She



Le Ho Nhat Anh, material handler at Scavi Hue factory



Nhat Anh distributing materials to workers

leaves home around 7 a.m., taking a bus or her moped to the factory, where her shift begins just before 8:30 a.m. "Scavi is a large company, and I enjoy interacting daily with warehouse staff, production line workers, supervisors, and managers. It challenges my communication and problem-solving skills," Anh says. The 23-year-old has grown with her tasks.

Anh's comfort and confidence in her workplace are evident, as is her ease in interacting with colleagues and superiors. This was further strengthened by a workplace sexual harassment prevention training that GIZ conducted at Scavi, in collaboration with one of the factory's buyers, since last summer. The training emphasized creating a safe and supportive environment—an integral part of the company's values.

Anh reflects, "Before the training, I wasn't entirely clear on what constitutes harassment—whether it's verbal, physical, or non-verbal. The session and hands-on practices helped me recognize these behaviours and understand the importance of addressing them. I also learned how to support others who might experience harassment."



While some colleagues initially found the topic uncomfortable, the training gradually sparked discussions and reflections. “Many women, in particular, are hesitant to speak openly or shy to dealing with issue such as sexual harassment in the workplace. They may find it embarrassing or unnecessary,” explains the 23-year-old.

However, repeated exposure to information, such as videos, poster, broadcast series on the topic, helped foster awareness. “Over time, discussions started, and people began reflecting on how harassment affects their lives. Placing posters in visible locations like entrances, restrooms, and canteens is particularly effective because they grab employees’ attention during daily routines. At first, people didn’t take it seriously, but after seeing the posters, flyers and videos multiple times, they understood that harassment is not just about serious incidents – it can also involve subtle behaviours that make someone uncomfortable. These small steps help to change perceptions.”

Anh also suggests using digital channels like emails, messaging apps, or Scavi’s Facebook page to enhance accessibility



Nhat Anh distributing materials to workers



Nhat Anh working on material inventory for the day

to these materials. “I often share what I’ve learned with colleagues to raise awareness,” she adds. Anh feels empowered by the training and recognizes its importance to her role. “I interact with a diverse range of people every day. Being aware of these issues helps me protect myself and support others. It’s essential in such a large and dynamic environment,” she says confidently.

The GIZ anti-sexual harassment programme that Anh participated in is part of a broader initiative leveraging the “Manual on Preventing and Addressing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace.” The training programme was implemented across more than 130 enterprises in the apparel and electronics sectors.

Anh’s story is a testament to the transformative power of education and awareness. From a determined 19-year-old eager to work, she has grown into a confident professional who not only excels in her role but also champions a safer and more inclusive workplace. For Anh, Scavi is more than just a workplace—it’s a community where she continues to thrive and inspire changes.

“Before the training, I wasn’t entirely clear on what constitutes harassment—whether it’s verbal, physical, or non-verbal. The session and hands-on practices helped me recognize these behaviors and understand the importance of addressing them. I also learned how to support others who might experience harassment.”

Le Ho Nhat Anh

Material handler, Scavi Hue factory, Thua Thien Hue province, Viet Nam



From Anti-Sexual Harassment Training to Advocacy: *Dang Van Ty's Mission to Support Workplace Safety*

As a technician at Scavi Hue's factory and an open-minded young man aware of social issues, Dang Van Ty received training on recognising and reporting sexual harassment at the workplace as part of GIZ's Anti-Sexual Harassment Programme. Empowered with new knowledge and skills, Ty becomes more ready to discuss and tackle sensitive issues for a safer, more supportive workplaces for all workers.

Dang Van Ty sits at the “Gerber Spreader”, an automated machine that unrolls layers of fabric onto a cutting area with even tension and without wrinkles. The 23-year-old focuses intently on the machine's display. A brief whirring sound follows, and the device, along with Ty, rolls out the fabric in long, even strips. Ty wears a mask, like all the other workers in the vast hall of textile manufacturer Scavi Hue, a producer and supplier of underwear, swimwear, and sportswear, among others.

“Smile, please” calls the photographer. Dang's eyes brighten with a genuine expression as the camera clicks. He is one of 6,000 members at Scavi Hue facility. The company operates ten industrial sites, with seven located in Vietnam. Employee well-being is seen as essential to the company overall success and commitment to fostering safe and supportive workplace.

Since April, Ty has been working as an automation technician. “I originally studied tourism, but I had to pause my studies because of the pandemic,” he explains.

“Then I joined the military for two years prior to working here where I received on-the-job training”. His tasks include



Dang Van Ty, technician at Scavi Hue factory



Ty working with the Gerber Spreader

inspecting fabric quality before cutting and operating the fabric cutting machine.

“There's not always a set routine. The factory's production schedule is posted online so that each team knows what's coming up next. We receive the plan, which details each type of fabric, customer specifications, and the fabrics to be processed,” the 23-year-old explains.

Ty is an open-minded young man unafraid to tackle sensitive issues, a commitment shaped by his past involvement. “Back in high school, I was part of an initiative raising awareness about sexual harassment among children aged 9 to 17” he recalls. This early commitment to social causes motivated him to participate in the GIZ Anti-Sexual Harassment (ASH) training at Scavi Hue as one of the factory's “agents of change”.

The GIZ ASH programme leverages the “Manual on Preventing and Addressing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace” which was developed collaboratively in 2022 by the GIZ, the Ministry of Labour, Invalid and Social Affairs,



the International Labour Organization and Fair Wear in Vietnam. Between 2022 – 2024, the training programme was implemented across over 130 enterprises in the apparel and electronics sectors. Key components included developing and advisory on ASH policies and regulations, enhancing sensitivity on sexual harassment issues, and strengthening grievance mechanisms.

At Scavi, Ty is one of the 75 employees directly participated in the GIZ ASH training, which has been instrumental in transforming the workplace culture. Ty says the programme helped him understand how to recognize sexual harassment at work and respond appropriately. “We learned both open and confidential reporting methods to ensure issues are addressed properly. For some, it might be uncomfortable to discuss such topics but tackling them has made our work environment more supportive,” he explains.

Since the ASH training, Ty has observed a gradual but noticeable cultural shift at his workplace. “People talk about these issues more openly and without hesitation now, and even the soccer team and others in the factory have responded well to this information. The factory also uses educational materials like video clips and posters on sexual harassment to foster understanding and encourage open conversation about harassment” he adds.

Beyond fostering a safer workplace, the GIZ ASH program also enriched Ty personally. “The soft skills we developed in ASH training are essential for everyone”, he says with a smile, citing improved confidence and communication. Ty’s newfound confidence extends beyond the workplace, as he feels more comfortable discussing such sensitive topics with his family and community.

Looking ahead, Ty dreams of advancing his career or studying economics. His family fully supports his aspirations, though sometimes hint at his marriage plans, he laughs. His current focus remains on a stable job to support his family and achieving a personal goal: taking a big trip before turning 30 - destination yet to be decided. For now, his journey at Scavi continues, with purpose and promise.



Ty working with the Gerber Spreader



Ty talking with a colleague during work lunch.

“People talk about these issues more openly and without hesitation now, and even the soccer team and others in the factory have responded well to this information. The factory also uses educational materials like video clips and posters on sexual harassment to foster understanding and encourage open conversation about harassment”

Dang Van Ty

Technician at Scavi Hue factory, Thua Thien Hue Province, Viet Nam.



Building Safe Workplaces: *Preventing Sexual Harassment in Manufacturing Factories*

Meet Ngo Thi Hoai Thuong, Head of HR Department at Scavi Hue, as she shares how the company is creating a safe and supportive environment for its workers from anti-sexual-harassment initiatives and health programs to community-focused projects.

Could you share some insights into your role and responsibilities?

Since joining Scavi in 2022, my main responsibilities have involved in human resources (HR) work, covering various aspects including recruitment, monitoring, communication, training and other work-force related activities.

What policies and practices are currently in place at Scavi to report any concerns or incidents safely?

At a workplace with around 6,000 employees, we need multiple channels and methods to obtain information and to promptly capture employee feedback and concerns. We want our workers to feel secure enough to speak up without fear. Our “Speak Up” program was launched in 2023. This initiative encourages workers to voice concerns through various ways including direct contact with relevant departments or Trade Union Executive Committee, hotline, QR codes for anonymous online feedback, or suggestion

boxes for written feedback, though most employees now prefer the hotline or online options for quicker responses.

Sexual harassment in the workplace is a significant problem in the garment industry worldwide, including in Vietnam. Why is it so important for Scavi to prevent and address this issue proactively?

Preventing and addressing sexual harassment is not only a legal obligation but also essential step toward fostering a safe, respectful workplace where everyone can thrive. The Labor Code 2019 provides a strong legal framework by defining sexual harassment and mandate businesses to address it.

However effective implementation at enterprise level requires more than just written policies. We still need to establish clear procedures, comprehensive awareness campaigns, and a commitment to drive cultural change across all levels within the factory.



Ngo Thi Hoai Thuong, Head of HR Department, Scavi Hue factory, Thua Thien Hue Province, Viet Nam



With support from GIZ and our buyer, we have taken proactive steps on anti-sexual harassment prevention through series of training and hands-on advisory sessions. These have empowered our workers with knowledge—helping them recognize what sexual harassment looks like, how to prevent it, and the importance of reporting it. Beyond training, we have further established robust grievance mechanisms and investigation procedures, and enforceable measures to ensure accountability. Equally important is cultivating a workplace culture that encourages open dialogue and protects employees who report misconduct. By combining legal compliance with practical, actionable measures, and building on our existing system, we can move beyond policies and create a safe and inclusive environment for all workers.

What noticeable changes have you observed within the factory following the GIZ Anti-sexual harassment (ASH) training? How have these influenced both management, workers and the workplace culture?

I can confidently say this program has significantly shifted mindsets across all levels—management and workers alike. Previously, sexual harassment was often considered a sensitive topic that people hesitated to discuss. Through the program, everyone gained a clear understanding of what sexual harassment entails, how to prevent it, and the steps to take if it occurs. Participants have become agents of change. They are more confident, proactive, and skilled in communicating what they learned and sharing key messages with others, among their teams and communities. This ripple effect has made the training's impact extend beyond the initial sessions.

While Scavi has general workplace policy and regulations in place, this programme provided us with deeper and more practical insights on ASH subject that inspired management team to enhance our commitment to change. With expert guidance from the labour lawyer, a GIZ consulting team member, we developed a comprehensive ASH policy that includes detailed regulations for receiving, handling, and

addressing reports of sexual harassment. This approach dives into greater detail, preparing management to respond to cases more sensitively and effectively.

We are also happy to acknowledge the workers' positive responses to the training sessions, actively seeking resources to deepen their understanding and share knowledge among peers. This demonstrates their proactive engagement, growing senses of ownership to promote a sexual harassment-free workplace. Building on this momentum, various awareness raising activities have been conducted by the workers such as series of radio broadcast, poster design contest on ASH topic to deepen the employees' understanding of ASH prevention.

Of course, understanding everything immediately isn't realistic. Benefiting from the impact of the GIZ program, we recognize the need for continued actions to reinforce ASH awareness and understanding.

We have no intention of stopping in 2025. We will plan many more programs on our own initiative to support a safe and respectful workplace for our workers.

Do you believe brands should take a more active role in helping factories build a supportive environment or is this primarily the factory's responsibility?

Addressing workplace challenges requires a collaborative approach, involving different actors at all levels. While factories hold significant responsibility for creating safe and supportive working environment, the brands also play a crucial role. At Scavi, we value close collaboration with our buyers in fostering long-term sustainable development. This partnership extends beyond human resources to encompass projects that improve worker performance and product quality within the factory. By sharing responsibilities and aligning on goals, the brands and factories can create synergistic relationship that ensures good working conditions and drives positive change across the supply chain.

"Through the program, everyone gained a clear understanding of what sexual harassment entails, how to prevent it, and the steps to take if it occurs. Participants have become agents of change."

The GIZ ASH programme leverages the "Manual on Preventing and Addressing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace" which was developed collaboratively in 2022 by the GIZ, the Ministry of Labour, Invalid and Social Affairs, the International Labour Organization and Fair Wear in Vietnam.

Between 2022 – 2024, the training programme was implemented across over 130 enterprises in the apparel and electronics sectors. Key components included developing and advisory on ASH policies and regulations, enhancing sensitivity on sexual harassment issues, and strengthening grievance mechanisms. These initiatives serve as a model for enterprises like Scavi to build on existing efforts and create a workplace that is safe, inclusive and respectful for all employees.



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Photos by:
©GIZ
European Union (p.17)

As at
March 2025