



CARE in Vietnam: Addressing social marginalisation in urban areas

CARE works in urban areas in Vietnam to ensure people who are particularly disadvantaged are not excluded from opportunities for development and are safe from violence.

It is estimated that one third of Vietnam's population of 96 million live in urban areas. Many of those working in Vietnam's cities have **migrated from rural areas for work**; there are currently around **4 million migrants** living in Vietnam's urban areas, with the rural-to-urban migrant population expected to reach 5 million by 2019.

About 60 per cent of the overall migrant population are women. Many women are **formally employed in garment and footwear factories**, while around half of all women employed in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City earn income in the **informal sector** in roles such as street vendors and waste collectors.

In the cities they migrate to, women face challenges including **poor housing and living conditions, insecure work and income, unsafe working conditions, and lack of labour rights protections**. They may lack representation and protection, and cannot access services such as legal aid, as a result of **social conventions and stereotypes**. Access to **basic social services** such as health care and legal protections can be limited and they may be particularly at **risk of violence**. Those engaged in the informal sector are particularly vulnerable.

CARE supports women to develop the skills and confidence to **increase their incomes and improve their working conditions**, while also engaging with government authorities and private sector employers to ensure **women are safe and respected** regardless of how they earn income.

WHAT DOES CARE FOCUS ON?



Empowering women workers



Strengthening women's leadership & representation



Addressing gender-based violence

WHO DOES CARE WORK WITH?

CARE's work in urban areas in Vietnam focuses on:

- **Migrant women who work in factories**
- **Migrant women engaged in informal work**
- **Female sex workers**

CARE recognises the specific needs of other marginalised groups including **people living with HIV, intravenous drug users** and those who are **lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender**. While CARE does not specifically focus on these groups in Vietnam, the organisation continues to promote their rights through broader gender equality efforts.

CARE'S IMPACT



3

New projects in 2018 addressing sexual harassment against women in urban settings



15

Total number of provinces which have promoted dialogue between female sex workers and local authorities.



1,600

Number of women who have received skill training or joined business groups since 2010.

LOOKING LONG-TERM

Across all projects CARE considers how to ensure lasting change for women who are disadvantaged in multiple ways.

CARE aims to **encourage partnerships** between worker groups and key influencers to ensure women have opportunities to represent their own needs.

CARE aims to **increase resilience** by promoting sustainable ways of earning income and ensuring public services are responsive to the effects of climate change.

HOW CARE WORKS WITH SOCIALLY MARGINALISED PEOPLE IN VIETNAM



EMPOWERING WOMEN WORKERS

CARE supports women workers to **know and practice their rights** and ensure they can **access support services** such as legal protection. Training on **business and money management skills** also support women's ability to change their economic situation for the better.

In formal settings, CARE promotes **better working conditions** such as working with the private sector to prevent sexual harassment in garment factories. For those in informal employment such as sex work or seasonal jobs, CARE focuses on ensuring their rights are **recognised and respected** by authorities.

Providing **opportunities for dialogue** between workers, authorities, managers and trade unions promotes women's ability to take action to **improve their working conditions**.

What does this mean for women?

Ngoc works as a street vendor but had never considered how technology and social media might help advance her business. The business skills she learned from CARE's program has not only helped increase her income but also increased her savings, as she is better able to plan her family's spending.

Huong migrated to Hanoi 20 years ago and has struggled to earn enough income as a waste collector. Following training on business and communications skills with CARE, she now leads a group to collect and refurbish second-hand clothes before selling on to other low income migrants and dreams of opening a 24 hour shop catering to the needs of migrant workers.*

ADDRESSING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Women working in informal settings often face **social stigma** and may **not be protected** by the law. Broader efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in Vietnam may not take into account the **specific risks faced by these groups**, so CARE highlights their specific situations and advocates for their needs to be **integrated into existing policies**.

In more formal settings such as garment factories where a high proportion of the workforce is female, CARE has a particular focus on **preventing and responding to sexual harassment** by encouraging employers to develop and implement **clear reporting procedures**. At national and international level CARE advocates for labour reforms which **protect women workers from violence**.

What does this mean for women?

Thuy used to think that because she was a sex worker it was ok for a client to violate her. Through CARE's clubs she now understands how she is protected by the law and even has the phone number of a senior police officer who says women can call him directly if they need urgent help.*

Nhgia moved to the capital two years ago with her husband. He would often get drunk and beat her if she did not agree with him; as a migrant worker she had limited access to formal support. Training from CARE helped her understand this was not acceptable, influence her husband's behaviour and has provided a support network of other women.*



STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP & REPRESENTATION

CARE aims to ensure the voices of women from particularly disadvantaged groups are **heard by decision-makers**. This has a particular focus on equipping women with the **skills and confidence to become leaders** in Trade Unions and other worker organisations and encouraging women to form their own collectives to **advocate for their needs and rights**.

What does this mean for women?

Li migrated to the city for work when just 17 and was drawn into sex work. Life skills training and leadership opportunities through CARE's We are Women clubs have enabled her to become a committee member for the Vietnam Sex Worker Network where she can directly influence national-level policy about the rights of female sex workers.*