ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION, INCLUSIVE GROWTH & GENDER EQUALITY IN VIETNAM

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OUTLINE OF THE PRESENTATION

• 1. Links between economic transformation, inclusive growth and gender inequality

• 2. Key gender issues in economic transformation and inclusive growth in Vietnam

• 3. Policy recommendations
1. Links between economic transition, economic growth and gender inequality

- How economic development/growth affect gender inequality (incomes, services, education and employment)?

- How gender inequality impacts on economic growth? (short-and long-term effects)

- Is growth (gender-) inclusive? (unpaid work burdens, access to resources, social norms= constraints to women)
1. Links between economic transition, economic growth and gender inequality

- Vietnam’s economic transition & gender equality issues
  - Low middle income status
  - On track to meet nearly all MDGs

However:

- Persistent poverty and increasing inequality
- Speed of poverty reduction & economic growth rate has slowed => increased the risk of falling back into poverty for marginal population.
- Cheap labor, subsistence agriculture, limited jobs skills, physical and social isolation (ethnic minorities, women)
1. Links between economic transition, economic growth and gender inequality

• Challenges:

• To shift into higher value-added activities for continuing growth

• Increased competitiveness: Productivity, production innovation, technology transfer where women often have fewer opportunities to be a part of the process
2. Gender Issues in the economic transformation and inclusive growth in VN

Achievement:

• remarkable progress on gender equality (education, health, labor force and political participation
• Legal framework for gender equality: (Gender Equality Law, National Strategy on gender equality 2011-2020; gender mainstreaming in legislation, etc.)

Challenges:

• Gender gaps in education
• Gender segmentation of the labor market.
• Women are represented in informal employment, unpaid work
• Low wages and unsafe working conditions, fewer benefits of safety nets
2. Gender Issues in the economic transformation and inclusive growth in VN

Challenges (cont’d)

• Gender gaps in vocational training and technical education: Low percentage of women (29% employed women compared to 40% of men); short term training, gender stereotypes ➔ constraints for women to involve in new and high paying sectors

• Informal sector (that not governed by the Labor Code) – women are majority – less access to formal social protection

• Unpaid work, urban poor with rapid urbanizing

• Limited integration of gender specific concerns in current economic policies
2. Gender Issues in the economic transformation and inclusive growth in VN

Challenges (cont’d)

- Gender relationships is influenced by traditional Confucian doctrine.
  - Patriarchal behavior => women’s inferior status in the family
  - Son-preference
  - Men’s reluctance to share household family responsibility.
3. Policy recommendations

- Effective *integration of gender equality* objectives into the implementation of economic policies at all levels.

- *Social protection/security policies* needs to be gender responsible.

- *Promoting incentives for women* to join integrated economy deeply.
3. Policy recommendations

- **Engaging the private sector for gender responsive enterprise development:**

- **Formalization of informal jobs/employment**, which could enable a process toward protection of the vulnerable groups.

- **Review and building a national database system** on women and men in all fields of economics, training and education and social security