

Implementing the National Study on Domestic Violence against Women: Experience and Lessons from Viet Nam March 2011 (Updated. September 2012)

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Acronyms

AECID	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ALASTI	Software for qualitative data processing
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CCIHP	Centre for Creative Initiatives in Health and Population
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIHP	Consultation of Investment in Health Promotion
CSAGA	Centre for Studies and Applied Sciences in Gender-Family-Women and Adolescents
CSPRO	Census and Survey Processing System
DaO	Delivering as One
DV	Domestic Violence
DVL	Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control
EA	Enumeration Area
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
GBV	Gender-based violence
GE	Gender equality
GEL	Law on Gender Equality
GSO	General Statistics Office
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JPGE	United Nations/Government of Viet Nam Joint Programme on Gender Equality
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDG-F	Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund
MOCST	Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
MPS	Ministry of Public Security
NCFAW	National Committee for the Advancement of Women
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations

PSO	Provincial Statistics Office
PCG	Programme Coordination Group
STATA	Data Analysis and Statistical Software
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
VAW	Violence against Women
WHO	World Health Organization

1. Introduction

1.1 What this paper is about

On 25 November 2010, the results of the first National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam were released at an event for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in Ha Noi. The results of the study confirmed the prevalent incidents of domestic violence against women in Viet Nam, indicating that overall, 32 per cent of ever-married women reported having experienced physical violence in their life. The study also showed the extent to which women suffered from domestic violence in Viet Nam which had not been fully known. The launch of the study results was successful in raising awareness on domestic violence among general public and to present concrete evidence to policy makers and development practitioners to reaffirm commitment to eliminate domestic violence by designing and implementing evidence-based interventions.

Behind the successful launch was a long and careful preparation and implementation process supported by many colleagues from the government, mass organizations, national research institutions, civil society organizations, and the UN agencies. Every step was planned and implemented carefully in close consultation with the key stakeholders to ensure their commitment and support, as well as relevance and validity of the study. The information on the key steps, the stakeholders involved in the process, good practices, and lessons is important to understand what brought this success, and what may be done differently to improve similar exercise in the future. This report documents the key steps, the stakeholders involved in the process, lessons, and recommendations from implementing the National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam, which was completed in 2010. Each section starts with information on the process and includes lessons from each step.

It is hoped that this paper provides useful guidance for future implementation of the national study on domestic violence against women or a similar study in Viet Nam as well as for other countries interested in carrying out similar studies.

1.2 How this paper came about

Successful completion of the Study was realized owing to many people who had been involved in implementing the Study conducted within the framework of the United Nations – Government of Viet Nam Joint Programme on Gender Equality (JPGE). Under the three-year JPGE, the twelve UN Agencies and Programmes in partnership with the Government of Viet Nam provided strategic, coordinated and multi-sectoral capacity building and technical assistance to build the capacity of national and provincial duty bears so that they can better implement, monitor, evaluate and report on the Law on Gender Equality and the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control. While the study was conducted by the General Statistics Office (GSO) with key technical assistance from WHO, technical and coordination support was also provided through the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) technical working group of the UN-Government Gender Programme Coordination Group (PCG) in Viet Nam throughout the implementation of the Study.

Upon the completion of the Launch, members of the GBV technical working group discussed key follow-up actions, and agreed to advocate for a repeat study in 2015 to assess progress in eliminating domestic violence against women in Viet Nam. The members also agreed that the experience from the Study should be documented so that the information could contribute to the smooth implementation of the 2nd national study on domestic violence against women in Viet Nam. In this context, this paper was developed by Aya Matsuura, Gender Specialist of the Joint Programme on Gender Equality (2009-2012).

The Millennium Development Goals Fund (MDG-F) Gender Window Community of Practice Knowledge Transfer Initiative, launched in July 2011, provided additional financial support to finalize and publish this documentation. The MDG-F, which supported 128 Joint Programmes worldwide including the Joint Programme on Gender Equality in Viet Nam, recognized that progress on gender equality is critical to the achievement of all the MDGs, and the MDG-F Secretariat created guidance to encourage the development of gender responsive joint programming¹, and provided financial support to document effective practices in promoting gender equality for MDG Achievement.

1.3 Objective

This paper aims to contribute to the elimination of domestic violence in Viet Nam by ensuring availability of regularly generated data on domestic violence which can be used as a basis for formulating and implementing interventions on domestic violence prevention and response and for monitoring and evaluating its progress.

Specific objectives of the paper are to:

- Document experience from conducting the 2010 National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam
- Share lessons from the study implementation to guide the implementation of future studies on domestic violence in Viet Nam as well as in other countries.

Since this paper does not provide detailed information on technical guidance such as methodology, sampling, and ethical and safety considerations, those who are interested in implementing a study on domestic violence are recommended to review this document in conjunction with other guidelines. The list of other resource materials is included in Annex 1.

1.4 Target users

The primary users of this paper are:

- Officials of the Viet Nam General Statistical Office (GSO) who are responsible for, or involved in implementing the national study on domestic violence against women
- Field workers/enumerators who are involved in data collection on domestic violence
- Officials of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MOCST) who are responsible for implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control as the State Management Agency in Viet Nam

¹ MDG-F Knowledge Sharing Initiative Call for Proposals

- Officials from the UN who are providing support to the Government of Viet Nam, and other stakeholders working on domestic violence prevention and control
- Other stakeholders from mass organizations, civil society organizations and research institutes working on domestic violence prevention and control.

The secondary users of this paper are:

- Officials of line ministries (e.g. Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of Education) who have active roles in implementing the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control
- Officials and development practitioners in other countries working on domestic violence issues, and planning to implement a similar study
- Statisticians and researchers interested in learning the process of carrying out a study on a sensitive topic such as domestic violence.

1.5 Acknowledgments

This paper was produced as a result of the recognition by relevant gender colleagues in Viet Nam that lessons from implementing the National Study on Domestic Violence should be documented for guiding similar exercises in the future. This paper was developed under coordination and supported by UNFPA Vietnam Country office, funded by MDG Fund Gender as a Cross Cutting Issue KM Initiative. Aya Matsuura, the former Gender Specialist of GOV-UN Joint Programme on Gender Equality (2009-2012) was contracted as consultant to develop the paper under supervision of UNFPA gender team leader, in close consultation with Nguyen Thi Viet Nga, statistician of the Viet Nam General Statistics Office, also the former coordinator of The National Survey on Domestic Violence. The paper was also received the substantial inputs from Khamsavath Chanthavysouk, the former Gender Officer, UNFPA Viet Nam Representative Office (2008-2011).

Special thanks to Dr. Henrica A.F.M. Jansen, International Consultant, for providing guidance in developing this paper, Do Anh Kiem, Director of the Social and Environmental Statistics Department, General Statistics Office, Hoang Tu Anh, Director, Centre for Creative Initiatives in Health and Population (CCIHP) and Consultation of Investment in Health Promotion (CIHP), and the members of the UN Gender-Based Violence Working Group in Viet Nam for providing comments.

Many thanks to Mandeep K.O' Brien, representative of UNFPA a.i, Gender team of UNFPA Viet Nam: Phan Thi Thu Hien, team leader, Do Thi Minh Chau, Gender Analyst, and Clara Gomez, Programme Officer on Gender for their valuable comments and coordination in getting feedback from relevant JPGE partners for this paper.

2. Implementing the Domestic Violence Study

2.1 General context and background

Viet Nam's commitment towards gender equality is evident in its action to improve the national legal and policy frameworks to advance gender equality, and to ratify number of gender related

international instruments. Promotion of equality between women and men in Viet Nam has been recognized as an inevitable element in Viet Nam's development. The principle of gender equality is enshrined, and the violation of women's rights is prohibited in the Constitution of Viet Nam. The Law on Gender Equality (GEL) was passed in 2006. With strong advocacy supported with the extensive media attention granted to domestic violence, domestic violence was officially recognized for the first time as an obstacle to development in Viet Nam in the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS) approved by the Prime Minister in 2002, and the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control (DVL) was passed in 2007.

Viet Nam ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1982, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1990, and the ILO Conventions 100 on Equal Remuneration and 111 on Discrimination (Employment & Occupation) in 1997. Viet Nam in 1994 endorsed the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development Plan of Action which recognized that reproductive healthcare is critical to the health of women, and that women's health is essential to the prosperity and opportunity of all, to the stability of families and communities, and the sustainability and development of nations. Viet Nam is committed to the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women Platform of Action. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have been localized as the Viet Nam Development Goals and the Government of Viet Nam made commitment to achieve its goals including eliminating gender inequalities by 2015.

With the strong commitment, the Government of Viet Nam has made important progress in promoting gender equality in number of areas including in education, employment and health. The gender gap in primary schooling has been eliminated and women have caught up and even surpassed men in terms of attaining college degrees. With respect to labour force participation rates, the women's labour participation rate was 65.4 per cent in 2007. Though it was 9 percentage points lower than that of men, the differential between the two participation rates is much smaller than is the case for many other countries throughout the world². Infant and under age five mortality rates have fallen dramatically, as has maternal mortality from 233 to 85 deaths per 100,000 live birth from 1990 to 2003. Since then progress has slowed, reaching 69 in 2009³.

Many important gender issues remain to be addressed. A significant degree of segregation between men and women in their field of study exists and it is linked to the significant segregation in terms of occupation and industry of employment. There is disparity in terms of access to education among ethnic minority groups especially at higher levels. Most indicators related to MDGs implementation in ethnic minority groups are lower than the national average, especially when compared with the majority ethnic group⁴. The implementation of MDGs related to gender development, child and maternal health care, and the rate of infection from dangerous diseases is also considerably lower for the ethnic minority groups compared with the majority group⁵.

² MOLISA/ILO's Viet Nam Employment Trends 2009

³World Bank Country Gender Assessment.

⁴ Viet Nam MDG Report 2010

⁵ Viet Nam MDG Report 2010

In terms of employment, data from 2007 showed that more than half (over 53 per cent) of all employed women were unpaid workers in the family business, compared with 32 per cent male workers, indicating that more than half of all employed women in Viet Nam did not receive earnings for the work they performed⁶. The share of women who work in vulnerable jobs was large at 69.1 per cent in 2009⁷. These data showed that despite the relatively high labour participation rate, many women worked with decent work deficit.

There has been emerging concern over the rise in sex ratio at birth (SRB) from 106 male births for every 100 female birth in 1999 (the approximate biological norm) to 111 in 2009⁸. In terms of women's representation, the ratio of women in the National Assembly has been on decrease from 27.31 per cent in 2002-2007 to 25.76 per cent in 2007-2011, and to 24.40 per cent in 2011-2016. In relations to data on domestic violence and gender-based violence in Viet Nam, there were a number of small-scale studies that provided a broad picture about gender-based violence issues in the country. However, available data was not nationally representative. The 2006 Nation-Wide Survey on the Family in Viet Nam conducted by the Government provided some data on domestic violence for the first time. However, this survey did not specifically focus on domestic violence. With limited data and understanding on domestic violence, there had been insufficient response to address gender-based violence in Viet Nam.

In this context, the key stakeholders working towards promotion of gender equality identified the need for a more effective approach to support the national agenda for gender equality. Consequently, the UN led by the Gender Theme Group, in partnership with the Government of Viet Nam and other stakeholders started the preparation for providing coordinated, comprehensive, multi-sectoral technical assistance to promote gender equality in Viet Nam. The consultation workshop to discuss priorities and strategies for advancing gender equality Viet Nam was held in February 2007. The workshop recommended five strategies to support the national agenda for gender equality including 1) capacity building, 2) enhanced data collection, monitoring and evaluation, 3) attitude and behaviour change, 4) support and service delivery, and 5) policy and law development.

Lesson: Continuous and coordinated advocacy to address gender issues in general, and violence against women in particular, by UN and other gender stakeholders created enabling environment to implement the first National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam.

The results of the consultation workshop directly fed into the formulation of the Joint Programme on Gender Equality which aimed at enhancing the effective implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the Law on Gender Equality and the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control. The programme was submitted to the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F) for funding with successful result, and it was launched on 19 March 2009.

⁶ MOLISA/ILO's Viet Nam Employment Trends 2009

⁷ MOLISA/ILO's Viet Nam Employment Trends 2010

⁸ World Bank Country Gender Assessment 2011

Box 1: Project Summary – Joint Programme on Gender Equality

United Nations-Government of Viet Nam Joint Programme on Gender Equality (2009-2012)	
Goal	Promotion of gender equality and the elimination of domestic violence through effective implementation of the Law on Gender Equality and the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control during 2009-2012
Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Improved skills, knowledge and practices for the implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the Law on Gender Equality and the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control 2) Enhanced partnerships and coordination around gender equality within and outside of the government 3) Strengthened evidence-based data and data systems for promoting gender equality
Budget	USD4,683,516 (USD4,500,000 from MDG-F, USD88,810 from AECID, USD94,706 from counterpart fund)
Participating UN Organizations	FAO, ILO, IOM, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIDO, UN Women, UNODC and WHO
National Implementing Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) • Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MOCST) • General Statistics Office (GSO)
Co-Implementing Partners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ministry of Education and Training 2. Ministry of Information and Communication 3. Central Communist Party Committee for Education and Popularisation 4. Parliamentary Committee for Social Affairs and Parliamentary Committee for Culture , Education, Youth and Children 5. National Committee For Advancement of Women (NCFAW) 6. Vietnam Women’s Union (VWU), Centre for Women and Development
Other National Partners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) 8. Ministry of Health (MOH) 9. Ministry of Justice (MOJ) 10. Ministry of Public Security (MPS) 11. National Assembly: Parliamentary Women Group 12. Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) 13. Some key media agencies 14. Some other related agencies, organizations when required 15. Selected national universities, research institutions 16. Some selected NGOs in the Gender Community Network (Gencomnet), NEW and DOVIPNET

Due to lack of data on the incidence of domestic violence in Viet Nam, which was raised as one of the priority areas in the consultation workshop in 2007, the first ever comprehensive national study on domestic violence against women in Viet Nam was included in the Joint Programme. The activity had been planned to apply the methodology of the WHO multi-country study on

women's health and domestic violence which includes both quantitative and qualitative components to provide data on prevalence as well as information on causes, consequences, risks and protective factors to support the formulation and implementation of appropriate interventions in responding to domestic violence. Within the Joint Programme, this activity contributed to the Joint Programme Output 3.1: Current gender equality and sex-disaggregated indicators are reviewed and new indicators identified through research, and the Joint Programme Outcome 3: Strengthened evidence-based data and data systems for promoting gender equality.

The objectives of the study were to:

- Estimate the prevalence, frequencies and forms of violence against women
- Assess the extent to which domestic violence against women is associated with a range of health and other outcomes
- Identify the factors that may either protect or put women at risk of domestic violence
- Document and compare the strategies and services that women use to deal with domestic violence, perceptions about domestic violence against women and how much women know about their legal rights.

The study had the following indirect objectives:

- Improve understanding about violence against women in Viet Nam
- Increase national capacity and collaboration among researchers and women's and other civil society organizations working on domestic violence
- Increase awareness about and sensitivity to domestic violence among researchers, policy makers and health care providers
- Contribute to the establishment of a network of people committed to address domestic violence.

2.2 Organization and management of the study

The National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam was implemented by the General Statistics Office (GSO) as one of the project activities of the Joint Programme on Gender Equality. Apart from the MDG-F financial support, additional financial support was made by the AECID to cover some cost of the study that had not been secured at the time of the JPGE project launch. While the key technical agency to provide support was WHO, other JPGE Participating UN Organizations also provided support through the Sub-Working Group on Gender-Based Violence throughout the implementation of the Study.

As one of the National Implementing Partners of the Joint Programme, the GSO was responsible for the overall management of the survey and the implementation of the fieldwork. More specifically, the GSO was responsible for:

- Logistics and overall management
- Leading the National Survey Steering Committee
- Organization of the orientation and planning workshops

- Pre-testing the questionnaire
- Recruiting the field workers for the field data collection
- Organizing the training workshops for the field workers
- Leading and supervising the field work
- Managing data processing and tabulation
- Taking lead in the report writing process, and organizing report-writing workshops, consultation workshop to share preliminary findings, and a workshop with the key policy makers to lobby for their support
- Organizing the launching ceremony to disseminate the results.

As the UN agency responsible for this activity of the Joint Programme, WHO was responsible for providing technical assistance, and for the overall coordination of the study. Specifically, WHO was responsible for:

- Recruiting national and international consultants/experts on DV study
- Liaising with the relevant Participating UN Organizations of the Joint Programme on Gender Equality, particularly the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) as the JPGE Managing Agent and as the chair of the Gender-Based Violence technical working group
- Facilitating communications with relevant stakeholders.

The National Survey Steering Committee was established in mid-2009 to take the overall responsibility for the implementation of the survey field work according to the agreed principles, objectives and timeline. The committee was led by the Vice General Director of the GSO. Members included the Director, the Deputy Director and Expert of the GSO Social and Environmental Statistics Department, the Director of the GSO Personnel and Training Department, the Head of the GSO Cabinet, the Deputy Director of the MPS Community Party Activities and Masses Activities, the Deputy Director of the MOH Planning and Financial Department, the Deputy Director of the MOLISA Gender Equality Department, and the Expert of the MOCST Family Department. For the daily operation, the committee was supported by the staff of the GSO Department of Social and Environmental Statistics.

The research team was established in mid-2009 and it consisted of seven core members, including two experts from the GSO, one expert from the Ministry of Health, two national consultants from the CCIHP, one independent international consultant, and one staff member from WHO Viet Nam⁹.

Within the research team, the international consultant as the team leader, and the national consultant were responsible for providing technical support to ensure quality and ethical standards. Specifically, they provided support in:

- Translating and adapting the questionnaire and the manuals for field workers

⁹National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam 2010

- Training and supervising field workers for the quantitative survey work
- Preparing for the qualitative research component
- Carrying out data analysis
- Drafting reports
- Presenting findings at dissemination workshops.

In addition, the Consultation of Investment in Health Promotion (CIHP) was contracted to work under supervision and in close consultation with the GSO and WHO to carry out the qualitative research.

For effective coordination and smooth implementation of daily tasks related to the study, one person each from the GSO and WHO, who were members in the research team regularly shared the information on progress with other relevant UN colleagues at monthly meetings of the Joint Programme Taskforce, and the Gender-based violence technical working Group, which are two of the sub-working groups of the UN Gender Programme Coordination Group (PCG). The JPGE Taskforce, participated by the focal points of the JPGE from different participating agencies, was used to share and monitor the status of the JPGE implementation. The GBV technical working group, led and chaired by UNFPA, participated by colleagues working on GBV, was used to discuss substantial contents of the study such as the questionnaire, training materials, and the list of different stakeholders to be involved at different stage. As a Managing Agent of JPGE, UNFPA was responsible for coordination to buy in relevant stakeholders in the preparation, consultation, and implementation process. UNFPA also send its relevant staff to participate in the monitoring of fieldwork together with other relevant agencies. This contributed to the smooth implementation and high quality of outputs at different stages of the study.

The key stakeholders involved in the study and the key timeline for the implementation of the study are included in Annex 2: List of the key stakeholders and implementation calendar.

Lesson: Assignment of the right institution to be responsible for the survey is critical. In the case of Viet Nam, the GSO was the most appropriate institution to carry out this study which required extensive experience in data collection and analysis, and nationwide network to mobilize human resources to work as field workers, and to cooperate with local statistical offices. The GSO was also equipped with required tools such as the data analysis software.

Lesson: Appointment of a committed and experienced focal point from the GSO was a key factor in implementing all activities as scheduled by ensuring good coordination with relevant stakeholders. One staff of the GSO was assigned as a focal point. With her knowledge on how things work in the GSO at the central and local levels, and her network established by working in the GSO, she ensured that there were appropriate steps and stakeholders' involvements planned for completing all the work, and she was able to navigate the team to follow the agreed steps.

Lesson: Requiring the involvement of the key stakeholders such as MOCST, MOLISA, MOJ, MPS and the UN from the beginning of the research to the dissemination step contributed to the success of the study as they gained ownership of the study and its findings.

Lesson: Mobilization and involvement of various and most relevant colleagues and officials at different stages of the study was important to ensure quality of products. They took part in providing technical support at different stages, and they had a shared understanding on the methodology and the process. This contributed to increase credibility of the study.

Lesson: A Communication and Advocacy (C&A) plan as well as follow-up actions such as further in-depth analysis of data should be included as an integral part of the activity to carry out a study or a project. When the Joint Programme was designed, the design did not include a C&A plan for the Programme and for the study. It also lacked a plan for how raw data would be further utilized by relevant partners for deeper analysis. A lot of focus was given to collecting and analyzing data. For the most effective dissemination and use of the newly generated data, a Programme or an activity should include a well-thought and designed C&A plan with sufficient budget so that sufficient attention can be given for disseminating the findings, and promoting the further use of data (e.g. in-depth analysis of the new data to generate more comprehensive information).

Lesson: From the beginning of the study implementation, it is necessary to develop a mechanism for key partners to own the data. Therefore, discuss and develop a plan among the key stakeholders such as the GSO, MOCST, and MOLISA on how they would be engaged, and how they would use the findings as well as raw data for addressing domestic violence, with a view to increasing ownership of the study findings.

Lesson: Selecting and securing an appropriate international consultant who has extensive knowledge, skills and experience in carrying out domestic violence studies is a key for the successful implementation and completion of a DV study, especially when the responsible agency has never carried out surveys on sensitive topics such as domestic violence. For the study in Viet Nam, WHO was able to identify and recruit a highly skilled and experienced consultant based on the existing contacts that WHO had. With her extensive knowledge on this topic and methodology, and skills and experience in implementing similar studies in countries such as Turkey, Solomon Islands, and Kiribati, she filled the gap of the implementing agency in running a new survey. She provided effective technical support and guidance to implement the study while building the capacity of involved officials, and developed a feasible and realistic plan by including strategies to address potential challenges.

Lesson: It was useful and appropriate to use the methodology developed by WHO as it was a well-established methodology to produce robust data, and it made possible to compare the results with other countries.

Lesson: Ensure that the core research team includes key members from various institutions (line ministries/agencies, NGOs, research institutes, UN agencies, etc) so that different views of those stakeholders can be shared, considered and reflected to develop feasible steps and to implement them smoothly while ensuring technical soundness.

Lesson: Establish a coordination mechanism to ensure sufficient information exchange and technical support from many colleagues throughout the implementation. In case of this study, the JPGE Taskforce and the GBV technical working group served as coordination mechanisms, and they met regularly, or as needed to share updates and to discuss ideas.

Lesson: Having this study in the Joint Programme created a more favourable condition for the implementing agencies to collaborate and coordinate to work on a sensitive topic with other agencies as the Joint Programme was implemented by many key agencies.

Lesson: Securing the full fund necessary for the study prior to the start of the implementation is essential for the smooth operation without potential disruption. When some stages of the study implementation (e.g. training of field workers) are supported by other donors, and if the funding arrives later than scheduled, this can cause delay in the whole process.

Lesson: To prepare for further analysis of the raw data, develop and have ready the guidelines for the use of the raw data under the close supervision of the GSO. This prevents the misuse and allows the raw data to be used to full extent to generate more and useful information. In the Joint Programme, the guidelines detailing who could access and use the raw data was developed in consultation with the key stakeholders upon the completion of the study.

2.3 Data collection

The study collected data to generate findings in two steps:

- Field survey conducted for quantitative data
- Field research conducted for qualitative data to provide supplement information to support the results from the quantitative component.

Lesson: The inclusion of the qualitative data component to the study was useful in generating supplemental information to the data from the quantitative component.

2.3.1 Quantitative component

The quantitative part of the study followed the methodology developed for the WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence,¹⁰ with a few modifications made in

¹⁰http://www.who.int/gender/violence/who_multicountry_study/en/

terms of the sample and the questionnaire to better suit the Vietnamese context. The quantitative component of the study interviewed 4838 women aged 18-60 years nationwide (63 provinces in Viet Nam) to represent all women in this age group in Viet Nam¹¹. Only one woman per household was interviewed using structured questionnaire in a neutral location such as the community meeting hall. Interviews were conducted in only one site per day. The response rate (the rate of those who completed the questionnaire) of the survey was 78.2 per cent. The refusal rate in this survey was low, compared with other surveys carried out in Viet Nam, having only 1.6 per cent refusing to be interviewed. Once the interview has begun, respondent completed the questionnaire. Nineteen per cent of eligible women were not available at the time of the field data collection for various reasons such as sickness or away from home.

More detailed information on the data collection methodologies and samples per step can be found in the WHO Multi-country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence against Women: Initial results on prevalence, health outcomes and women’s response (2005).

Preparation of questionnaire and other survey tools

The WHO Multi-country Study survey questionnaire Version 10 (Revision 26 January 2005) was adapted for the survey use in Viet Nam. The questionnaire included the following sections:

- Section 1: Characteristics of the respondent and her community
- Section 2: General health
- Section 3: Reproductive health
- Section 4: Information regarding children
- Section 5: Characteristics of the current or most recent partner
- Section 6: Attitudes towards gender roles
- Section 7: Experiences of partner violence
- Section 8: Injuries resulting from partner violence
- Section 9: Impact of partner violence and coping mechanisms used by women
- Section 10: Non-partner violence and violence against children
- Section 11: Financial autonomy
- Section 12: Anonymous reporting of childhood sexual abuse, respondent feedback

Please see Annex IIX of the Report on the National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam for the complete questionnaire.

The adaptation of the questionnaire involved the following steps:

- Review of the WHO Multi-country Study survey questionnaire by the research team
- Translation of the questionnaire into Vietnamese from English
- Sharing of the questionnaire with relevant authorities, experts, and other stakeholders working on gender in Viet Nam
- Discussions on and adaptation of the questionnaire
- Pre-field testing of the questionnaire in Ha Noi and Tien Giang. Respondents were asked to answer questions from the questionnaire. They were also asked to provide feedback on the

¹¹The WHO Study usually sampled one or two sites with about 1500 respondents at each site.

clarity and acceptability of the questions and the way in which the questionnaire was delivered

- Finalization of the questionnaire¹².

The process of adapting the questionnaire involved many colleagues who had interest in the survey from different technical background. Taking this opportunity for the nation-wide data collection, there were many requests to include additional questions to collect relevant data on other technical areas such as child abuse and HIV/AIDS. Through long discussions and negotiations and with advice from the international consultant, the final decisions on the adaptation of the questionnaire (e.g. adding/deleting/modifying questions) were made. The following factors were considered:

- Safety of respondents
- Increased resource needs: increasing the number of questions in the questionnaire means longer time required to complete one questionnaire. This also has implication on the total number of working hours required to complete the field data collection, as well as longer time required for training field workers
- The level of focus of the study: adding many questions on different topics may weaken the focus of the study
- Increased complications: Adding questions on various topics creates challenges in addressing ethical considerations
- Comparability of data: many adaptations may indicate compromising data comparability.

Lesson: Adaptation of the questionnaire needs to be done carefully by balancing data needs while keeping a strong focus of the study, and considering potential implications such as time to complete one questionnaire. Increasing the number of questions in the questionnaire means longer time to complete one questionnaire. This has implication on the total number of working hours required to complete the field data collection, as well as longer time required for training field workers.

Lesson: It is not ideal to include various topics in efforts to capture a lot of information, since each topic requires specific steps, questions, and set-up to collect reliable data to produce valid results. It may appear feasible and appropriate to include some topics (e.g. questions on child abuse). However, it can create a new set of issues which may not be appropriately addressed (e.g. what to do when a case of child abuse is found during the interview).

Lesson: In case the legal or policy framework related to domestic violence is available in a surveyed country, the questionnaire may include a question to assess awareness and knowledge on the law or policies/programmes among all respondents. The results can be useful to plan for future interventions to eliminate domestic violence.

¹² The adaptation made in the final questionnaire for use in Viet Nam can be found in the report on domestic violence against women in Viet Nam.

Selection and training of field workers

The finalization of the survey questionnaire was followed by the selection and training of field workers. The selection criterion for the field workers were:

- Female between 30-60 years old
- Have previous experience in survey work
- Have ability to interact with people with different economic and social background
- Have nonjudgmental attitude, maturity and life experience
- Have a good interpersonal skills to build a rapport with respondents
- Have experience in dealing with sensitive issues.

A total of 82 Vietnamese women (75 former staff of the Provincial Statistics Offices and 7 former staff of the General Statistics Office) who met the above criterion were recruited to participate in the field workers' training in November 2009. The larger number of women than required number of 70 field workers joined the training to ensure the selection of the best interviewers from the pool of trainees to join the field work and to have a reserve of field workers.

The training was carried out using the WHO training curriculum. While the WHO standard training curriculum lasts for three weeks, the training in Viet Nam was shortened to 11 days. This was possible as the trainees already had the prior experience in carrying out surveys.

The objectives of the training were to:

- Increase the sensitivity of the fieldworkers to gender issues at a personal and community levels
- Develop a basic understanding of gender-based violence in general, domestic violence in particular, its characteristics, causes and impact on the health of women and children
- Understand the goals of the survey on domestic violence against women in Viet Nam
- Learn skills for interviewing, taking into account safety and ethical guidelines
- Become familiar with the survey questionnaire and protocol.

The training covered basic concepts on gender, gender equality, domestic violence, interview techniques, questionnaire review and a pilot study to try the questionnaire in the field. The training sessions on face-to-face interviews were carried out with extra consideration to better implement the survey that deals with a highly sensitive topic. Additional training session of thirty minutes each was carried out for team leaders and field editors after the completion of the daily training sessions. The lead trainer was the international consultant recruited to provide technical support for the implementation of the study. Co-trainers from the Ministry of Health and the General Statistics Office provided additional technical support. Colleagues from the Joint Programme on Gender Equality, and civil society organizations also joined as resource persons. Data entry designers also attended the training course to understand the survey techniques so that an appropriate data entry system could be developed.

The site for the pilot study was selected in a way that the site is an average site in Viet Nam in terms of various factors such as income level, the level of economic development, geographical

characteristics (not rural nor urban). Eighty women were invited as respondents and 78 women participated in completing the interview. The data from the questionnaire in the pilot test was analyzed and the data for key indicators such as the rate of women who suffered from different types of violence (physical, emotional and sexual) was generated.

“In my opinion, it is important to create a comfortable, relaxing and friendly environment at the beginning to have a successful interview so that the interviewee finds it easy to share her thoughts. We need to build trust by clearly explaining about the objectives of the survey, principles for keeping information confidential, and the importance of the survey, so that the interviewee understands that she, along with other women in the country, can make a contribution to ensure women’s lives improve.” - A voice from an interviewer.

Upon completion of the training, all staff and field workers signed a confidentiality agreement on the final day of training as part of their work contract. Then, the field workers were selected and grouped into 14 groups of 5 field workers with a view to complete 5,520 interviews in 460 Enumeration Areas (EAs). The team consisted of:

- A team leader: responsible for overseeing all activities of the team in each Enumeration Area (EAs). A key person for the successful implementation of the field data collection in the selected EAs and she needs to ensure well-being and safety of the team members as well as the respondents, the appropriate arrangement for the interview venue, and the completion of the assigned workload and the maintenance of data quality through spot-check.
- A field editor: responsible for ensuring that questionnaires are completed fully and correctly
- Three interviewers: responsible for face-to-face interviews (each interviewer would complete three interviews per day over two months) (In sum conducting less than 100 interviews per person so as to avoid interviewer burnout).

During the group formation, the research team took into consideration the recommendation that interviewers should not conduct more than about 100 interviews during the survey to prevent exhaustion in violence against women studies.

Lesson: It is critical to recruit those who have both sufficient experiences in the field data collection and the proven record of managing some difficult situations in life because the topic of this survey is sensitive and the field workers need to be able to manage many difficult situations that can cause them to have problems such as headache and depression.

Lesson: It is important to include at least one senior field worker per team to provide mentoring support to the field workers and guidance in managing challenging situations.

Lesson: It is critical to recruit more number of field workers than the exact number required in the actual survey. Fieldworkers had the right to stop in the middle of the fieldwork if they suffered and could not endure the situation. Less field workers could mean prolonged timeframe to complete all the interviews. In case the timeframe for the field data collection could not be prolonged, it is important to ensure the availability of field workers who can replace the ones who stopped in the middle of the fieldwork. The Viet Nam experience recommends 20 per cent more field workers to be trained and be available than the number required in carrying out the field data collection.

Lesson: Include sufficient sessions for handling difficult situations during the field data collection in the training for the field workers. In case of Viet Nam, many field workers expressed that they had not known how to handle situations especially when they had interviewed survivors of domestic violence, and they had been left with feeling of regret for not being able to provide support, other than providing booklets showing services and resources for women who suffer from violence. Training should better prepare the field workers so that prior to the field data collection, they are aware of what they could do and could not do when they interview domestic violence survivors. This can help the field workers to have a better mental preparation for the field data collection.

Lesson: Provide sufficient guidance to the field workers to ensure that women with disabilities are not excluded in the survey. Although the percentage is not known, there were some reports from the field workers that some interviews with women with disabilities had been discontinued when the field workers had felt it was not possible or not adequate to continue. However, women with disabilities should not be excluded unless they are coded as incapacitated (e.g. very sick, deaf).

Lesson: Take advantage of different sessions of the field workers' training to assess capacity of the field workers. For example, during the pilot testing of the questionnaire which took place as part of the training course, all participants practiced filling data in the questionnaire, and the data entry was done during the training course. During this process, stronger participants may be identified to join the field team as team leaders.

Lesson: Invite the data entry designer to attend the training course for his/her better understanding on the survey techniques. During his/her participation, the designer can also take advantage of discussing with the international designer to clarify and agree on the coding variables used in the questionnaire (for raw data), and to develop appropriate data entry system.

Lesson: Ensure availability of the properly translated, pre-tested, and fine-tuned prior to the field worker training. This allows precious training time to be spent focusing on the core topics. Further revision of the questionnaire and the translation for fine-tuning may be made after the training and pilot testing.

Lesson: Prepare sufficient number of questionnaires for all participants during the training so that each participant can practice going through the questionnaire, and making inputs.

Lesson: Consider having a large enough sample size when carrying out a pilot test during the training. Results from the pilot test may contribute to act as a reference point for data checking and for identification of the need for further investigation during the nationwide field data collection. For example, the results of the pilot test from an average site in Viet Nam in terms of the key indicators (e.g. rate of physical violence, emotional violence, and sexual violence) showed the similar results as the national rates. These rates were compared with the results of each Enumeration Area. In case rates from an Enumeration Area were very different from the rates of the pilot site, the survey team asked questions for quality check (e.g. were the questionnaires completed appropriately?) and for potential need for further investigation in the qualitative component (e.g. what are possible reasons for certain areas to have much lower /higher rates of violence?).

Conducting field data collection

Fieldwork was conducted between December 2009 and early February 2010 interviewing 4,838 women. A detailed calendar of field visits by each survey team was developed, implemented and monitored closely. Each survey team spent one day per site and completed an average of 3 interviews per day, completing a total of 12 interviews per team per day. Each team had the coverage of 3-6 provinces.

The interviewee women were randomly pre-selected by the GSO at the central level and 78 per cent of those invited attended interviews. In case the originally selected respondents from random sampling were not available, other women from the replacement list were invited to complete the interviews.

Every step of the preparation and implementation of the field data collection was done with a high degree of caution to avoid creating any dangerous situations for those involved in the survey. One example is the name assigned to the field survey. In order to avoid causing danger to interviewees and interviewers, creating pre-judgment among the interviewees prior to joining the interviews, and having potential interventions to prevent disclosure of information related to violence in the community, the field data collection did not use the word “violence” in its undertaking. Instead, the name “National Study on Women’s Health and Life Experience” was used as the safe name. This name was also used to inform 63 Provincial Statistics Offices (PSO) and the local offices of the survey, and to seek their support in the field data collection in terms of sending invitation to the targeted women to take part in the interview, and arranging for the interviews.

The interviews took place in a room of the communal places such as the Commune People’s Committee office. The place for interviews was modified for the context in Viet Nam, and it was different from the place of interview recommended in the WHO guidelines, which is the individual home. This was decided considering the average living style of many generations living together in Viet Nam, which may not be ideal to maintain privacy and safety during interviews. Although the interviews were conducted in one room having 3-4 women being

interviewed at a time, privacy was preserved by allowing sufficient space between tables and chairs. Respondents could not hear interviews of other women.

At the end of the interview, which usually took around 85 minutes, the interviewed women received reference materials, consisting of booklets showing services and resources for women who suffer from violence, and copies of leaflets related to general health issues such as breastfeeding and traffic injuries prevention. The materials related to general health issues as well as on domestic violence were provided together in efforts to ensuring the safety of the interviewed women when they returned home.

In terms of mechanisms for quality control, the field workers followed certain procedures to ensure high quality of data collected. Firstly, editors in each team checked all completed questionnaires immediately after the interview while the respondent was offered tea. This time was used to clarify or complete some questions in case an error or omission was found while the respondent was still nearby.

Secondly, the team leaders and editors prepared a field report at the end of each day for every completed Enumeration Area to monitor progress and to address any issues that arose in the field in a timely manner. This report was useful to control the quality of the fieldwork especially at the beginning of the fieldwork.

Thirdly, members of the core research team carried out at least two monitoring visits per team to monitor progress of all 14 teams, and provided necessary technical and operational support to ensure that safety and ethical procedures were applied correctly.

Lastly, all teams were instructed to report to the core research team any issues that arose during the fieldwork so that the remedial actions could be taken under the guidance and supervision of the international consultant. During the fieldwork, the GSO kept close and regular contacts with the field workers to ensure smooth implementation of the field data collection.

Lesson: Due to the sensitive nature of the survey, the guidelines on ethic and safety consideration should be applied strictly in all actions. Careful consideration should be made in official documents (e.g. official letters to agencies) and appropriate words should be selected and used (e.g. avoid the word “violence”).

Lesson: Good cooperation among the survey teams, the Provincial Statistical Offices, and communal offices is the key for the smooth operation of the field data collection. To have a good cooperation, all relevant offices need to be aware of the survey plan that shows a list of actions and responsible agencies prior to the implementation of the field data collection.

Lesson: Conducting interviews in a central and neutral location instead of the homes of the respondents can be convenient for the field workers as they do not spend time locating houses of respondents.

Lesson: Prepare the set of materials to be given to the interviewed women well in advance. The materials should include information on where to seek help when suffering from domestic

violence. Information from the materials given at the interview could be the only support women may get to initiate actions to protect themselves from violence. The materials should be mixed with materials on other general health issues so that whoever views the materials does not identify the real purpose of the survey (domestic violence). This maintains the general understanding that the survey is on women's health and life experience. This is in efforts to avoid any potential violence against the interviewed women by their partner or husband after participating in the survey.

Lesson: Encourage the field workers to keep a fieldwork diary to document key issues and how they were resolved during the fieldwork as stated in the survey manual. The information can be useful for analyzing the impact of the survey on the field workers as well as on the respondents. The information can be useful for preparation and implementation of future surveys.

Lesson: Prepare in advance some support systems for the field workers during the field data collection to ensure well-being of the field workers. They sometimes expressed feelings of depression after interviewing women suffering from domestic violence. In these cases, other team members provided support to comfort each other. However, it would be more helpful to have additional support system during and after the field data collection.

Lesson: Prepare and send a letter of appreciation and a post-fieldwork questionnaire to the field workers right after the completion of the fieldwork to collect information on their experience based on their fresh memory. The letter could officially acknowledge the contribution made by the field workers, and the questionnaire could generate useful information for future surveys.

Lesson: The active and regular contacts between the central level and the provincial level as well as with the survey teams should be maintained to ensure smooth implementation of the field data collection. Field trips by the supervisor at the central level can be useful to provide guidance and to ensure quality. This is especially important at the beginning of the field data collection as the interviewers may make errors due to lack of experience and familiarity with the questionnaire. The result of the pilot sites in terms of the key indicators (e.g. rate of physical violence, emotional violence, and sexual violence) may be used as a reference point by the supervisor from the central level.

Processing and analyzing data

A data entry system was created in the Census and Survey Processing System (CSPRO 2.5) with an extensive error check programme. All information collected with the questionnaires was entered into this central system in Ha Noi. All data were double-entered to minimize data entry errors. Dummy tables, a data dictionary, and analysis syntax in Data Analysis and Statistical Software (STATA) were adapted and created for conducting data analysis to be conducted in Viet Nam.

Weighting was done to correct for the effect of sampling in order to achieve population estimates. Sample weights were calculated for the selection probability of the Enumeration

Areas, the households within the Enumeration Areas, and the women among the eligible women in the household. Without weighting for the number of women in a household, women from small households would be overrepresented in the sample because of a higher probability that they would be selected compared with women in larger households (i.e. with two or more eligible women).

For this report, univariate, exploratory and descriptive analyses of the results from the questionnaires were performed. All results in this report reflect weighted analysis.

Lesson: Ensure the involvement of the international consultant and technical experts especially at the beginning of the analysis stage to ensure accuracy of calculating weights and other calculation and analysis methods.

2.3.2 Qualitative component

Following the completion of the field data collection for the quantitative component in February 2010, a field research for the qualitative component was carried out in April 2010. The Consultation of Investment in Health Promotion (CIHP) was contracted to carry out the study for the qualitative component.

The objective of the qualitative research was to gather supplement information to fill in some information gaps which could not be explained with quantitative data. For defining the scope and the focus of the qualitative component, the research team carried out a desk review of existing domestic violence research to identify the information gap, reviewed feedback from the field workers of the quantitative component, and discussed possible areas and topics for further investigation.

Consequently it was agreed that the qualitative study would seek to contextualize the violence and learn the associated images and roles of men and women in the context of conflicts and violence, to provide better understanding of the perceptions about the violence by community members and authorities, perceived causes of violence, risk factors, how violence escalates, consequences of violence, and how family members, neighbours and other people may intervene in cases of violence. Another purpose was to validate findings from the quantitative component.

Lesson: Be very clear about what you want to get out of the qualitative component. Information from data collection such as Focus Group Discussions and In-depth interviews should generate supplement information that could not be gathered from the quantitative component.

Lesson: Inclusion of the qualitative component can provide valuable information from women in terms of their experience as well as men and officials of the local authorities and other agencies that could not be generated from the quantitative component.

Preparation of questions and survey tools

Based on the above-mentioned specific objectives of the qualitative component, the following categories of people were identified to take part in the research:

- Women survivors of violence
- Village leaders, chairs and vice-chair of the Communist Party, police officers, and officers from the Women's Union and a Health Care Provider at the local level

- Women from the community
- Men from the community.

The interview guidelines were developed based on the questions from the study protocol and inputs from the international consultant and the relevant colleagues from the GSO and the UN. The research tools (e.g. guidelines for interviewing women suffering from domestic violence, guidelines for men in community, etc) were tested in Bo De Commune, Long Bien District, Ha Noi on 6 April 2010, completing 5 interviews with women suffering from domestic violence, interviews with 1 man and 1 local leader, and two focus group discussions (1 with women and 1 with men). Based on the results and feedback from the pilot test, the questions and guidelines were fine-tuned and finalized.

Selecting the research sites and the participants

The research team discussed how to select officials and women and men at the community level to participate in the qualitative component. The team discussed extensively especially on how to select women suffering from domestic violence. After analyzing different options and in consultation with the international consultant, it was decided to select and contact women participating in projects on domestic violence or receiving services to see if they could participate voluntarily. The option of going back to the quantitative component to identify and contact the respondents suffering from domestic violence was also discussed but not selected for ethical reasons and to maintain confidentiality of the study.

In terms of selecting sites, the research team discussed to select communes that did not participate in the quantitative component so that the safety of the women who participated in the quantitative component is not jeopardized. Three provinces of Ha Noi, Hue, and Ben Tre representing northern, central and southern Viet Nam were selected for the following reasons:

- Three main regions are included and the combination allows for a good representation of rural and urban areas
- Intervention projects for gender-based violence survivors were available in these provinces, which was extremely useful in identifying and selecting women who were suffering from violence for the interviews with minimum risk. Besides, these services would provide the necessary emotional support for women after the interview, when needed
- These projects were managed by the Ha Noi Health Service Department, the Huong Thuy Women's Union and the Ben Tre Department of Population and Family Planning. All of them had a good local network to mobilize necessary support for the study.

For the detailed composition of the interviewees in the qualitative component, please refer to the section on Qualitative Component of the National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam 2010.

Lesson: Identify and work with a partner who has local network on domestic violence prevention and control. This is useful in identifying relevant organizations working on domestic violence prevention and control which can collaborate when carrying out a study.

Lesson: Ensure application of ethical and safety consideration throughout the study.

Conducting field data collection and analyzing data

The field data collection was conducted during March-April 2010. The field data collection was completed by three teams, each composed of four senior researchers (including three members of the core research team) and one assistant researcher who had undergone specialized training. To ensure homogeneity in the application of the guidelines for interviewers and focus group facilitators, all researchers attended a one-day preparation workshop on 15 March 2010.

In total, five women survivors, five key informants (a staff member from the Women's Union, a health care provider, a policy officer, a village leader, a chair and vice-chair of the Communist Party), ten women and ten men from the community per province undergone in-depth interviews (IDIs), and two Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) for women and two FGDs for men in each province were conducted. The information from the IDIs and FGs were recorded and transcribed for thematic analysis. Based on the report outline, a coding table was created and text was coded using software called the ALASTI 5.0.

2.4 Report writing

Upon completion of the field data collection for the quantitative component in February 2010 and the qualitative component in April 2010 and the subsequent data processing step, preliminary results were ready for drafting a report. The General Statistics Office (GSO) organized an intensive writing workshop during 14-18 June 2010 in Ha Long City, Viet Nam to consolidate the results and to develop the first draft report in an environment where the participants could focus on report writing without any distractions from daily work.

The specific objectives of the workshop were to:

- Discuss and identify solutions for any issues that emerged in the previous stages
- Strengthen the capacity of the research team members in analytical report writing
- Document the process of the research and survey procedures adapted to Vietnam
- Provide an opportunity for all research team members to share their experiences, which could be shared with those working on domestic violence research in Viet Nam or in other countries
- Strengthen the team spirit among the research team members.

The participants included:

- A representative from GSO
- The International Consultant
- The National consultants
- A representative from WHO.

By the end of the workshop, the team produced:

- First draft report on national study on domestic violence against women in Viet Nam
- Executive summary of the report
- PowerPoint presentation for the executive summary.

The outputs of this workshop were used for the first consultative workshop.

Lesson: It is effective to bring together the research team to an intensive workshop to focus on reporting writing instead of each team working separately on different parts of the report. This allows the team to discuss and clarify any issues without delay.

2.5 Dissemination of results

Since domestic violence had been generally perceived as a sensitive topic, it had been envisaged that a sudden release of the data on domestic violence against women may create anxiety particularly among policy makers, and may provoke unfavourable reactions by some of the key stakeholders resulting in some negative effects on the future work. Therefore, the process of results dissemination was carefully planned and implemented involving the key stakeholders and promoting shared understanding on the study to avoid public backlash. The key steps included:

- Finalization of the draft report by incorporating inputs from the key colleagues involved
- Consultation meeting with the key stakeholders
- Pre-launch meeting to present the study
- Official launch of the study report.

Experiences from other countries were also studied in this process. There were also several ethical concerns that needed to be taken into consideration prior to the launch. The dissemination of the findings was a buy-in process to convince and collect support from key stakeholders.

Finalization of the draft report

After the writing workshop in Ha Long city, the writing team produced a draft report of the national study. Copies of the draft report were distributed to the technical advisory members for review prior to the closed consultative meeting. The draft report copies were treated as strictly confidential and they were sealed and hand-delivered to reviewers to prevent possible information leakage and to assure confidentiality of the findings.

Reviewers were those who were closely involved in this study, and who would be responsible to support the dissemination, communication, and utilization of the data after the official launch. Reviewers were asked to provide feedback, and raise questions regarding the study and its findings prior to the public view. This provided an opportunity for reviewers to discuss and anticipate issues that may arise during the release of the findings. Various issues were discussed to make sure that findings would be well received.

Lesson: Ensure technical inputs from the relevant experts to make the draft report as comprehensive as possible.

Lesson: Pay extra attention to handle draft reports to avoid information leakage so that the release of the findings is managed and done at the appropriate and planned timing.

Consultation with the key stakeholders

The first consultation workshop was organized on 24 June 2010 in Ha Noi, Viet Nam. The outputs of the writing workshop, the draft report, executive summary, and the draft PowerPoint presentation were presented. The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Promote better understanding on the study through introduction of the study objectives, methodology, sample and scope
- Collect comments to improve the draft report (in terms of outline, clarify of contents, recommendations, etc.) after presenting the preliminary key findings from the study
- Discuss and develop strategies to launch the study results in a most effective way, by anticipating concerns, questions, and responses from the public, and identifying strategies to address these anticipated concerns.

The participants of the workshop were technical experts and included:

- 9 representatives from GSO, (colleagues of the GSO involved in the Joint Programme, trainers and supervisors of the survey, sampling & IT experts)
- 2 representatives from the Ministry of Health
- 2 representatives from the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the State Management Agency for the Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control
- 2 representatives from the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, the State Management Agency for the Law on Gender Equality
- Representatives from the Ministry of Justice
- 2 representatives from the Viet Nam Women's Union
- 2 representatives from AECID
- 2 representatives from national NGOs
- 3 representatives from academic institutions
- 2 representatives from WHO
- 5 representatives from other UN agencies
- 2 simultaneous interpreters
- Other related stakeholders.

The consultation workshop highlighted some issues that needed to be addressed before the official launch:

- Some participants did not have a comprehensive understanding of the survey methodology, thus questioned the survey methodology as well as the credibility of the data
- There were questions related to the sampling technique and sample size questioning the national representation of the findings
- Some participants were concerned that this study excluded men from the picture
- There were some interests to see international data from similar surveys conducted in other countries
- There was a call for relevant agencies to be present at the launch in an attempt to address questions related to systems, mechanisms, and services in place to respond to domestic violence.

In general, it became clear at the workshop that many stakeholders did not fully understand the methodology of the study, which led to some misunderstanding and mistrust of the findings. The workshop identified the need to further enhance stakeholders' knowledge and understanding of

this study, as well as to be well-prepared to address these points at the official launch of the study.

Lesson: Organize a consultative meeting with the key stakeholders prior to the official launch to identify possible areas for backlash and to prepare strategies to address these points. At the same time, seek support from officials of the stakeholder institutions present at the consultative meeting to share information with their colleagues so that the key information is shared among the key members of the institutions prior to the official launch.

Pre-launch meeting to present the study on domestic violence against women in Viet Nam

Prior to the official launch of the study results, a half-day pre-launch meeting was organized on 16 September 2010 in Ha Noi, Viet Nam to explain about the study objectives, scope, and methodology, present the findings, and discuss and clarify any issues necessary for endorsing the findings. The meeting was co-chaired by the Deputy General Director of the General Statistics Office and a representative of the WHO Viet Nam.

The participants were representatives, directors of departments, decision makers and technical experts from the following institutions:

- Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism
- Ministry of Education and Training
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
- Ministry of Planning and Investment
- Ministry of Public Security
- General Statistics Office
- United Nations Vietnam.

The participants shared their comments and endorsed the report for the official launch. The pre-launch meeting was followed by a technical meeting in the afternoon to discuss the results of the morning meeting and to prepare for the official launch on 25 November 2010. The report was finalized and sent for printing during 1-7 November 2010.

Lesson: It is important to obtain support from the leadership and management of the relevant ministries and institutions prior to the official launch by clearly explaining about the study objectives, scope, and methodology, and the findings, and having an opportunity to clarify any issues.

Launch of the Report on International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, 25 November 2010

The official launch of the study was conducted on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November 2010 in Ha Noi, Viet Nam with participation of more than 200 colleagues representing the research team, government institutions, mass organizations,

UN agencies, donors, bi-lateral cooperation agencies, national and international NGOs, academic institutions, and media agencies.

The launch included the presentations on the introduction of the study in Viet Nam, explanations on methodologies and scope for the quantitative and qualitative components, the key findings, and recommendations for further research, followed by Q&A session. The agenda included presentations by the key duty bearers such as MOCST to provide feedback to the study to support the key findings and to share MOCST's view in responding to domestic violence. The launch also included a media briefing session.

The materials made available at the launch were as follows:

- Full report
- Summary report
- Factsheet
- Q&A
- Press Release
- Media kit for journalists
- CD/memory stick with soft copies of the report in both Vietnamese and English
- Booklet with addresses of services related to domestic violence
- Introduction to the link to the GSO website which has soft copies of the report in both Vietnamese and English.

With careful preparation for the Launch and with support from the One UN Communications Team, the launch was successful in disseminating the findings of the first national study on domestic violence against women in Viet Nam. The launch was featured in many media including newspaper, online news, and TV.

Lesson: It was important to have the representation as well as presentation time of the key line ministries such as the GSO and MOCST. This showed the ownership of the data by the government of Viet Nam. The ownership by the government also meant that the findings are credible and can be used for further work on prevention of domestic violence.

Lesson: It is important to provide clear explanation on the study methodology to prove credibility of results. There were many questions saying that the results may be high based on the study methodology, but the research team was able to present a strong case for the methodology.

Lesson: It is important to invite representatives of the interviewers' group to participate in the national launch of the study as a form of recognizing their work and contribution.

Lesson: It is important to arrange a separate briefing and Q&A session specifically for media so that they can receive comprehensive and accurate information to use in their articles even if they do not stay for the whole event. This can avoid possible misunderstanding and wrong reporting of the study findings.

Lesson: For effective dissemination of the findings to various groups, different communication forms should be applied such as video, radio programme, TV show, and interactive website.

Lesson: For wider dissemination of the findings, the launch at the central level may be followed by the launch in other major cities and provinces of the country. The launch should be followed-up with further dissemination and other related events to utilize the findings.

Lesson: The launch does not mark the end of the communication and advocacy. A strategy is needed to continuously disseminate and communicate the study findings to various stakeholders. It is important to continue addressing the questions of the data use, influence on policies and programmes, the extent that the recommendations were realized, and how to provoke thoughts of policy makers and general public about the consequences of the violence to the family, society, and the country to contribute to the elimination of domestic violence.

Lesson: The study produced rich data on the issue of violence against women in Viet Nam. It can help duty bearers and relevant colleagues to better understand the issue, and to better prevent and respond to violence against women. With this in mind, further analysis of the raw data is needed to draw out more information and knowledge from this study. Available data tells stories of women in Viet Nam, as well as the voice of those who experience violence. The report gives the highlights, but cannot give fuller stories of interviewees. As such, relevant agencies have the accountability to tell more stories of the women through conducting further analysis of the data, disseminating findings to different stakeholders and actors, and setting mechanisms and systems to prevent and respond to violence.

2.6 Feedback from the field workers

Immediately after the completion of the field data collection, it was decided to acknowledge and appreciate the contribution of the field workers, and to seek feedback from them to learn to what extent the preparation helped them in the field and how they addressed difficult situations, and to identify possible areas for improvements in the future. The letter of appreciation and a feedback questionnaire were developed by a few colleagues from the GSO and the UN who were involved in the survey process, and sent to all field workers. In total, 45 questionnaires were returned (8 are team leaders, 10 are editors, and 26 are team members, with one person not specifying her role in the survey).

Overall, the feedback showed that the training had been useful for the field workers in terms of having sufficient knowledge on domestic violence, asking questions in ways that are easily understood by respondents, completing the questionnaire, keeping confidentiality, and addressing unexpected interference. The field workers also expressed that the field data collection had proceeded well in terms of ensuring safety of respondents, safety of the field workers, and emotional well-being of the field workers. Logistical preparation and support was highly appreciated by the field workers. The feedback indicated that the study also had some impacts on the field workers in terms of their level of awareness and understanding on domestic violence issues. Throughout different occasions during the fieldwork, many participants expressed positive feedback about participating in the survey as they increased their awareness

on domestic violence and felt that they made contribution to the important work in raising awareness on domestic violence among the respondents.

Some voices from the field workers are shared below:

“Participating in the survey was an important change for me. From conducting the survey, I realized that domestic violence was a big issue for women.”

“I realized all cases of emotional violence are extremely painful though they do not leave visible injury or marks on a body like physical violence does. A pain in one’s heart is no less serious.”

Most field workers had the gap in terms of estimating the incidence of domestic violence in Viet Nam, having an original idea that domestic violence does not happen very often, but they learned that the level of incidence was very high or high in reality.

The feedback also identified areas for improvements. Feedback from different source identified the need to prepare the field workers better for dealing with depressing feelings after interviewing a woman suffering from domestic violence, as seen in a voice from a field worker below:

“I had an interview with a female teacher who told me that she had a harsh life and her teardrops kept falling down on her face and soon we began our conversation. The interview ended late but successfully. That night I could not sleep. In my mind, I still remembered the image of the woman who suffered from physical violence. Her husband even offended her dignity and spiritual well-being.”

In terms of maintaining the well-being of the field workers, some respondents commented that it was more difficult to maintain well-being of the field workers in some places such as mountainous areas due to long trip to get there and return and lack of clean water. In these cases, the fieldworkers suggested to have stronger support from collaborating local offices. These points for improvement should be considered and included in the future training of field workers.

Lesson: Send a letter of appreciation and a feedback questionnaire to the field workers immediately after the completion of the field data collection phase to recognize their important contribution and to learn about their experience from the field data collection to improve the survey in the future.

3. Impacts: From Data to Actions

The Joint Programme on Gender Equality in Viet Nam made significant achievements in promoting gender equality and addressing gender-based violence in Viet Nam. With support from the Joint Programme, the capacity of duty bearers have been strengthened to promote gender equality, and the government issued the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2011-2020, and the National Programme on Gender Equality 2011-2015. Line ministries then developed and issued the Ministerial Plan of Action on Gender Equality 2011-2015.

Increased evidence generated through various research conducted within the Joint Programme was utilized to advocate for developing new policies and interventions to address gender inequalities and gender-based violence. The findings from the National Study on Domestic Violence such as prevalence rate were used when developing key messages and communication materials for further awareness raising and advocacy. With advocacy backed up by evidence, there has been increased attention on domestic violence prevention by parliamentarians, communist party members, and leaders of relevant ministries and local authorities. In all advocacy events, leaders of the key government agencies played an active role such as a co-chair to enhance the advocacy efforts. Gender-based violence has been included in a number of policy, programme and guiding documents by the government. Intervention models on domestic violence prevention and response were developed based on the findings in selected provinces for nationwide application. The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism in collaboration with the General Statistics Office is planning to implement a repeat survey on domestic violence in 2015 to assess the progress in addressing domestic violence in Viet Nam.

In addition, the study made significant impacts on those who were directly involved in the study such as the interviewers and the respondents. Some voices from the field workers are shared below:

“The survey was very meaningful for women and for family happiness. Some women suffered from violence but had kept silence for many years until they shared their story for the first time in the survey. Violence should not be hidden or ignored. Women themselves need to recognize about gender equality. When we can promote awareness, we can gradually reduce violence in Viet Nam.”

“When interviews were completed, I myself felt stressed from seeing respondents crying a lot as they suffered from violence. After interviews, the interviewed women expressed their sincere thanks with smiles and they even wanted to invite us to their houses. This makes me think we made a small contribution to a long-term issue of domestic violence.”

Lesson: All advocacy events should be co-chaired by relevant lead government agencies with a view to increasing the government’s ownership of the data for further use. This can also contribute to having stronger influence over relevant national institutions to address domestic violence.

4. Conclusion and the Way Forward

4.1 Conclusion

While the completion of the study as well as dissemination of the study results was a huge way forward in addressing domestic violence against women in Viet Nam, the study is not an end in itself. There is no doubt that more needs to be done to end domestic violence against women so

that women, men, girls and boys can have a healthy life free from violence. This will contribute to the healthy development of Viet Nam.

The implementation of the study as well as dissemination of the results was a very meaningful first step in addressing domestic violence as it raised awareness of many people involved including the respondents, field workers, general public, policy makers, and colleagues from relevant organizations who learned about the survey and the key findings. The study also strengthened the capacity of officials and data collectors in carrying out a survey on domestic violence.

The study findings as well as the raw data should be further utilized by various partners in efforts to end violence against women in Viet Nam. Based on the lessons from this study, further research may be conducted to identify various factors or environments where women are more or less likely to suffer from domestic violence, or where women are more or less likely to seek support.

As Viet Nam strengthens their efforts in addressing domestic violence against women and gender-based violence, it is important to develop comprehensive and integrated policies and institutional frameworks that will enable Viet Nam to better respond to domestic violence and gender-based violence. This requires the strong leadership of the State Management Agency on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control, as well as strong collaboration among the relevant agencies in terms of implementing the laws, policies and programmes, monitoring the progress by regularly collecting evidence-based data, and evaluating results.

4.2 Way forward and next steps

This section provides a list of suggested steps that may be taken by different partners in Viet Nam to make further progress in addressing domestic violence against women, following the completion of the National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam. They can be mainly divided into categories of data utilization and capacity building as follows:

Data utilization:

- Discuss among the key stakeholders and develop a plan on how data should be utilized to enhance actions to address domestic violence and gender-based violence
- Conduct further analysis of the raw data to maximize the use of the available data collected
- Continue disseminating the study results at both central and local levels to advocate for using data to have improved policies and programmes for domestic violence
- MOCST, MOLISA, GSO and other relevant agencies to develop policy briefs and IEC materials for different target audience using the findings from the study
 - MOCST as Stage Managing Agency on DVL with GSO to further analyze and publish a set of data related to domestic violence against women to support development of improved programme to address domestic violence
 - MOLISA with GSO to develop a data package on violence against women to address wider gender-based violence issues
 - MOH with GSO to develop data package for health sector.

Capacity building:

- Strengthen the national capacity for interpreting data and using data for improved programming and policy development
- As a part to promote the study as well as to enhance understanding of this study, GSO and WHO should consider organizing a technical training on the WHO Multi-Country Study Methodology for those who are interested, particularly researchers, academia, and other development practitioners. This is also a strategy to strengthen national capacity on conducting research on violence, an area which is still limited in Viet Nam
- Discuss the timing and prepare for the 2nd National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam. The plan should include a clear communication and advocacy strategy for disseminating the results
- Advocate for securing national budget for the regular implementation of this study.

References

Labour Market Information Centre, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Government of Viet Nam (2009), *Viet Nam Employment Trends 2009*, Viet Nam

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Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (2010), *Millennium Development Goals 2010 National Report: Viet Nam 2/3 of the Way Achieving the Millennium Development Goals and Towards 2015*, Viet Nam

World Bank (2012), *Viet Nam Country Gender Assessment*, Viet Nam

General Statistics Office (2010), *“Keeping silent is dying” Results from the National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam*, Viet Nam

Annexes

Annex 1: List of resource materials

- Multi-Country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence. Facilitator’s Manual. Workshop for Training Fieldworkers. WHO, Revision 21 September 2007, Updated 6 November 2007 (http://www.who.int/gender/violence/who_multicountry_study/en/).
- Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence against Women. Geneva, Department of Gender and Women’s Health, Family and Community Health, World Health Organization, 2001 (http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2001/WHO_FCH_GWH_01.1.pdf).
- Researching Violence Against Women: A Practical Guide for Researchers and Activists, Elisberg and Heise, WHO and PATH, 2005 (http://www.path.org/publications/files/GBV_rvaw_complete.pdf).

Annex 2: List of the key stakeholders and the domestic violence study implementation calendar

Key stakeholders involved in the study:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Assembly, including the Committee on Social Affairs and the Department of Social Affairs from the National Assembly Office • Ministries, including the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), the Ministry of Health (MOH) departments including the Maternal and Child Health Department, the Administration for Medical Services, the General Administration for Population, the Health and Legislation Department, the Department of Planning and Finance and Preventive Medicine Department, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MOCST), the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), and the National Committee for the Advancement of Women (NCFAW) • Mass organizations including the Viet Nam Women’s Union, Center for Women and Development (CWD), the Viet Nam Youth Union, and the Viet Nam Farmers Union • All Participating UN Organizations of the Joint Programme on Gender Equality, especially the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, now UN Women), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the World Health Organization (WHO)

- National non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including the Centre for Studies and Applied Sciences in Gender-Family-Women and Adolescents (CSAGA), Consultation of Investment and Promotion (CIHP), the Centre for Creative Initiatives in Health and Population (CCIHP)
- The national institutions including the Institute for Social Development Studies (ISDS), the Institute for Family and Gender Studies (IFGS), and the Viet Nam Academy of Social Science (VASS)
- International NGOs, including Peace and Development (PYD), Oxfam, Save the Children, Action Aid, and the Population Council
- Embassies and bilateral cooperation organizations, including the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Swiss Embassy, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), the Embassy of Australia and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).

Dates	Events
2009	
19 March	Launch of the UN-GOV Joint Programme on Gender Equality
March	Planning for the DV Study started
29 June to 1 July	<p>Orientation Workshop</p> <p>This is the first time the survey was mentioned with outsiders about related steps of the research, all the research and survey tools from the WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence and discuss how to adapt them to the needs and reality of Viet Nam. Participants of this workshop were related research partners to ensure that all are working together towards the same objective and have the same understanding of quality, ethical and safety needs. The workshop also provided Provide the opportunity for all research members to share their experiences in Viet Nam and abroad working on domestic violence research and other research.</p>
28 September	GSO sent an official letter to related ministries and agencies (MOLISA, MOCST, MOP, WU, MOH) to request for nominating an official to participate in the National Survey Steering Committee
October	Recruitment of an International Consultant (Expert on DV and DV survey)
2 October	<p>Planning workshop</p> <p>To present the research methodology adapted survey tools as well as getting feedback or comments from related stake holders about the survey plan as well as the ethical issues in this sensitive survey. As commented by participants from this workshop, the fieldwork protocol then be change from interview at home as mentioned in the guideline of WHO to the communal places (as health centre or cultural house...). After the pilot test of the adapted</p>

	questionnaire in Ha Noi and Tien Giang in October 2009, the survey tools then to be shared with 2 MOLISA and MOCST to get more detail comments on the survey procedures.
October	Adaptation of the WHO Multi-Country Study Questionnaire
2 October	Sharing of a draft questionnaire with UN colleagues (comments due on 7 Oct)
6 October	GSO sent an official request to Ha Noi and Tien Giang for their support in pilot-testing the questionnaire in their provinces
3 rd /4 th week October	Pilot field test of the draft questionnaire
30 October	GSO sent an official letter to 63 PSOs to inform about the fieldwork preparation and to seek support in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - updating the list of selected Enumeration Areas (EAs) with households, eligible women in each selected EA - recruiting fieldworkers from the provincial level.
12 November	GSO issued an official survey plan to and sent it to 63 provinces, the provincial people's committee, and members of the National Steering Committee
28 November	Finalization of the Questionnaire
16-29 November	Training of Field Workers
23 November	GSO sent a document to the PSOs to request for fieldwork preparation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arranging for the interviews as detailed plans for each EAs in collaboration with the local offices - The local authority to send invitation letters to the targeted women to take part in the interview.
7 December 2009 - February 2010	Field Data Collection (Quantitative Survey)
2010	
10 February	Planning Workshop to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update about the quantitative field data collection and agreement on next steps - Agree on basis and timeframe for the qualitative research - Discuss funding needs and availability - Agree on weekly coordination mechanisms.
March – September	Data entry in March 2010 followed by clearance, processing and analysis up to September 2010
6 April	Pilot-testing of research tools for the qualitative component (5 In-depth Interviews with women suffering domestic violence, 1 IDI with a man, and 1 IDI with a local leader, and two focus group discussions (1 with women and another with men) in Bo De Commune, Long Bien District, Ha Noi
12-30 April	Field Data Collection (Qualitative Study) (Thai Binh, Hue, and Can Tho)

June-October	Drafting and finalizing the report
14-18 June	Report Writing Workshop (GSO, researchers, MOH, consultants, WHO, etc) in Ha Long, Quang Ninh: The 1 st draft of the national study was the output of this workshop
24 June	Consultations with key stakeholders to share preliminary findings and first draft of the report to receive feedback from the related stakeholders.
16 September	Pre-launch Meeting to present the study on DV in Ha Noi. Objectives: By the end of the consultative meetings, participants will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a clear understanding on the objectives, scope, methodologies of the National Study on Domestic Violence - Review the preliminary findings, discuss to clarify and endorse the findings - Make recommendations to develop a draft plan for disseminating the study findings.
25 November	Launch of the Report in Ha Noi
	Launch of the report at provincial levels