

## **Domestic Violence and the Modules to Preventing it in Vietnam**

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### **1. Overall situation**

Recent years, domestic violence has been published on mass media. This is one of the new thing in Vietnamese press in order to prevent a negative phenominal in society

Though, it is difficult to collect the statistic of this issue but according to the Ministry of Public security, every 2-3 days, there is one person who is killed which is related to domestic violence. In 2005, there was 14% number of homicide related to domestic violence ( Le Thi Quy, Đàng Vu Canh Linh,2007)

All most the case, violence happened by the husbands to their wives or from adults to children. The rest of the case, violence happened among family members, for example children to parents, cousins with each other, parent in law to daughter in law. There are many serious cases which local authority must involve; in general, women are slapped, punched, kicked or mistreated by their husband is considered as normal

These figures based on official document of authorities, on the basic of the publicity of cases have been handled therefore they are just like the tip of iceberg. In fact, due to its sensitivity, domestic violence is the least social issue to be published

### ***The connection among violence types***

Domestic violence includes different types for example physical violence, mental violence, and sexual violence. In Vietnamese society, it often appears by two types: visible violence and invisible violence. These types of violence in one way is shown in close relationship, in other way it is shown in dependent and separate from each other. This depends on each family context and the awareness and actions from family members. The concept of “invisible violence” is defined by author show that labor or economic violence which people can not realize its severity. Because of custom which creates the illogical labor division between men and women; Therefore, victim of domestic violence (mostly are women) silently suffer the whole their lives and society does not support them

### **2. Social work with prevention domestic violence**

In 2003, the first time, Research Center for Gender and Development (RCGAD), now it becomes The Institute for Gender and Development by the director ( INGAD), Prof. Ph.D Lê Thị Quý conducted an action research, established models to prevent domestic violence at Hanoi, Phutho and Thaibinh which is based on the following principles: *base on resource and initiatives of community, develop community to adress communitie's issue.*

After more than one year, in 2005, RCGAD conducted a evaluation research on evaluating intervention model at 3 provinces to find out difficulties, advantages, achievement, limitations, lessons learned and recommendation to duplicate models to other areas

The result of this research is reported at the National Assembly Committee on Social Affairs and it is one of the bases for Committee to compile Domestic Violence Prevention law. For example, the Law used "Reliable address" at community of the project side to apply on the law and develop to the whole country.

From 2007 -2011, RCGAD was conducting an intervention project of Domestic Violence Prevention as the second time at Thai Binh and Nam Dinh provinces follow principle :"*Base on community's initiatives, developing non domestic Violence Vietnamese villages*"

In particular, the pilot model is developed mainly by preventing principle. The project used all the available organizations at local community, establishing action network at commune, award, creating into a strong movement of domestic violence prevention at community. This includes:

- Local authority and local union in which Women Union, Farmer Union, Veterans are Core organization.
- Health and Education Department
- People: include men, women regardless of occupation, education, age, religion, politics. They are family members, relatives and neighbors.

### **3. The intervention project: 6 tools**

*Tool 1: To investigate Sociological survey on Domestic Violence at local level, to make a list of violence perpetrators, victims and their families*

The survey results are made public for local authorities and people and these are confirmed by them.

*Tool 2: To expand communication , to raise the awareness of women and people on family and domestic violence prevention*

Firstly, the project organized training courses for government staffs, social organizations, educational and medical personnel, and reconciliation groups, speakers and people including married women and men, those who often beat their wives, couples with high risk, and adolescences (hundreds of people took part in the training course), with the following topics:

- The issue of gender equality and domestic violence in Vietnam and in the world. The causes and consequences of domestic violence.

- The activities of the United Nations (UN), governments, the international women's movement and the progressive forces in preventing domestic violence. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).
- Propaganda and education on the law, value, ethic, and standard of Vietnam.
- The integration of propaganda against domestic violence into the programs and activities at local level such as neighborhood and village meeting, and mass organizations. Take the problem of domestic violence in the Village regulation and monitor the implementation of the Village regulation at local level.
- The responsibility of each person in family violence prevention

During this time, the project organized communication campaigns at local level by many different forms, for example: giving lectures; delivering flyers and handbooks to interpret law on gender equality and law on domestic violence prevention; writing for local radio station; hanging panels and poster in public places; showing video; organizing clubs and performances to call people to prevent domestic violence. By this way, the project generated a movement and new environment to change local people's perceptions on domestic violence.

*Tool 3: To build local intervention system to prevent domestic violence*

3.1. To establish Steering Committee to prevent domestic violence and other social evils

The Steering Committee consists of 5 people and they are assigned as follows: the Vice Chairman of the People's Committee as a head; the Chairman of the Women's Union as a deputy head; the Head of the Communal Police, the Secretary of the Youth Union and the Chairman of the Farmer's Union as members. The Committee will guide directly the activities of domestic violence prevention. Its location is on the communal/ward People's Committee and its activity schedule depends on local condition. The Committee has a network of members and collaborators at all villages and communes.

3.2. To establish "hot line"

Including children, neighbors and family with violence or anyone who detect violence. They can call over the phone or directly run to inform the news to the management board or the police.

3.3. To establish rapid intervention team

This team has 8 people: the police occupies team leader while judicial officials, the head of village, the members of the Women's Union, Youth, the Veteran's Union, the Farmer Union, conciliation officers are the team's members. The team works under the direct supervision of the management board.

When the incident occurred, the rapid intervention team will send people to intervene immediately

For severe cases :

Isolate immediately perpetrators away from victim with the strict supervision of the team. Take the victim to be treated soon. If a serious incident or repeated violations, the perpetrators are put in temporary detention and prosecuted before criminal court as proposed.

Subsequently, the perpetrators must be reviewed before local people and they are offered professional advice about family marriage, family responsibilities, and conflict with law in beating and maltreating others.

For mild cases :

Community-based counseling, education and reconciliation. We can use the reconciliation groups "women to women", "men to men" or advice to the couple. The perpetrators are forced to sign commitment to end violence behavior. Monitoring and supervision are at least 6 months.

3.4. To establish "trusted address" :

This is an initiative of the people of Thanh Ne town, Thai Binh province. Many people volunteered to use a chamber in their family for victims and their children who need temporary residences in their time of violence. The first time, these addresses were kept confidential and then Vu Lac's communal authorities, Thai Binh province decided to announce these addresses on local radio station, with the following content: *"Those who threaten or disrupt the reliable addresses will be arrested because of resisting officials on duty"*. At present, Thanh Ne town has 42 addresses ; Vu Lac has 35 addresses, Yen Tan (Nam Dinh) has 10 addresses, and Yen Hong (Nam Dinh) has 6 addresses. These addresses saved many victims from the local as well as other areas. The project provided blankets, mattresses, fans, material and medicine cabinet for these addresses. Currently, there is almost no victim in these addresses when domestic violence stop in local.

Protecting and treating victims at the local clinics are also conducted. Counseling and mediation officials help them recover psychology and mental health and these are useful for them and their children to have a quickly stable life in their home. If the couple continue to live together, there will have supervision from mediation group at least 1 year to prevent violence. This is done according to the principle "

*Tool 4: To establish the consultation and mediation groups*

The consultation and mediation groups are reputable with educational attainment in the local. There are time to separate the husband and wife to have counseling, sometimes, facilitating the dialog couple and counselling them. The Board's members are responsible for communication.

Mediation officers are trained on the content of domestic violence prevention and operational skills. They are able to advise on marriage, family at local level. Basically, the groups are operating according to voluntary spirit. To support victims, they mobilize the local people's participation such as members in family, relatives, the victims' friends, and neighbors.

*Tool 5: Build the Happy Family Clubs, without domestic violence and small groups organizing activities near each other*

The project facilitated men to participate in the club's activities, especially perpetrators. Thanh Ne town had the club "The men love wives" which involve many men. Each club has from 30 to 40 people, with the diversity activities such as material reading, cultural performance activities, and the experience sharing of life stories. By that way, the women's clubs built happy families including the victims and those who are not victims. They helped each other to prevent domestic violence and participated in propaganda for others.

Besides, people also establish clubs including both men and women with a variety of topics, integrated anti-domestic violence.

*Tool 6 : The drama/ stage of family violence*

Organize cultural performances in the communication campaigns by the creation of local people on the subject of domestic violence. Hold the festival of competition to learn about knowledge. Print out handbooks composed by the local and disseminate people living in other areas.

These forms has profound effects and they are easy to understand and remember for people and encourage them to actively participate in domestic violence prevention at local level.

## **4. EFFECT OF MODEL**

### ***4.1. Effect of activities – based on the side of benefited objects***

It can be said that probably people who reach and take part in activity model could be benefited by outcomes of project with different levels although their position and role maybe not the same. They are victim such as women, children, men, who cause violence, family, union, authority, community. Here, we analyse level and sphere of benefit from project to each group.

#### ***4.1.1. Union and authority groups.***

Awareness changing is the first point that is accepted in the project areas. This change includes new awareness about domestic violence, terms, domestic violence determination methods, expression level of domestic violence and its harm to individuals, family and society. It also helps local authority aware their responsibilities and management method into this issues. Authorities and unions are very first ones meet and

manage project so obviously they are the first ones who benefit from project as well. Training courses into the first step of project focus on enhance knowledge and skills for team leader and key persons of project. Local officers from provinces recognize that project has helped them solve “hot issues” at their local and made facility for them to operate other social and economic programs

By participating into project, reputation of authority is increased as well as social security, healthy lifestyle culture are ensured at the zone they are in charge of. According to the report from Thanh Ne Town, Vu Lac District, Thai Binh province, here they are reduced about 85%-90% domestic violence cases, ended 100% domestic violence cases with severe injury. Yen Tan ended around 96% domestic violence cases, now just several slight arguments.

#### ***4.1.2. Changing awareness and behavior of community***

Today, at the project areas, local people deeply understand knowledge about domestic violence and domestic violence prevention. We can prove this statement through media such as press, television and so on. Awareness of women and children group about domestic violence is wide and clearly therefore their action to prevent domestic violence is also aggressive and more professional.

During project, every family discusses about gender equality and domestic violence prevention. Each family has member work at several unions so they continuously adapt information. Beside that, leaflets, posters, loudspeaker are useful as well. Although they have heard news many times but still thought those news are useful and needed to discuss deeply. They understand their charge have got to end domestic violence and don't ignore as before.

Local people understand that original reason of domestic violence is gender inequality that causes domestic violence becomes more serious. Both gender inequality and domestic violence drive humankind to poverty and broken family. They request to expand media program due to it is fit for plenty of ages, especially adolescent.

Victims of domestic violence are not the ones who approach project firstly but they are benefited at highest level. They are wives, children, elderly, even some kind of men who are victim of mental violence. However, women and children is the most pitiful group. Many women when meeting with project officers they smiling brightly while two tears flowing profusely. They express their thank to project officers. In the past, they just kept the pain themselves and were not protected by others. Most of them were lack of information, they did not aware about their rights partly because they wanted to reserve their family honor. However, because of this, it more and more stimulated violent behavior of their husband. Nowadays, both authority and community stand for their rights, it meant they are protected and their life are better.

#### ***4.1.4. Perpetrator groups – From criminal to active members who communicate to end domestic violence***

The change of perpetrator is expressed on many different levels. In some local of project, some authorities hit their wife before. However, when project has come, they confessed and changed the behavior. Otherwise, right at the office, their board director also strikes handling mis conduct too.

For perpetrator who are normal people, their changing process is lower. Team leader mobilized them participate into life activities of union or club. For the first times, some perpetrator was shame and did not attend but gradually they have taken part in regularly. Because if they don't participate they will feel lonely. Many perpetrators after stopping domestic violence have realized that home atmosphere become more warm, their wife also love and take good care to them more, home economic becomes better especially their children feel more close with the family. They have volunteered to join communication team, shared their story on television to audiences.

#### ***4.2 Effects of activities– based on the side of project officers***

Project officers also benefit from project because it is a chance for them to apply theories into reality. They are learnt from local people that helps them strongly believe in their being work that to build better life for themselves as well as people around them.

#### **Conclusion:**

Project made a premier echo in Vietnam about carrying out gender equality and domestic violence prevention. Although there are some difficulties exist but Institute for Gender and Development still pursue real gender equality goal for women and fair for everybody.

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