



Report

Report on the gender communication campaign in Vietnam

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List of abbreviations

CIAT	Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
SAPLING	Sustainable Animal Productivity for Livelihoods, Nutrition, and Gender Inclusion
TCA	Thăng Creative Agency
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VWA	Vietnam Women's Academy
VASS	Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences
WP	Work Package
WEF	World Economic Forum
WELI	Women Empowerment in livestock Index
WELBI	Women's Empowerment in Livestock Business Index

Background

The CGIAR Research Initiative on [Sustainable Animal Productivity for Livelihoods, Nutrition and Gender Inclusion \(SAPLING\)](#) in Vietnam focuses on the pig and beef value chains to package and scale up tried and tested technical innovations (in animal health, genetics and feed) and socio-institutional innovations (e.g. policies, gender and youth-based disadvantage and market systems). SAPLING aims to improve women's and youth's livestock productivity, livelihoods and nutrition and reduce negative impacts on climate and the environment. Work package 3 (WP3) of SAPLING in Vietnam aims to increase economic and decision-making power for ethnic minority women by addressing local norms that discourage women from engaging in some roles and benefits in livestock.

In 2023, the SAPLING gender team cooperated with experts from the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS) to conduct qualitative fieldwork in Mai Son District, exploring the main social (with a focus on ethnicity) and gender norms that hindered women's involvement in livestock production. Based on the findings of gender norms, the gender SAPLING team developed key gender communication messages to change awareness and behaviour of gender inequality in livestock production. Then, the Thang Long Creative Agency (TCA) team validated the identified gender messages and established the best communication approaches for a strategy on social behaviour change communication (SBCC).

Together with the SAPLING gender and TCA teams, the Vietnam Women's Academy (VWA) developed and implemented a communication campaign based on the recommendation for the SBCC suggested by TCA. The communication messages were then finalized, respecting the rights mentioned in the Law of Gender Equality (2006). The campaign promotes women's empowerment in the livestock sector and contributes to consolidating the achievements of interventions from other SAPLING work packages.

Introduction

Vietnam has achieved a lot in gender equality. It is one of the countries that has eliminated the gender gap fastest in the past 20 years and contributed to improving the status of women (WEF 2024; Australian Aid et al. 2021; UN Women 2021). However, some inequalities still occur: The participation of women in organizations and social management structures is still limited, the income gap between men and women in the same job still exists and the opportunity to access high-quality jobs for women is lower than that of men (Australian Aid et al. 2021; UN Women 2021; Dung et al. 2020).

For ethnic minority communities in particular, who live in high mountain areas, the level of enjoyment of social services is still limited. There are gender stereotypes and prejudices in the concept of the role and position of women. Many women depend on men and are limited in their decision-making. Many women are not allowed to own property and are not free to decide on marriage (UN Women 2021). According to the 2023 report by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, the percentage of women in the northern mountainous region of Vietnam who have their names on certificates for residential land, agricultural land and non-agricultural land is 62%, but for other types of land, it is only 17%. Among them, the percentage of women in rural areas engaged in agriculture is as high as 80% and even higher in ethnic minorities.

In Vietnam, the household economy plays a significant role in socio-economic development, with more than 60% of the population living in rural areas (Australian Aid et al. 2021; UN Women 2021). In ethnic minority areas, households mainly rely on cultivation and livestock, so raising animals is important to the household economy (UN Women 2021; Dung et al. 2020). However, gender inequality, gender stereotypes and prejudices have become barriers that prevent ethnic minority women from fully promoting their capacities and roles.

The behaviour change communication campaign supported the capacity of women, particularly among the Mong and Thai people, to engage in, make decisions on, and benefit from pig and beef value chains. The campaign provided basic knowledge about gender issues and gender equality in livestock farming for women and men farmers in villages. Through diverse, rich and attractive forms of communication, the campaign transferred gender messages to enhance equitable attitudes and behaviours in daily life, particularly in livestock farming.

This report shows how communication activities were carried out among the target farmers in the communes of Chieng Chung, Chieng Luong, Hat Lot and Muong Bon in Mai Son District, Son La Province. The report has four components: 1) Planning a communication campaign; 2) producing communication products/tools; 3) testing tools; and 4) implementing direct communication sessions.

Planning the communication campaign

A communication campaign was planned to raise awareness on gender equality in livestock and enhance women's empowerment in the four communes. Activities were planned to promote women's autonomy and self-determination in the livestock sector and life in general.

The communication content focused on providing new perspectives and understanding on gender relations, removing barriers and gender stereotypes, and simultaneously encouraging women's participation in life decisions, especially in production activities. Another important goal was to promote the recognition of the role of women in family economic development, especially in the livestock sector, and to promote gender equity and non-discrimination practices.

It is worth noting that the communication activities targeted both women and men. Men were mobilized to improve gender norms and relations in the locality.

The gender communication messages were:

- Message 1: Women have the ability to generate income and make effective and wise economic decisions.

- Message 2: Women and men can both be strong and make decisions together for the family.
- Message 3: Women are good breeders and can make decisions about livestock management.
- Message 4: Women and men can both participate in training to improve knowledge and share it with other family members.
- Message 5: Career has no gender. Women can be veterinarians, business owners or cattle traders, or join any other career they want.
- Message 6: Husband and wife should listen to and respect each other's opinions; anyone can give informed opinions.
- Message 7: Both men and women have the right to own land and property. This benefits the family and society.

The VWA team suggested targeting women and men who raised livestock and were in the labour age. If the communication campaign only attracted the participation of the elderly, it would be almost meaningless. One optimal solution for mobilizing the participation of those in the labour age was to give the farmers a small allowance when they attended the communication campaign¹.

The campaign included direct and indirect communication activities. For direct communication, the team met farmers in person, interacted with them and held discussions with them in the villages, while indirect communication was done through the loudspeaker systems in the villages or social media networks. The products and communication tools outlined included presentations, quizzes, poems, leaflets, banners, standees and videos.

The duration of the direct communication session in the villages was calculated to be two hours. Meanwhile, the indirect communication was extended for one month after the direct communication took place.

Producing communication products/tools

Poems

Poems vividly and easily depict messages to be conveyed to the community. In production and daily life, people often use poetry to remember messages and convey them to each other. However, sometimes, poems contain negative messages about gender, such as 'When the husband is angry, the wife should say less/When the rice is boiling, turn down the heat, how can it burn?'; 'Men are as shallow as a well/Women are as deep as a betel box'; 'A man at thirty is still young, a woman at thirty is getting old'; and 'A man with a wide mouth is noble/A woman with a wide mouth ruins the family'.

Therefore, composing and communicating poems with positive messages and breaking down gender stereotypes will have a long-term socializing effect on gender. Seven communication messages on gender equality were expressed in seven poems. Each poem focuses on a specific message that the project is aiming at (Table 1).

¹. A day's work for local workers is 200,000 Vietnamese dong (around 8 USD). For participating in a communication session for two hours, each farmer was given VND 50,000 (around 1.5 USD).

Table 1: Poems used in the communication campaign

	Poems in Vietnamese	English translation of poems
Message 1 Women have the ability to generate income and make effective and wise economic decisions.	Phụ nữ đâu chỉ ở nhà Phụ nữ đâu chỉ ở nhà Quanh quần trong bếp, với là quét sân Chăn nuôi lãi gấp nhiều lần Thu nhập rất ổn, thêm phần ấm no *** Việc nhà chồng, vợ cùng lo, Quyết định kinh tế em đâu nề hà Khôn ngoan ích nước, lợi nhà Chăn nuôi hiệu quả thật là mừng vui...	Women are not only in the houses Women are not only in the house Hovering around the kitchen, sweeping the yard Raising livestock is profitable many times over A very stable income and warm prosperity. *** Household matters are the business of both husband and wife, Economic decisions, I would not shy away from making Being educated is good for the country, good for the family Farming livestock effectively truly brings great joy...
Message 2 Women and men can both be strong and make decisions together for the family.	Chúng ta cùng mạnh mẽ Chúng mình mạnh mẽ như nhau, Cho tới bạc đầu vẫn gắn bó thôi! Công việc bàn bạc cho xuôi, Người nêu ý tưởng, người tìm hướng đi *** Bình đẳng, phát triển là gì? Cùng nhau mạnh mẽ, cùng nhau đồng lòng Em ra quyết định, anh thông Chăn nuôi phát triển, cộng đồng đi lên...	We are strong together We are equally strong, Until we are old and gray, we shall stick together! Working together to solve our problems smoothly, One gives ideas, the other finds a direction. *** Equality and development, what is it? Being strong together, being united I make a decision, you evaluate it Livestock farming will never take a step back...
Message 3 Women are good breeders and can make decisions about livestock management.	Người ra quyết định quản lý vật nuôi Em đâu chỉ giỏi chăn nuôi, Em còn là người thu xếp thông minh Chăm lo hạnh phúc gia đình, Gia đình êm ấm, chúng mình dựng xây *** Phát triển kinh tế hàng ngày Chăm chỉ tích lũy, tuổi già thành thói	Decision-maker for livestock management I am not only good at raising livestock, I am also a smart planner Nurturing our family's happiness, A warm family, we build up together. *** Our finances improve day by day Save diligently for a leisurely retirement

	Còn về quản lý vật nuôi Em chính là người quyết định khôn ngoan...	As for livestock management I can be a wise decision-maker...
Message 4 Women and men can both participate in training to improve knowledge and share it with other family members.	Người chia sẻ kiến thức Phụ nữ nam giới như nhau, Tham gia tập huấn, thêm nhiều điều hay Chăm chỉ học tập mỗi ngày, Kiến thức sẽ dày theo cấp số nhân... *** Nhớ chia sẻ với người thân, Anh em, chú bác xa gần đều hay Kinh nghiệm tích lũy bao ngày, Chăn nuôi thắng lợi, thêm đầy hầu bao.	One who shares knowledge Men and women are similar, Participating in training, learning many useful things By studying hard every day, Our knowledge will increase exponentially... *** Remembering to share with those close to us, Brothers and uncles, near and far With experience accumulated over many years, Successful livestock farming, brings forth a full wallet.
Message 5 Career has no gender. Women can be veterinarians, business owners or cattle traders, or join any other career they want.	Phụ nữ hãy làm gì phụ nữ muốn Em làm bất cứ nghề gì, Nếu em yêu thích, chẳng hề đắn đo Chăn nuôi, buôn bán lợn, bò Kinh doanh, bác sĩ hay làm Airline *** Nghề nghiệp đâu của riêng ai Tự do phát triển, nay mai mạnh giàu Điều này em nhớ khắc sâu Làm nghề em muốn, làm điều em mong...	Women should do what women want You can do any job, If you love it, do not hesitate Rearing pigs, trading cows Business, medicine or aviation. *** A career does not belong to anyone Develop freely, tomorrow you may be rich You shall remember this dearly Do the job you want; do the things you dream of...
Message 6 Husband and wife should listen to and respect each other's opinions; anyone can give informed opinions.	Lắng nghe và thấu hiểu Vợ chồng tương trợ lẫn nhau, Tôn trọng ý kiến, cùng nhau luận bàn Tính em vốn chẳng khô khan, Mong anh thủ thỉ, quan tâm mỗi ngày *** Chăn nuôi quan trọng lắm thay, Ý kiến sáng suốt chúng mình đưa ra Đừng khinh thân phận đàn bà,	Listening and understanding Husband and wife support each other, Respect both opinions and discuss together My nature is truly not dry, I hope you will whisper with care every day. *** Livestock farming is of the utmost importance, Wise ideas we shall put forth Do not look down on women,

	Em nhắc lại là - bình đẳng như nhau!	I repeat - we are equal!
Message 7 Both men and women have the right to own land and property. This benefits the family and society.	Bình đẳng ích nước, lợi nhà Nam giới, phụ nữ có quyền, Bình đẳng, phát triển, mọi miền ấm no Đất đai, nhà cửa, lợn, bò Đều chung sở hữu của mình, của em *** Bình đẳng lợi ích nhiều bên Gia đình, xã hội, cả em, và mình Sơn La phong cảnh hữu tình Kinh tế phát triển, tiến lên mạnh giàu...	Equality benefits the country, the family Men and women have rights, Equality, development, prosperity for every region Land, homes, pigs, cows All are jointly owned by me, by you. *** Equality benefits many parties. Family, society, and you, and me Son La scene is beautiful A rapidly developing economy, growing strong and rich...

These poems were printed and distributed on leaflets, read during communication sessions and formatted into cheerful cards sent to the Zalo groups. In addition, the VWA group asked the women's unions, farmers associations and youth unions at the commune and village levels to cooperate in sharing the poems. They read these poems in meetings and while interacting directly with local people. The poems can also be used in suitable modules to teach gender and development students in the future (see *Appendix 1*).

Leaflets, standees and banners

The leaflet design was based on the project's target groups and the message that WP3 wants to convey. The images of a man and a woman, pigs and cows on orange-coloured paper were used to represent gender equality and prevention of gender-based violence. The bright colours and use of relatable images relayed messages of gender equality and hope.

Initially, the campaign was expected to distribute a batch of 800 leaflets but more will be handed out at other commune events in coordination with the women's unions, farmers' associations and local youth unions. It is crucial to ensure that the number of people accessing leaflets and communication messages is not limited to the number of direct participants (see *Appendix 2, 3*).

Video clips

The video clips covered each of the seven messages as engaging lessons that were concise, fun, and easy to understand. In addition, records from the direct communication sessions were used to make qualitative video clips with gender messages. The video clips will be sent to local officials and farmer groups through the Zalo network, a popular social media platform in Vietnam. This way, farmers, both men and women, have access to this knowledge even after the campaign ends.

The first video, lasting 02 minutes and 22 seconds, has been produced. It synthesizes the seven messages, visualized through the images and activities of local people. Seven video clips, one for each of the messages, will be extracted from the full video of direct communication activities in the villages. All the communication products will be sent to the women and men farmers via Zalo groups (see *Appendix 4*).

Gender scientists show evidence that women are good and skillful livestock breeders, often taking care of livestock and participating in different aspects of the value chain, but are limited in property ownership or decision-making rights. Within families, the husbands make the final decisions when it comes to valuable livestock such as cattle, buffaloes or pigs (Galiè et al. 2022). Women only have the power to sell poultry. This division of roles is mostly maintained in families where the spouses are 40 or older. In some younger families, where the wife is more educated than the previous

generation, she actively participates in the family's livestock activities (Dung et al. 2020; Galiè et al. 2022).

Women's empowerment, significantly enhancing women's economic empowerment, aims to increase confidence and autonomy and promote women's participation and decision-making in the livestock sector (Galiè et al. 2022). This helps women to participate more actively and effectively, be recognized more and take better control of family economic activities, which is needed to affirm positive gender roles in the communities and society (ibid.).

Raising awareness among people in general about the roles and positions of women in livestock farming (in particular) and the household economy is vital. Local people need to understand gender and gender roles clearly. From there, families and communities can gradually change harmful and damaging gender norms that are no longer suitable for gender equality. Empowering women in livestock farming increases economic power and decision-making rights in families, helping to progress toward equal, prosperous and sustainable societies.

Initial findings from the SAPLING qualitative research on gender norms show that Thai and Mong communities maintain many gender norms that regulate the roles of women and men in families and communities. These norms have been deeply rooted in their lives for many generations. However, many gender norms are no longer appropriate, and some are even harmful, preventing women and men from fully developing their potential. Today, the maintenance of traditional norms further increases the burden of housework on women, prevents them from making effective decisions in animal husbandry and limits their participation in community activities. Many women still do not have the necessary autonomy or voice in the common choices of the family and community.

Testing the tools in villages

On 19–21 August 2024, the VWA team organized a field trip in Mai Son, Son La, with the ILRI team. Their objective was to understand the issues (terrain, traffic, time, weather, local activities, customs, typical local practices etc.) in the area better and discuss them with local officials. The local SAPLING project coordinator actively supported the VWA team during this trip. The team aimed to:

- 1) Test leaflets and poems;
- 2) Learn about the village loudspeaker system;
- 3) Discuss the plan to implement direct communication with local officials;
- 4) Observe the travel area and the community meeting house to visualize the layout for the communication meeting;
- 5) Learn about the weather and arrange a suitable schedule for the communication session; and
- 6) Assess access to the internet and use of selected social media platforms².

The gender communication leaflets were tested in the village event organized by WP4³. The work package 3 leaflets were integrated into the competitions on livestock knowledge.

The VWA team tested the communication tools in five villages: Me village and Rung Thong (in Muong Bon Commune), Na Sy (in Hat Lot Commune), Keo Lom (in Chieng Luong Commune) and Khoa (in Chieng Chung Commune).

The team undertook the following activities in the field:

² Objective 6 was particularly important because the team was considering sharing the messages through video clips, poems and messages to Zalo groups and local social networking sites after the direct communication activities.

³ The events were organized from 15 to 23 August 2024 in the eight core SAPLING villages: May, Khoa, Rung Thong, Cu Nghe, Me, Na Sy, Oi and Mon. Two farmer teams in each village participated in a competition, answering questions on production, processing and preservation of animal feed; barn preparation, sanitation and disease prevention; fertilizer production for grass and corn biomass; breeding techniques (including natural breeding and artificial insemination of cattle and pigs); and gender equality. Participants attending the events were local authorities, women's union, farmer associations and service providers.

- Evaluated the area to gauge access to the villages during the rainy season;
- Understood the status of the local loudspeaker system from the centre of communes to villages;
- Tested communication leaflets to determine whether the women and men farmers understood the messages, then edited the leaflets;
- Observed and evaluated the participation of local people, disaggregated by gender, during the village events;
- Explored preferred forms of communication in the area;
- Estimated the percentage of people accessing the internet and using social networks;
- Evaluated the possibilities of mobilizing target audiences for gender communication sessions; and
- Established a collaborator network with the women's unions at district and commune levels.

A quick survey in the area showed that people did not fully understand the content of the leaflets yet this was one of the important tools for summarizing the communication information. Despite all the participants reading and taking home the leaflets, when asked about first impressions, the local people said they wanted to understand the content better, and expected the leaflets to be printed in colour instead of black and white.

The loudspeaker systems in the four communes no longer worked yet it had been expected to be useful for spreading messages widely. In most areas, there was no funding to maintain the loudspeaker system. Furthermore, local officials said the number of loudspeakers left was small.

In the four project communes, the ratio of people using smartphones to access the internet and social media is very high, fluctuating between 65% and 80% for people under 50 years old. Thus, information shared and exchanged in the villages' Zalo chat group is very popular. This internet access was achieved largely due to the Vietnamese government's determination to implement the national digital transformation project, helping people to gradually connect to the internet and e-commerce. This is a great advantage that the communication implementation team recognized during the tool test. The people not accessing the internet are those over 55 or who live in high mountain areas with no Wi-Fi access. These persons will access the gender messages at direct communication sessions or at regular women's union or farmers' association meetings.

The researchers specified the proportion of people participating in community activities in each survey area as follows:

- For Thai people: The proportion of people participating in community activities was specified according to the activity (village meetings, women's association activities, farmers' association activities or knowledge training). Men and women actively participated in local community activities but men attended more than women.
- For the Mong ethnic group: Most community activities were attended by men. Women's participation requires specific intervention from social organizations or permission from men in the family. Women of working age often do not participate in voluntary community activities.

Thus, men's participation in Thai and Hmong ethnic communities is higher than that of women. This is in line with local gender norms, according to which community roles are the men's domain and reproductive roles are the women's domain. The communication campaign needed to reach both women and men though, with a target of 50–70% community participation.

Due to the difficulties in achieving the targeted participation rate for local community activities, it was considered necessary to engage local social organization officials in mobilizing people according to the desired age and gender ratio. To this end, the project implementation team

worked with the following local officials: The commune chairman gave general direction, the women's union was responsible for mobilizing 50% of women and the farmers' association was responsible for mobilizing 50% of men to participate in communication classes. The establishment of a network of collaborators received positive feedback from the locality.

From the village sharing events, the survey team drew the following key points related to the implementation of WP3:

- Without specific intervention, the number of people attending the training course will not be guaranteed quantity and quality. Participants were not evenly divided between men and women. Also, they were mainly people outside of working age (the elderly and children), who usually have more time and are less involved in labour duties. Close coordination with local social organizations and mechanisms is needed to ensure the desired number and ratio of participants.
- Communication sessions should be combined with cultural and artistic activities. The VWA group's experience working directly with people shows that combining communication sessions with artistic performances will attract more people, and people will be more excited and comfortable interacting with officials from other places. They must also promote the role of local people in organizing events.
- Communication sessions should last a maximum of two hours, with the communication message and its relevance being optimally simplified: easy to listen to, remember and understand (avoiding academic jargon).
- Communication implementation time needs to be synchronized with the working time of local people.

The biggest limitation is that some Mong ethnic villages are inaccessible by car or motorcycle during the rainy season; the only way to get there is to walk over slippery hills. The rainy season in Mai Son District lasts more than a month and in August, when the communication events were organized, the land had absorbed a lot of water, leading to fears of landslides. This year (2024) was particularly rainy in Vietnam and many natural disasters occurred in the northwest. To meet the criteria of including the right proportions of both Thai and Mong ethnic groups, the villages selected for communication sessions should be those involved in the WP1/WP4 as well as the Women Empowerment in livestock Index (WELI) and Women's Empowerment in Livestock Business Index (WELBI) baseline survey of WP3.

Quick interviews with women and men farmers revealed that gender roles are popular; men mainly undertake the production and community roles while the women undertake the reproductive role. Gender stereotypes have been deeply ingrained in the local culture for a long time. Wives must obey their husbands and abide by most of the decisions made by men. In community activities, except for the progressive women, the participants are mainly men, the elderly and children.

When the field team asked local people the reasons for the limited participation of women in community activities, most answered that women of working age, due to the nature of agriculture, tend to the livestock and crops all day. They often do not have time off when the weather is suitable for working. During bad weather, they do housework, spending little time on community activities. When working with the local women's unions, the team suggested that the training be held in the evening to encourage the participation of women. However, the response was that it was even more difficult for husbands to allow their wives to leave the house in the evening.

Implementation of communication activities

The VWA and ILRI teams discussed the feasibility of implementing direct communication activities during the rainy season. Based on the weather within the previous 15 days in Mai Son, they discussed the accessibility of villages by motorbike. They then selected nine villages for communication events—It Ho, Khoa, Keo Lom, Oi, Rung Thong, Me, Long Khoang, Cu Nghe and another three villages when there is an extra budget—after considering different priorities:

- Villages that have benefited from other WPs;
- Villages where the WELI/WELBI baseline survey was conducted;
- Villages with the target ethnic groups of WP3 (Thai and Mong ethnic minorities); and
- Locations within the SAPLING farmer group model.

Each communication session lasted a maximum of two hours, including question and answer activities, games with prizes and leaflet distribution. The targeted groups were women and men farmers, village vets, livestock service providers and traders at cultural houses with support from women's union officials. A video clip was recorded for each communication session.

The communication sessions started with the introduction of all the participants and the display of the seven messages included in the poems and leaflets.

- After training on the first two messages, facilitators presented typical examples of women who were good at doing business locally and nationally.
- After training on the third message, audience members participated in a game where they answered questions about the roles of women and men in animal husbandry.
- After training on the fourth message, there was another game called 'Do you agree or disagree?'. The facilitators discussed ideas about gender equality in education and training; for opinions that differed from the majority, the instructor invited participants to explain their views.
- After training on the fifth message, the participants played a game called 'Jobs/careers for women and men'. All classes were divided into three teams which answered these questions: 'What jobs/careers are suitable for women?' 'What jobs/careers are suitable for men?' 'What jobs/careers are suitable for both women and men?'. Each team had to write down as many jobs as they could think of and stick the notes on the boards. Afterwards, the facilitators led a discussion based on the responses.
- After training on the sixth and seventh messages, the facilitators invited a village representative to give a conclusion on the messages.

Farmers were allowed to ask the trainers questions about the information given during the training sessions. The trainer invited farmers to recite the poems distributed and the team did a quick assessment to collect feedback from the audience. The farmers could be asked to translate the poems into Thai and Mong languages (see Appendix 5 for the presentation used in the communication session).

Results of direct communication

The team organized communication to raise gender awareness among local people and officials in four communes: Muong Bon, Chieng Chung, Chien Luong and Hat Lot. Each communication session mobilized an average of 60 Thai and Mong people per village, including those who participated and benefited from other SAPLING work packages. The communication activities took place on 5–6 September and 12–13 November 2024. The total number of participants was 663, of which 296 were men (44,6%) and 367 were women (55,4%).

From 12–13 November 2024, the team organized communication sessions to raise gender awareness for local people and officials in three villages in Chieng Chung, Chien Luong and Hat Lot. The feedback was positive and some farmers and village officials hoped that the sessions would continue to be implemented in the area in the future.

Rapid assessment of the effectiveness of the communication sessions showed that women and men farmers participated enthusiastically in the activities. They found the messages and poems easy to understand and relatable. Moreover, they developed a deeper awareness of issues related to

gender equality in livestock farming and were determined to diversify their family livelihoods based on what they had learned. In addition, some women's union staff and village heads gave feedback on what they learned from the project's direct communication methods to apply to other local communication activities in the future.

Results of indirect communication

After the direct communication activities in the four communes of Hat Lot, Muong Bon, Chieng Chung and Chieng Luong in Mai Son District, Son La Province, in early September, the VWA team continued to implement indirect communication activities through farmer associations and women's unions. The communication products included a video (animation) conveying seven gender messages, 10 poems and seven short videos from the direct communication sessions held in the villages in September.

These communication products were sent to the leaders of the farmer associations and women's unions of the four project communes, Zalo groups of eight farmer groups and a Zalo group with 800 members of the Chan Henh project. Collaborators in branches of the women's unions and farmer associations continue to be responsible for forwarding these communication publications on their social media platforms, such as Zalo or Facebook. In particular, the poems and messages on gender equality were integrated into the activities of the women's unions. At the commune level, the women's unions were implementing the reproductive health care propaganda sessions under Project 8 of the Central Committee of the Vietnam Women's Union. As of now, women's unions in two communes, Muong Bon and Hat Lot have integrated Project 8 activities in six villages. The activities were elaborately staged and led by a facilitator.

Although the effects of indirect communication activities are not as clear as those of direct communication, they are a good way to continue to consolidate and convey messages about gender equality in livestock farming (including to people who participated in direct communication and those who have not had the opportunity to participate in direct communication). This method also continues to consolidate the sustainable effectiveness of the project. Because the communication products are transferred to local officials and people, the local women's unions in particular continue to use the communication products in combination with other propaganda content in meetings and activities.

Conclusion

In summary, the communication campaign has brought about positive results, changing people's perceptions of gender equality in livestock farming and promoting women's economic empowerment. Men are recognized as important agents of change and they actively participated in the communication campaign. Although the participation ratio did not reach the expected 50%, the participation of 44.6% of men in the entire communication campaign is a positive result that contributes to promoting positive changes in the community. It also contributes to the formation of a positive mindset about inclusive gender equality.

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Appendix

Table 2. Villages with interventions of WP1/WP4 and WP3 baseline surveys selected for the direct communication sessions

Commune	Village	Ethnicity	Interventions				WP3 baseline surveys	
			Animal health	Breed and genetics	Feed and forage	Business development (farmer group model)	WELI/WELBI survey	Gender norms study
Chieng Chung	It Ho	Mong					x	x
	May (*)	Thai	X	x		x		
	Khoa	Thai	X		x	x	x	x
Chieng Luong	Keo Lom	Mong and Thai					x	x
	Mon (*)		X		x	x		
	Oi	Thai	X		x	x		
Muong Bon	Rung Thong	Mong		x	x	x	x	x
	Me	Thai		x	x	x	x	
Hat Lot	Long Khoang	Thai and Kinh					x	x
	Cu Nghe	Thai		x	x	x	x	x
	Na Sy (*)	Thai	x	x	x	x		

(*) The communication activities in the villages of May, Mon and Na Sy were carried out later, after additional funding was approved.

Table 3. Participants attending the direct communication sessions in villages

N. order	Date	Commune	Village	Note
1.	5 September2024	Mường Bon	Mé (morning)	Total number of participants: 72 (including 27 men)
			Rừng Thông (afternoon)	Total number of participants: 50 (including 06 men)
2.		Hát Lót	Củ Nghè (morning)	Total number of participants: 41 (including 17 men)
			Lọng Khoang (afternoon)	Total number of participants: 49 (including 25 men)

N. order	Date	Commune	Village	Note
3.	6 September 2024	Chiềng Chung	It Hò (morning)	Total number of participants: 73 (including 31 men)
			Bản Khoa (afternoon)	Total number of participants: 80 (including 45 men)
4.		Chiềng Lương	Oi (morning)	Total number of participants: 72 (including 33 men)
			Kéo Lồm (afternoon)	Total number of participants: 81 (including 38 men)
5.	12 November	Chieng Chung	May	Total number of participants: 94 (including 53 men)
6.	12 November	Chieng Luong	Mon	Total number of participants: 21 (including 5 men)
7.	13 November	Hat Lot	Nasy	Total number of participants: 47 (including 16 men)

Table 4. Schedule for transferring the communication products through Zalo groups

N. order	Media content	Date	Recipients
1.	Media product package (7 clips, 1 animation clip, 10 poems)	21 October 2024	Women's unions and farmers' associations of four project communes
2.	Clip illustrating the 4 messages in general	22 October 2024	Eight farmer groups Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmers' associations
3.	Leaflet illustrating 7 communication messages	23 October 2024	Eight farmer groups Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmers' associations
4.	Message poem number 1	24 October 2024	Eight farmer groups Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmers' associations
5.	Video message 1	24 October 2024	Eight farmer groups Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmers' associations
6.	Message poem number 2	25 October 2024	Eight farmer groups

N. order	Media content	Date	Recipients
			Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmers' associations
7.	Video message 2	25 October 2024	Eight farmer groups Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmers' associations
8.	Message poem number 3	26 October 2024	Eight farmer groups Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmers' associations
9.	Video message 3	26 October 2024	Eight farmer groups Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmers' associations
10.	Message poem number 4	27 October 2024	Eight farmer groups Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmers' associations
11.	Video message 4	27 October 2024	Eight farmer groups Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmers' associations
12.	Message poem number 5	28 October 2024	Eight farmer groups Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmer's associations
13.	Video message 5	28 October 2024	Eight farmer groups Women's unions Farmers' associations
14.	Message poem number 6	29 October 2024	Eight farmer groups Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmers' associations
15.	Video message 6	29 October 2024	Eight farmer groups

N. order	Media content	Date	Recipients
			Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmers' associations
16.	Message poem number 7	30 October 2024	Eight farmer groups Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmers' associations
17.	Video message 7	30 October 2024	Eight farmer groups Goup Chăn Hênh Women's unions Farmers' associations

Leaflets

[Gender training material for livestock development in Mai Son District, Son La Province](#)

[Key gender insights from the CGIAR Initiative on Sustainable Animal Productivity for Livelihoods, Nutrition and Gender Inclusion](#)

Videos

[Transforming gender norms and empowering women in livestock farming](#)

[CGIAR empowers gender equality in agriculture in Vietnam](#)

Photos



Photo 1: Communication session in Na Sy Village (photo credit: Vietnam Women's Academy).



Photo 2: Communication session in Cu Nghe Village (photo credit: Vietnam Women's Academy).



Photo 3: Communication session in Long Khoang Village (photo credit: Vietnam Women's Academy).



Photo 4: Communication session in It Ho Village (photo credit: Vietnam Women's Academy).



Photo 5: Communication session in Rung Thong Village (photo credit: Vietnam Women's Academy).



The CGIAR Research Initiative on Sustainable Animal Productivity for Livelihoods, Nutrition and Gender Inclusion (SAPLING) is working in seven countries focusing on livestock value chains to package and scale out tried-and-tested, as well as new, innovations in livestock health, genetics, feed, and market systems. SAPLING aims to demonstrate that improvements in livestock productivity can offer a triple win: generating improved livelihoods and nutritional outcomes, contributing to women's empowerment, and reducing impacts on climate and the environment. Its seven focus countries are Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Nepal, Tanzania, Uganda and Vietnam.

It forms part of CGIAR's new Research Portfolio, which delivers science and innovation to transform food, land, and water systems during a climate crisis.

