

## Advocacy and Influencing Impact Reporting Tool – July 2018

### CARE Vietnam Nang Quyen Success

#### Success

CARE Vietnam's Nang Quyen – NQ (Women's Empowerment) project, funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, was implemented across in three provinces from 2013-2017. At the time of the project, sex work was illegal in Vietnam with the Department Social Vice Prevention (DSVP) under the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) responsible for policy matters relating to sex work. Through the project, CARE has promoted a rights-based approach and piloted a number of interventions which have resulted in **female sex workers having increased voice and opportunities to engage in dialogue directly with authorities.**

#### ***National Action Plan on Sex Work***

Most significantly, the partnership with the DSVP allowed female sex workers to share their stories and speak out about their issues/concerns in national level workshops and different dialogue at local levels. These helped ensure the inclusion of the issue of response to GBV as an action point in the **National Action Plan on Sex Work**, as one of three core activities in Part 3, Section 3 of the Plan: c) Develop and implement activities to prevent HIV and to prevent and respond to GBV against sex workers.

A target was set of, by 2020 that 50% of provinces should implement activities to prevent GBV against sex workers. And concretely, this included objectives to

- i) improve capacity of sex workers' self-help groups to do outreach to prevent GBV;
- ii) organize policy dialogue between self-help groups and policy makers at different levels; and
- iii) training and workshops for all stakeholders to improve responsibility to address GBV among sex workers (National Action Plan on Sex Work, p.9).

CARE Vietnam's Nang Quyen (Women's Empowerment) project was one of only three reference models in the National Action Plan on Prostitution Prevention and Control 2016 – 2020. It has been **proposed to replicate the model** in an initial 25 additional provinces under DSVP support.

#### ***Attitude change of DSVP:***

The partnership with DSVP allowed CARE to work with a strategic partner who influences policy change and attitudes of policy makers and implementers. The evaluation report and following workshop/ meetings organized by DSVP ( after project ended) showed that there is **significant change in their perception** toward sex work that recognizes a rights-based approach as central to address sex work issue while promoting do no harm and reduced GBV. A proposal for a law on sex work is being discussed, and DSVP has proposed it be called "Law on Sex work" instead of " Law on preventing and controlling sex work" and they organized technical consultant workshop to get inputs from NGO/INGOs and researchers on the approaches of the new law. It is also recognized that sex workers will be key stakeholders to be consulted during the process of developing the new law. When speaking with media, the DSVP director also confirmed this approach and expressed appreciation of CARE's NQ model.

#### ***Budget Approval to Support Sex Workers***

The Can Tho city authority has issued a **City's Resolution 09/NQ-HĐND** with **budget approval** for 3 years plan (2017-2020) at 3.5 billion Dong (US\$ 156,000 on sex work which uses an approach modelled on NQ to provide sex workers with different opportunities to social services. This includes the establishment of We are Women (WrW) clubs – a key NQ intervention – across the city to **promote dialogue between female sex workers and the authorities.**

## Contribution

**National Action Plan on Sex Work:** CARE's contribution in the effort was high. Although a number of organisations in Vietnam, such as Plan International, ISDS and CSAGA, have developed evidence on GBV against female sex workers, none of them had proven interventions to address the issue.

**CARE's contribution can also be measured by the fact that the sex worker self-help group model (We Are Women club) has been included as part of the National Action Plan on Sex Work.**

Our quarterly plan with DSVP in Quang Ninh, Can Tho and HoChiMinh city showed how we engaged DSVP at national and provincial levels in our activities. Their engagement helped establish buy in and ensured they were aware of our approach. Furthermore, other local DSVP have expressed interest in applying the WrW club model when they learnt about it at the NQ review workshop.

**Budget Approval to Support Sex Workers:** CARE's contribution in this success was medium. CARE worked closely with DSVP Can Tho to hand over the approach to them so they are confident to establish WrW club and to run the dialogue. However, it is the province who has their own direction to address the issue. What CARE provided was the way they can address it, the province then decided to allocate budget and pursue what they had learned.

## Potential Impact/Reach

**National Action Plan on Sex Work:** According the National Action Plan, **25 provinces under DSVP support will replicate the model.** NQ WrW clubs will be established in 25 provinces where female sex workers can meet and learn about GBV, share about their experiences then bring the cases to discuss with local authorities and service providers in the provinces. Each province has established 2 WrW club. Each club has 25 members then total 750 FSW have accessed to club activities, about 1/3 of them have also attended some dialogue at provincial and national event for two years.

However, it is hard to record how that participation changed their life. We have no evidence to prove the impact, unfortunately.

**Budget Approval to Support Sex Workers:** Under the city Resolution, 100% of districts in the city are expected to deliver the model to ensure sex workers in the city can access WrW clubs and appropriate services in the city. For the concrete number, we will need to consult DSVP Can Tho. We will update the number when the information is confirmed.

## Actual Impact/Reach

Skip since we have not tracked the evidence. The project faced some challenges at the beginning given the sensitive nature of the topic. As a result, impacts were only beginning to emerge as the project ended.

## Reflection and Learning

The key factor to this achievement is the partnership with Department of Social Vices Prevention (DSVP). Despite the name of the department, it was significant change that the department sees themselves as a change agent to shift the government perceived role in harm reduction approach rather than the control and prevention of sex work. DSVP is open and eager to apply new model to follow the chosen approach. Involving the DSVP in the project from design to implementation has helped them buy in. This ownership made them confident to successfully propose the model into their National Action Plan and in Can Tho Provincial plan. The successes and lesson learnt from NQ helped DSVP to **generate evidence to prove rights-based and harm reduction approaches when proposing the new law on sex work.** CARE's approach to work at both the **local and national levels** has helped to deliver local interventions which generate evidence to inform local planning as well as the National Action Plan on Sex Work. CARE Vietnam is continuing to maintain its good partnership with DSVP through ongoing advocacy on sex work issues.