



Press release

MORE THAN 11,000 ETHNIC MINORITY WOMEN SUPPORTED TO DEVELOP LIVELIHOOD THROUGH THE "REACH TO EXCEL" PROJECT

The project "Reach to Excel: Promoting Financial Inclusion for Ethnic Minority Women" is jointly implemented by P&G Group, CARE International in Vietnam, and the Central Vietnam Women's Union.

Since 2018, the project has supported livelihood development for more than 11,000 ethnic minority women in 18 provinces in Vietnam.

Hanoi, October 17, 2022 - With the support of P&G Group, a pioneer in promoting Diversity, Equality and Inclusion in Vietnam over the years, through CARE International in Vietnam and the Central Committee of the Vietnam Women's Union, after four years of implementation in 18 provinces in the country, the project "Reach to Excel: Promoting Financial Inclusion for Ethnic Minority Women" has supported the development of more than 500 self-managed village credit savings groups (VSLA) with more than 11,000 women participating in savings mobilisation and small-scale lending. The VSLA model effectively supports women and families in livelihood development activities, contributing to ensuring households' financial security.

From January 2018 to December 2019, CARE cooperated with Procter & Gamble (P&G) to implement the project "Reach to Excel: Promoting financial inclusion for ethnic minority women" in four mountainous provinces in Northern Vietnam (Hoa Binh, Son La, Dien Bien and Bac Kan). Through cooperation with P&G, CARE has established 260 self-managed VSLA groups, directly helping 5,196 ethnic minority women access loans and become more economically independent. Many members of the VSLA group said they could save more money and invest better in their children's education, household livelihoods and income-generating activities.

In the project's second phase, from December 2020 to the end of December 2021, 287 VSLA groups were established with 4,185 female participants. In the first year, the groups mobilised 9.35 billion VND in savings and gave 2,427 members loans to develop their livelihoods. In the first half of 2022, there were 269 groups with 4,058 members, which mobilised 5.62 billion VND in savings, and 1,416 members received loans to finance their livelihood development.

Ms. Le Thi Tuyet Mai, Corporate Communications Director of P&G Vietnam, shared: The "Reach to Excel" project is an important community program in the company's long-term development plan in Vietnam. With a commitment to always accompany the advancement of Vietnamese women, over the



years, P&G has not only strived to create high-quality consumption products to improve the quality of consumer lives but also persistently implemented many programs to promote the advancement of women, remove gender barriers and promote the development of Vietnamese women."

Data from the World Bank in 2017 (Findex) shows that only 30% of adult men and 31% of adult women in Vietnam have access to formal financial services, one of the lowest rates in East Asia. Based on gender analyses conducted by CARE, women face more difficulties in accessing finance and are negatively impacted by gender inequality and traditional cultural norms. Studies have also shown that with financial decision-making and agricultural production in the family, the husband often has a decisive say in livelihood and significant expenditures. It also dramatically affects decision-making and women's participation at the community level.

Started by CARE in 1991 in Nigeria and implemented in Vietnam in 2010, up to now, the Village Credit Savings Model (VSLA) has been introduced in more than 20 provinces/cities. The operating model is based on the three principles of Voluntary Participation, Self-Management and Self-Responsibility, promoting the principles of openness, transparency, and equality for all members.

Evaluating the project's activities in recent years, the representative of the Vietnam Women's Union, **Ms. Pham Thi Huong Giang, Member of the Women Union Presidium - Head of the Committee to support women in economic development**, said: "This model is very suitable for ethnic minority women, helping them to form the habit of saving, self-management and the community to support and help each other in difficult times. Through the model, the women union has also communicated on the state's legal policies related to ethnic minority areas and other necessary knowledge for women such as organising their lives, growing their family income and promoting gender equality".

Ms. Le Kim Dung, Country Director, CARE International in Vietnam, affirmed the organisation's commitment to cooperation with the Vietnam Women's Union, "The VSLA model is considered the starting point to help group members connect and access other forms of financial services and be part of an inclusive financial ecosystem in which everyone has the right to participate. The approach and characteristics of the VSLA model are very consistent with the goals of the Women's Union in the project 8 implementation process. CARE commits to accompany and provide technical support with the Central Committee of the Women Union in the next five years to carry out activities to achieve the set goals effectively."

For more information about the project, please refer [here](#).



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To editors:

About Procter & Gamble group (P&G)

P&G serves consumers worldwide and has the strongest product portfolio with top quality and reputable brands such as Always®, Ambi Pur®, Ariel®, Bounty®, Charmin®, Crest®, Dawn®, Downy®, Fairy®, Febreze®, Gain®, Gillette®, Head & Shoulders®, Lenor®, Olay®, Oral-B®, Pampers®, Pantene®, SK-II®, Tide®, Vicks® and Whisper®. P&G currently operates in 70 countries around the world.

About Procter & Gamble (P&G) Vietnam Company

P&G started operating in Vietnam in 1995 with the commitment of "Bringing a better and more fulfilling life to Vietnamese consumers" and has since grown strongly with famous products of international quality such as Ariel, Tide laundry detergent and powder, Downy fabric softener; Safeguard soap; shampoo Pantene, Head&Shoulders, Rejoice; Gillette razor; women and children care products such as Pampers, Whisper. P&G is a pioneer in promoting Diversity, Equality and Inclusion in Vietnam over the years. Realizing the group's commitment to creating a more equal world, P&G has always been a pioneer in accompanying the advancement of Vietnamese women, building an equal and inclusive environment with the efforts of women, promoting gender equality, supporting the LGBTQ+ community and people with disabilities.

For the latest news and detailed information about P&G and its brands, please visit www.vn.pg.com.

About CARE International in Vietnam

CARE International is a leading development and humanitarian aid organisation, fighting global poverty and injustice, working with women and girls to bring lasting change to their communities.

CARE International in Vietnam (CVN) has actively collaborated with diverse Vietnamese organisations and partners over the past 30 years in more than 300 projects. CVN realises that the keys to equal development achievements are interventions to address deeply rooted, underlying structural causes of poverty, social injustice, and gender inequality that pull part of the population out of the development process and make them vulnerable.

CVN's long-term objective is that poor and marginalised ethnic minorities and urban people of all genders, particularly women, equitably benefit from development. For more information, please visit www.care.org.vn

About the Vietnam Women's Union

The Vietnam Women's Union is a socio-political organization, representing the legitimate rights and interests of all Vietnamese women; strive for the development of women and gender equality.

The Association is a member of the Vietnam Fatherland Front, a member of the International Federation of Democratic Women and the Federation of ASEAN Women's Organizations.

From the predecessor organizations to the present day, under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the Association unites, mobilizes, and gathers women from all walks of life, upholding the patriotic, heroic, and patriotic traditions. loyal, loyal and courageous, actively contributing to the cause of building and defending the socialist Vietnamese Fatherland, rich people, strong country, democracy, justice and civilization.