

RESEARCH FINDINGS¹

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COVID-19 heavily impacts female workers in the textile and garment, and hospitality industries

The COVID-19 pandemic breaking out in 2020 has caused heavy impacts on the Vietnamese economy. Textile and garment and hospitality were among the sectors hit hardest. This is the result recorded from a phone survey conducted by the Centre for Analysis and Forecasting (under the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences) in 2021. The survey, being nationally representative, covered 1,000 households with members working in the industries mentioned above. Results show varying income and non-income impacts of the pandemic by gender in Vietnam in May 2021.

Total household income dropped significantly: the income level recorded in May 2021 was only 58.1% of the income in April 2020. Moreover, the decrease in income was more severe in female-headed households than those led by men.

Support packages were far from adequate, with only 27% of affected households receiving assistance. Moreover, the support packages largely missed the transient income poor. Meanwhile, 44.8% of female-headed households fell into temporary poverty, compared to four in ten male-headed households. In addition, emergency support is most needed when income declines substantially, as transient poverty is associated with adverse non-income impact. Four in ten households reported having difficulty accessing education services, 30.7% for health care services, and 31.9% for the purchase of food, beverage, and other necessities.

The gender gap in unpaid care and domestic work was considerable. The issue of support from a gender perspective needs to be given attention properly, especially when most respondents reported that the burden of unpaid care and domestic work had disproportionately fallen on women's shoulders. The gender gap was 42.7 percentage points for house chores, 22.9 percentage points for taking care of children and their education, and 17.4 percentage points for taking health care of family members.

¹ Reported by a research team from the Centre for Analysis and Forecasting (under the Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences) working on the research project “The Impact of COVID-19 on Inclusive Development and Democratic Governance: Rapid and Post-Pandemic Assessment in the Mekong Subregion”, which is financially supported by the International Development Research Center (Canada) and coordinated by the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (Cambodia). For further information, please contact Dr. Nguyen Thị Thu Phuong, the research coordinator, at pnguyenhanoi2019@gmail.com.