

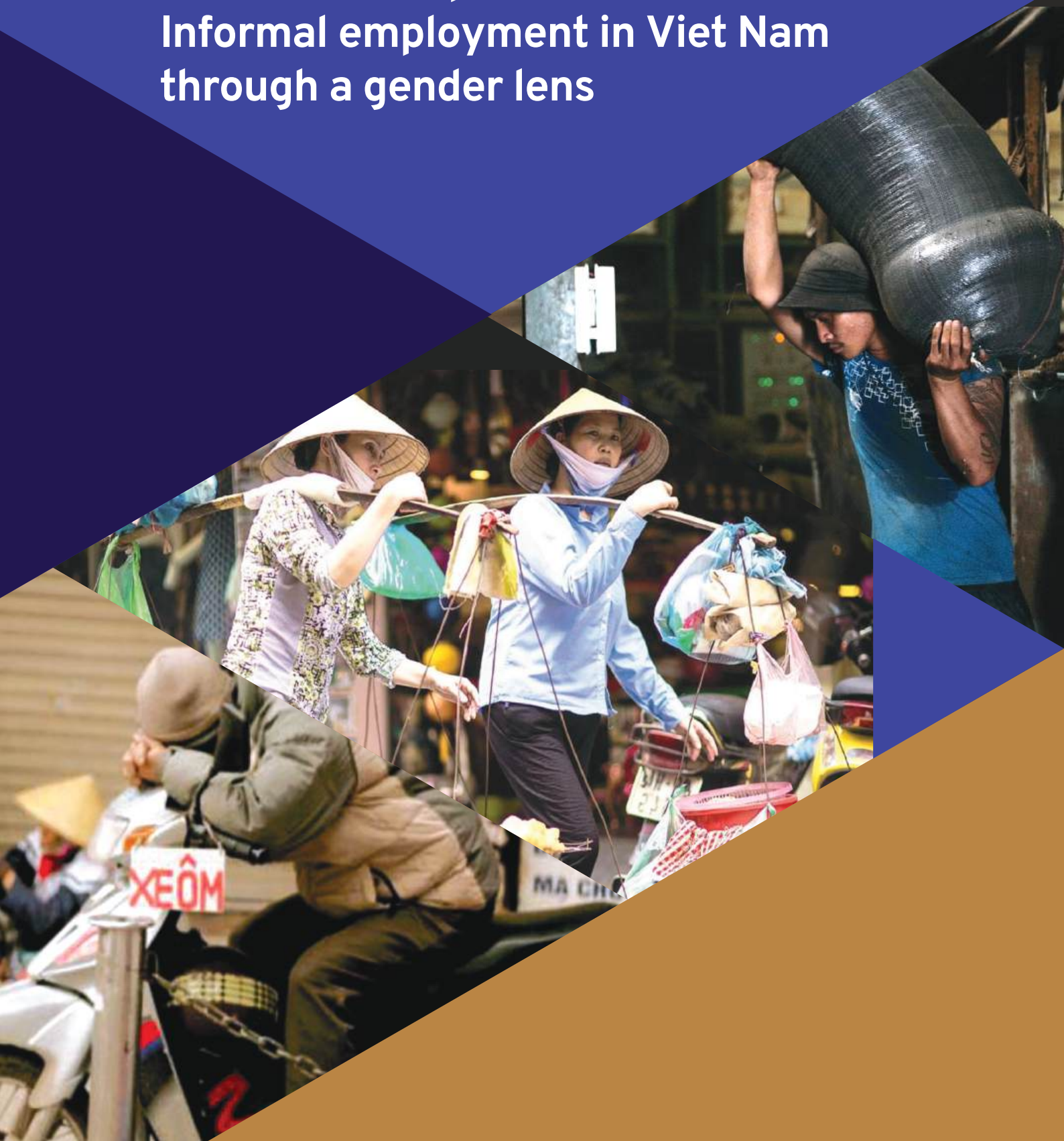


International
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► Research report

Informal employment in Viet Nam through a gender lens



► **Research report**
Informal employment in Viet Nam
through a gender lens

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► Abbreviations

GSO	General Statistics Office
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILSSA	Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health

► Executive summary





Executive summary

Analysis of informal employment in Viet Nam through a gender lens

This report by the Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs (ILSSA) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) provides a comprehensive analysis of informal employment in Viet Nam through a gender lens, highlighting the structural, economic, and social challenges faced by informal workers. Drawing on data from the Labour Force Survey 2021 and a targeted survey conducted in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City from August to September 2022, the report examines the prevalence, characteristics, and dynamics of informal employment and offers actionable policy recommendations to address gender disparities and promote decent work.

Informal employment accounted for 68.5 per cent of total employment in Viet Nam in 2021. Men were more likely to engage in informal work, with an informal employment rate of 71.6 per cent compared to 65 per cent for women. Women, however, face disproportionate vulnerabilities in the informal economy. They are more frequently concentrated in own-account work or contributing family work, positions that lack income security or social protection. Female informal workers also earn significantly less than their male counterparts. Women's engagement in informal employment is often driven by the need for flexible working arrangements to balance family responsibilities, as they dedicate significantly more time to unpaid care work than men.

Education and skills gaps further exacerbate these challenges, with fewer female informal workers having formal training compared to men. Informal employment remains concentrated in sectors such as agriculture and services, where informality rates are high, and women dominate low-wage, elementary occupations. The COVID-19 crisis intensified these vulnerabilities, as women experienced greater job losses and income declines, reflecting their concentration in sectors heavily affected by the crisis. Women express a stronger desire to transition to formal employment. However, barriers such as low skills, family responsibilities, and limited access to resources need to be addressed to facilitate this transition.

Gender-responsive policy implications

While the informal employment rate continued to decrease both for women and men in Viet Nam in 2022 and 2023 according to GSO, the report identifies gender-responsive policy implications that are needed to further advance gender equality and promote decent work:

1. Promote and disseminate information on the value of formal employment and gender equality in labour markets

Raising awareness among managers, policymakers, employers, employees, and society about the importance of formalizing employment and addressing related issues is crucial. Communication efforts should highlight the benefits of transitioning to formal employment, such as improved job security and social protections. Campaigns should also strengthen awareness of labour laws, voluntary social insurance, and gender equality, using diverse communication methods to engage all stakeholders. It is essential to promote understanding of the division of labour at work and in the family, fostering shared responsibilities between men and women. Central and local budgets should be allocated to support these information promotion initiatives effectively.

2. Enhance access to decent work for all informal workers, especially female informal workers

Policy focus may be geared towards finalizing legal frameworks on gender equality, labour and employment on the basis of promoting equal rights and non-discrimination. Investing in skills development, including through expanding vocational training programmes tailored to informal workers, especially female workers, can bridge skills gaps. Ensuring the legal rights of workers and preventing informalization, as well as an effective public employment service strategy, and tailored support for young and older workers can further advance formalization efforts and contribute to Viet Nam's sustainable development.

3. Ensure access to social protection for informal workers

Social protection systems must be inclusive of informal workers, particularly women. Expanding social insurance coverage is critical, coupled with incentives to encourage participation. This includes raising informal workers' awareness of social insurance and their eligibility, and making social insurance more family-friendly.

4. Promote gender-transformative measures to transition to formal employment

Gender norms that perpetuate inequality must be challenged to facilitate transitions to formal employment. Policymakers should integrate gender-transformative approaches into labour market policies, including initiatives that provide leadership training for women, reduce unpaid care work burdens for women through supportive policies, and ensure equal pay for work of equal value to address wage disparities. Fostering supportive workplace cultures can contribute to long-term gender equity.

5. Strengthen policy linkages in local economic development

Integrating informal workers into local economic development strategies can create sustainable pathways to formalization. Informal workers require access to training and resources to improve their productivity and earnings. Coordination between businesses, community organizations, and government agencies can strengthen support networks and foster economic opportunities for informal workers. Efforts should prioritize sectors with high rates of informality, such as agriculture and services.

6. Promote gender equality in the family and community

Achieving gender equality in the labour market requires addressing disparities in household responsibilities. Policymakers should promote family-friendly policies that encourage shared caregiving responsibilities between men and women. Social dialogue and public awareness campaigns can provide a platform to help shift societal attitudes about traditional gender roles, enabling women to pursue employment opportunities without being disproportionately burdened by domestic responsibilities. Enhanced access to affordable childcare services is also critical.

7. Strengthen State management of informal workers

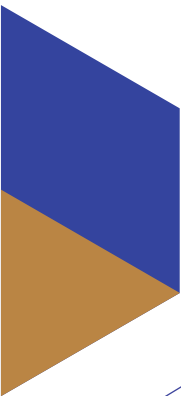
Effective governance is essential for supporting informal workers and their transition to formal employment. This includes improvements in data collection on informal workers to design targeted interventions. Strengthening enforcement of labour laws and coordinating efforts across government agencies can ensure better compliance and protection for informal workers, ensuring the enforcement and compliance with the existing law and regulations on gender equality.

Conclusion

The report underscores the critical need to address gender-specific vulnerabilities in informal employment in Viet Nam. Achieving inclusive and sustainable development requires targeted, gender-responsive policies and multi-stakeholder collaboration and coordination that promote decent work opportunities, enhance social protection, and shift societal norms towards gender equality. By addressing these issues, Viet Nam can create a labour market that supports all workers, particularly women, in their transition to formal employment.

Part 1 ● Introduction





Part 1. Introduction

1.1. Background

As in many developing countries, informal employment⁶ is a reality in Viet Nam. According to the General Statistics Office (GSO) (2022), it is estimated (based on International Conference of Labour Statisticians 2019) that Viet Nam's labour market had 33.6 million informal workers, accounting for 68.5 per cent of total employment.⁷ Informal workers face a multitude of risks including insecure income, exclusion of social benefits and protection, with acute vulnerability to recessions and economic crises. They were seriously impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with reduced hours, incomes and job losses (ILO 2021, ILSSA 2022).⁸ Despite government efforts to address formalization in recent years, these workers remain outside regulations and beyond the scope of labour market policies (ILSSA 2019).⁹

As informal employment may be impacted by technological developments, including web-based remote service delivery systems, there is increased uncertainty among State management agencies on how to determine the nature and methods of protecting an increasing cohort of workers in non-standard forms of employment.

From a gender perspective, men are more likely than women to be in informal employment in Viet Nam in 2021. According to the Labour Force Survey (2021), the male informal employment rate was 71.6 per cent compared to 65 per cent for women.¹⁰ Even if lower in percentage, the informal economy in Viet Nam can have disproportionate impacts on women as they are often engaged at the lower levels of the informal employment ladder.¹¹

This study sets out to generate an in-depth analysis of the characteristics of informal employment in Viet Nam through a gender lens. Based on the findings, it makes gender-responsive policy recommendations to support informal workers to improve their conditions of work and support the transition to formality.

⁶ According to the ILO (2023), informal employment refers to working arrangements that are in practice or by law not subject to national labour legislation, income taxation, or entitlement to social protection or other employment guarantees. For example, advance notice of dismissal, severance pay, or paid annual or sick leave (ILO, What is informal employment? 2023).

⁷ GSO, *Overall Situation of Workers in Informal Employment in Viet Nam, 2022*.

⁸ ILO, *Informal Employment in Viet Nam: Trends and Determinants, 2021*.

⁹ In recent years, recognizing the importance of supporting workers in the informal sector and transforming jobs from the informal to formal sector, the Government of Viet Nam promulgated the Employment Law 2013, Law on Occupational Safety and Health 2016 and revised the Law on Social Insurance 2014 to expand the coverage of labour market policies to workers in the informal sector and other disadvantaged groups. However, implementation of these policies was not effective. Workers in the informal sector still face difficulties accessing preferential loans, developing skills, occupational safety and health, and participating in voluntary social insurance. Especially, up to now, there has been limited effective support for the transformation of jobs from the informal to formal sector (ILSSA 2019).

¹⁰ GSO, op. cit.

The research report is primarily based on data from the Labour Force Survey (2021) with additional data collected in 2022. At the time of publication of this report, updated data published in the GSO Statistical Yearbook of Viet Nam 2023 indicates a further decrease of the informal employment rate in Viet Nam to 65.8 per cent in 2022 and 65.1 per cent in 2023. The male informal employment rate was estimated at 68.3 per cent compared to 61.5 per cent for women in 2023.

¹¹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and ILO, *Tackling Vulnerability in the Informal Economy, 2019*.

► **Box 1: Concepts and connotations used in the research**

Informal sector: Is regarded as production units owned by households and not constituted as separate legal entities independent of households or household members that own them. Moreover, there are no complete sets of accounts (including balance sheets of assets and liabilities) available to permit a clear distinction of production activities of enterprises from other activities of their owners and identification of any flows of income and capital between enterprises and owners.¹² The characteristics of production units in the informal sector are that they typically operate at a low level of organization. Labour relations are based on casual employment, kinship or personal and social relations rather than contractual arrangements with formal guarantees. Fixed and other assets do not belong to production units as such, but to their owners. Hence, units cannot engage in transactions or enter into contracts with other units, nor incur liabilities, on their own behalf.

Informal employment: Workers in informal employment perform jobs legally or not protected by labour legislation, do not pay income tax or are not entitled to social protection and other employment benefits (such as no prior notice of dismissal, no severance and termination compensation, no annual salary increase or no sick leave).¹³ Such work is often undeclared, temporary or short-term in nature, has working hours or wages below the prescribed threshold, sometimes does not fully comply with provisions of applicable law. This includes both workers employed within the informal sector and workers in informal employment outside the informal sector.

Formal employment: Employment recognized and protected by law (such as wage workers with a labour contract or self-employed workers or owners of production and business establishments with official business registration) and is covered by the social security system through participation in compulsory social insurance.

Sex: Refers to biological differences between females and males (e.g. gonads, sexual organs, chromosomes, hormones).¹⁴

Gender: Indicates the characteristics, positions and roles of women and men in all social relationships.¹⁵

Gender discrimination: Indicates the act of restricting, excluding, not recognizing or not appreciating the role and position of men and women leading to inequality between men and women in all fields of social and family life.¹⁶

Gender equality: Indicates that men and women have equal positions and roles, are given equal conditions and opportunities to develop their capacities for development of the community and family, and equally enjoy the achievement of that development.¹⁷

Gender lens: Takes existing differences between women and men into account when analyzing a situation or developing specific approaches or programmes.¹⁸

¹² GSO, op. cit.

¹³ GSO, op. cit.

¹⁴ Council of Europe (2016), Sex and Gender Equality Glossary.

¹⁵ Law on Gender Equality 2006, Session of the X Legislature of the National Assembly, Law No. 73/2006/QH11, Chapter 1, Clause 5.

¹⁶ Law on Gender Equality 2006, op. cit.

¹⁷ Law on Gender Equality 2006, op. cit.

¹⁸ Law on Gender Equality 2006, op. cit.

► Box 1 (cont.)

Gender stereotype: Is negative and biased awareness, attitude, and assessment of the characteristics, position, role and capacity of women and men.¹⁹

Gender-sensitive: Is being properly aware of different needs, roles, responsibilities of men and women and understanding that these differences can impact women and men's access to and control over resources and level of participation in and benefit from resources and development.²⁰

Gender responsibility: Is being gender-sensitive and taking regular, positive and consistent measures or actions in work to eliminate the causes of gender inequality for achieving gender equality.²¹

Gender-responsive: Refers to the level of transformation from awareness to practical action to address gender inequality.²² In other words, gender-responsive is after acknowledging gender inequality issues and reasons, individuals and organizations take active action to address the situation towards achieving gender equality goals.

Gender transformation: Activities to address the root causes of gender inequality and transform harmful gender roles, norms and power imbalances.²³

Gender-transformative approaches: Programmes and interventions that create opportunities for individuals to actively challenge gender norms, promote positions of social and political influence for women in communities, and address power inequities between persons of different gender.²⁴

1.2. Research method

Multiple steps were taken during this research, starting with a desk review and assessment of existing statistics on informal employment and undertaking a household survey. Finally, a technical meeting was organized to consult researchers, policymakers and managers on the key findings of the survey. Feedback from stakeholders was used to complete this final report and nuance its recommendations.

1.2.1. Survey methodology

A survey of employers, employees and own-account workers was designed to collect further information to paint an accurate picture of gender-focussed issues in informal employment. Surveyed workers were divided into two basic groups:

- (i) Traditional informal workers, including employers/owners of production and business establishments without legal registration, informal wage workers, contributing family workers and own-account workers (street vendors, motorbike taxi drivers and porters).

19 Law on Gender Equality 2006, op. cit.

20 Law on Gender Equality 2006, op. cit.

21 Ministry of Justice, European Union and UNICEF Viet Nam, *Guidelines for the Mainstreaming of Gender Equality in the Development, Communication and Training of Legal Normative Documents*.

22 Ministry of Justice, European Union, UNICEF Viet Nam, op. cit.

23 UNFPA, *Technical Note on Gender-Transformative Approaches in the Global Programme to End Child Marriage Phase II: A Summary for Practitioners*, 2020.

24 Health Communication Capacity Collaborative, *Gender Transformative Approaches*.

- (ii) Online platform informal workers, including online location-based platform workers (car drivers and light goods vehicle drivers), and online web-based platform own-account workers (freelancers, YouTubers, online sellers, advertisement writers and advert generators/writers).

A semi-structured questionnaire was used to gather information on the characteristics of informal workers, working conditions, gender gaps, the needs and barriers of informal workers in their transition to formal employment.

The survey was conducted in the capital Ha Noi and the southern economic hub Ho Chi Minh City, the two largest commercial centres of the country.

1.2.2. Survey sample and method

To inform the gender analysis, the survey sample was split into two groups of female and male workers. Thus, at least 10 categories (equivalent to five categories for each of the two female-male groups) were analyzed in the survey. At the same time, to have normally distributed variables (mean, median and mode coincide), statistical theory dictated that at least 30 observations are required for a category. Therefore, at least 300 informal workers (30 observations per 10 categories) were required for each surveyed city (Ha Noi, Ho Chi Minh City). However, due to financial and time constraints, the final sample came to 270 informal workers in each, with the breakdown shown in Table 1. As the number of observations in a category is smaller than the statistical standard, statistical conclusions were only generated for the two cities combined rather than for each city.

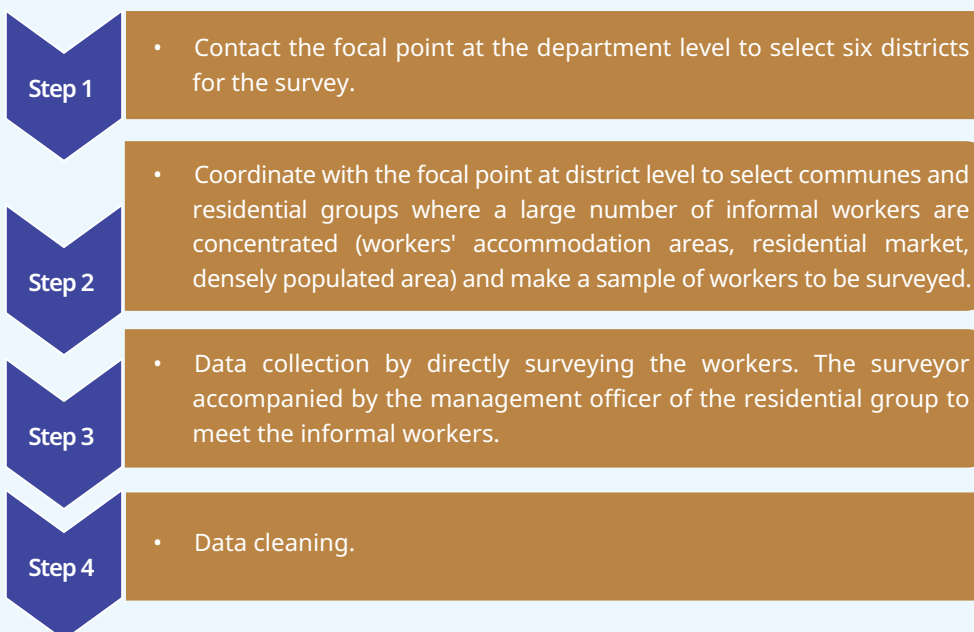
► **Table 1: Sample size and distribution according to survey areas and sex**

	Ha Noi			Ho Chi Minh City			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
I. Traditional informal workers	75	75	150	75	75	150	150	150	300
- Employers (owners of production and business establishments/economic units)	15	15	30	15	15	30	30	30	60
- Own-account workers and contributing family workers	30	30	60	30	30	60	60	60	120
- Wage workers	30	30	60	30	30	60	60	60	120
II. Online platform informal workers	60	60	120	60	60	120	120	120	240
- Online location-based platform workers (car drivers and light goods vehicle drivers/shippers)	30	30	60	30	30	60	60	60	120
- Online web-based platform own-account workers (freelancers, YouTubers, online sellers, advert generators/writers)	30	30	60	30	30	60	60	60	120
Total: (I) + (II)	135	135	270	135	135	270	270	270	540

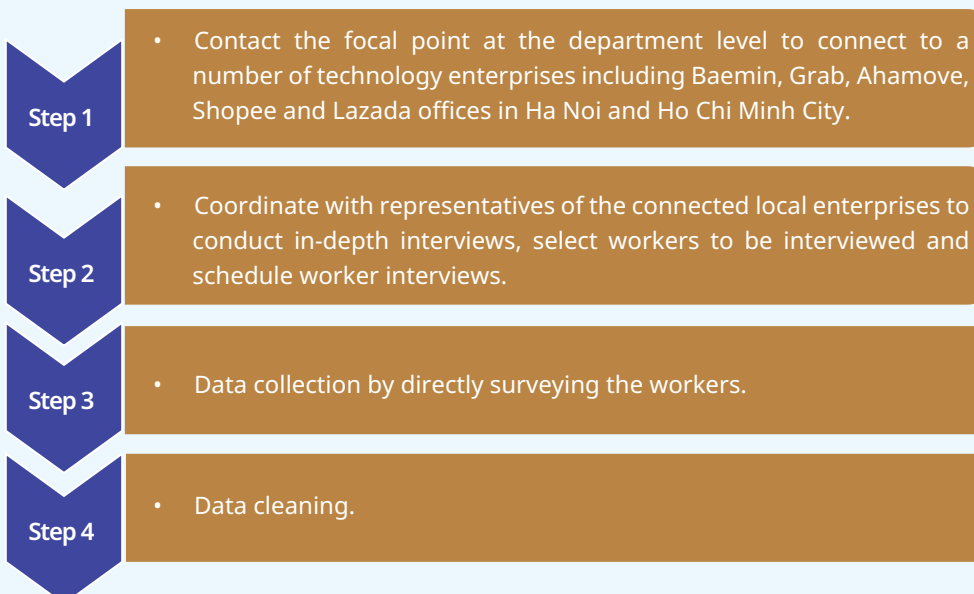
The research team used the purposive sampling according to the categories shown in Table 1 and using the Viet Nam quarterly Labour Force Surveys of the GSO as the sampling frame. The survey was conducted from 15 August to 15 September 2022 in Ha Noi and from 18 to 30 September 2022 in Ho Chi Minh City.

The following steps were applied to locate the surveyed informal workers:

Procedure 1. Surveying traditional informal workers



Procedure 2. Surveying the online platform informal workers



A difference between the actual and planned sample size and distribution was seen in the platform driver/delivery worker category in surveyed cities. The Ho Chi Minh City survey team was unable to locate 30 female platform drivers/delivery workers in the time allotted. The final sample results shown in Table 2 reflect adjustments from the original sample design, which envisaged an equal gender split.

► **Table 2: Final sample size and distribution**

	Male	Female	Total
I. Traditional informal workers	152	165	317
- Employers (owners of production and business establishments/economic units)	31	31	62
- Own-account workers and contributing family workers	59	66	125
- Wage workers	62	68	130
II. Platform informal workers	112	111	223
- Online location-based platform workers (car drivers and light goods vehicle drivers)	51	39	90
- Online web-based platform own-account workers (Freelancers, YouTubers, online sellers, advert generators/writers)	61	72	133
Total: (I) + (II)	264	276	540

1.2.3. Stakeholder interviews

To supplement survey findings and their interpretations, structured interviews were conducted with 18 stakeholders shown in Table 3, including department-level managers of labour (Division of Employment, Division of Salary and Social Insurance under the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs), representatives of management agencies under the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (Department of Social Insurance, Department of Employment, Department of Industrial Relations and Wages) and representatives of technology platform providers.

► **Table 3: Actual sample size of in-depth interviews**

	Ha Noi	Ho Chi Minh City	Total
Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs	2	2	4
Department of Gender Equality, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs	1	0	1
Department of Employment	1	0	1
Institute for Family and Gender Studies	1	0	1
Central Institute for Economic Management	1	0	1
Enterprises providing technology platform	2	1	3
Informal production and business establishments	5	2	7
Total	13	5	18

Part 2 ● Gender dimensions of informal employment in Viet Nam



Part 2. Gender dimensions of informal employment in Viet Nam

This chapter presents the salient gender-based characteristics of informal employment in Viet Nam. Primarily based on analysis of the Labour Force Survey 2021, as well as findings of the Survey of Informal Workers conducted for this research, the chapter presents a detailed statistical profile of the labour market, highlighting distinct features related to the formal-informal duality as well as unique circumstances for women and men engaged in informal employment.

2.1. Size and share of female and male workers in informal employment

In Viet Nam's labour market, informal workers account for a large proportion of the total number of employed workers. In 2021, the country had 33.6 million informal workers, of whom male workers accounted for 18.79 million and female workers 14.84 million (Table 4). The male informal employment rate was 6.6 percentage points higher than the corresponding rate for women (71.6 versus 65 per cent).

► **Table 4: Size, share and distribution of employment by sex and informality, 2019 and 2021**

	2019			2021		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Total employment (million)	27.326	23.307	50.633	26.239	22.833	49.072
Informal employment	19.604	15.174	34.779	18.789	14.843	33.632
Formal employment	7.722	8.133	15.855	7.450	7.990	15.440
2. Share of informal and formal employment (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Informal employment	71.7	65.1	68.7	71.6	65.0	68.5
Formal employment	28.3	34.9	31.3	28.4	35.0	31.5
3. Distribution by sex (%)	54.0	46.0	100.0	53.5	46.5	100.0
Informal employment	56.4	43.6	100.0	55.9	44.1	100.0
Formal employment	48.7	51.3	100.0	48.3	51.7	100.0

Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey 2019 and 2021.

During 2019–21, the number of male and female workers in informal employment decreased, of which the former decreased more than the latter. The main driver of the decline was the COVID-19 pandemic and workers withdrawing from the labour market. The overall drop in labour force was accompanied by a decline in both informal and formal employment. During 2019–21, the number of female informal workers fell by 2.2 per cent, less than the 4.2 per cent decline in male informal employment. One can conclude that in terms of the magnitude of impacts, male workers were affected more by the pandemic than female peers.

While most informal workers were employed in the informal sector (81.8 per cent), it is also common for workers to have informal jobs in the formal sector (Table 5). This proportion among female informal workers was 0.9 percentage point higher than that of male workers (82.3 versus 81.4 per cent).

► **Table 5: Size and share of informal employment by sex and economic sector, 2021**

	Male	Female	Total
1. Size (million)	18.789	14.843	33.632
a. Formal sector	3.482	2.494	5.976
b. Informal sector	15.297	12.212	27.508
c. Household sector	0.010	0.138	0.148
2. Distribution of informal employment by sector (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0
a. Formal sector	18.5	16.8	17.8
b. Informal sector	81.4	82.3	81.8
c. Household sector	0.1	0.9	0.4
3. Share of male and female in informal employment (%)	55.9	44.1	100.0
a. Formal sector	58.3	41.7	100.0
b. Informal sector	55.6	44.4	100.0
c. Household sector	6.7	93.3	100.0

Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey 2021.

2.2. Characteristics of informal workers from a gender perspective

2.2.1. By age group

Among younger cohorts, informal employment tends to be higher among men than women (Table 6). In 2021, workers in the 15–34 year age group accounted for 31.5 per cent of all male informal workers compared with 26.4 per cent for female informal workers. Conversely, the proportion of informal male workers aged 35 years and above is lower than the corresponding rate of informal female workers (68.4 versus 73.7 per cent).

Informal employment among adults aged 25 years and above tends to rise with age, with this situation most acute among older female workers. In 2021, 95.2 per cent of older women workers (aged more than 60 years) were in informal employment, 3.2 percentage points higher than the corresponding rate of older male peers.

► **Table 6: Share and distribution of informal employment by age group and sex, 2021**

	Male	Female	Total	Gap (Female-Male)
1. Informal employment rate by age group	71.6	65.1	68.6	-6.5
15–24 years	75.0	59.5	68.0	-15.5
25–34 years	61.9	47.0	55.0	-14.9
35–59 years	72.0	68.9	70.5	-3.1
60+ years	92.1	95.2	93.6	3.2
2. Distribution of informal employment by age group	100.0	100.0	100.0	
15–24 years	10.2	8.4	9.4	-1.9
25–34 years	21.3	18.0	19.9	-3.3
35–59 years	56.5	59.7	57.9	3.1
60+ years	11.9	14.0	12.8	2.1

Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey 2021.

Unit: %

Notably, in 2021, Viet Nam had nearly 3.2 million young workers aged 15–24 years in informal jobs, including nearly two million men and 1.2 million women. With limited economic security, few training opportunities and sub-optimal work conditions, youth informal employment can act as a major barrier to productive independence as adults.

In addition, in 2021, Viet Nam had more than 4.3 million older workers (aged 60 years and above) in informal work (2.2 million men and 2.1 million women). This underlines the “double” disadvantage of declining health and discrimination in the labour market. These challenges are amplified in the informal economy, where poor working conditions, unstable jobs and incomes are prevalent.

2.2.2. Household characteristics

The survey results of informal workers reveal that the majority (68.5 per cent) live in nuclear families (with spouse and children). Nearly one-fifth of surveyed informal workers live alone, most of whom are young. A small portion (11.7 per cent), mainly older workers, live in multi-generational families.

By sex, the proportion of female informal workers in multi-generational families was higher than the male share, while fewer female informal workers live alone than male peers.

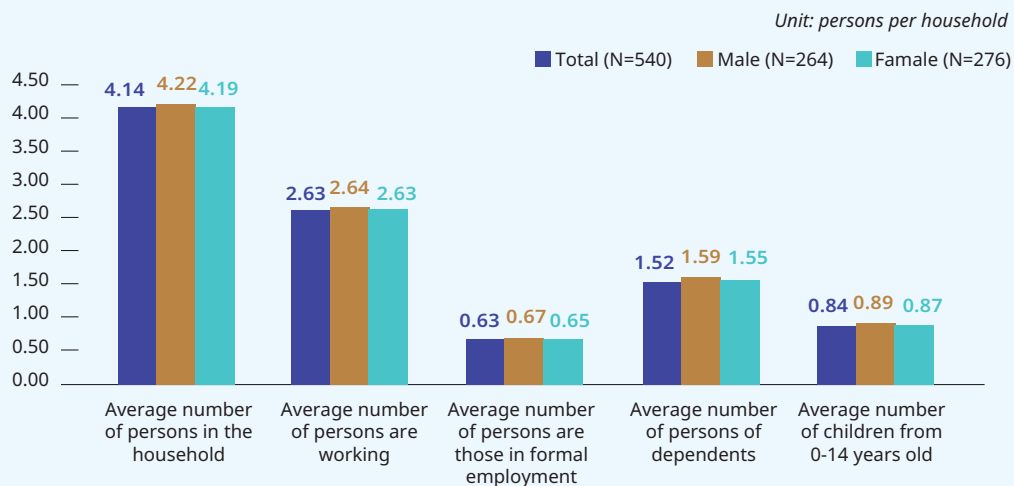
The average number of people per household of surveyed informal workers was 4.2 (Figure 1), higher than the average number of people per household nationwide.²⁵ There was little difference between the household size of female and male informal workers (4.22 versus 4.14 persons per household, respectively). The ratio of dependents (children and non-working elderly) to workers of households of surveyed informal workers was 0.59 (one worker in the family had to support 0.59 dependents), higher than the overall dependency ratio of Viet Nam’s population (0.51).

In general, the household size and overall dependency ratio of working families with informal jobs are both higher than the national average, pointing to the burden faced informal worker respondents in dealing with the economic pressures of large families.

Notably, the survey results show that the average number of workers per household of surveyed informal workers was 2.63. Given the averages of 1.98 informal and 0.65 formal workers per household, this represents a ratio of around three-to-one.

²⁵ Nationally, there was on average 3.6 people per household in 2021. Source: GSO, press release of Viet Nam Household Living Standards Survey 2021.

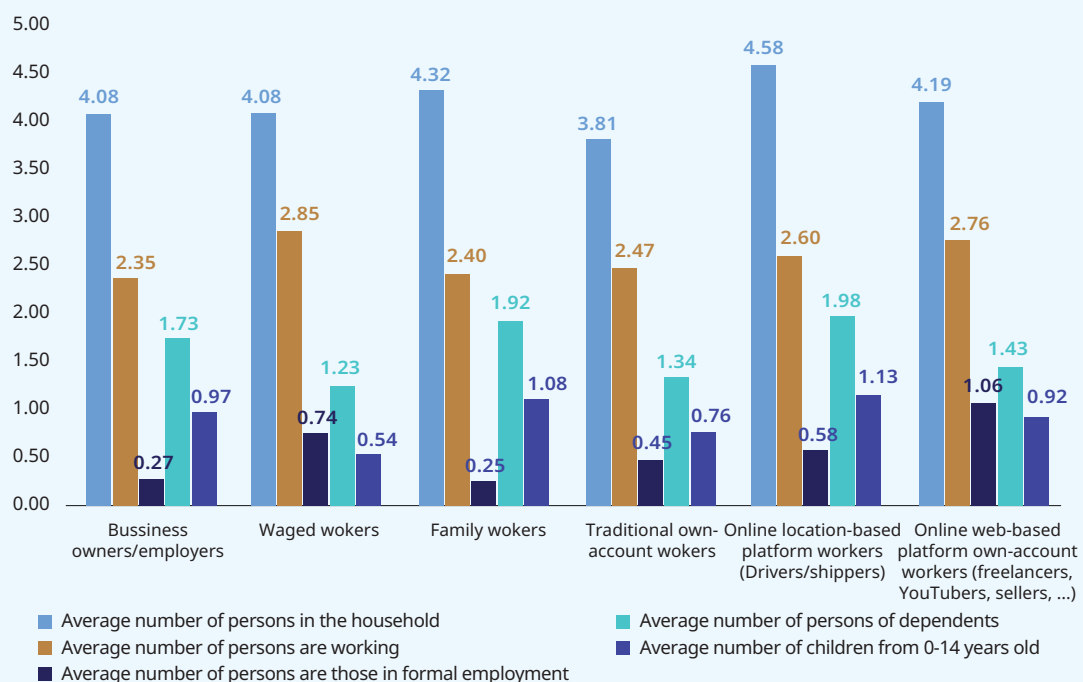
► **Figure 1: Size of household members of informal workers by sex and target groups, 2022**



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

By surveyed group, informal wage workers had 2.85 people/household generating income, the highest among the five surveyed groups (Figure 2). As well, the number of dependents was 1.23 people/household, of which those aged 0-14 years totalled 0.54 per household, the lowest among the five surveyed groups. Meanwhile, own-account workers based on technology platforms had the highest number of formal employed (1.06 people/household) among surveyed groups.

► **Figure 2: Household size of informal workers by surveyed group, 2022**



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

2.2.3. Education/training levels

Table 7 shows that in 2021, the proportion of higher skilled workers with degrees or certificates²⁶ in the informal workforce only reached 12.5 per cent, much lower than the corresponding rate for formal workers (55.1 per cent) and the whole economy (26.1 per cent).²⁷ The proportion of female workers with higher skill levels is just 8.4 per cent, 7.3 percentage points lower than for male peers (15.8 per cent) and much lower than the corresponding rate of formal female workers (50.4 per cent).

Notably, for youth aged 15–24 years, the proportion of workers in 2021 with college qualifications was 3 percentage points higher among female informal workers than male counterparts (5.3 per cent compared to 2.4 per cent, respectively).²⁸ This could be due in part to efforts to implement the Gender Equality Strategy in Viet Nam for 2011–20, which increased education and training opportunities for girls and young women.

► **Table 7: Distribution of employment by highest education or training level and informal status, 2021**

	Informal employment			Formal employment		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
I. Unskilled or technical workers without formal training (No schooling, primary and secondary school)	84.2	91.6	87.5	39.7	49.6	44.9
1. Illiterate	2.6	4.8	3.6	0.2	0.4	0.3
2. Incomplete primary school	9.1	11.2	10.0	1.3	1.6	1.5
3. Completed primary school	24.9	27.5	26.0	6.9	8.7	7.8
4. Completed lower secondary school	33.7	33.8	33.7	14.8	19.8	17.4
5. Completed upper secondary school	13.9	14.3	14.1	16.5	19.2	17.9
II. Professional and technical workers with formal trainings (qualifications/certificates)	15.8	8.4	12.5	60.3	50.4	55.1
6. Skilled with short-term vocational training	8.6	1.8	5.6	13.7	5.6	9.5
7. Secondary vocational school	3.0	2.2	2.7	8.6	6.0	7.3
8. College	1.7	1.7	1.7	6.8	8.1	7.4
9. University and higher	2.5	2.7	2.6	31.2	30.7	30.9
Total: (I) + (II)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey 2021.

Unit: %

2.2.4. Geographic location

Table 8 highlights that the proportion of informal employment in urban areas was 52 per cent, higher for men (53.7 per cent) relative to women (50.1 per cent). In rural areas, by comparison, the rate of workers with informal jobs was 77.9 per cent, although notably higher by 7.6 percentage points for men compared to women.

²⁶ Degrees and certification include graduation from short-term vocational training, secondary vocational school, college, university and higher.

²⁷ Source: estimated from the results of the Labour Force Survey 2021 (GSO, 2022)

²⁸ Authors' calculation from GSO, Labour Force Survey 2021.

► **Table 8: Proportion of informal employment by urban and rural area and sex, 2021**

	Urban	Rural	Total
1. Percentage of informal employment in total employment			
- Male	53.7	81.4	75.8
- Female	50.1	73.8	68.4
- Total	52.0	77.9	68.5
Gap (female-male), percentage points	-3.6	-7.6	-7.3
2. Distribution of informal employment by urban and rural area			
- Male	26.6	73.4	100.0
- Female	28.6	71.4	100.0
- Total	27.5	72.5	100.0
Gap (female-male), percentage points	2.0	-2.0	

Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey 2021.

Unit: %

The high informal employment rate in rural areas highlights Viet Nam's limited economic restructuring in rural areas and heavy economic reliance on agriculture. Low productivity in agricultural crop and livestock production remains a sizeable challenge to formalize informal employment.

By economic regions, informal workers were mainly concentrated in three populous regions: North Central and Central Coast, Mekong River Delta and the Red River Delta (Table 9). The three regions together account for nearly two-thirds of the country's informal workers.

The Southeast and Red River Delta are two regions with the lowest percentage of informal employment nationally (48.6 and 60.5 per cent, respectively). They feature numerous industrial parks, export processing zones and concentrations of large enterprises that have created formal jobs for local and migrant workers in recent years. Meanwhile, less developed regions have much higher informal employment rates, especially in the Mekong River Delta and Central Highlands (80.9 and 86.6 per cent, respectively).

The proportion of female workers in informal employment was lower than male peers in all economic regions, with the largest gender gap in the Northern Midlands and Mountains (7.3 percentage points) and Red River Delta (7.3 percentage points). Conversely, the smallest female-male gap was in the Central Highlands (2 percentage points).

► Table 9: Share and distribution of informal employment by economic region and sex, 2021

	Male	Female	Total	Gap (female-male), percentage points
I. Share of informal employment in total employment	71.6	65.1	68.5	-6.5
1. Red River Delta	64.0	56.7	60.5	-7.3
2. Northern Midlands and Mountains	77.9	70.6	74.4	-7.3
3. North Central and Central Coast	78.8	72.4	75.8	-6.5
4. Central Highlands	87.5	85.5	86.6	-2.0
5. Southeast	51.5	45.2	48.6	-6.3
6. Mekong River Delta	83.3	77.7	80.9	-5.6
II. Distribution of informal employment by region	100.0	100.0	100.0	
1. Red River Delta	19.7	20.7	20.2	1.1
2. Northern Midlands and Mountains	12.4	12.9	12.6	0.4
3. North Central and Central Coast	22.5	23.3	22.9	0.8
4. Central Highlands	8.5	9.6	9.0	1.1
5. Southeast	14.0	13.3	13.7	-0.7
6. Mekong River Delta	22.9	20.2	21.7	-2.7

Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey 2021.

Unit: %

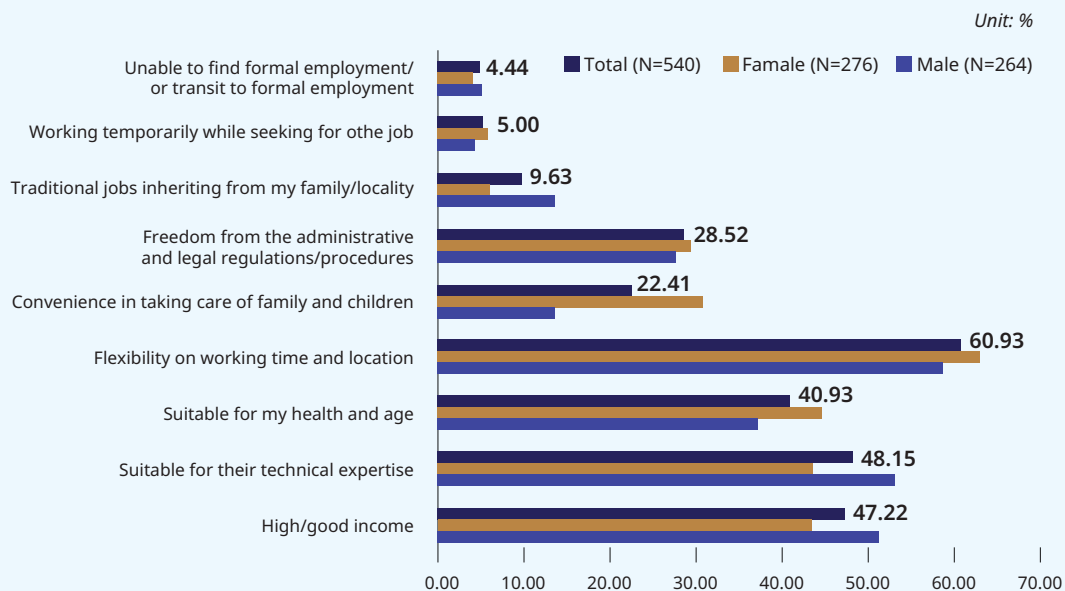
2.3. Reasons for working informally

The survey results highlight the diverse reasons why workers “chose” informal jobs, including subjective factors such as family circumstances and personal capacity (health, education) and objective factors such as flexibility of work, better income or simple preferences (Figure 3).

The most common reason for choosing an informal job was “flexible working time” (61 per cent of respondents). In addition, nearly half (48 per cent) of surveyed workers said an informal job was “suitable for their technical expertise” and 47 per cent thought it provided better incomes. The latter were mostly digital platform workers.

Other reasons were “suitable for my health and age”, “freedom from the administrative and legal regulations/procedures”, and “convenience in taking care of family and children”. Only 4 per cent indicated they could not get a formal job, indicating that informal employment was largely “voluntary”.

► **Figure 3: Reasons specified by informal workers for engaging in informal employment by sex, 2022**



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

The top three reasons for preferring informal works given by categories of informal workers were:

- Traditional own-account workers: "Suitable for health" (62.9 per cent), "Flexibility in working time and location" (61.3 per cent) and "Relevant to professional and technical qualifications" (45.2 per cent).
- Location-based platform workers: "Flexibility in working time and location" (70.0 per cent), "Good income" (54.4 per cent) and "Relevant to professional and technical qualifications" (54.4 per cent).
- Online web-based platform own-account workers: "Flexibility in working time and location" (75.9 per cent), "Good income" (67.7 per cent) and "Unbound by regulations and procedures" (45.9 per cent).

From a gender perspective, there was little difference in reasons for choosing informal employment, with a slightly higher percentage of female workers selecting "Flexibility in working time and location" and "Convenience in taking care of family and children".

2.4. Characteristics of informal jobs

2.4.1. Sector of employment and ownership structure

In 2021, informal employment was still heavily concentrated in the agriculture-forestry-fishery sector with 14.09 million workers, accounting for 41.9 per cent of total informal workers in the economy. The services industry, with more than 10.8 million workers (32.1 per cent), accounted for the second highest number (Table 10)

There is a gender gap in the structure of informal employment by economic industry. Female informal workers were concentrated in the services industry (38.6 per cent of female informal workers) and agriculture-forestry-fishery sector (43.5 per cent), with only a small portion in the industrial sector (17.9 per cent). Meanwhile, male informal workers were relatively more balanced across the three sectors: most commonly in the agriculture-forestry-fishery sector (40.6 per cent of the total number of male informal workers), followed by industry (32.3 per cent) and services (27 per cent).

► **Table 10: Share and distribution of informal employment by industry and sex, 2021**

	Male	Female	Total	Gap (female-male), percentage points
I. Share of informal employment in total employment	71.6	65.1	68.6	-6.5
1. Agriculture-forestry-fishery	99.0	99.0	99.0	-0.1
2. Industry-construction	63.6	39.7	53.8	-23.9
3. Services	56.6	59.7	58.2	3.1
II. Distribution of informal employment	100.0	100.0	100.0	
1. Agriculture-forestry-fishery	40.6	43.5	41.9	2.9
2. Industry-construction	32.3	17.9	26.0	-14.5
3. Services	27.0	38.6	32.1	11.5

Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey 2021.

Unit: %

Despite State efforts to restructure and modernize agricultural and rural areas, the agriculture sector still generates few formal jobs. While relatively few women work in the industrial sector (17.9 per cent of women workers), it has the highest rate of formalization (Table 11) with 39.7 per cent of women workers in informal employment compared to 63.6 per cent of male peers. This is partly explained by the large presence of men in the still largely informal construction sector compared to women more concentrated in export-oriented processing and manufacturing industries, such as textiles, garments, footwear, and electronics. These export-based industries tend to be more formal in nature.

Therefore, measures to formalize informal employment should pay attention to the niche development characteristics and labour issues of each economic industry. This also underlines the need for greater government attention to industrial development and investment policies, in tandem with creating decent work, as an integral part of broader formalization strategies.

According to the type of business establishment ownership, most workers employed in household and own-account establishments were informal, accounting for 94.1 per cent of total employment in that sector (Table 11). The share of informal jobs in other sectors of the economy – including private enterprises, state-owned enterprises and FDI enterprises – was significantly lower, although still relevant especially in the private sector (27 per cent). This shows that the level of compliance with labour laws of some private employers, in terms of signing labour contracts and paying compulsory social insurance for workers, remains a challenge.

► **Table 11: Share and distribution of informal employment by ownership and sex, 2021**

	Male	Female	Total	Gap (female-male), percentage points
I. Share of informal employment in total employment	71.6	65.1	68.6	-6.5
1. State-owned sector	11.0	6.5	8.6	-4.5
2. Private sector	29.4	24.2	27.0	-5.2
3. Foreign direct investment sector	6.4	5.2	5.7	-1.2
4. Households, own-account sector	94.0	94.3	94.1	0.3
II. Distribution of informal employment by ownership	100.0	100.0	100.0	
1. State-owned sector	1.3	1.0	1.2	-0.2
2. Private sector	6.9	6.1	6.5	-0.8
3. Foreign direct investment sector	0.5	0.8	0.6	0.3
4. Households, own-account sector	91.4	92.1	91.7	0.7

Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey 2021.

Unit: %

2.4.2. Status in employment and occupation

By employment status, there is a clear difference between female and male informal workers (Table 12). In 2021, the proportion of female informal own-account workers and contributing family workers was higher than of male workers by 4 and 14 percentage points, respectively. Meanwhile, the rate of female informal workers who were employers and wage employees was lower than male cohorts by 1.6 and 17.3 percentage points, respectively. These results reveal how women's informal employment tends to be concentrated in more vulnerable jobs than men's.

► **Table 12: Share and distribution of informal employment by employment status and sex, 2021**

	Male	Female	Total	Gap (female-male), percentage points
I. Share of informal workers in total employment	71.6	65.1	68.6	-6.5
1. Employers	51.1	36.9	47.5	-14.1
2. Own-account workers	90.6	91.1	90.8	0.5
3. Contributing family workers	100.0	100.0	100.0	0.0
4. Members of cooperative	73.4	95.8	81.9	22.4
5. Wage workers	57.1	35.7	47.8	-21.4
II. Distribution of informal workers	100.0	100.0	100.0	
1. Employers	2.3	0.7	1.6	-1.6
2. Own-account workers	43.4	47.4	45.2	4.0
3. Contributing family workers	10.6	25.5	17.2	14.9
4. Members of cooperative	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.0
5. Wage workers	43.7	26.4	36.1	-17.3

Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey 2021.

Unit: %

By occupation, the number of informal workers doing high-skill jobs requiring advanced educational qualifications and skills (managers, technicians and associate professionals) only accounted for a small proportion (1.8 per cent), with minimal gender differences (Table 13). About 62.8 per cent of informal workers were employed in low- and medium-skilled jobs (office clerks, service and sales staff, assemblers and machine operators), while the share for female informal workers was 7.3 percentage points lower than of male informal workers.

► **Table 13: Distribution of informal workers by occupational group and sex, 2021**

	Male	Female	Total	Gender gap (Female–Male)
<i>I. High-skilled occupation: (1) + (2) + (3)</i>	1.7	2.0	1.8	0.4
1. Managers at all levels	0.1	0.0	0.1	-0.1
2. Higher level technical professionals	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.3
3. Secondary level technical professionals	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.1
<i>II. Medium- and low-medium skilled occupation: (4) + (5) + (6) + (7) + (8)</i>	66.0	58.7	62.8	-7.3
4. Professionals (including elementary technical workers and office clerks)	1.0	0.8	0.9	-0.1
5. Service and sales staff	13.2	31.1	21.1	17.9
6. Skilled workers in agriculture	19.9	14.8	17.6	-5.0
7. Skilled craftsperson	23.3	8.4	16.7	-14.8
8. Skilled workers in assembling and operating machinery and equipment	8.8	3.5	6.5	-5.2
<i>III. Low-skilled occupation: (9)</i>	32.3	39.3	35.4	7.0
9. Elementary workers	32.3	39.3	35.4	7.0
Total: (I) + (II) + (III)	100.00	100.00	100.00	

Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey 2021.

Unit: %

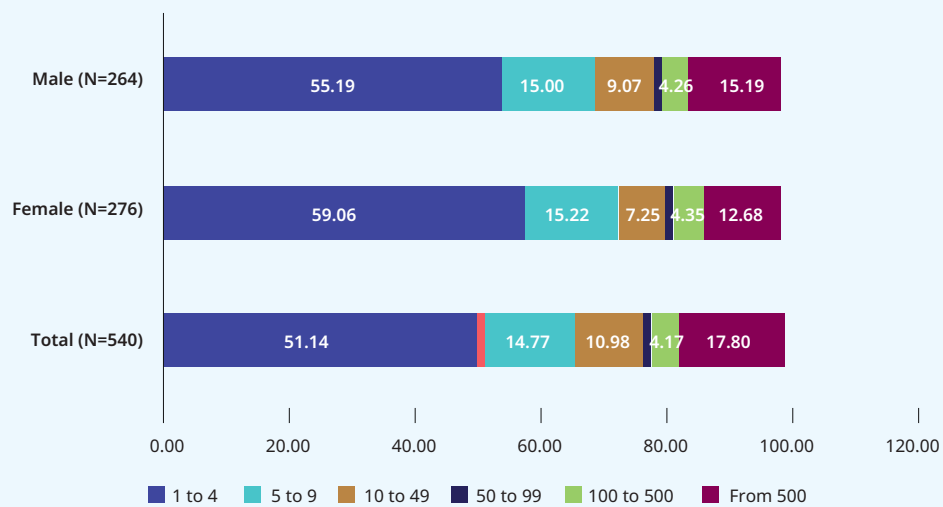
In addition, more than a third of workers (35.4 per cent) were in low-skill occupations and this proportion was 7 percentage points higher for women. In fact, non-state-owned enterprises, informal business and production establishments mostly use outdated technology, limiting the demand for high-skilled workers.

2.4.3. Size of economic units

Most informal workers were employed in small or micro economic units (Figure 4). The proportion of informal workers in establishments with less than five workers was 55.2 per cent, and 15 per cent in those with five to nine workers. Notably, survey respondents employed in economic units with 100–500 workers (4.3 per cent) and more than 500 workers (15.2 per cent) were all technology-based drivers or delivery workers. As well, the share of women informal workers in economic units of less than five workers was 8 percentage points higher than for male workers.

► **Figure 4: Distribution of informal workers by size of economic unit and sex, 2022**

Unit: %



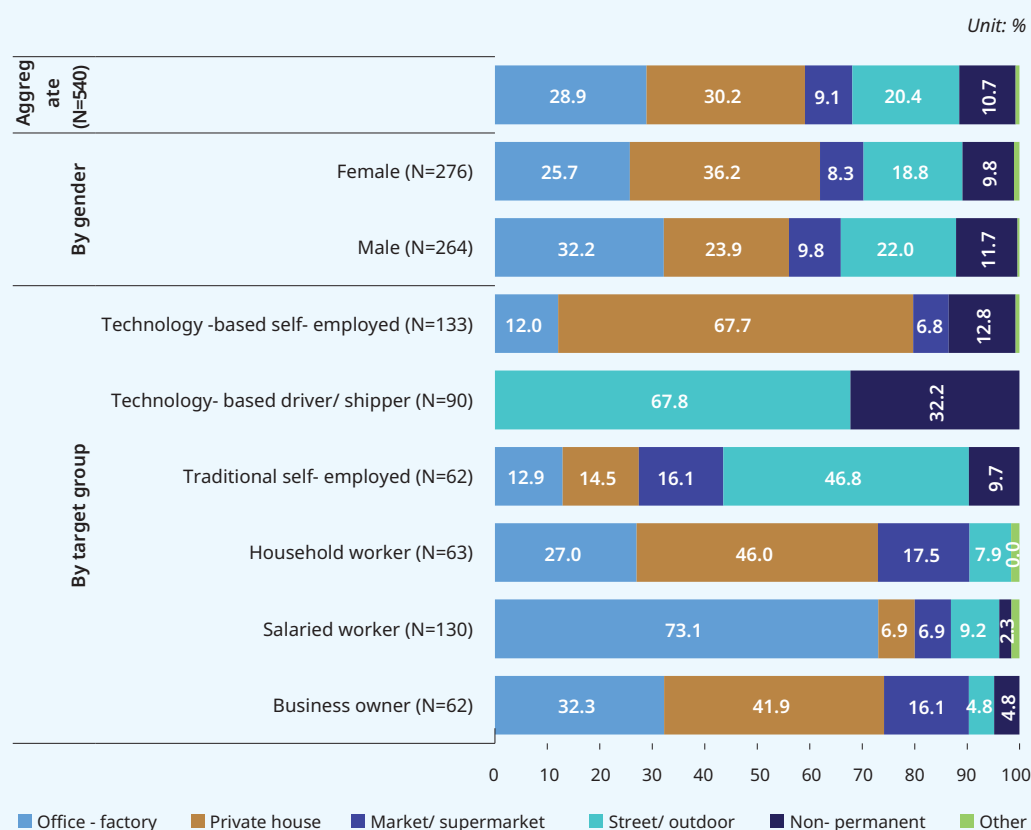
Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

2.4.4. Place of work

The work place of informal workers is dependent on the nature of their employment, but most did not have their own or a permanent work place (Figure 5). Only 28.9 per cent of respondents worked in offices or factories, and most were wage employees. The remainder worked in private homes (30.2 per cent), street or outdoors (20.4 per cent), non-permanent workplaces (10.7 per cent) or at markets or commercial centres (9.1 per cent). The share of female informal workers who worked at private homes accounted for the largest proportion (36.2 per cent), higher than for male peers (23.9 per cent). As "Private homes" fall outside the scope of regulations on workplaces, persons doing such domestic work remain vulnerable to potential abuses.

According to the survey target groups, technology-based drivers, shippers and traditional self-employed workers had the highest rate of working outdoors and on the street (67.8 and 46.8 per cent, respectively). The remaining respondents from the technology-based drivers and shippers category worked in non-permanent working locations (32.2 per cent).

► **Figure 5: Distribution of informal workers by working place, sex and employment status, 2022**



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

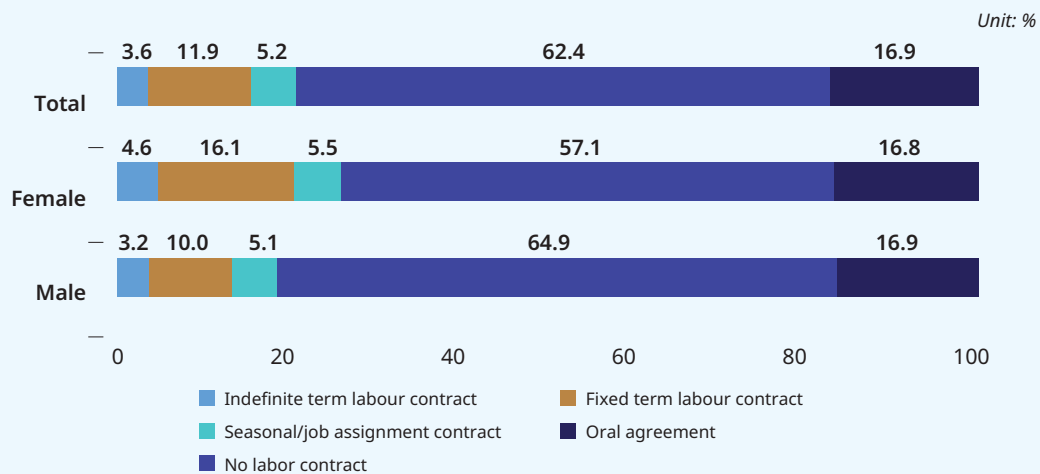
2.4.5. Labour contract

According to GSO Labour Force Survey data, in 2021 most informal wage employees were without employment agreements or labour contracts. Only 20.7 per cent of informal wage workers entered into any type of written labour contract (Figure 6). In comparison, a large share only had oral agreements (62.4 per cent), with some having no agreements at all (16.9 per cent).

As regulated by the Labour Code 2019 (Clause 2, Article 18, Point a, Clause 1, Article 145 and Clause 1, Article 162), two parties may enter into a verbal labour contract for a term of less than one month. However, further analysis of workers engaged in oral agreements shows that most had worked for employers for three months or more (95.1 per cent). Most work in the informal sector. Thus, there are common violations of labour legal regulations of written contracts in the informal sector.

This situation among male informal wage workers was more serious than for female peers. The proportion of male informal wage workers without a labour contract and with an oral agreement was 7.9 percentage points higher than for female counterparts (81.8 versus 73.9 per cent, respectively).

► **Figure 6: Distribution of informal wage employees by form of labour contract and sex, 2021**



Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey 2021.

Regarding technology platform workers, the survey found that most entered into freelance or business cooperation contracts (like a commercial agreement).²⁹ According to Table 14, nearly 94.4 per cent of surveyed workers reported entering into freelance contract/agreements with technology firms, 92.2 per cent for male workers and 97.4 per cent for female peers. Around 5.6 per cent of workers had a job assignment contract with technology firms.

This implies that most technology platform workers, specifically platform drivers and delivery workers, are considered business partners of technology enterprises rather than official employees. These workers may lack employee benefits and are not guaranteed certain labour rights and social security. According to provisions of the revised Labour Code 2019, a partnership contract enables technology enterprises to employ workers under a legal contract, while avoiding exercising the legitimate rights and interests of workers in accordance with provisions of the Labour Law. In essence, the relationship between this group of workers and technology enterprises can be identified as an employment relationship as there are contractual contents on work that must be performed, issues regarding pay (discount rate per transaction, bonuses and penalties) and are subject to the management and supervision of technology enterprises (ILSSA, 2021). This is an issue that requires policy attention and State management to reshape the employment relationship and labour relations between technology enterprises and their workers who are considered "partners" at present.

²⁹ A cooperation contract is an agreement between individuals and/or legal entities to jointly contribute assets and efforts to perform certain work, and jointly share benefits and responsibilities (see: Civil Code 2015, Article 5).

► **Table 14: Distribution of informal platform drivers and delivery workers by sex and form of work agreement with technology firm, 2022**

	Male (N=51)	Female (N=39)	Aggregate (N=90)
1. Labour contract	0.0	0.00	0.00
2. Job assignment contract	7.8	2.6	5.6
3. Partner contract	92.2	97.4	94.4

Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

Unit: %

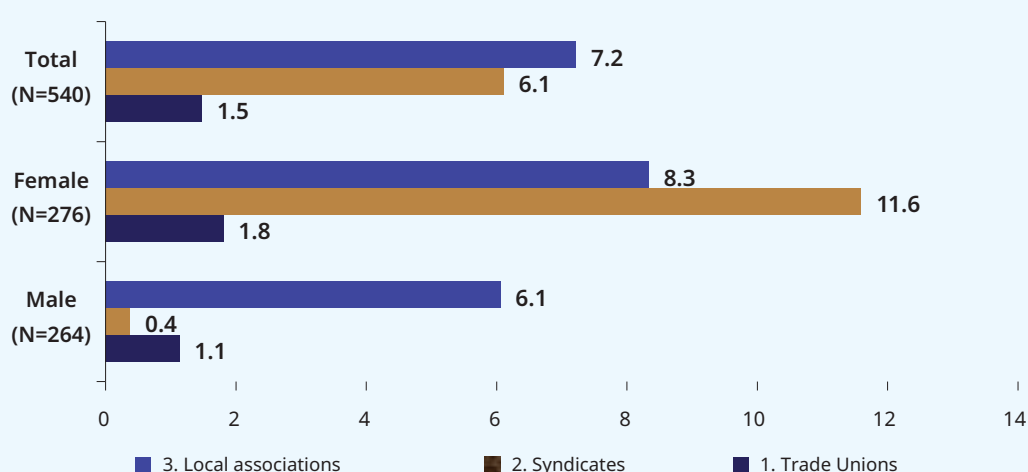
2.4.6. Participation in trade unions or workers' associations

Participation in organizations representing workers is extremely important to protect the legitimate rights of workers as well as safeguard the role, voice and status of workers in employment relations. However, according to survey results, their participation in workers' associations is limited (Figure 7), with just 1.5 per cent of respondents participating in trade unions. In addition, only 6.1 per cent participated in business/professional associations (hereinafter referred to as "syndicates"), mainly ceramic associations (traditional handicraft villages), platform drivers' syndicates or wholesale and retail establishment syndicates. Finally, 7.2 per cent of respondents participated in local associations such as Women's Unions, Youth Unions, veterans' and farmers' associations.

By sex, the participation rate of female workers in trade unions or syndicates was 13.4 per cent compared to only 1.5 per cent of male workers. This indicates that women seem to have a greater interest and need to join such organizations representing workers than men.

► **Figure 7: Participation rate in trade unions and professional/occupational organizations by sex, 2022**

Unit: %

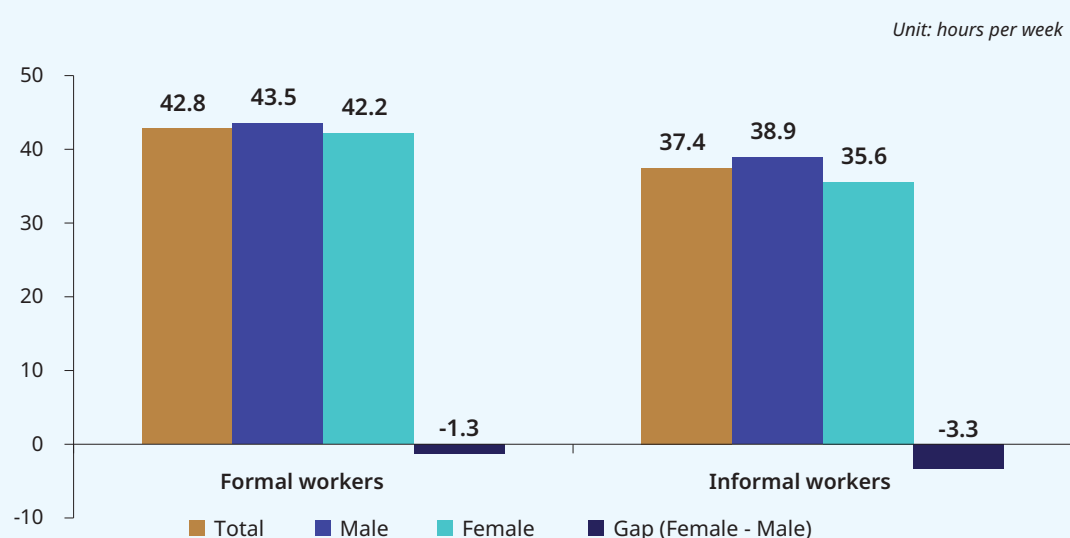


Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

2.4.7. Working time

According to the Labour Force Survey in 2021, the average work time of informal workers was 37.4 hours per week, 5.4 hours per week fewer than that of formal workers (Figure 8). This trend is true across all employment statuses and economic sectors (Table 15). By sex, the average weekly work time of female informal workers was 3.3 hours per week fewer than of male informal workers. Meanwhile, this gap among formal workers was only 1.3 hours per week. These patterns show that the gender gap in work times is higher among informal than formal workers.

► **Figure 8: Average working time by sex and informal status, 2021**



Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey 2021.

By employment status, the two groups of informal workers who had the highest work times were wage workers (42.5 hours per week) and employers (42.2 hours). The lowest average work time was among contributing family workers (32.5 hours). Female informal workers had a lower average work time than male peers in all employment statuses (Table 15)

By the three economic sectors, the highest average work hours was found among informal workers in the industrial sector (43.1 hours per week) and the fewest hours worked were among informal workers in the agriculture-forestry-fishery sector (32.6 hours). The widest gender gap in work times for informal workers was in the agro-forestry-fishery sector (4.2 hours).

► **Table 15: Average working hours by sex, informal status, employment status and economic sector, 2021**

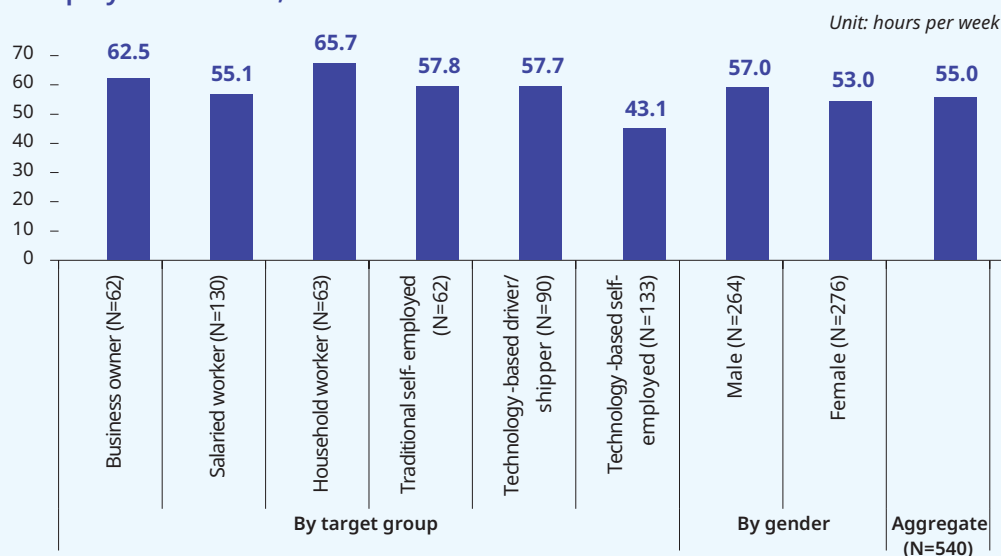
	Formal	Informal			
		Male	Female	Total	Gap (female–male)
I. Employment status					
1. Employers	44.30	42.46	41.15	42.21	-1.32
2. Own-account workers	43.54	35.71	34.49	35.15	-1.22
3. Contributing family workers	...	33.44	31.95	32.46	-1.49
4. Cooperative members	41.47	34.70	34.15	34.46	-0.55
5. Wage employees	42.64	43.23	40.96	42.49	-2.27
II. Economic sector					
1. Agriculture-forestry-fishery	45.34	34.57	30.35	32.63	-4.22
2. Industry-construction	44.60	43.73	41.57	43.08	-2.15
3. Services	40.99	39.65	38.84	39.22	-0.80

Note: By definition, all contributing family workers are classified as informal workers.

Unit: hours per week

Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey 2021.

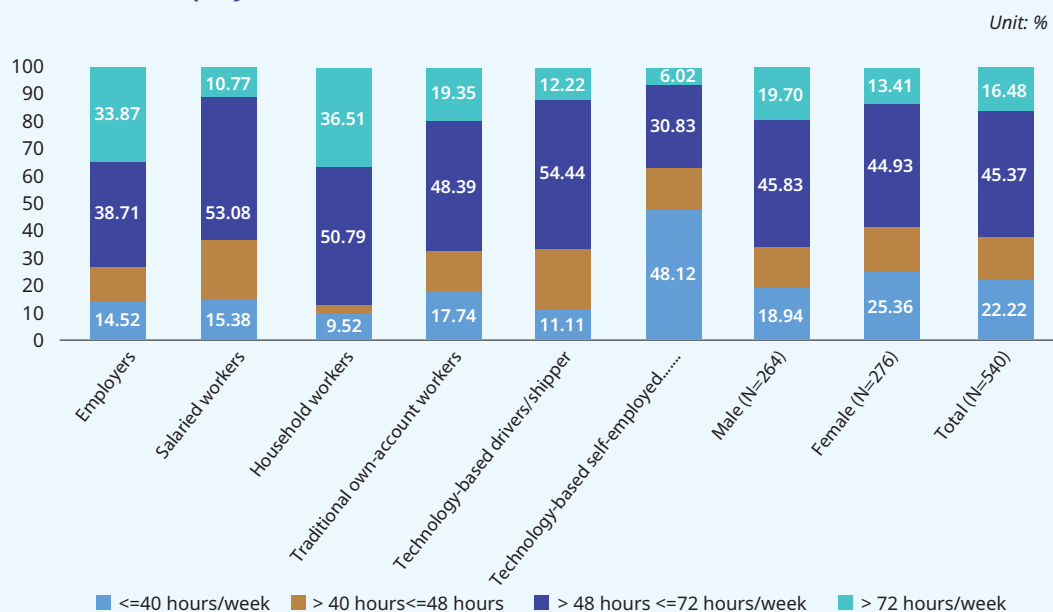
The survey of informal workers found long work times in urban areas of Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City, with females working fewer hours than male counterparts. The average work time of surveyed informal workers in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City was 55 hours per week, about seven hours higher than prescribed by the Labour Code (48 hours per week). As revealed in Figure 9, the highest average work hours was in the group of contributing family workers (65.6 hours per week) and the lowest for digital platform workers (43.1 hours). The average working time of female informal workers was 53 hours per week compared to 57 hours for male peers.

► **Figure 9: Working time of informal workers by sex and employment status, 2022**

Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

By target group, technology-based self-employed workers, such as online sales and web designers, had the largest proportion (48.1 per cent) working fewer than 40 hours per week (Figure 10). Meanwhile, household workers and employers had the highest share working more than 72 hours/week, at 36.5 and 33.9 per cent, respectively. Women were more likely to work shorter hours than men.

► **Figure 10: Distribution of informal workers by working hours sex and employment status, 2022**



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022

2.4.8. Wages and income

According to the Labour Force Survey in 2021, the average income of informal workers from their main job was VND 4.5 million per month, equal to about 55 per cent of a formal worker's income (Figure 11).³⁰ The average monthly income of female informal workers was nearly VND 3.3 million, just 45 per cent of that of a female formal peer. The gender pay gap was evident regardless of informality status, but was significantly higher among informal workers.³¹ The gender pay gap among informal workers was around 40 per cent, but among formal workers it was 21 per cent.

³⁰ Income is identified as wages, salary or profits from business that a worker received in a certain period of time from its main job.

³¹ The gender pay gap is measured as the difference between male and female earnings as a share of male earnings, multiplied by 100.

► **Figure 11: Average monthly income by informal status and sex, 2021**

Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey 2021.

By employment status, the average monthly income of informal workers was below that of formal workers in every employment status (Table 16). At the same time, men earned more than women in all categories. In 2021, among informal workers, employers had the highest average monthly income of VND 13.5 million. Conversely, informal wage employees had the lowest at VND 5.9 million per month.

► **Table 16: Average monthly income by informal status, sex and employment status (million VND) and gender pay gap (%), 2021**

	Male	Female	Total	Pay gap
I. Informal workers				
1. Employers	13.514	9.580	12.754	29.1
2. Own-account workers	6.043	4.293	5.233	29.0
3. Wage employees	5.865	4.451	5.409	24.1
II. Formal workers				
1. Employers	19.669	14.425	18.100	26.7
2. Own-account workers	10.573	8.667	9.714	18.0
3. Wage employees	8.435	7.008	7.673	16.9

Note: The gender pay gap is measured as the difference between male and female earnings as a share of male earnings, multiplied by 100.

Source: GSO (2022), Labour Force Survey, 2021.

According to results of in-depth interviews with enterprise management officers and policymakers, an important explanation behind the gender income gap is the higher representation of women than men in low-income occupations, mainly unskilled in personal services, retail sales, street vending and agricultural work. Another reported cause is women's shorter work hours compared to men. During in-depth interviews with officials and managers in charge of labour and gender management, the research team found gender stereotypes as among root causes leading to informal worker gender income gaps. Gender stereotypes manifest in many aspects of the labour market, including influences on women's career choices (see Box 2).

► **Box 2: Causes of gender income gap among informal workers**

"In Viet Nam, there are still stereotypes about men and women. Men often do jobs that require higher muscle strength and skill. Women will do "easier" jobs such as personal services and domestic work. At the same time, cultural beliefs are such that women are in charge of housework and men are the breadwinners of the whole family. Therefore, for the majority of Vietnamese women, family time is always at the top priority in their time budget; while men are more invested in professional education and vocational training than women so that they can take enable their role of breadwinner in the family. Therefore, men tend to have the opportunity to access occupations requiring high technical expertise. In addition, in my opinion, there are many other reasons for this income gap."

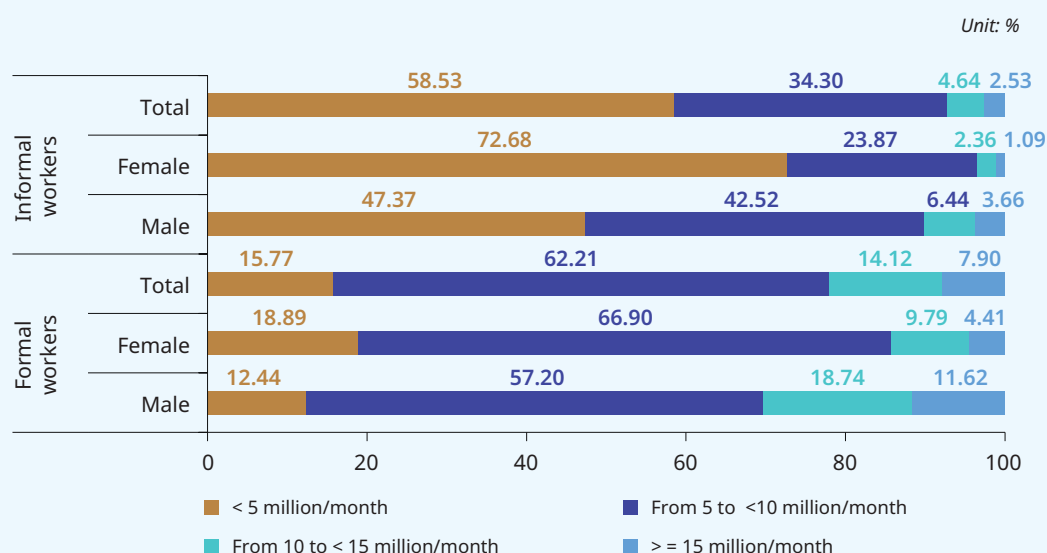
"Gender stereotypes are still strong about the role and capacity of women in economics, business leadership, and technical expertise, which is a major barrier to efforts to promote gender equality in employment. Specifically, the percentage of the female labour force who have received professional and technical training is very low and lower than that of male workers. The largest gender gap is in the vocational education level. These are the reasons that lead to lower income of female workers than male workers."

Source: ILSSA, In-depth Interviews with Managers at the National Level.

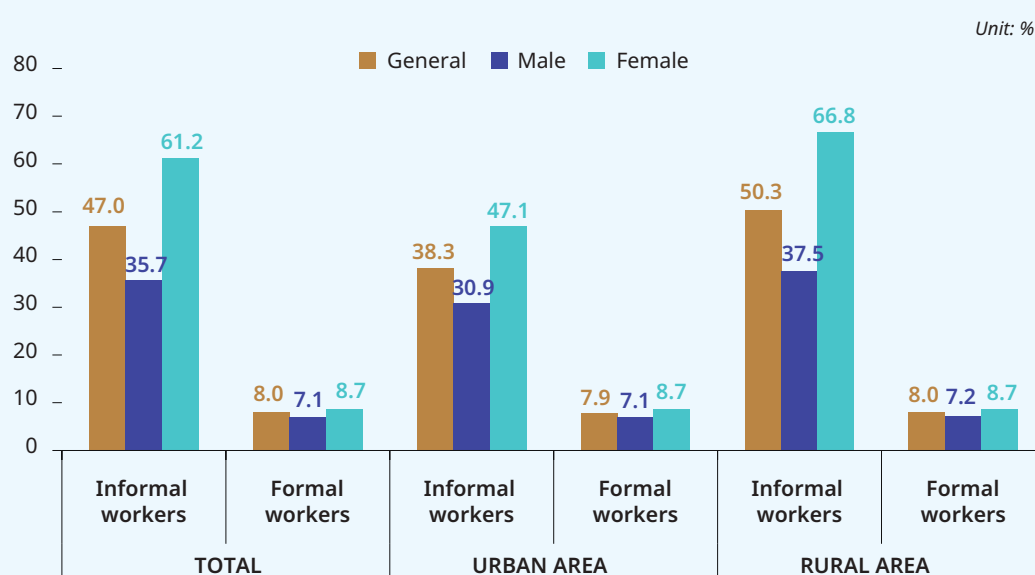
Figure 12, based on the Labour Force Survey 2021, shows the distribution of informal and formal workers by sex and income grouping. The share of informal workers with an average monthly income of VND 10 million or more was low (7.2 per cent), far below the corresponding rate for formal workers (22 per cent). In contrast, the majority of informal workers (58.5 per cent) had an average monthly income of less than VND 5 million, while this proportion among formal workers was only 15.8 per cent. Notably, the corresponding proportion among female informal workers was much higher than for male peers (72.7 against 47.4 per cent, respectively). The average monthly income of less than VND 5 million may be considered a relatively small amount to cover basic living needs³² and especially challenging for informal workers who commonly have dependents within the household.

³² The level of income needed to cover basic living needs will depend on the number of workers and dependents within the household, among other factors. See: ILO, Estimating the needs of workers and their families in Viet Nam, 2021.

³³ The regional minimum wage is regulated in Decree No. 90/2019/NĐ-CP (dated November 15, 2019) of the government.

► **Figure 12: Distribution of informal and formal employment by income group and sex, 2021**

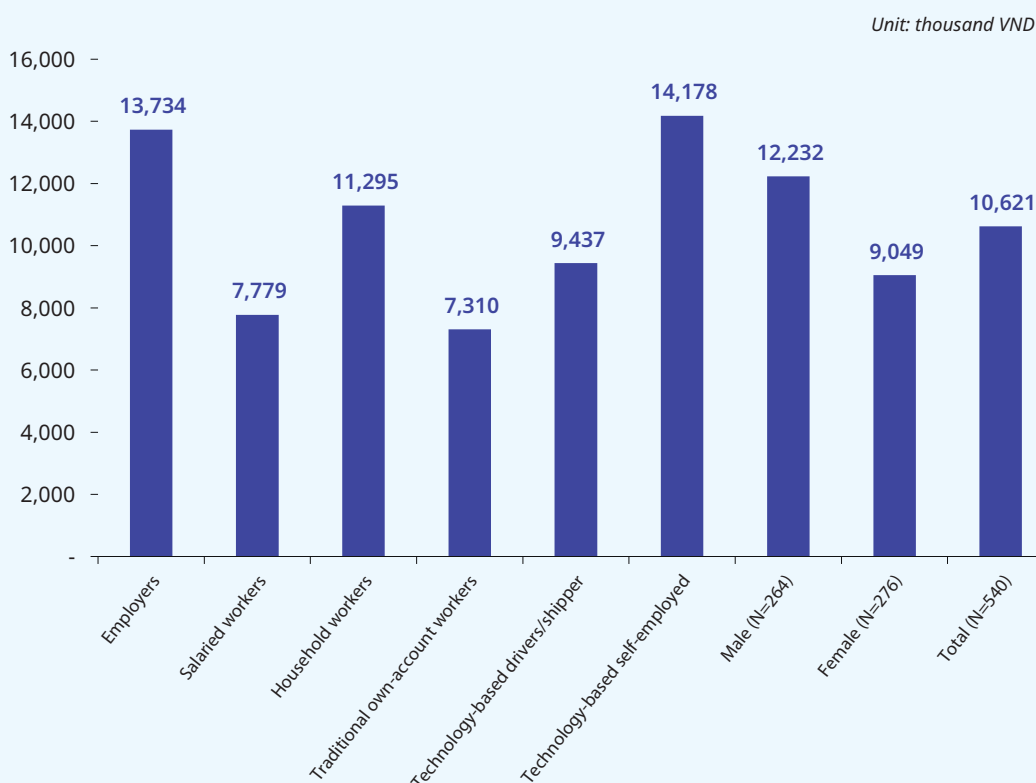
Nearly half of informal workers (47 per cent) reported income levels below the regional minimum wage, while the corresponding rate among formal workers was only 8 per cent (Figure 13).³³ By sex, there was a higher share of female informal workers with incomes below the regional minimum wage, nearly double the share of male counterparts (61.2 versus 35.7 per cent, respectively).

► **Figure 13: Proportion of workers with incomes below the regional minimum wage by informal status, sex and urban-rural area, 2021**

Based on the Survey on Informal Workers, results point to wages in the country's two most dynamic cities (Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City) being above the average income of informal workers nationwide according to the Labour Force Survey in 2021. This could be explained in part by the differing survey methodologies applied and because living standards in the two urban centres are among the highest in the country. The average income of surveyed informal workers in the two cities was VND 10.6 million per month (Figure 14). In addition, the highest average income was earned by technology-based self-employed workers (VND 14.2 million per month). By comparison, traditional self-employed workers had the lowest average monthly income (VND 7.3 million).

The average income of female informal workers in the two cities was VND 9 million per month, equal to 74 per cent of male informal workers' income in the survey sample. This could reflect less time worked by female informal workers compared to male counterparts. Notably, according to the survey results, the work time of technology-based self-employed workers was the lowest of all surveyed informal workers, but their income was the highest, reflecting differences in productivity.

► **Figure 14: Average monthly income of informal workers by sex and employment status, Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City, 2022**

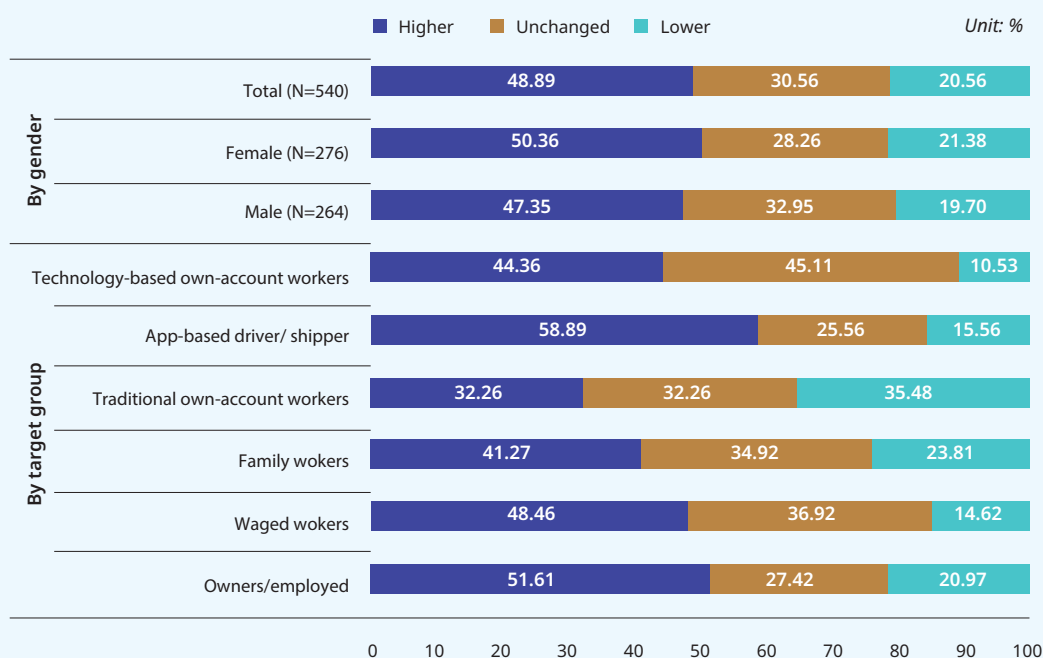


Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

According to the survey results, nearly half of informal workers (48.9 per cent) reported improved income in 2022 compared to the previous year (Figure 15). More than one-fifth of surveyed workers (20.6 per cent) revealed their income decreased compared to 2021. By sex, while more women informal workers reported improved income than men, a higher proportion of the former reported a decrease in income compared to the previous year.

By employment status, technology-based drivers and shippers had the highest share reporting a bump in income (58.9 per cent), followed by employers (51.6 per cent) and waged workers (48.5 per cent). Conversely, fewer traditional self-employed were better off (32.3 per cent).

► **Figure 15: Distribution of informal workers by reported income change compared to the previous year, sex and employment status, 2022**



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

2.4.9. Access to benefits and coverage of labour and social protection

From the surveyed results (Table 17), more than 52 per cent of total surveyed informal waged workers and technology-based drivers/shippers did not receive any kind of benefits (none of the 12 point criteria) at the workplace, that means the number of workers enjoying benefits at the workplace is not high (less than 50 per cent of the total). In particular, basic entitlements for workers according to provisions of the labour law, such as paid leave and paid sick leave, are rarely received. Policies helpful to female employees, such as maternity allowance and childcare support, are even more rare.

► **Table 17: Share of surveyed informal workers in wage employment entitled to employment and welfare benefits by sex and type of benefit, 2022**

	Male (N=113)	Female (N=107)	General (N=220)
<i>I. Received at least one kind of benefits</i>	49.56	48.60	49.09
1. Bonus (based on work performance)	48.67	47.66	48.18
2. Holiday and Tet bonus	40.71	39.25	40.00
3. Training/retraining, mentoring/vocational transfer	43.36	27.10	35.45
4. Provided with labour protection	37.17	31.78	34.55
5. Paid overtime	36.28	28.04	32.27
6. Food allowance	38.05	24.30	31.36
7. Household allowance	14.16	11.21	12.73
8. Participation in insurance system paid by employer	5.31	8.41	6.82
9. Housing allowance	8.85	3.74	6.36
10. Regular health check-up	6.19	6.54	6.36
11. Being paid while on annual leave/sick leave	5.31	0.93	3.18
12. Maternity leave allowance	0.00	0.00	0.00
<i>II. Have not received any kind of benefits (none of above 12 point criteria)</i>	50.44	51.40	50.91
Total: (I) + (II)	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

Unit: %

Through in-depth interviews with informal workers, the research team found that employment and welfare benefits received were insufficient. For example, for overtime payments, workers only often received additional payments equal to the agreed hourly salary, not time-and-a-half enjoyed by formal workers. Technology drivers/shippers and waged workers must share a part of the cost for uniforms, work protection and insurance paid by employers. Most reported they were only covered with accident insurance by their employers or digital platform providers/companies. By sex, aside from periodical health checks and insurance paid by enterprises, a smaller proportion of female workers received suitable benefits and policies at work compared to male peers.

► **Box 3. Benefits at informal production and business establishments, technology enterprises**

“The establishment operates on a small scale, we deduct a part of the income to support sick workers. We do not have enough finance for other support.”

Production and business establishment owner, Ha Noi

“Working in craft villages is very hard, so I also try to have Tet bonus for my workers. We have health support, but it is not high. This recent Tet, I tried my best, but only gave each worker a few million as a bonus, and other support is not compulsory at my establishment, that depends on each case.”

Production and business establishment owner, Ha Noi

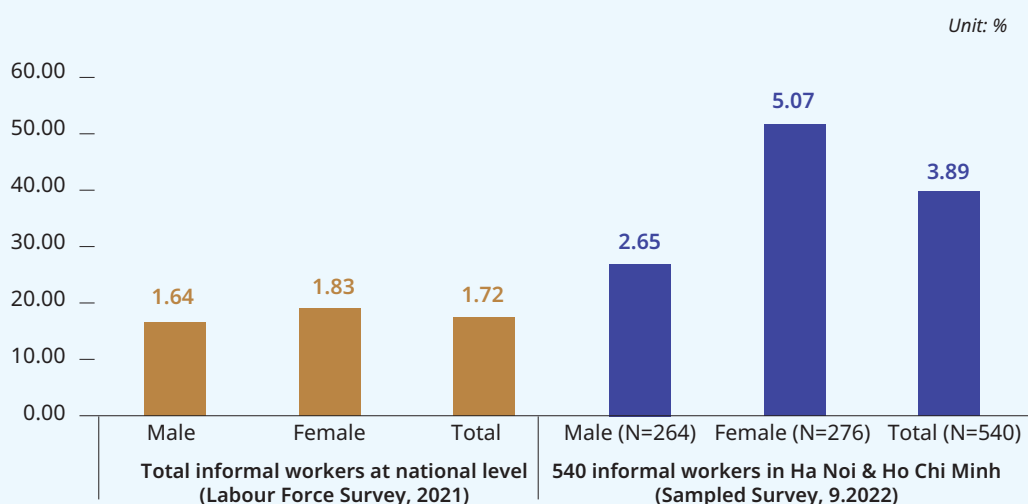
► **Box 3. (cont.)**

“Our business currently still provides an insurance package for driver partners, which is a traffic accident insurance. In addition, for female driver partners, they also receive support in Tet holidays such as gifts to women on 8 March 8 and on October 20 and gifts for outstanding female drivers.”

Technology business, Ha Noi-Ho Chi Minh City

Voluntary social insurance coverage among informal workers remains acutely low with little distinction by gender. According to the Labour Force Survey in 2021, only 1.7 per cent of workers participated in voluntary social insurance, with it slightly more popular among female workers (1.8 per cent) than males (1.6 per cent). Even, the sampled survey of informal workers in the nation's two most developed cities (Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City) also display less positive results with only 3.89 per cent participating in voluntary insurance (Figure 16). This leaves a large portion of the working-age population not covered by social protection. As a result, workers are left exposed without the full protection of the labour law, occupational safety and health, compulsory social and unemployment insurance. As well, they do not enjoy benefits in working age such as sick, paid or maternity leave, while child care and income security in old age are not assured.

► **Figure 16: Percentage of informal workers participating in voluntary social insurance**



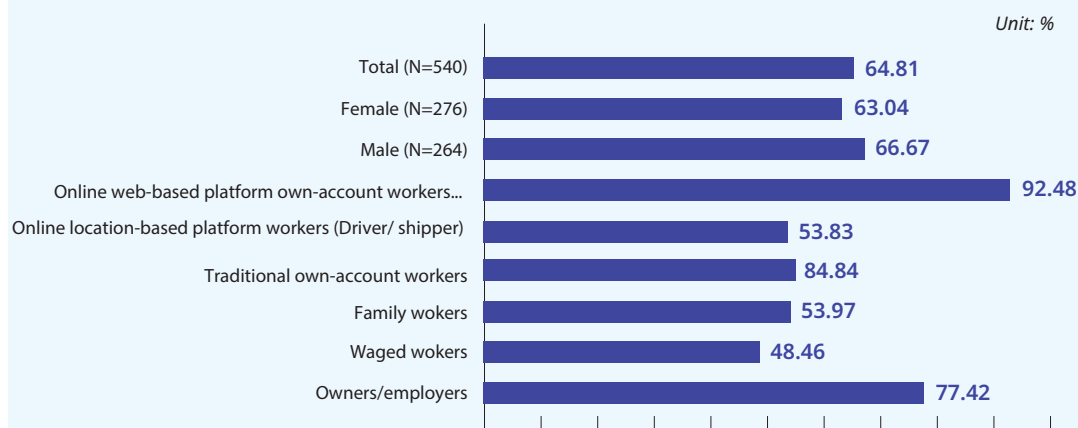
Source: GSO (2022), Labour force survey 2021 & ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022

On a more positive note with the policy of universal health insurance, the fee to participate in health insurance at household level is quite low due to the State subsidy, the rate of people participating in health insurance is high. In the survey sample, the proportion of informal workers participating in health insurance is the largest (70.9 per cent).³⁴

34 ILSSA (2022), the results of the Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022

Despite low and unstable incomes, the majority of informal workers had a sense of saving or making profitable investments to increase income and offset risks (Figure 17). The proportion of workers with savings or investment accounts was 64.8 per cent, higher among men (66.7 per cent) than women (63.0 per cent).

► **Figure 17: Percentage of workers with savings/investment by survey target group and gender**



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022

Regarding the form of savings or investment, informal workers commonly relied on "cash or jewellery" (38.7 per cent), "savings at the bank" (32.3 per cent), and "investing in production and business" (25.6 per cent).³⁵ Although the savings rate among surveyed informal workers was quite high, when asked more deeply about the value of savings, most workers considered it to be of small value, insufficient for life security (Box 4).

► **Box 4. Savings of informal workers in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City**

"Savings? My family's income is just enough for our expenditures without any savings. Currently, we have only about VND50 million in hand and we plan to make a mezzanine as a study place for our son."

Minh, Ha Noi

"Of course, we save a little money for spending when getting sick, but not much. Our family income is a little bit more than VND15 million per month, and we are raising two children of studying age. How can we save money in Ha Noi?"

Lan, Ha Noi

"We try to save about VND2 million a month to spend in case of illness. It is not really a savings as it is put in an envelope rather than deposited in a bank. At the end of the year, if we lack money for Lunar New Year, we will take it out to spend."

Hoa, Ho Chi Minh City

35 ILSSA (2022), the results of the Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022

The most frequently stated purpose of saving or investing by informal workers was to cover health care (21.2 per cent), followed by risk prevention (18.2 per cent), and investment in children's education (15.7 per cent).³⁶

The rate of informal workers participating in socio-political organizations was low, only 2.8 per cent of youth workers participated in local youth unions and 2.2 per cent of female workers participated in the local Women's Union.³⁷ The results of in-depth interviews with informal workers revealed they considered themselves too busy making ends meet and did not have time to join social/political organizations/associations (Box 5). Moreover, they did not appreciate the benefits of participating in mass society organizations. In times of need, workers turned first to family and friends. Those seeking support from the local government accounted for only 1.8 per cent of respondents.³⁸

► Box 5. Informal workers' participation in political organizations/associations

"I joined the Youth Union of the residential group, but in appearance only. Sometimes I work as a volunteer. I do not see many activities. The union provides no training, no job counselling or referrals."

21 years old, shipper, Ha Noi

"I moved from my hometown (Hai Duong) to Ha Noi to drive a Grab bike two years ago. I drive my bike all day or all night then sleep in a motel when finishing my work. I don't know and have no need to join any organizations or associations."

19 years old, platform driver (Grab bike), Ha Noi

"It seems that our neighbourhood has a Women's Union, but I'm busy selling goods all day so I do not join. Sometimes when the neighbourhood needs help, I will stay at home to give a hand."

49 years old, selling flowers on street, Ha Noi

"I have no organizations or associations at my workplace. Sometimes, our team goes out for some drinks after working hours and then come back home."

42 years old, construction worker, Ha Noi

2.4.10. Perceptions on gender equality at work place

According to results from in-depth interviews with representatives from production and business establishments, most informal establishments and technology enterprises said there was no gender inequality in their recruitment. However, there were certain jobs where employers specified a preference for men over women – for example, to take night shifts or jobs requiring heavy lifting. Few survey respondents – from business managers to workers – felt there was any gender discrimination in salaries paid to female informal workers, nor in their treatment in access to training or promotion. At most, 5.4 per cent of informal wage workers felt men were given preferential salaries.

³⁶ ILSSA (2022), the results of the Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022

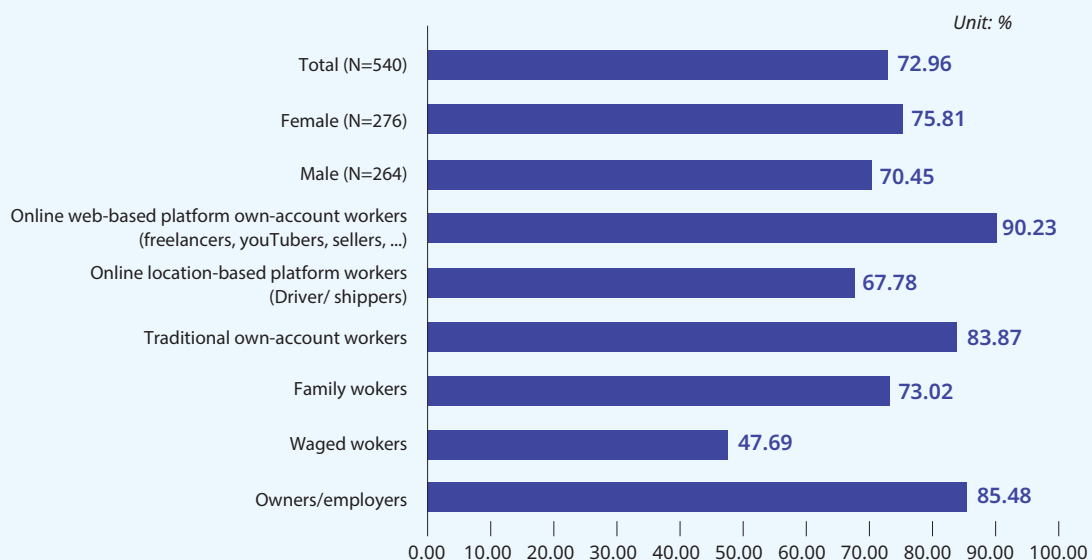
³⁷ ILSSA (2022), the results of the Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022

³⁸ ILSSA (2022), the results of the Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022

2.4.11. Risks and difficulties of informal workers

About two-thirds of surveyed informal workers have ever encountered one or more difficulties at work, of which the percentage of female workers with difficulties was 75.36 per cent, higher than for men 70.45 per cent (Figure 18). Salaried workers and technology-based drivers/shippers have the lowest percentage of challenges in their jobs, respectively, at 47.69 and 67.78 per cent. Self-employed technology-based workers (online sales, click workers) and group of owners of production and business establishments have the highest percentage of workers having difficulty in their jobs (90.23 and 85.48 per cent, respectively). In addition, the results of in-depth interviews also show that informal workers' main difficulties are unstable income, limited professional qualifications and limited access to benefits/policies, especially among women (Box 6).

► **Figure 18: Percentage of informal workers who have had difficulties in their work**



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022

► **Box 6. Difficulties of informal workers**

"Most informal workers face difficulties in life, especially in terms of income and policies for their children, such as education and health care. Most informal workers are migrants from rural to urban areas or from other provinces, so they have difficulty in housing. They must rent at high cost, and the use of public facilities is limited, among other difficulties."

In-depth interview, labour manager, Ha Noi

"In my opinion, the biggest difficulty for wage workers, specifically technology-based drivers and shippers, is they are not protected by the Labour Law against risks in production and business. For example, if an occupational accident occurs, they will certainly not be protected, not entitled to insurance regimes. For the group of self-employed household workers, they face limitations with acquiring new knowledge and new skills affecting labour productivity."

In-depth interview, labour manager, Ho Chi Minh City

► **Box 6. (cont.)**

"Among disadvantaged groups, female workers account for a larger proportion regarding low education, lack of technical qualifications, informal migrant workers facing difficulty in accessing basic social services such as health care, housing, education, and cultural activities. Informal workers are not covered by compulsory social insurance, while voluntary social insurance has many limitations and is not attractive to workers."

In-depth interview, gender officer, MOLISA

Besides difficulties, informal workers also face risks at work. The proportion of workers who have experienced risks at work is significant, accounting for 60.19 per cent of workers surveyed (Figure 19). Female workers have a risk rate of 57.25 per cent, lower than male workers (63.26 per cent). By target group, the group of salaried workers has the lowest probability of risk (33.85 per cent), while technology-based self-employed workers have the highest probability (75.94 per cent). Informal workers identified the following as their top five biggest risks: "customers cancel orders or transactions", "bad debts", "occupational accidents/diseases", "penalty for non-compliance with regulations/rules" and "bankruptcy". For online platform-based informal workers, the risks of "cancellation of orders/transactions" and "bad debts" were much higher than for traditional informal workers (64.1 and 34.1 per cent compared to 13.6 and 26.5 per cent, respectively).³⁹

► **Figure 19: Rate of informal workers who have been experienced at least one type of risk during their work**



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022

2.5. Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on informal workers

According to a study by ILSSA and GIZ (2020), the pandemic severely affected informal workers in seven key ways:⁴⁰

- (1) *Negative impacts on employment and income of workers, with females more severely affected.*

A survey of 400 informal sector workers showed that 18 per cent were not affected in terms of employment (agriculture, food retail, groceries, ride-hailing), while the remaining 82 per cent were impacted to differing degrees depending on their job and industry. Most informal workers and employers suffered from job or income shocks. At the same time, most informal workers (own-account, family, wage) had no other income sources for support when they stopped working or lost their job.

Of those workers, women were more severely affected by job losses as they were more concentrated in industries strongly impacted by the health crisis, including textiles, footwear, handicrafts, retail, family work services, and beauty care. In addition, in case an economic activity was shared by both wife and husband in a household, it was usually the woman who would take temporary/permanent leave to take care of the family and children. Therefore, the percentage of informal female workers with income lost or reduced was higher than the corresponding rate of male counterparts.

- (2) *The majority of informal workers did not make significant shifts in response to the crisis.* Rural workers were more likely to switch to other temporary jobs to earn income (for example, returning to agricultural production, participating in local household economic activities or expanding to farming and animal husbandry).
- (3) *After social distancing when production and business activities gradually recovered, workers returned to their job or found new ones in the informal economy.* According to the General Statistics Office (2022), the total number of people working in the informal sector (including those in agricultural households) in 2022's first quarter amounted to 33.4 million people, an increase of 97,500 people quarter-on-quarter and a decrease of 992,100 people year-on-year. The number of informal workers in agriculture, forestry and fishery was 21.4 million, an increase of two million on a quarterly basis and an annual rise of 695,400 people.
- (4) *Household spending depended on reserved resources and financial capacity.* With more limited financial resources than formal workers, informal workers needed to carefully manage expenditure to ensure household living standards. Most interviewed households (97 per cent) cut unnecessary expenditures during the crisis, as more than 60 per cent used savings, 45 per cent of low-income households bought essential goods on credit, 30 per cent in rural and fringe areas did further farming, 30 per cent of young households received support from families, 20 per cent of households with large compulsory expenditures had to borrow money and nearly 10 per cent received community support.
- (5) *The pandemic and its labour market impacts added psychological pressure, stress, anxiety and conflicts in households and the risks of violence and abuse against children and women increased.*
- (6) *As informal workers did not participate in social insurance, when exposed to job-related shocks, they could not access social and unemployment insurance policies. Instead, they relied on "self-security" or other community support programmes during the pandemic.*

Meanwhile, community support programmes, financial and material support from the community ("rice ATMs", models of "Happiness Store", "Zero Dong Store") were opened in a timely manner, bringing positive effects to stabilize social order and security.

40 ILSSA and GIZ, Evaluating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on informal workers in Viet Nam, 2020.

(7) *Informal workers' access to government emergency support packages was limited.*

According to a study by UNDP (2021), in 2020, the government issued emergency social security support packages (Resolution No. 42/NQ-CP⁴¹ and Resolution No. 68/NQ-CP⁴²) with different policies to support businesses and workers to overcome losses and gradually restore production and business, and ensure social security.

The first support package (Resolution No. 42/NQ-CP) encountered obstacles that prevented the intended VND1,000,000 per person per month from reaching many informal workers.

According to a summary by MOLISA (2022), to overcome the limitations of the first support package, the second support package (Resolution No. 68/NQ-CP) designed a cash support policy for informal workers laid-off or who lost jobs due to the pandemic. People's Committees of central provinces and cities developed criteria for determining target beneficiaries and levels of support not less than VND1,500,000 per person or VND50,000 per person per day. Provinces and cities determined criteria and support for affected workers who did not have labour contracts. As of 30 June 2022, provinces and cities provided support to nearly 16 million people (57 per cent of total informal workers in the economy).

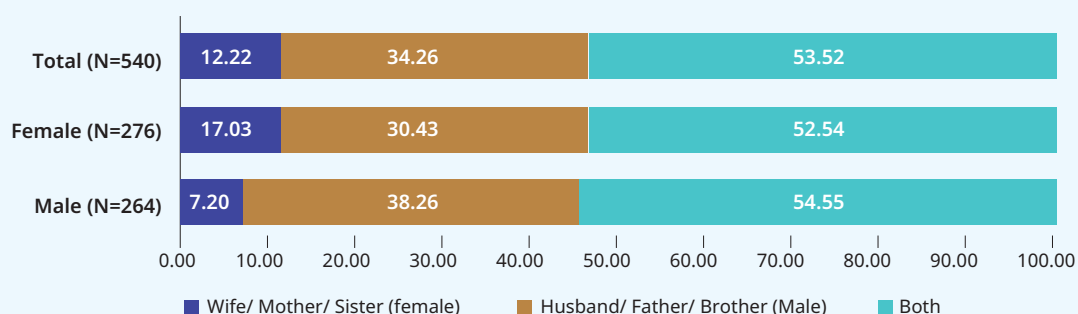
2.6. Attitudes on gender roles

Viet Nam has made progress in promoting gender equality in recent years. However, gender prejudices appear in many areas of social life, especially in a traditional family structure where women are seen as weaker than men. To spotlight how attitudes on gender roles can impact labour market outcomes, the survey team designed a series of questions.

In general, the country is still influenced by Confucian principles and the idea that men are the "strong gender" with status and power, while women are "weaker" with little voice in the family. Men take responsibility for making money and important decisions, while women play the role of "housekeepers". However, these stereotypes now contrast with women now taking an active role in the workforce. In fact, the survey found that more than half of respondents (53.5 per cent) reported making equal contributions to household income (Figure 20), with just 34.3 per cent reporting that a male household member was the main contributor to household income.

► **Figure 20: Distribution of informal workers by sex and family member who is the main contributor to household income, 2022**

Unit: %



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022

41 Resolution No. 42/NQ-CP on measures to support people facing difficulties due to pandemic was issued on 9 April 2020 with an estimated total package of VND62 trillion.

42 Resolution No. 68/NQ-CP on a number of policies to support employees and employers suffering hardship due to pandemic was issued on 1 July 2021 (Resolution No. 68/NQ-CP) and Decision No. 23/2021/QĐ-TTg stipulating the implementation of a number of policies to support employees and employers suffering hardship due to the pandemic (Decision No. 23/2021/QĐ-TTg) with a total package of VND26 trillion.

When carrying out in-depth interviews with married or unmarried workers in the survey sample, "income" was reported as a common aspiration of women for their spouses, but men did not select this criterion for their partner (Box 7).

► **Box 7. Responsibility for income contribution to the household**

"The monthly tuition fee of our two children is about VND 8-9 million, equal to my income. A series of expenses for electricity, water and house instalment payments is VND 5 million, not including expenses for eating and drinking, and entertainment activities. It would be too heavy for only one person to earn money for the whole family."

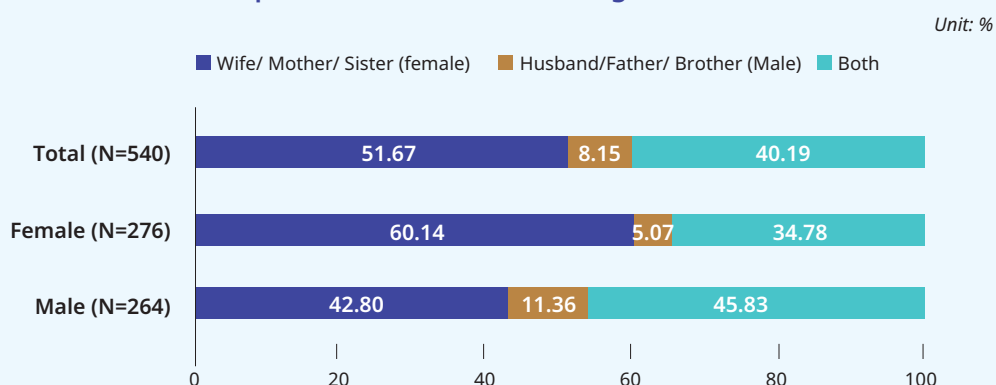
Female respondent, Ha Noi

"I think the most important role of a man in the family is whether or not he earns money. I go to work every day to raise my family. The old sayings of "men build houses, women build nests" is still true in my opinion. My wife has to spend time taking care of my family, so she cannot be burdened by worries about food, clothes and income. This is the reason why I don't let my wife work anymore."

Male respondent, Ha Noi

Although the majority of female employees are not the main contributor to family incomes, they take responsibility for financial management. The survey showed 51.7 per cent of respondents live in households with women as the main household financial manager, compared to 40.2 per cent for men (Figure 21).

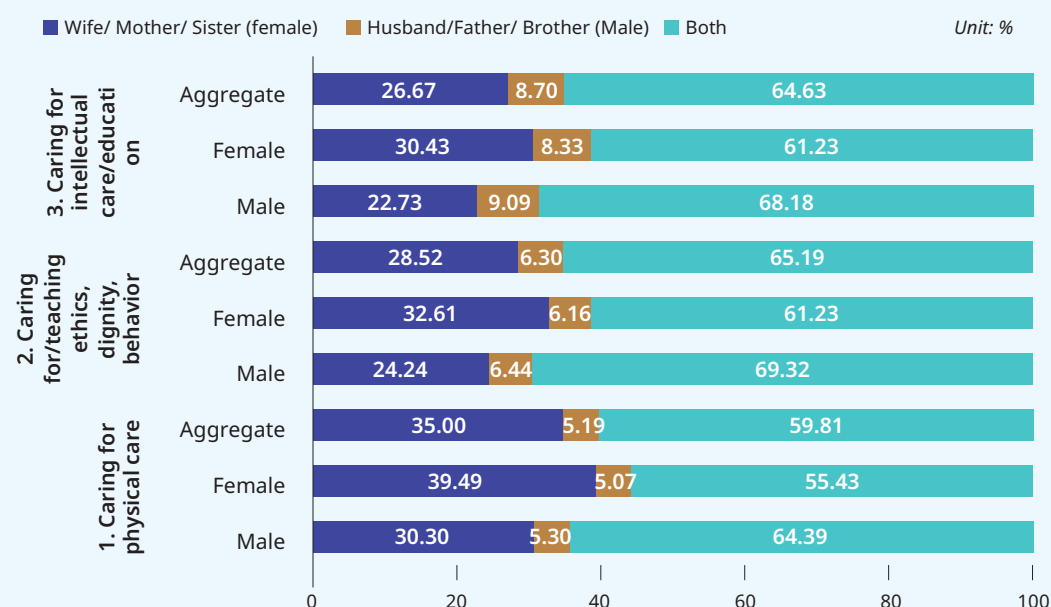
► **Figure 21: Distribution of informal workers by sex and the household member most responsible for financial management, 2022**



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

When it comes to childcare responsibilities, women and men are involved, but women take on a greater role. According to the survey, 59.8 per cent of respondents indicated that both parents provided physical care for their children (Figure 22). Moreover, 35 per cent identified women as taking on this main role, with only 5.1 per cent saying men did. Similar patterns were found in responsibilities to teach ethical behaviour and support education.

► **Figure 22: Distribution of informal workers by sex and the sex of the family member mainly responsible for childcare and education in the family, 2022**



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

The survey results point to female workers being more heavily influenced by expectations that "the responsibility of taking care of the family belongs to them more than male workers". Such findings are supported by in-depth interviews with informal workers which confirmed that women often seek informal jobs with lower income, but more time flexibility to devote time to caring for families (Box 8).

► **Box 8. Female workers quit jobs to spend time on family care**

"I've been married since 2009, my parents-in-law have two children, but only my husband is a man. Two years ago, my father-in-law suddenly had a stroke that made him unable to walk, and his mother-in-law was old, their daughters are also married, so my family took our parents to Ha Noi to live with us. At that time, I was working as an accountant at a construction company but had to resign to have a job to take care of my father-in-law. At that time, my husband's income was still higher than mine. Since the day I quit my job, I had to find some jobs to supplement my income. Luckily, I ran my own business for cooking nutritious porridge for children and making nut milk to sell online for building residents, so I earned a little for living."

Female respondent, Ha Noi

"When my son was in seventh grade, my husband told me that I should quit my job to focus on taking care of him. My salary was not worth working everyday and I did not have time to take care of my child while he was in puberty, rebellious and unruly. If no one took care of him, my husband was afraid that our son would be ruined. This is the reason why I quit my job. Fortunately I opened a cafe shop to earn money as well as spend time caring for my kids."

Female respondent, Ha Noi

Unpaid care work is defined as unpaid activities performed by family members to sustain life. Care activities include housework chores, such as cooking, food preparation, cleaning, washing clothes, fetching water and fuel and direct care work (care of children, the elderly, disabled and adults). Unpaid care work can be done in a household or community.⁴³

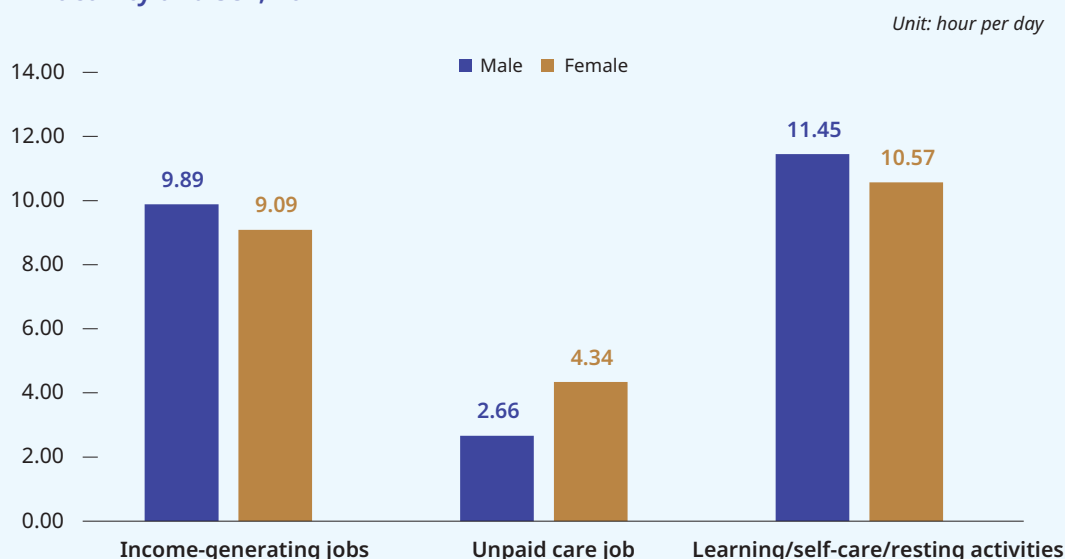
► **Table 18: Average time spent on unpaid care work among informal workers by sex and employment status, 2022**

	Male	Female	Ratio of female to male (%)
1. Employers (N=62)	2.35	4.26	180.82
2. Wage workers (N=130)	2.44	3.71	152.16
3. Contributing family workers (N=63)	2.87	4.69	163.27
4. Traditional self-employed (N=62)	2.57	4.82	187.58
5. Online location-based platform workers (N=90)	2.90	5.18	178.48
6. Online web-based platform own-account workers (N=133)	2.79	4.15	149.01
Total (N=540)	2.66	4.34	163.16

Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

Unit: hour per day

► **Figure 23: Time distribution of informal workers by main activity and sex, 2022**



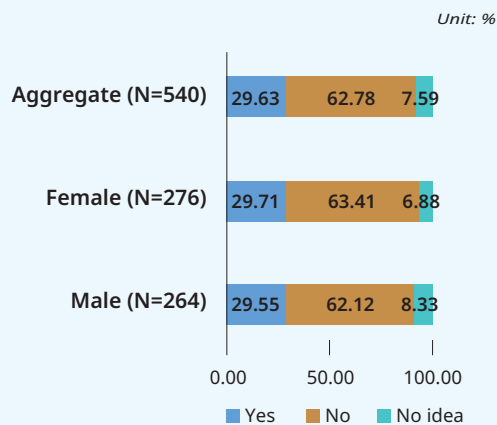
Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

43 Gender and Development Network, Unpaid Care: Prioritizing post-2015 Goals, Policy Summary No. 6-July 2014.

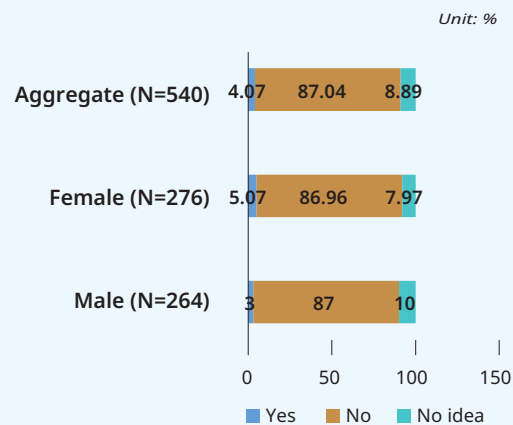
In summary, although there has been clear progress in realizing gender equality in many aspects of life and society within Viet Nam, the role of caregiver is still more frequently assigned to women. This is deeply rooted in the thinking and behaviour of Vietnamese men and women. Changes in gender equality awareness are occurring, but are not yet reflected in transformative action. This imbalance in the division of labour continues to perpetuate gender inequality.

The survey also examined issues regarding domestic violence. It is understood as "the (physical or verbal) force used by family members (physically or verbally) to solve family problems"⁴⁴. Forms of domestic violence include physical, emotional, economic, and sexual. In this report, the research team focused on physical violence and mental abuse shown in Figures 24 and 25. Up to 30 per cent of informal workers reported having experienced mental abuse such as "verbally insulted by their spouse", with equal shares reported among men and women. In addition, 4.1 per cent of informal workers have experienced physical violence ("Being beaten by their spouse"), with a slightly higher share among women (5.1 per cent) than men (3 per cent).

► **Figure 24: Distribution of informal workers by sex and status as victim of domestic verbal abuse, 2022**



► **Figure 25: Distribution of informal workers by sex and status as victim of domestic physical violence, 2022**



2.7. Desire and needs to switch to a formal job

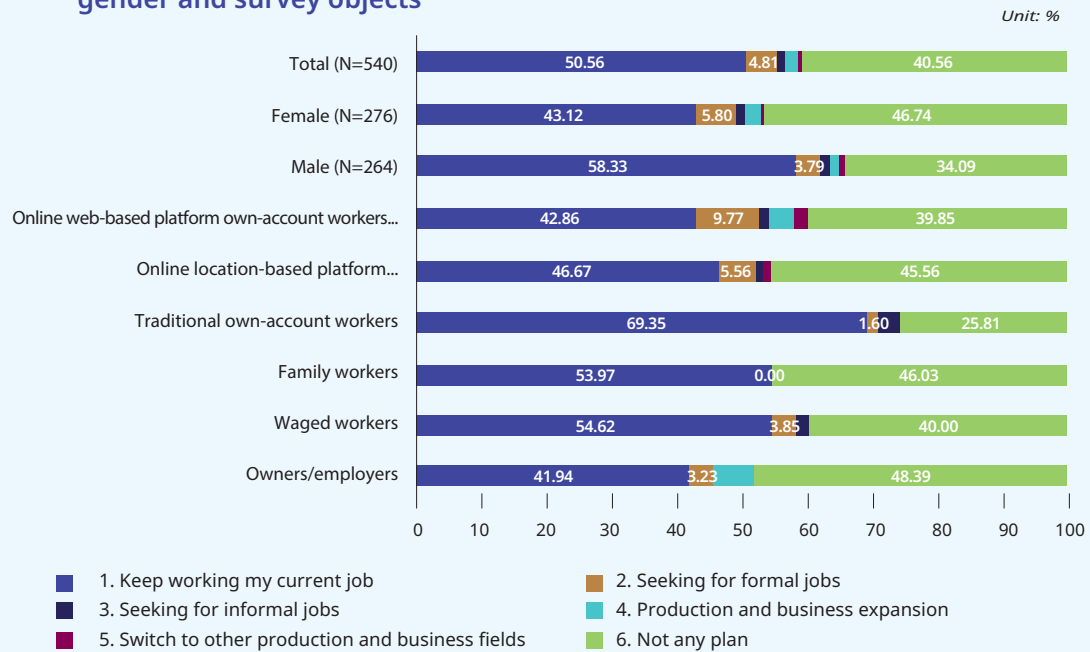
2.7.1. Desire to switch to a formal job

Slightly more than half of those surveyed planned to keep working in the same job into the future (50.6 per cent of all respondents, 58.3 per cent of male workers). However, less than half (43.1 per cent) of female workers intended to (Figure 26).

Among the 540 respondents, only 24.8 per cent said they would consider switching to a formal job if they had the chance, but nearly double the proportion of female workers (31.5 per cent) were willing to switch to a formal job compared to male peers (17.8 per cent). There were higher levels of willingness to switch to formal jobs among online platform informal workers, especially app-based drivers (40 per cent), followed by technology-based workers (33.83 per cent). In contrast, traditional self-employed informal workers were the least willing.

⁴⁴ According to Viet Nam Gender Equality Law.

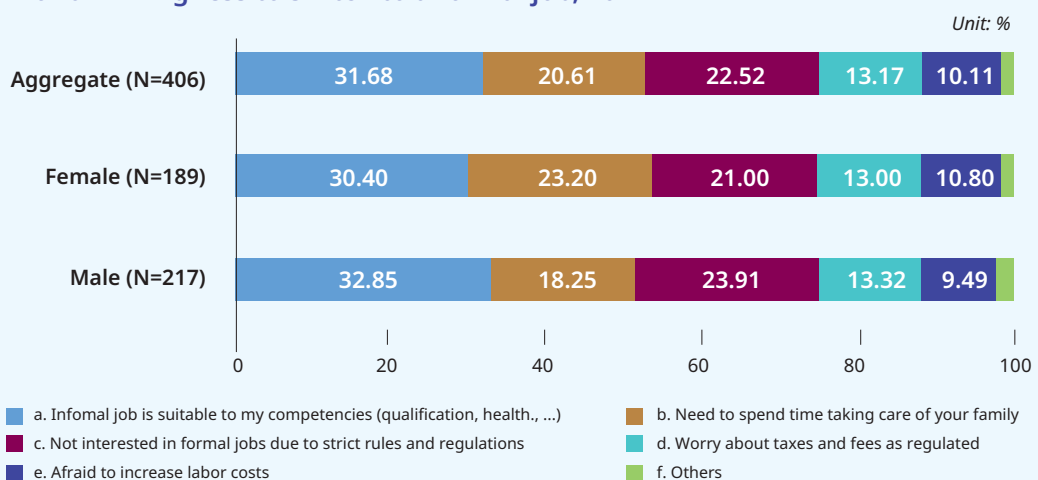
► **Figure 26: Structure of informal workers by future occupational plan, gender and survey objects**



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022

Reasons for not willing to switch to a formal job varied (Figure 27). The main factors included: the current job matched their competence and needs (31.7 per cent of respondents), not liking strict rules and regulations in formal jobs (22.5 per cent) and the current job enabled time for taking care of family members (20.6 per cent). Among women, time to take care of family was the second most important reason (23.2 per cent), while for men it ranked third.

► **Figure 27: Distribution of informal workers by sex and the reason for unwillingness to switch to a formal job, 2022**



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

2.7.2. What do informal workers need to switch to a formal job

Asked what was most needed in terms of support from employers, wage and platform-based workers' top three selections were increased income (66.4 per cent), increased bonuses and incentives (56.8 per cent) and support for paying/participating in social insurance (49.6 per cent). In all three categories, the share of female respondents seeking this support exceeded that of male cohorts (Table 19).

► **Table 19: Proportion of informal workers (wage workers and online location-based platform vehicle drivers) who need support from employers by sex and type of support, 2022**

	Total (N=220)	Sex		Type of employment	
		Male (N=113)	Female (N=107)	Wage workers (N=130)	Platform- based vehicle drivers (N=90)
1. Income improvement	66.36	63.72	69.16	51.54	87.78
2. Increase in bonuses and incentives	56.82	48.67	65.42	45.38	73.33
3. Support for paying/participating in social insurance	49.55	44.25	55.14	43.85	57.78
4. Signing labour contract	41.82	35.40	48.60	40.00	44.44
5. Support in case of risks	40.45	37.17	43.93	36.15	46.67
6. Full and productivity employment assurance	40.00	32.74	47.66	38.46	42.22
7. Safe working conditions and environment	36.82	30.09	43.93	28.46	48.89
8. To be trained (re-skilling, up-skilling)	27.27	24.78	29.91	26.15	28.89
9. Allowing flexible working time	20.91	22.12	19.63	15.38	28.89

Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

Unit: %

Table 20 highlights the share of surveyed informal workers needing government support, led by "support for paying/participating in social insurance" (46.1 per cent), "advice and support in finding and switching to a formal job" (35.2 per cent), "access to preferential loans" (34.8 per cent), "training on occupational skills" (33.3 per cent) and "guidance and support in business registration/start-up procedures" (29.3 per cent).

► **Table 20: Proportion of informal workers who need support from the government by sex, employment status and type of support, 2022**

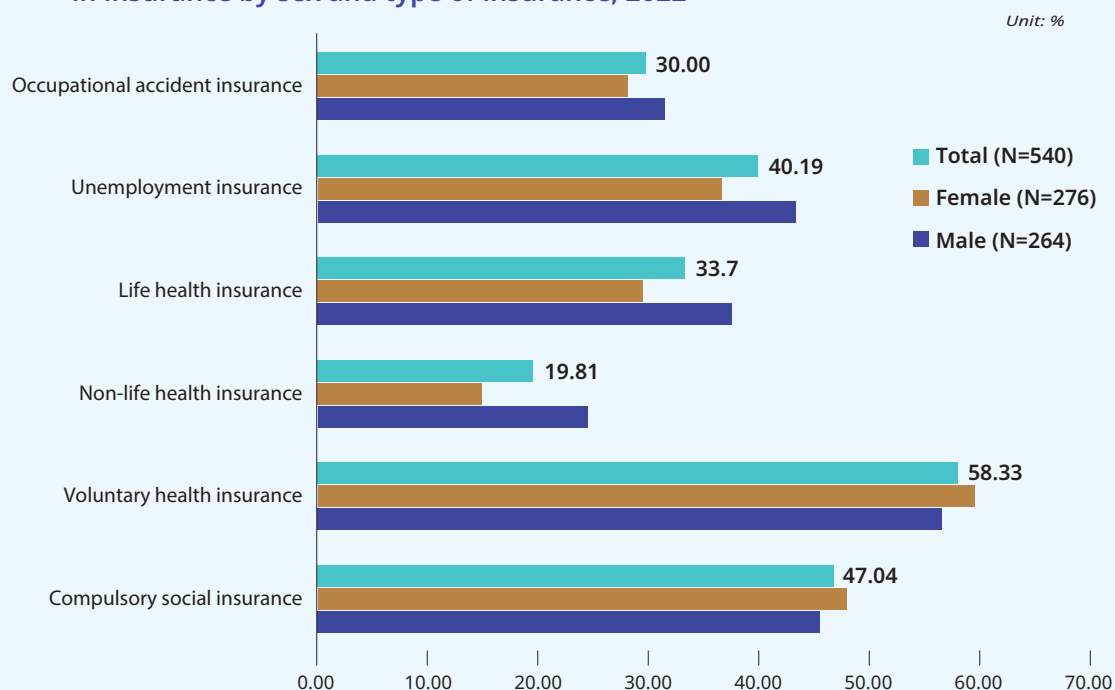
	Total (N=540)	Sex		Employment status		
		Male (N=264)	Female (N=276)	Employers N=62)	Wage worker, online location- based platform drivers/ship pers) (N=220)	Traditional/ platform own- account workers, contributin g family workers (N=258)
1. Paying/participating in social insurance	46.11	46.97	45.29	29.03	51.36	45.74
2. Advice and support in finding and switching to a formal job	35.19	34.47	35.87	20.97	40.91	33.72
3. Access to preferential loans	34.81	38.64	31.16	50.00	25.91	38.76
4. Training on occupational skills	33.33	32.95	33.70	27.42	40.91	28.29
5. Guidance and support in business registration/start-up procedures	29.26	29.92	28.62	29.03	23.64	34.11
6. Trained with managerial skills	27.59	26.89	28.26	29.03	18.64	34.88
7. Support output consumption market	27.22	27.65	26.81	41.94	10.45	37.98
8. Services to support employment abroad	14.81	18.18	11.59	14.52	12.73	16.67

Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

Unit: %

The survey results spotlight that the proportion of workers willing to participate in any type of insurance was relatively high (Figure 28). This indicates that workers were aware of the protective role played by various types of insurance, especially health, social and unemployment insurance. The proportion of workers willing to participate in voluntary health insurance was the highest (58.3 per cent), followed by compulsory social insurance (47.0 per cent), unemployment insurance (40.2 per cent), life health insurance (33.7 per cent) and occupational accident insurance (30.0 per cent). There was a higher rate of female workers willing to participate in health and social insurance than males, but lower than male peers in the rate of willingness to participate in other types of insurance such as unemployment, life health occupational accident insurance. Private insurance schemes with high premiums were not viewed as attractive by informal workers with unstable incomes.

► **Figure 28: Proportion of informal workers willing to participate in insurance by sex and type of insurance, 2022**



Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022

The survey also examined barriers to transitioning to a formal job (Table 21). Asked about what prevented them from making the transition, the following top five reasons were given: "low-level technical expertise and skills (46.8 per cent), "unable to arrange time to take care of family, children" (38.6 per cent), albeit higher for women (51.4 per cent), "do not know where to apply for a job" (35.0 per cent), "compliance with regulations of formal employment" (22.3 per cent) and "the current employers do not want to switch to formal production and business establishments" (19.1 per cent). Among these five reasons, two were related to personal constraints and the remainder were specific to the labour market context.

► **Table 21: Proportion of informal wage workers and online platform vehicle drivers who faced difficulties in switching to formal jobs by sex and type of difficulty, 2022**

	Total (N=220)	By sex		By type of employment	
		Male (N=113)	Female (N=107)	Waged workers (N=130)	Platform vehicle drivers (N=90)
1. Low-level technical expertise and skills	46.82	43.36	50.47	46.15	47.78
2. Old age and poor health	18.18	13.27	23.36	18.46	17.78
3. Unable to arrange time to take care of and fulfil family responsibilities	38.64	26.55	51.40	24.62	58.89
4. Opposition from husband's or wife's family	8.18	8.85	7.48	3.08	15.56
5. Not knowing where to apply for a job	35.00	31.86	38.32	24.62	50.00
6. Owner does not want to switch to a formal production and business establishments	19.09	15.04	23.36	16.15	23.33
7. Compliance with working regulations of formal employment	22.27	20.35	24.30	19.23	26.67

Source: ILSSA, Survey of Informal Workers, September 2022.

Unit: %

The analysis reconfirms the biggest obstacle faced by informal workers to switch to formal employment are largely self-imposed, except for those in production and business establishment owners. The choice of informal employment is mainly based on personal circumstances (level of education and health, for example) and family. According to the majority opinion of respondents in in-depth interviews, Viet Nam's labour market offered a variety of employment opportunities, especially for unskilled, low- and medium-skilled occupations. However, according to interviewed managers and researchers, the conversion from informal to formal employment was not as important as supporting them to access adequate income and minimum social security benefits. This requires widening the scope of labour policies and social insurance to informal workers (Box 9).

► **Box 9: Hurdles when switching to formal employment**

"In my opinion, currently, many enterprises are recruiting workers massively to restore production after the COVID-19 pandemic. There is huge demand for labour in industrial parks and export processing zones. Thus, informal workers have many opportunities to find formal jobs in those enterprises. However, the majority of workers do not think of applying for jobs in formal enterprises. They prefer flexible jobs that provide time for their family while still earning income, especially as online sales workers or freelancers."

In-depth interview, labour management staff at local level

► Box 9: (cont)

"Sometimes the unit income of informal employment in the labour market in big cities is higher than for formal employment. A barber can be paid around VND 300,000 per one female hair cut for about one hour's working time or a bricklayer can earn VND 300,000 per day, not to mention high-skilled workers. Meanwhile, informal workers with low levels of qualifications would have low income even if they apply for a job in formal enterprises, even lower than their current job. Thus, I think, it is more important to find solutions for informal workers to help them access jobs with guaranteed income and social security according to the decent work approach."

In-depth interview, labour management staff at national level

Part 3 ● Summary of key findings and policy implications





Part 3. Summary of key findings and policy implications

3.1. Key findings on gender issues in informal employment

- (1) *In Viet Nam, informal employment is a key source of jobs for females and males.* In 2021, the male informal employment rate was 6.6 percentage points higher than the corresponding rate for women (71.6 versus 65 per cent). During 2019-2021, the number of male and female workers in informal employment decreased, of which the former decreased more than the latter. The main driver of the decline was the COVID-19 pandemic and workers withdrawing from the labour market. The overall drop in labour force was accompanied by a decline in both informal and formal employment.⁴⁵
- (2) *While most informal workers undertake work in the informal sector (81.8 per cent), it is also common for workers to have informal jobs in the formal sector.* As well, more male than female workers are found in this category. In 2021, there were more than six million informal workers in the formal sector, where the proportion of male informal workers in total male employment was 10 percentage points higher than of female informal workers.
- (3) *Informal female workers tend to display more vulnerabilities than informal male and formal female workers.* By age, informal female workers have an older age structure than male counterparts, with a higher rate of informality among older female workers. Second, informal female workers are more likely to be a widow, divorced, or separated relative to informal male workers and women in formal employment. Third, in households of informal workers, the majority of other workers also engage in informal employment. When all workers are informal, the household remains especially vulnerable to economic, social and environmental shocks. Fourth, female and male migrant workers commonly participate in informal employment, with more than 1.4 million migrant workers engaged in informal jobs in 2021. Migrants in urban areas can find it difficult to access basic social services at the destination, while suffering from unsafe work environments, unstable employment, unsecured living conditions and other layers of social security.
- (4) *There are few differences between female and male workers in the rationale to choose informal jobs.* However, the percentage of female informal workers, as primary family and child carers, seeking flexible work times and convenience was slightly higher.

⁴⁵ The research report is primarily based on data from the Labour Force Survey (2021) with additional data collected in 2022. At time of publication of this report, updated data published in the GSO Statistical Yearbook of Viet Nam 2023 indicates a further decrease of the informal employment rate in Viet Nam to 65.8 per cent in 2022 and 65.1 per cent in 2023. The male informal employment rate was estimated at 68.3 per cent compared to 61.5 per cent for women in 2023.

- (5) *The education level of informal workers is low, especially among young women.* In 2021, the proportion of informal workers with technical vocational training was 14.1 per cent, much lower than for formal workers (57.65 per cent). Notably, more than one in ten female (15.3 per cent) and male (11.1 per cent) informal workers did not graduate from primary school. This is a key hurdle for informal workers, especially young ones, to access vocational training. Notably, the gender gap in education and training is insignificant among young people in Viet Nam, reflecting government efforts to promote gender equality in education and training.
- (6) *There are gender differences in choices of sectors to work.* Informal female workers are more involved than male peers in the agriculture-forestry-fisheries and the services sectors, which have a higher prevalence of informality.
- (7) *Female informal workers are in more vulnerable forms of employment than male informal peers.* In 2021, the former were more likely to be own-account or contributing family workers (73.4 per cent of informally employed women) and more frequently found in elementary occupations compared to men (55.2 per cent).
- (8) *In general, the quality of employment for informal workers is much lower than for formal workers and men.* This is supported in the research and survey findings based on where people work, work times, income, access to benefits, and other areas.
- (9) *Limited access to social security remains a significant challenge for informal workers.* The gaps in social protection leave informal workers with no choice, but to make use of limited savings and investments during times of need.
- (10) *In recent years, the role and status of women in the family has been significantly raised (MOLISA 2021).* These positive developments are due in part to implementation of the National Strategy on Gender Equality. However, gender stereotypes and inequalities within families and society persist, influencing gender outcomes in the labour market because of:
- Limited awareness of broader gender equality issues.
 - Gender stereotypes and discrimination in the family, society and labour market.
 - Gender disadvantages due to bias, subjectivity and lack of information in policy formulation and implementation exacerbate gender stereotypes and inequalities in the labour market. In particular, the absence of social policies (child care system, maternity benefits, and child family allowance, for example) has forced women to participate in the informal sector for the flexibility that it allows, even at the cost of low levels of security and income.
- (11) *Many informal workers do not see the need to transition to formal employment.* However, most informal workers expressed a desire to receive added benefits, like social security, that would come from formal employment.

3.2. Gender-responsive policy implications to promote decent work for informal workers

3.2.1. Promote and disseminate information on the value of the transition to formal employment and promote gender equality in labour markets

- (1) *Raise awareness among managers and policymakers as well as employers, employees and society of the importance of formalizing employment and related issues.* In particular, raise awareness of skilled workers in the informal sector on the importance of transitioning to the formal sector, as well as to understand their responsibilities, obligations and rights when moving to the formal sector.

- (2) *Strengthen communication to raise awareness of employers and informal workers in the informal and formal sectors on labour laws, voluntary social insurance and gender equality.* This can be achieved through diverse forms of dissemination, including knowledge-sharing trainings and information sharing through local public employment service centres.
- (3) *Continue to promote communication on gender equality on division of labour at work and in the family.* Such efforts will help raise the awareness of men, women and society in general on sharing family responsibilities, recognizing domestic work and family care duties to create equal opportunities for women and men in career development.
- (4) *Utilize central and local budgets to invest in information promotion and dissemination initiatives.* In addition, there should be close and effective coordination among State management, service-providing agencies, local mass organizations and associations. The latter should include local Youth Unions and women's associations. As well, business owners and workers should play an important role in raising awareness and knowledge about labour laws and promoting gender equality in the labour market.

3.2.2. Enhance access to decent work for all informal workers, with particular attention to female informal workers

- (1) *Finalize policies and laws on gender equality, labour and employment on the basis of promoting equal rights and non-discrimination.* In particular, expand the application of laws on labour, employment and gender equality to be gender inclusive of those in informal employment and migrant workers, including:
 - (i) Equal rights, without direct or indirect discrimination in accessing and benefiting from support policies and resources in labour and employment.
 - (ii) The right to work without discrimination in the workplace regardless of gender.
 - (iii) Access to welfare and improved work conditions.
 - (v) Equal rights to healthcare in accordance with gender characteristics.
 - (vi) Protection from forced labour, gender-based violence, and sexual harassment in the workplace.
 - (vii) The right to participate in policy decisions on issues related to gender equality and employment.
 - (viii) Enhanced work-life balance for all workers.
 - (ix) Equal sharing of domestic and unpaid care work.

Revisions toward expansion of labour market policies and programmes to cover all employees, including those in informal employment, should address key concepts and definitions such as the employment relationship. These revisions should expand target groups of active and passive labour market policies (preferential credit, training to improve skills and qualifications, labour market information, job counselling, and unemployment insurance, for example) to include freelancers and other informal workers. Special attention should be paid to training policies for freelancers and informal workers, such as reskilling and upskilling programmes, expanding vocational training support to unskilled informal workers, and developing mechanisms to support young people to study and work simultaneously to enhance qualifications and adapt to the labour market. As well, the employment relationship between workers on digital platforms and the platform company should be defined, with provisions on the roles and responsibilities of technology platform providers in ensuring the rights of workers.

- (2) *Invest in skills development so informal workers, especially females, can access formal jobs.* For informal workers in rural areas, effective implementation of the Vocational Training Programme for Rural Workers during 2021–30 is key to facilitate job creation or job changes for rural workers. For informal workers in urban areas, there is a need to develop and implement vocational training support programmes from the National Target Programme on Sustainable Poverty Reduction for 2021–25 and the National Employment Fund for migrant workers in informal urban employment. A particular focus on vocational training for unskilled, middle-aged and older workers, especially female ones, would help to this end.
- (3) *Ensure the legal rights of workers and prevent further informalization.* It is still common for formal sector employers to violate current regulations on labour contracts, occupational safety, and social insurance contributions. As well, informal workers in the formal and informal sectors tend to have low incomes without guaranteed overtime pay and other benefits. To address these challenges, it is necessary to focus on the following measures:
- Strengthen State management of labour inspections at enterprises.
 - Improve working conditions for informal workers, with an emphasis on occupational safety and health.
 - Promote collective bargaining and strengthen social dialogue for informal workers, including enhancing the voice of trade unions in protecting workers' rights in the formal sector, especially in enterprises that employ a large number of women such as in textiles, apparel, and footwear.
 - Champion policies to encourage enterprises to prioritize recruitment of vulnerable groups, including older workers, through employment subsidies.
- (4) *Develop an effective public employment services strategy.* Strengthen the employment service system by targeting specific vulnerable groups, such as young people, older workers, poor, and people with disabilities. Increasing access to labour market information to facilitate job placement should be a key focus on those living in rural, remote and isolated areas. In addition, digital technologies should be utilized to enhance online employment to better match labour supply and demand. Also critical is to undertake timely labour market forecasts and project trends in labour supply and demand.
- (5) *Promote decent work for youth.* Supporting young people to find high-quality formal employment is critical and several measures can achieve this goal. These include strengthening career orientation for students, investing in vocational training and job placement centres including the Youth Union, equipping young workers with life skills, enhancing the role of mass organizations (such as the Youth Union, Women's Union) in facilitating employment for young people, and promoting youth entrepreneurship through effective implementation of the Master Plan on Supporting the National Innovation Startup Ecosystem until 2025 and Supporting Students in Starting a Business to 2025" (30 October 2017).
- (6) *Create suitable jobs with adequate incomes for older workers.* Such efforts would ensure income security and promote the role of older workers in socio-economic development. These efforts should prioritize employment services, provide incentives to enterprises to recruit older workers, and ensure occupational safety and health through labour inspections. As well, build an overarching policy framework on developing decent jobs for older workers to 2030 is critical.

3.2.3. Ensure informal workers can access social protection

Policy support is needed to reduce the vulnerability of workers in informal employment, including:

- (1) *Expand the legal coverage of social insurance, including by broadening the categories of workers eligible to participate in compulsory social insurance under the Social Insurance Law.* Amendments should be based on the principle of ensuring gender equality.
- (2) *Raise informal workers' awareness of social insurance and their eligibility.*
- (3) *Make social insurance more family-friendly.* Different policy options can play an important role in reducing the gender gap in employment with contributory mechanisms, in part driven by women's more significant unpaid care work. This could include the introduction of child/family benefits, care credits on social insurance, and improved access to childcare.

3.2.4. Promote gender-transformative measures to transition to formal employment

- (1) *Support informal workers to transition to formal jobs in enterprises*

- *Enhance capacity building for informal workers to facilitate their transition to formal employment.*

Active labour market policies and employment services related to skills training, labour market information and job facilitation should target the self-employed and informal workers, especially female ones. Information dissemination should be through local employment agencies in conjunction with local mass organizations, especially the Youth Union and Vietnamese Women's Union.

- Support "traditional" informal freelancers such as barbers, manicurists, and traditional motorbike taxi drivers to register their business or join a professional association. Business registration should include tax registration to enable workers to benefit from relevant public policies, such as training and preferential loans.

- *For platform-based service providers (drivers, shippers, and house maids, among others), they could be encompassed by professional associations to promote workers' rights and related benefits, such as skills training and participation in social insurance.* At the same time, it is necessary to promote awareness-raising among technology platform providers on ensuring basic workers' rights and benefits. In the long run, there should be provisions in the Labour Law to define the employment relationship for these workers.

- (2) *Support freelance workers and informal production and business establishments to transition to the formal sector*

- A more dynamic and streamlined investment and business environment and incentives for informal economic units to transition to the formal sector are critical. To encourage private sector development, micro and small-sized enterprises must be supported and strengthened. It is necessary to continue removing barriers in the business environment, simplifying administrative procedures and adjusting the business tax regime so the economic and social benefits of formalization are evident and attractive.

- Reform and simplification of business registration procedures and regulations are needed, through implementing the Master Programme on State Administrative Reform for 2021–30. Incentives to encourage establishments and self-employed workers to register – such as for tax exemptions and reductions and support for compulsory social insurance contributions during the first years after business registration – could accelerate the transition to formality. Championing the benefits of business registration as well as access to government support for business development is equally essential.

(3) *Continue to effectively implement programmes to support women in innovation, business development and business start-ups.* These critical programmes to foster gender equality include the Scheme on Support Women in Business Start-ups for 2017–25 (Decision No. 939/QĐ-TTg dated 30 June 2017 of the Prime Minister) and the Scheme on Supporting the National Innovation Startup Ecosystem until 2025 (Decision No. 844/QĐ-TTg dated 18 May 2016 of the Prime Minister).

(4) *Strengthen the business knowledge, skills and understanding of informal workers, especially women, to expand their employment and business development opportunities.*

Tailored training, from basic to advanced, should target business owners, self-employed and contributing family workers in the informal sector with long-term tracking to ensure necessary follow-up support and training effectiveness. Adequate investment in human resource development should be funded from the National Target Program on Employment for 2021–25.

(5) *Strengthen preferential credit support for all in-need informal sector workers from the National Target Programme on Sustainable Poverty Reduction 2021–25 and the National Employment Fund.* It is necessary to review preferential credit policies for self-employment, production and business development, working abroad and vocational training. Expanding the beneficiaries of preferential credit loans to low-skilled young workers, redundant middle-aged workers, individual production and business establishments, and small and micro enterprises employing middle-aged and older workers is key. Credit support for production and business establishments should come with consulting services to help improve labour productivity and working conditions. At the same time, it is necessary to increase credit limits for business owners and loan terms so they can expand production scales and improve the quality of products.

3.2.5. Strengthen policy linkages in local economic development

(1) *To boost local economic development, support policies are necessary to further realize the potential of informal households, businesses and workers to strengthen linkages with formal businesses across the domestic supply chain.* For example, rural development policies should encourage cooperation and foster linkages between small businesses and households or create conditions for informal sector workers to participate in providing handicraft products and services for tourism or urban areas. In addition, urban development policy should consider special areas for street vendors, food trucks, and those providing small services such as motorcycle, appliance and lock repairs.

(2) *Develop public employment programmes to create jobs and ensure minimum income for disadvantaged groups of workers and those who lost jobs at formal enterprises.*⁴⁶ In fact, Viet Nam has not implemented public work programmes since 2015 (Employment Law took effect on 1 January 2015). On the one hand, this was because of low unemployment and underemployment rate, while the programme has not received adequate attention.

⁴⁶ According to the Employment Law 2013, public employment programmes are to be implemented through State-funded projects or activities associated with socio-economic development programmes in communes. These include building infrastructure for agriculture, forestry, fisheries and salt production; building public infrastructure facilities; protecting the environment; responding to climate change; and other activities serving local communities. These policies prioritize workers who are ethnic minority people, members of poor households or households living just above the poverty line or households having agricultural land recovered, and unemployed or underemployed people.

3.2.6. Promote gender equality in the family

Research results show that female informal workers face a dual burden, more so than men, of participating in economic activities and family care duties. However, they also have a small voice in family decision-making. Therefore, it is necessary to take measures to improve the status of female workers in the family, as well as creating conditions to balance income-generating work with housework and care responsibilities.

- (1) *Promote gender equality through amendments in regulations of social insurance and social protection, including:* Acknowledging unpaid care, housework and promoting public policies in child care, subsidies for kindergarten education and care services for older workers would help reduce the household burden on women.
- (2) *Continue to highlight the importance of gender equality in the division of labour at work and in the family.* Such efforts would raise awareness of men, women and society on sharing family responsibilities and recognizing domestic and care work to create equal opportunities for men and women in career development.

3.2.7. Strengthen State management of informal workers

A number of priority actions would enhance the management and support of informal workers. These include compiling statistics and information on informal workers employed on technology platforms, codifying the roles and responsibilities of local authorities in the management of freelance and informal migrant workers, and improving local labour inspection capacity to address Labour Law violations in the formal and informal sectors.

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