

Councils at lower levels), to the Politburo, Communist Party's Secretariat Committee, and the Government (or, in brief, to the highest level of the State). The initial purpose of Decision 217 is to ensure proper implementation of **commitments** in practice, effective **governance**, **civil rights** protection, improved **democracy** and social **consensus**. Though it may be not perfect, such mechanism, once strengthened, could become inclusive to actually engage NSAs and pave the way to a future enabling environment for NSAs to bring the voices of Vietnamese people on board. It offers an obvious chance to deepen the social accountability of public policies in Viet Nam, given the above-mentioned context and restriction. Therefore, and building on such mechanism, the programme could allow **EU to engage at political level, establishing a more structured dialogue** and, thus, to aim for **transformational impact**.

Out of the six mass organisations under Decision 217, the mandate of **Viet Nam Women's Union (VWU)** is to represent the rights and interests of Viet Nameese women and girls. Following several rounds of consultation and a joint field trip with them, the VWU appears to be keen on improving country's resilience to climate change and natural disaster and on promoting circular economy, while supporting women leadership; women economic empowerment; and women-peace-security agenda. VWU has strongly expressed its readiness to establish a strategic cooperation with Team Europe actors in improving the democratic governance mechanism, defined by Decision 217. With its nationwide network (from central to grassroots levels) and openness to work with the NSAs, Legislative agencies and Executive agencies, the VWU represents the best option for hosting the institutional capacity development, particularly the structured dialogues. Beside VWU being, it will be essential to ensure proper engagement with other **important stakeholders such as** other mass organisations (especially the Youth Union and the Fatherland Front), National Assembly's Committees, line Ministries; and relevant NSAs (especially academia, social enterprises and associations) and umbrella organisations such as VUSTA¹⁶, PACCOM¹⁷, but also provincial authorities.

2. Outcome 2: The monitoring and implementation of Viet Nam's international commitments related to Green Deal, MEAs, climate change and Gender Equality require greater and effective engagement of **NSAs, as key stakeholders**. The Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change recognized the centrality of gender equality, the empowerment of women, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations (FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1). The Glasgow Climate Pact emphasized gender equality, the empowerment of women and the full, meaningful and equal participation of women in climate action (FCCC/PA/CMA/2021/L.16). Following the 3rd EU Roadmap for engagement with CSOs in Viet Nam; the EU Strategy for human rights; and the EU Gender Action Plan III Country Level Implementation Plan, the Action aims to support NSAs in implementing national/local policy instruments, raising the awareness of communities and citizens, monitoring the implementation of policy instruments, advocating for international standards and inclusiveness, pursuing transparency and accountability, **pioneering innovations, especially those initiated by Youth and Women, that can spearhead changes on gender-responsive green transition, climate change mitigation and adaptation and environmental protection**. While the Action builds on relevant experience in working with international NGOs through Calls for Grant Proposals, it is expected that the sub-granting and service-provision mechanism allow to extend EU's support and the visibility of the EU and its Member States's acting in a Team Europe approach to a great deal of Viet Nameese NSA stakeholders, be it cooperatives, business and/or professional associations, universities and research institutes, private sector and social enterprises, academia, youth and women movements, NGOs, CBOs, etc. Since the technical capacity varies between NSAs, the Action encourages NSA stakeholders to form alliances for cross-sharing expertise; experiences and knowledge. As the financial capacity of Viet Nameese NSAs deteriorates due to the economic downturn and the serious impact of COVID-19 pandemic, the Action considers waiving their contribution (co-financing) as they apply for EU grants or sub-grants under the Action.

¹⁶ Viet Nam Union of Science and Technology Associations is the biggest umbrella organisation for Viet Nam's local NGOs. Its mission is "gathering and uniting Viet Nameese intellectuals in science and technology inside and outside the country, coordinating and guiding the operations of member associations".

¹⁷ People's Aid Coordinating Committee (PACCOM) is a specialized and functional body of the Viet Nam Union of Friendship Organisations (VUFO). PACCOM is responsible for relations with INGOs and for mobilizing aid. It works closely with INGOs both at the central level and in all 63 provinces and centrally administered cities to facilitate foreign NGOs' activities in Viet Nam.