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**Buddhist Nuns with Social Security Work In Vietnam Today And Some Issues Posed****\*Dr. Cao Thi Minh Hong, Nun, Thich Dieu Tam<sup>1</sup>,***Chief of Office cum Head of International Buddhist Department of the North Central Division of Nuns.***Corresponding Author\***

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**Abstract:** Social security is an indispensable condition for any country to be able to maintain economic, social, political stability, etc. for its own country, and Vietnam is no exception. Over the years, together with the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, Buddhist nuns have made many important contributions to social welfare activities for people from different angles, such as taking care of orphans and children, orphaned without support; participate in relief and social assistance activities for people in ethnic minority areas, areas with special difficulties, activities to prevent and combat social evils,... On the basis of evaluating the achievements, the author clarifies some limitations and difficulties in the process of this Buddhist work, thereby offering some solutions and recommendations to promote social welfare activities. An association for the people of the Nuns to contribute to the successful implementation of the country's sustainable development goals in the process of international development and integration.

**Keywords:** *Social Security, Buddhist nuns, Vietnam, Buddhism today, Vietnamese society.*

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Until now, especially in the current international economic integration context, the State of Vietnam has implemented many projects to take care of the lives of the Vietnamese people through social security programs. Besides, all religions focus on social charity activities. However, in terms of nature, Buddhism's social charity activities are different from many other religions. This difference stems from a number of peculiarities in the teachings of Buddhism. During the past many years, the humanitarian work of social welfare with positive results has confirmed that this is the strength of the Vietnamese Buddhist Church, and this strength originates from the spirit of patriotism. Loving-kindness, serving the Dharma, serving the nation, of Vietnamese Buddhist nuns, Thanks to this potential and abundant resources, the Vietnamese Buddhist Church in general and the Vietnamese Buddhist nuns, in particular, have been able to carry out many meaningful charity programs on traditional Buddhist festivals. religious and ethnic minorities such as Buddha's Birthday, worshipping and worshipping at lower schools in the summer retreat season, Vu Lan festival, Mid-Autumn Festival, Lunar New Year, Invalids and Martyrs' Day on July 27, supporting children Poor studios, Donating houses of gratitude, Building houses of love, Nurturing orphans, Lonely elderly, Free medical examination and treatment for poor patients,

forming charity kitchens, giving scholarships to poor students overcoming difficulties, distributing wheelchairs and bicycles, participating in fund programs for the poor, building bridges, drilling wells, building corrugated iron roofs, providing relief to disadvantaged people in remote border areas, especially enthusiastically participating in provide relief whenever the country has a flood disaster... This shows that Vietnamese Buddhist nuns play a very important role in humanitarian charity work advocated by the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and social charity activities at monasteries directly under the Buddhist Sangha. Associations at all levels or initiated by the Vietnam Fatherland Front Committee. Notably, in the majority of Vietnamese Buddhist nuns and nuns participating in charity and social welfare work in the Church organization, up to now there have been many female Buddhists who are successful businessmen, or Famous artists are the locomotive for charity and humanitarian activities... On the other hand, with the current favorable conditions, in the past time, there have been many female Buddhists who have enthusiastically contributed materials, together with monks and nuns to build Temples, expansion of monasteries to study abroad are managed by the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, in particular, the majority of women are mainly active participants in training courses at monasteries in the country. the whole country and this is an important foundation for a part of women who have awareness, ability, and ideals of enlightenment and liberation to continue on the path of ordination and study. Since the establishment of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in 1981, the number and quality of nuns' spiritual practice has increased, especially the quality of their dedication in the fields of education, preaching, and charity. The social security of nuns has been significantly improved, now there are many nuns with master's and doctorate degrees standing on the podiums of Buddhist academy lecture halls, they are ethical preachers. virtue, talent, and prestige in the Church organization. They all come from exemplary Buddhists who have contributed to the Church, which shows that, in addition to the role of Dharma protectors, Vietnamese Buddhist nuns and nuns dignify the church. also acts as a team to inherit valuable human resources for the Vietnamese Buddhist nuns and nuns in particular and the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in general.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

In recent years, the research on social welfare activities of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and the Vietnamese Buddhist nuns has received the attention of many domestic and foreign scholars from various angles. different levels of access. To study this article, we mainly use the historical method research method and logical method with interdisciplinary research methods (statistical method, analytical and comparative method, quantitative method). quantity) to clarify some relevant theoretical and practical issues. In particular, using the in-depth interview method to assess the situation and propose to strengthen the role of Vietnamese Buddhist nuns in ensuring social security for the people of the Nuns in recent years.<sup>1</sup>

## **3. RESULT**

### **3.1. Activities to ensure social security of the Central Nuns in recent years**

In 1935 the first law on social security appeared in the United States, the term social security has since been officially used. By 1941, in the Atlantic Charter and later the International Labor Organization

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<sup>1</sup> The author interviewed 05 abbots at some pagodas in Hanoi and Tay Ninh and 01 leader of the Central Vietnam Buddhist Sangha.

officially used the term social security in international conventions. On those grounds, social security has been recognized by all countries in the world as one of the human rights. In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted on December 10, 1948), the United Nations General Assembly specifically noted: "Everyone as a member of society has the right to social security. That right is based on the satisfaction of economic, social and cultural rights necessary for the dignity and freedom of human development...". In Vietnam, the 2013 Constitution affirms in Clause 2, Article 29 that: "The State creates equal opportunities for citizens to enjoy social welfare and develop the social security system" and further affirms. Article 34 "Citizens have the right to social security". Therefore, up to now, social security activities in Vietnam have become increasingly popular, in which there is a significant contribution of Buddhist monks and nuns. Especially in recent years, under the guidance of the Central Executive Council of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and the Central Sangha Committee, with the support of the authorities at all levels in 2019, the nuns division. The Central Committee has carried out a number of Buddhist activities with certain achievements. Continuing the achievements achieved in the past years, and at the same time to further promote the ability of the Vietnamese Buddhist nuns and nuns, contributing to the dignification of the Church, accompanying the nation, and developing a safe community. Social welfare in 2020, the Central Nuns' Sub-committee sets forth the following activities:

- Participating in the implementation of the program of activities of the Executive Council and the Central Board

- Together with the Nun Sub-divisions of the provinces and cities, they operate in accordance with the law on belief and religion, the church charter, the rules of the Sangha Committee, the guidelines, policies, and laws of the Party and State.

- Continue to call on the nuns' sub-divisions in the provinces and cities to host a rotating ceremony to commemorate the Holy Ancestor Dai Ai Dao - the senior nuns with good merit. In the past two years, 2020-2021 because of the complicated development of the Covid-19 epidemic. Due to the complexity, the Venerable Duc Lan allowed any province to hold the event on the spot, not gathering nuns nationwide as before.

- To further promote the advantageous activities of Vietnamese Buddhist nuns and nuns such as preschool education, charity, social security,...

- Facing the current state of environmental pollution and clearly seeing the harmful effects of environmental pollution and climate change, responding to the call of the Executive Council of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, the Chinese Nuns Sub-Committee The Central Committee of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha across the country has specific and practical programs of activities aimed at protecting the environment and responding to climate change, namely not using plastic and nylon items. , use once and then discard such as plastic bags, plastic cups, plastic straws, styrofoam rice boxes, disposable food... instead of environmentally friendly items.

The basic purpose of the Buddha's teachings is to relieve suffering, transmit the good things of Buddhist monks and nuns to contribute to upholding the value of compassion and wisdom of Buddhism with the spirit of patriotic service and sharing. For everyone, it is sustainable development, but emancipation does not mean monastic practice and escape from life, but on the contrary, the teachings and activities of Buddhism always carry a sense of community commitment with a spirit of commitment to the community. noble social responsibility, acting for the benefit of others and the common good for all. The

teachings of Buddhism are liberating birth and death, bringing people out of suffering. But liberation is the complete fulfillment, conscientiously performing all duties and obligations of a citizen in society, not avoiding society. There should be two clauses "Proclaiming the Buddhadharma, benefiting all beings" attached to each other in Buddhist teachings. The spirit of social responsibility is deeply imprinted in the thought of the Buddha's teachings, in the Flower Adornment Sutra there is a sentence: "Regardless of selfishness, we seek peace and wish for sentient beings to attain the end of suffering" (do not pray for peace for oneself). , but only vows to let sentient beings be free from suffering) the spirit of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva: "If you don't swear to become a Buddha in hell, you can't become a Buddha if you can't become a Buddha if you can't become a Buddha." Only when all sentient beings are saved will we attain Bodhi) - Science of Buddha offerings.

In the Medicine Sutra, when Ananda asked how to get out of trouble, the Buddha replied: "If there are sentient beings who are unfilial to the five disobedience, dishonor the Three Jewels, destroy my king's law, destroy If they violate the precepts, King Yama will punish them according to their serious and light crimes, so I advise all sentient beings to light lamps to make lanterns, to release living beings and to practice blessings, so that they can be free from diseases and disasters, and do not encounter accidents. ". Thus, in the Buddhist concept, actions such as releasing living beings, cultivating happiness, and doing good deeds are the way to help people have a peaceful life free from accidents. In addition, the Sutras Encourage bodhicitta, the Wonderful Dharma Lien Hoa sutra... All refer to the spirit of selflessness and altruism that advises people to live responsibly with the community and have compassion for others. The Lotus Sutra is one of the important Buddhist sutras: "Even if the crime is committed more than a mountain / The Magic of Dharma maintenance is less than a few rows", it mentions the merits of those who generate compassion to help sentient beings: If the good man! Good women who have accomplished the four dharmas, after the extinction of the Tathagata, will receive this Lotus Sutra: One is to be protected and remembered by the Buddhas, two is to plant roots of merit, three to be in the right concentration, four to have a mind to save. save all sentient beings"<sup>2</sup>.

40 years of establishment, with the motto: "Dharma - Nation - Socialism" and shining the spirit of protecting the nation and the people, with the philosophy for people and the desire to bring a happy and peaceful life to the people. people, the Vietnamese Buddhist Church in general, and the Vietnamese Buddhist nuns in particular, always accompanies the nation. Over the years, the nuns of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha have actively mobilized monks, nuns, and Buddhists nationwide to live in righteous faith so that the light of enlightenment of the Buddhadharma can be put into practice, actively implementing the activities of mutual affection, saving suffering and saving lives, ensuring social security, making practical contributions to the cause of national construction and defense. Thereby, this activity contributes to creating cultural beauty, imbued with the sentiments of the Vietnamese nation with the spirit of "protecting the nation, an".

Activities to ensure social security have always been considered as one of the key tasks of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, in which the Central Committee for Nuns and Nuns of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha clearly reflects the social function of the Buddha. Buddhism, through which, spread the message of "compassion, rejoicing" of the Buddha into social life. With that goal, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha has

<sup>2</sup> The Buddhist Church of Vietnam (2008), The Lotus Sutra, Most Venerable Thich Tri Tinh translated, Hanoi, Publishing House. Religion, p.38.

mobilized more and more monks, nuns, Buddhists, benefactors, benefactors, people in the country, and overseas Vietnamese to contribute and support. both materially and spiritually into movements (poverty eradication, sustainable poverty reduction, multi-dimensional poverty reduction) contributing to social security; towards the roots launched by the Party and State with the amount of funding and material in the following year always higher than the previous year. This year, because of the Covid 19 epidemic, the Central Committee of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha has called on the nuns nationwide to donate money to support the purchase of vaccines and ventilators for compatriots in Vietnam, and send money to the community. Indian cell.

During the Buddhist activities of the term, the nuns together with the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha have mobilized and donated to social security activities such as caring for and helping people affected by natural disasters and floods. flood, environmental protection; construction of rural roads and other humanitarian and charity activities with a total cost of up to hundreds of billions of dong; contributed and supported money and material for the work of ensuring social security worth 550 billion VND<sup>3</sup>, of which Ho Chi Minh City's Buddhism alone supported more than 150 billion VND. In 2010, The Church has contributed to charity work, ensuring social security of 700 billion VND, of which more than 400 billion VND is spent to support the poor, take care of poor students, raise lonely elderly people, and families. policies with meritorious services to the country, building houses of gratitude, supporting scholarships for poor students to overcome difficulties, providing capital support, and donating means of livelihood to people in difficult circumstances.<sup>4</sup>... In 2011, with the determination to contribute to hunger eradication and poverty alleviation for people in remote and isolated areas, especially those affected by storms and floods in the Central region, in 2020 the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha campaigned, contributing to charity and humanitarian work, contributing to stabilizing people's lives worth over 800 billion VND Term VI (2007-2012), Buddhism nationwide has donated to social charity work, ensuring social security worth more than 2,879 billion VND, of which the Buddhist Church of Ho Chi Minh City contributed. over 786 billion VND.

In 2015, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and monks, nuns, and Buddhists throughout the country continued to join hands to carry out humanitarian and charity activities, hunger eradication, poverty alleviation, ecological environment protection, contributing to the construction building a cultural lifestyle in the residential area.... Thereby, the Church has mobilized the contribution of the whole society worth over 1,164 billion VND for this work. In which, Buddhism in Ho Chi Minh City has contributed over 406 billion VND. In 2016, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha continued to make efforts to contribute to hunger eradication, poverty alleviation, disease treatment, relief for the sick, and job creation for people in special circumstances separate. In particular, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha has focused on spending a large amount of money on relief work and helping fishermen in four central provinces affected by environmental incidents caused by the Formosa Company. determine life, continue to go out to sea; at the same time mobilize to increase ni, Buddhists and the whole society contributed money, goods and articles worth tens of billions of dong to help people in flood-prone areas in the provinces of Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Binh, Quang Tri,... soon settle down. In particular, the Nuns Sub-Committee of the Central

<sup>3</sup> The currency of Vietnam

<sup>4</sup> Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (2017), Summary report on Buddhist activities of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha for the term 2012-2017, Hanoi.

Committee of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and the Sub-Committee of Buddhist Nuns in the provinces and cities across the country visited and presented gifts with a total value of over VND 2.8 billion. The amount and kind of donation for charity, humanitarian and social security work in 2016 was more than 1,330 billion VND, the Ho Chi Minh City Buddhist Church alone contributed over 433 billion VND, many provinces contributed. over 50 billion VND such as: Kien Giang, Soc Trang, Dong Nai, Long An, Ba Ria - Vung Tau, Hanoi... the total relief work is nearly 7000 billion VND. By 2019, according to the Summary Report on Buddhist affairs in 2019 of the Central Committee of Social Charity, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, the total amount is more than 2,000 billion VND<sup>5</sup>.

The program of social issues, bringing light to the poor, led by the nun Thich Nu Hue Tu, has carried out charitable activities such as visiting and giving gifts to the blind, organizing for cataract patients. can receive eye surgery, donate wheelchairs, shakers, walkers, support the vocational school of the Blind Association in Tam Ky city, Quang Nam province, support money to drill clean water wells for poor households in the Central Highlands province, support the Red Cross Society, ethnic minorities and poor people in the provinces, flood disaster relief... operating expenses are nearly 22 billion VND<sup>6</sup>.

Along with the contribution and support in terms of funding and material, people's health care activities are also interested by the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, contributing to sharing with the people difficulties in the medical field. which the State has not been able to respond in a timely manner. According to the summary report on Buddhist work, term VII, Social Charity Committee of the Central Committee of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha. With a system of over 165 Tue Tinh Duong establishments, more than 10 Eastern and Western medicine clinics, hundreds of herbal medicine and acupuncture clinics are operating effectively in the localities of Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi, Da Nang, and Can. Poem... examined and distributed Eastern and Western medicine, acupuncture and acupressure to hundreds of thousands of patients. Every year, the Church also opens training classes for primary medical staff, training classes for Eastern doctors to serve the people's medical examination and treatment requirements; Publication of Proceedings on medicine...for the care and treatment of diseases for poor people in remote and isolated areas. According to the report of the Summary of Buddhist work, term VII, the Social Charity Committee of the Central Committee of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha at the Long Buu Charity Clinic, led by the nun Doctor Lien Thanh in charge of Western Medicine, has performed Medical examination, medicine distribution, gift-giving to poor patients in the Central Highlands, Central region, remote areas, and medical equipment with a total cost of 19 billion VND. With the support of Unicef, through the theme "Buddhist Leaders' Initiative on HIV/AIDS propaganda", many Buddhist provinces/cities have established health care and counseling centers. health for hundreds of people living with HIV/AIDS.

In Thua Thien - Hue province, the Provincial Board of Directors regularly organizes classes to teach acupuncture and health care for health workers taking care of HIV patients at Hai Duc Pagoda....This is an activity of great social significance. contribute to saving the suffering of misguided people and helping to erase the stigma and prejudices of society towards patients, while limiting the spread of this century's disease. In addition, every year, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha also supports meals for poor patients at

<sup>5</sup><https://vbgh.vn/index.php?language=vi&nv=news&op=tai-lieu-hinh-anh-hoi-nghi-tong-ket-ghpgvn-nam-2019/bao-cao-tong-ket-cong-tac-phat-su-nam-2019-ban-tu-thien-xa-hoi-trung-uong-ghpgvn-1105.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (2017), Document of the Eighth National Buddhist Congress, p.130.

major hospitals in the country, typically: Ba Ria Hospital and Le Loi Hospital (Vung Tau City); K Hospital (Hanoi), An Binh Hospital (Ho Chi Minh City), Provincial General Hospital and Binh Phuoc Traditional Medicine Hospital, etc. with a total value of hundreds of billions of dong. In particular, with the model of "Porridge of love" of Buddhism in many provinces and cities, it has shown the deep affection of the Vietnamese Buddhist Church to a large number of people. Poor Buddhists throughout the country, such as "Porridge of love" at Dermatology Hospital, General Hospital (Da Nang), Children's Hospital 1 (Ho Chi Minh City, Thanh Hoa Children's Hospital, Children's Hospital). K Hospital in Hanoi... every year has supported the lives of thousands of poor patients and their family members who are being treated here. According to the 2019 Buddhist work summary report, the Social Charity Department of the Central Committee of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha Male. The medical charity division is headed by Nun Thich Nu Lien Thanh. In the last 6 months of 2019, the division carried out the following activities: medical examination and treatment, medicine distribution, nutrition department kitchen with a total amount of money. :1,250,000,000 VND<sup>7</sup>. .

The Vietnam Buddhist Sangha also focuses on raising orphans and caring for and nurturing the lonely elderly throughout the country. According to the 2019 Buddhist work summary report, the Central Committee of Social Charity of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha. The system of schools to raise orphans, classes of love, and centers for the care of the elderly without the support and difficult circumstances... belonging to the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha are operating stably and effectively. nurturing nearly 1329 orphans, orphans, and disabled children; taking care of more than 527 lonely elderly people. Up to now, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha has opened nearly 12 classes of compassion for orphans, wandering, helpless and disabled children; hundreds of facilities providing free day care for preschool children with over 5,678 children attending; dozens of nursing facilities. In addition, there have been hundreds of pagodas in many localities that have become preschools and schools for raising homeless and unfortunate children, contributing to reducing the burden on society.

Cat Linh Pagoda (Hanoi City) annually gives gifts to dialysis patients, patients with sepsis, patients who have just had heart surgery at Bach Mai hospital, Dong Da hospital. Every year on Buddha's Birthday, gifts are given to the poor and disabled. Teachers and students often go to support people affected by natural disasters in Nghe An, Thanh Hoa, Ha Tinh, Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Lao Cai, giving gifts and refrigerators to boarding schools in February 2020. Dien Bien border ethnic group...; sponsoring Agent Orange patients... "Participating in social charity activities comes from a sincere heart, and the enthusiasm that I want to contribute to the community when people are in need is what I do. . We have no experience at all, we just follow the Buddha's teachings."<sup>8</sup>.

In order to contribute to creating jobs and improving the lives of the homeless, the homeless, people with extremely difficult circumstances, children of poor working families, people with meritorious services, families of invalids, and sick soldiers The Vietnam Buddhist Sangha has organized many vocational schools in many localities throughout the country to provide training in majors: Sewing, electrical appliances, informatics, car repair, etc. this object. Every year, thousands of graduates are trained and

<sup>7</sup><https://vbgh.vn/index.php?language=vi&nv=news&op=tai-lieu-hinh-anh-hoi-nghi-tong-ket-ghpgvn-nam-2019/bao-cao-tong-ket-cong-tac-phat-su-nam-2019-ban-tu-thien-xa-hoi-trung-uong-ghpgvn-1105.html>.

<sup>8</sup> Source: Author's in-depth interview with the nun - abbot of the temple in Tay Ninh, 2020.

introduced to job placement centers. Typically, 02 pagodas: Tay Linh, abbot by Nun Thich Nu Nhu Minh, and Long Tho Pagoda (Thua Thien - Hue), abbot by Nun Thich Nu Minh Tanh, annually organizes 02 training courses on embroidery and knitting, sewing, office computers... Since their establishment, these two establishments have trained more than 1,000 trainees to introduce them to work at companies. Or Master Thich Thien Chieu (Ky Quang II Temple, Ho Chi Minh City) annually provides career guidance and vocational training to hundreds of graduates with stable jobs; Master Thich Nhuan Tam (Law Pagoda, Ho Chi Minh City) opened many free English, Japanese and Chinese teaching classes for hundreds of poor youth in the city, creating jobs for them to help the poor. I made a career, it's true that giving free by giving, or giving a fish is not as good as giving a fishing rod...

The Vietnam Buddhist Sangha also pays special attention to the work of repaying gratitude and considers it one of the central tasks of the Church, showing the spirit of gratitude to the generation who sacrificed for independence. freedom for the country. Over the years, the Church has donated and cared for hundreds of Vietnamese Heroic Mothers throughout their lives, building thousands of houses of gratitude and love; Thousands of billions of dong were raised to contribute to sharing and alleviating the pain and loss of families whose relatives are war invalids, martyrs and people with meritorious services to the revolution. With the tradition of "Drink water, remember the source", eat fruit, remember the person who planted the tree, and be grateful to those who have sacrificed for the nation and for the country. for heroic martyrs in many cemeteries throughout the country such as: Con Dao, Phu Quoc, Truong Son, Quang Tri, Dien Bien... Especially, with the spirit of "Remembering those who left, for those who stayed". Every year, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha has coordinated with the National Traffic Safety Committee to organize a Mass for the victims of traffic accidents. In particular, in 2017, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha successfully coordinated to organize the Great Requiem Ceremony for victims of traffic accidents with more than 10,000 attendees at Trinh Pagoda, Yen Tu, Quang Ninh.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to the above activities, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha also mobilizes followers, Buddhist dignitaries, and people to actively respond to donations and support other social welfare works such as the movement to support the army., people in Truong Sa, and at the frontline frontiers of the Fatherland; support the gratitude fund, the fund for the poor, the study promotion fund, the construction of charity houses, nursing homes; participate in humanitarian activities such as free eye surgery for poor patients with cataracts; participating in the "Exam season support" program to help candidates take part in the annual university and college entrance exams and actively respond to the blood donation movement. In July 2021, nearly 500 Buddhist monks and nuns volunteered. Sign up to be on the front line to help take care of Covid-19 patients. On the basis of promoting the spirit of "Religion and patriotism", being close to society, existing in the hearts of the nation, over the years, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, together with monks, nuns and Buddhists have accumulated actively respond to and participate in movements for the benefit of the country and the people, protecting the ecological environment, responding to climate change, social charity activities, ensuring social security, promoting the tradition of solidarity, national harmony, and independence, actively participating in the all-people movement, defending the Fatherland; contribute to building a civilized, progressive and prosperous Vietnamese society. For many years, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha at all levels has campaigned for contributions to ensure the social

<sup>9</sup> The Vietnamese Buddhist Sangha (2017), Document of the Eighth National Buddhist Congress.

security of monks, nuns, and Buddhists nationwide worth about VND 7,000 billion<sup>10</sup>. Through the contribution to the work of ensuring social security, humanitarian, and charity activities, many groups, and individuals, typically monks, nuns, and Buddhists with outstanding achievements have been awarded by the Party and State. reward noble rewards. For example: Sister Thich Nu Lien Thanh (Long Buu Pagoda, Ho Chi Minh City), Master Thich Thanh Son (Van Tho Pagoda, Ho Chi Minh City) has examined and treated thousands of poor people; Master Thich Thanh Huan (Phap Van Pagoda, Hanoi) adopts and treats HIV-infected patients; Thich Thien Chieu (Ky Quang 2 Temple, Ho Chi Minh City) raised hundreds of orphans, Agent Orange, provided free medicine to thousands of poor patients; Master Thich Nhuan Tam (Law Pagoda, Ho Chi Minh City) teaching foreign languages to poor young people, ... is really typical in charity work, ensuring social security, ensuring the rights of people with special circumstances in Vietnam<sup>11</sup>.

With the positive contributions of Buddhist nuns to social welfare work mentioned above, it can be affirmed that Buddhism in general and Buddhist nuns in particular always play an important role in social life. , thereby contributing a part to the sustainable development of Vietnam.

### **3.2. Some comments on activities to ensure social security of Vietnamese Buddhist nuns in recent years**

#### **3.2.1. *These achievements***

Ensuring social security is a requirement and a necessary condition for the stability and development of the country. With the Church's great contributions to charity, humanitarian work, and social security for nearly 40 years, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha has been honored twice to be awarded the Ho Chi Minh Medal, the highest award of our Party and State along with many other noble titles. At the 35th anniversary of the establishment of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha was also honored to receive the First-class Labor Medal awarded by the Party and the State for "Outstanding achievements in the movement to serve the law and the nation, contributing to the cause of building socialism and defending the Fatherland".

In 2019, the nuns subdivision of the Central Committee of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in collaboration with the Institute of Buddhist Studies, the Vietnam Buddhist Academy in Hanoi successfully organized the Great Celebration and Scientific Conference of 906 years of Nirvana. Monk Dieu Nhan passed away with his ancestors and nuns with great merit. This has a great meaning, that is, in addition to recognizing and honoring the great contributions of the nuns to the cause of building and developing Buddhism in the country in the context of the times. Any action in the Buddhadharma with the same goal of liberating and enlightening people and for the practical benefit to bring peace and happiness to the people of the society is the propagation of the Dharma for the benefit of all living beings, of the Buddha's son.

*Firstly*, the disadvantaged people in society are cared for and paid more attention to supporting the poor, taking care of poor students, nurturing the lonely elderly, building houses of gratitude, and supporting scholarships for students. poor members, overcome difficulties, provide capital support, and provide means of livelihood to people in difficult circumstances

<sup>10</sup> The Vietnamese Buddhist Sangha (2017), Document of the Eighth National Buddhist Congress.

<sup>11</sup> The Vietnamese Buddhist Sangha (2017), Document of the Eighth National Buddhist Congress.

*Secondly*, the number of nuns with professional training is increasing, with experience in participating in social charity activities, dynamic nuns actively participate in social welfare charity work to highland areas such as Dien Bien province. Bien, Son La, Lao Cai, Central Highlands, Dak Lak,...

*Third*, actively coordinate with other departments of the Central Committee of the Church and other social organizations in activities to ensure social security for the people. In the process of charity work, in conjunction with the Church's departments and branches and directly contact the local Fatherland Front authorities to donate.

*Fourth*, the propaganda on social security activities of the nuns has been promoted: combined with propaganda on An Vien television channels, online Buddhist affairs, articles, Special San Hoa Dam, Noi San Hoang Phap, Khuong Viet Magazine, Buddhist Culture Magazine...

Favorable achievements achieved by the virtues of meticulousness, diligence, patience, suffering, and humility, the venerable nuns and nuns of the Central Nunnery Division and the provinces always uphold the majesty of the precepts in their practice. and preaching; by the application and promotion of collective wisdom in the spirit of unity, harmony, fostering the dignified religion of the church, operating according to the church charter and according to the regulations of the Sangha Board as proposed; always abide by the state's policies and laws, live a good life, contribute to maintaining the faith of the Dharma for lay Buddhists, and guide Buddhist nuns nationwide to unite with one heart to complete the task. entrusted by the Central Vietnam Buddhist Church

### **3.2.2. Some limitations, difficulties, and causes**

Over the years, social security activities of the Church and nuns have achieved many respectable results, however, there are still some limitations and shortcomings that need to be overcome such as:

In 2019, only 49/63 provinces and cities have established provincial nuns and nuns divisions, and 14 provinces have not yet established nuns subdivisions. Because the provincial nuns' sub-committee has not been established synchronously, so it has not brought into full play the potential of the national nuns, and the operational directions of the central nunnery sub-committee have not been fully deployed from the central government. to local.

Propaganda about activities to ensure social security to people, especially ethnic minority areas of the Nun Sub-Committee, still face many difficulties (not going deep; not regularly, continuously;...) lack of creative methods and ways, suitable for each object. It is not timely to summarize and reward and commend positive and typical groups and individuals of Nuns at all levels in activities to ensure social security for the people. At the same time, successful and unsuccessful experiences and lessons have not been drawn in the process of implementing this work in practice.

### **3.3. Some problems raised in activities to ensure social security for people in recent years**

From the research to assess the current situation and some comments on the activities of ensuring social security for the people of Vietnamese Buddhist nuns in recent years, it can be seen that the activities of ensuring social security of the Buddhist nuns in Vietnam. There are a number of problems that need to be further studied and solved in the future:

*Firstly*, at present, charity activities in particular and social welfare activities are considered as the most prominent form of incarnation of Buddhism. In Vietnam, these activities are replicated everywhere

in pagodas, monasteries, Buddhist communities, etc., which have brought many achievements, which is also an opportunity to propagate the Dharma. Over the years, although there have been many policies and measures to ensure social security for people in the implementation process of the nuns' subdivisions at all levels, many nuns have done charity silently. reports, the Secretariat did not capture specific numbers.

*Second*, the Church does not have the basic financial resources to timely prepare emergency relief work. Nuns need to be more active in social welfare charitable activities, although there are humanitarian activities, financial resources are mainly based on donations and mobilizing Buddhist followers. Therefore, you should not be proactive at times, sometimes you will get less, or if you are short, you will not be able to prepare as desired. The organization of charity events for schools in border areas, remote and mountainous areas, relief groups for people affected by natural disasters is still fragmented and lacks linkage. The promotion of the rich human potential of the provincial nuns' sub-divisions has not been fully developed, and the members of the committees are not synchronous and lack cohesion. "We always want to help boarding ethnic minority students with a dormitory so that they can have a better learning environment. In the future, if we have enough grace, we will do it. With the desire to do charity work for sustainable social security for boarding ethnic children in the highlands. I hope that the Central Committee of Nuns will coordinate and work together"<sup>12</sup>

*Third*, the number of nuns actively participating in activities to ensure social security, but some of them have insufficient qualifications, expertise, and understanding of social security, so the implementation efficiency is not high. while carrying out the policy of the Church. Because at present, Buddhist nuns in Vietnam are strong in quantity, but the quality of their practice is still limited. A part of young nuns due to their low sense of learning and unsettled practice skills, they are easily influenced by external factors and influenced by external factors. Besides, there are some nuns in Vietnam who lack confidence and self-doubt about their own ability to practice.

### **3.4. The solution is to promote activities to ensure social security for the people of Vietnamese Buddhist nuns in the current period of development and international integration.**

Ensuring social security for the people towards the sustainable development of the country is an important policy of the Party, State, and the Vietnamese Buddhist Church. With their unremitting efforts, Vietnamese Buddhist nuns have made important contributions to the overall achievements of the Church in ensuring social security in a sustainable way in Vietnam. of Vietnamese Buddhist, nuns have some limitations, shortcomings, and problems. Therefore, we offer some basic solutions to promote activities to ensure social security for the people of the Nuns in the current period of development and international integration.

*Firstly*, promote propaganda about the importance of activities to ensure social security for the people for nuns by many practical activities in Buddhist work, encouraging young nuns to devote themselves to spreading the Dharma in the region. In remote areas, bringing the light of Buddhism to the youth generation who are the next generation for the future of the country, they need to be virtuous enough to be the master of the country.

<sup>12</sup> Source: Author's in-depth interview with the nun - abbot of the temple in Hanoi, 2020.

*Second*, attach importance to the training and retraining of nuns in expertise and profession related to the field of social work, guiding the use of social protection gradually leading to sustainable development in the field of social work. social security charity...

*Third*, continue to have measures to authenticate and apply to each province and city across the country with specific guidelines. The annual charity implementation plan for social security work should be reported in detail, in order to have practical suggestions for contributions to achieve high efficiency.

*Fourth*, take initiative in financial resources in charity work, social security, build a sustainable long-term plan according to the policy of the Church and the Vietnam Buddhist Nuns Sub-Committee.

*Fifth*, regularly organize fostering classes on social security for nuns to improve their professional qualifications and understanding of society and the policy of the Church, so that when natural disasters occur In the event of a flood, we will actively do charity work for social security in the best and fastest way. Let's join hands to share and spread the ideological values "Peace - Harmony - Compassion" taught by the Buddha to contribute to the transmission of Buddha's thoughts and truths along with the beauty of Buddhist culture. , to spread to other people of all worlds, contributing to the proclamation of the profitable Dharma of Vietnamese Buddhism.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Vietnamese Buddhism has always been a religion accompanying the nation. Since its establishment in 1981, the Vietnamese Buddhist Sangha has always consolidated and developed. socially recognized and appreciated. With the spirit of compassion, compassion, and love for freedom and peace, the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in general and the Central Buddhist Nuns Sub-Committee in particular, are at the forefront of religious and people's solidarity. ethnicity; preserving, promoting and fostering the Buddhist tradition of patriotic solidarity which is always shining in the hearts of the nation; actively mobilize monks, nuns, Buddhists, and people to uphold the spirit of "Preaching the Dao, patriotic", "Protecting the nation and the people", actively participating in activities to ensure social security for the people. With great and positive contributions to social security work and a responsible role in Vietnam's new conditions, it is a solid basis to affirm the particularly important position of Vietnamese Buddhism in social life. festival. At the same time, contributing to affirm the vitality of Buddhism for the development of the nation. Throughout historical periods, the work of social security, justice, and social progress cannot be without the contributions of Buddhism, including Vietnamese Buddhist nuns. In the period of development and international integration, at present, Vietnamese Buddhist nuns need to continue to successfully carry out the proposed Buddhist program; leading the Vietnamese Buddhist Church to be more and more firmly established on the path of "Proclaiming the Dharma, benefiting the community", contributing to building and defending a prosperous Vietnamese Fatherland "For the sake of a rich people, a strong country, and a prosperous nation". equality, democracy, civilization". Among them are Vietnamese Buddhist nuns who always dignify the church to be worthy of being the daughter of the Buddha.

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