



PROJECT PROGRESS SHEET HELPING VIETNAMESE SMES ADAPT AND ADOPT CSR FOR IMPROVED LINKAGES WITH GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS IN SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION



Legend

- Eligible countries where SWITCH-Asia projects are implemented
- Eligible Asian countries for the SWITCH-Asia programme
- Non-eligible Asian countries for the SWITCH-Asia Programme

Project implementation area

- City
- Region
- Country

The boundaries shown on this map do not imply on the part of the European Union any judgment on the legal status of any territory or the endorsement or acceptance of such boundaries.



BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project aims to contribute to the increased adoption of sustainable production patterns and behaviors among Vietnamese SMEs for reduced environmental impact, improved social practices and enhanced international competitiveness through an improved understanding and strengthened cooperation between Europe and Asia. Following the overall SCP-policy (sustainable consumption and production) of the European Union.

In detail, the activities focus on enhancing the sustainable integration of Vietnamese SMEs into global supply chains through an increased awareness, understanding and adoption of “triple bottom line” (TBL) corporate social responsibility based on a continuous improvement process. At the same time the competitiveness of the participating SMEs on the domestic market is expected to increase as consumer’s expectations and requirements are changing. The main results expected:

- Increased awareness and understanding of TBL-CSR approach among Vietnamese SMEs, consumers and other relevant stakeholders;
- Compliance with CSR procurement standards among Vietnamese SMEs increased;
- Policy and regulatory recommendations for promotion of sustainable production practices and behaviors identified through participatory processes.

The relevant replication mechanism of the project will be based on the train-the-trainers and in-plant assessment activities as well as on the sustainable capacity building inside the BMOs.

PROJECT PARTNERS

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Austria; Vietnam Chamber of Commerce (VCCI), Vietnam; European Chamber of Commerce in Vietnam (EuroCham), Vietnam; Leather and Footwear Association (LEFASO), Vietnam; Textile and Apparel Association (VITAS), Vietnam; Electronics Industry Association (VEIA), Vietnam; Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs (ILSSA), Vietnam; Directorate for Standards and Quality (STAMEQ), Vietnam; National Metal and Materials Technology Centre (MTEC), Thailand; SEQUA GmbH, Germany

PROJECT IMPACT

The project is making an impact in Ha Noi, Danang and Ho Chi Minh City, and on a later stage probably in Dien Bien Phu, Da Lat and the Greater Mekong region, Vietnam.

PROJECT ABBREVIATION

Adapt – Adopt – Improve CSR in Vietnam’s SMEs “Responsibility for Generations!”

PROJECT WEBSITE

<http://www.csr-vietnam.eu>

PROJECT DURATION

October 2009 – October 2012

TARGET GROUPS

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) out of the sectors textile/garment, leather/ footwear and electro/electronics which are mainly part of an international supply chain and now face new procurement regulations of their clients beyond product specification and price
- SMEs producing also for the domestic market which consider CSR as a proper way to develop new products, to enter niches and/or to foster their unique selling point.
- Business member organisations (BMOs) as future source of know-how and service in terms of CSR
- National consultants who want to become CSR experts
- National policymakers who are involved in all the fields of CSR – focussing on social issues
- Universities and higher education institutions who are searching for cooperation on the topic CSR future integration in their courses
- Media networks covering economic issues and are reaching out for “good news”
- Multinationals who are likely to increase the social and environmental compliance throughout Vietnamese SMEs.

PROJECT MANAGER

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ORGANIZATION

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OUTPUTS TO DECEMBER 2009 TO BE SHARED WITH WIDER AUDIENCE

As the project started with the first Steering Committee Meeting on 8 March 2010, outputs for a wider audience are not available yet. All the current information are available on the webpage www.csr-vietnam.eu In terms of transparent project execution a detailed activity calendar is open to public on our website. This calendar contains project activities as well as other CSR relevant events/data in the region.



RESULTS ACHIEVED TO MARCH 2010

As the project is still in its initial phase most activities so far have focussed on engaging with project partners. In addition to the nine project partners close relationships with European Commission Office in Hanoi, the Vietnamese Cleaner Production Centre and other related projects and initiatives like Global Compact, UNIDO Cluster Building for SMEs project, BSCI or Ministry of Social and Labour Affairs were established.

In course of the project preparation a detailed work-plan and time-schedule for the first year was elaborated and finally approved by the Steering Committee on 8 March 2010. The necessary recruitment processes were started and seven national project staff members will start their job on 1 April 2010.

The baseline study questionnaire was sent out to project partners to obtain their final com-

ments and approval. To get some internationally benchmark-able results all of the questions used by an world-wide used CSR-Awareness Survey by the European Commission 2007 were included. To ensure a common understanding of CSR throughout partners a workshop “CSR – More than a nice to have?” was organised in the aftermath of the Steering Committee Meeting. This workshop focussed on the terminology, history and subjects of CSR.

The PR and marketing activities established the project website early on. This site will be used by both partners/donors and the public and provides the core of the projects communication strategy. A CSR Wiki is already in a testing phase and will provide mainly information for our partners, consultants and participating companies. After the project’s end these structures should be used as an important platform for replication.



LESSONS LEARNT SO FAR

That only the administrative process in a project with nine main partners is rather complicated is obvious. The detailed service provider contracts especially which are mostly new to our partners, caused some significant delay. Most of the problems finally could be resolved after some personal conversations between the partner representatives and the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) on-site. To ensure a “common CSR language” including the necessary translations it is crucial to create an internal

communication structure as well as consequent formal and informal team meetings beyond the work-plan. The project office under guidance of the CTA will carry out these activities. These activities should finally lead to a CSR-stakeholder-map of Vietnam. The lack of reliable statistical data available from national authorities brought the project to reach out for even more knowledge exchange with other international organisations to share their networks and databases. This process of informal cooperation should continue in the future. As there is a kind of competition between the huge number of international projects going on at the same time in Vietnam, marketing and PR for the project are critical. As there are low budgets for this important task a lot of creativity will be necessary – reaching out for multipliers, using new media, sponsorships, word of mouth and lot of personal effort.

OUTREACH AND SYNERGIES

The discussion on sustainable replication mechanisms led us already to intensify the contacts with educational institutions (e.g. CSR Workshop with students at the prestigious RMIT – Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology – in Hanoi on 13 April 2010) as well as with some national consulting companies.

In terms of policy-making two partners (STAMEQ – the national standardization body as well as ILSSA – the Institute for Social and Labour Sciences) are already involved in some of the most important legal reform projects (e.g. the new Vietnamese labour code) and will actively promote the ideas of sustainable consumption and production through their comments to the lawmaker. The intense engagement with more and more CSR relevant stakeholders will be the base of continuity of the project’s ideas

and activities in future. As already mentioned the project office might be turned into a hub for CSR in future, using the knowledge database, the network and hopefully the national staff. As a first step of active cooperation with other projects the project will share the “office house” with another SWITCH project (MEET-BIS). This cooperation will create a lot of synergies beside the economic benefits of sharing the infrastructure and is highly appreciated by the EU Delegation in Hanoi. The other close cooperation established includes the UNIDO SME Cluster Building Facilitation Project. The discussions with Switch Network Facility representative brought a lot of high valuable inputs in terms of project execution and replication. His presence and presentation during the Steering Committee Meeting was highly appreciated by all partners.