



# PROJECT PROGRESS SHEET

## RE-TIE BANGLADESH: REDUCTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS AND INCREASE OF EXPORTABILITY OF BANGLADESHI LEATHER PRODUCTS



### 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**

**Overall Objective:**

To provide employment and income-opportunities in environmentally sustainable SMEs in the leather sector in Bangladesh.

**Specific Objective:**

SMEs of the leather industry will be more economically and ecologically successful and more sustainable with the use of aligned technologies and practices.

Activities implemented:

- Training of two national experts and employment and coaching for cleaner production (CP) matters;
- Started the implementation of cleaner production facilitated by those experts and the sector units by assessing 12 pilot enterprises
- Institutionalisation of outreach: establishment of three sector units, each lead by one facilitator who was trained, coached and employed. One sector unit comprises up to 25 entrepreneurs/enterprises;
- Preparation of dissemination material on innovation, results and guides through those sector units to about 400 SMEs (supported by campaigns, conferences etc.,)
- Three workshops held on capacity strengthening of BMOs in the leather sector (organisational development)
- Sensitisation and awareness-raising of relevant stakeholders on SCP matters
- Influencing the consumption and production physical infrastructure of a new industrial site for the leather industry (Savar)

**PROJECT PARTNERS**

sequa gGmbH, Germany; United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), Austria; Berufliche Fortbildungszentren der Bayerischen Wirtschaft (bfz), Germany; Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), Bangladesh; Bangladesh Finished Leather, Leathergoods and Footwear Exporter's Association (BFLFEA), Bangladesh; Bangladesh Tanners Association (BTA), Bangladesh (ass. partner)

**PROJECT IMPACT  
PROJECT ABBREVIATION  
PROJECT WEBSITE  
PROJECT DURATION**

The project is making an impact in Dhaka and Savar, Bangladesh.

Re-Tie Bangladesh

<http://www.switchretiebd.org>

February 2010 – February 2012

**TARGET GROUPS**

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and business membership organisations (BMOs) who are the main receivers of improved environmental practices, environmental technology and management.
- The first direct target group are the staff and the experts (consultants) of the sector associations BFLFEA, BTA and DCCI who will be trained and enabled to support member companies in their demands, induce technological innovation, facilitate the implementation of cleaner production, advocate the policy framework, create outreach to relevant SMEs and will render services accordingly.
- The second direct target group are the member companies of the participating sector associations and DCCI that will change their production according to the objectives of the project. Approximately 400 SMEs should be effected directly and change their production.

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## OUTPUTS TO DECEMBER 2009 TO BE SHARED WITH WIDER AUDIENCE



Please refer to Mr Ivan Kral (UNIDO,  
[I.Kral@unido.org](mailto:I.Kral@unido.org)) regarding:

- Training of two national experts and employment and coaching for CP matters;
- Started the implementation of cleaner production facilitated by those experts and the sector units by assessing 12 pilot enterprises;
- Preparation of dissemination material on innovation, results and guides through those sector units to about 400 SMEs (supported by campaigns, conferences etc.);
- Influencing CP physical infrastructure of the new industrial site for the leather industry (Savar).

Please refer to Ms Sabine Sibler  
([sibler.sabine@bln.bfz.de](mailto:sibler.sabine@bln.bfz.de)) regarding:

- Institutionalisation of outreach: establishment of three sector units, each lead by one facilitator who was trained, coached and employed. One sector unit comprises up to 25 entrepreneurs/enterprises.

Please refer to Mr Gerhard Weber  
([gerhard.weber@sequa.de](mailto:gerhard.weber@sequa.de)) regarding:

- Three workshops held on capacity strengthening of BMOs in the leather sector (organisational development);
- Sensitisation and awareness-raising of relevant stakeholders on SCP matters.

## RESULTS ACHIEVED TO JANUARY 2010

- The project engaged with the target group successfully since the most relevant BMOs of the sector are either direct or associate project partners and are fully committed to the objectives of the project.
- The direct sustainability gains so far are greater awareness of the environmental situation and the need to address it. This includes an understanding that economic success in the near future depends on environmentally friendly production since the consumers are demanding products produced in an environmentally and socially acceptable way.
- The SCP replication mechanism the project has built includes training of local experts

and staff of enterprises working in the sector, implementing sector units which work on SCP matters within the Bangladeshi BMOs and address this directly to SMEs. The BMOs are also addressed through capacity building workshops in order to strengthen their institutional capacity to replicate project activities. Financial institutions have been involved to make them aware of the economic possibilities of applying SCP.

- the project role in updating of SCP policies is to involve policy makers as much as possible and to work directly with the governmental departments working with the sector.

## LESSONS LEARNT SO FAR

- The strengths of the methodology include the direct involvement of BMOs active in the sector since they have a direct interest in the success of the project. They reach the relevant SMEs and strengthen their institutional capacity by setting up sector units and capacity building workshops.
- Connecting relevant institutions (Banks) and policy-makers to the project was able to be implemented earlier than originally planned.
- The problems encountered concerning project coordination, impact assessment (sustainability gains), and stakeholder engagement were as expected due to the lack of professionalism and institutional



capacity within the two small associations. These problems are not of major concern since they are part of such a project. The full commitment of all partners is therefore sufficient to deal with these problems.

- All stakeholders are important to the project in their own field of work and regarding their responsibilities.
- Achieving and establishing local participation and ownership in the project has not been more difficult than expected. The leather sector in Dhaka has not been very open in the past and changes are not easy to achieve. Nonetheless the project has started well.

## OUTREACH AND SYNERGIES

- This project has benefited from the experiences from other projects implemented by Sequa and DCCI together and individually. The previous collaboration for many years underlines the mutual sense of trust, and has brought experience with EC administrative issues.
- The possibilities for extension are very promising since all partners are fully committed and the associate partner BTA is working on a PADOR registration in order to become eligible for an extension of the project. It also became obvious that the results that can be achieved by this project would serve as a

great start for a continuation. Replication is also very likely, either in Bangladesh in Chittagong or in other countries like Pakistan or India.

- It is foreseen to create policy linkages with individual members of Parliament representing Hazari-bagh, the Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Environment. They all play an important role for the sector, especially as the tanneries have to move to a location outside of Dhaka and support from all these Ministries is important for the successful set-up in the new location.

Continuity of the project achievements is not guaranteed but is likely due to a stable political environment, economic advantages for the sector, opportunities for the BMOs involved and social improvements. SEQUA and UNIDO, with its partners, have implemented similar projects that focus both on capacity building and sustainable production that have largely proven to be sustainable even after a considerable time span. SEQUA is the world's leading development agency in the field of capacity building for BMOs. UNIDO has been, together with UNEP, the pioneer of the cleaner/sustainable production approach. Together these two organisations combine technological expertise and outreach to a large number of SMEs. The partner associations are eager to enlarge their knowledge and to build up capacity, since they are interested in providing an up-to-date service in environmentally relevant fields to satisfy their members and to gain new ones. The partner IBOs are, no doubt, highly motivated to contribute to the project's success. The nuclei will address and include non-member, too and will thus provide the BMOs with new members. The project will not result in any new organisation or physical infrastructure. It thus avoids large running costs for the partners in the future, creating difficulties for the project's financial sustainability after its completion. The respon-

sible management of the benefiting enterprises do realize that sustainable production and consumption will bring an advantage in the medium to long term. This perception and mediation – as can be seen from experiences in other countries – proves effective, given that the enterprises are involved in the process of developing possible solutions. Bangladeshi tanneries are more and more forced to switch to environmental-friendly production methods in order to stay competitive on the world market. The implementation of the planned activities will provide the companies with cost-reducing technologies and the nuclei offer the possibility to build-up cooperatives, which help to reduce purchase prices. The project outputs will have a number of deliveries with important policy relevance and long-term impact: introduction of the nucleus approach, dissemination of guides (sector units' guide, OHS and CSR guides, training curricula etc.), and strengthened role of partner BMOs. The establishment of an institutional and durable policy dialogue between private and public stakeholders will create sustainable conditions enabling a better development of the leather sector. The project design guarantees a strong ownership of project activities by the local partners who are from the beginning actively involved in the improvement of leather production and exports.

## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

The contributions of DCCI and BTA are greater than expected. DCCI has not many members from the leather sector but is fully committed and BTA as an associate partner acts in the same way as the other partners.