

IMPACT SHEET • SWITCH-ASIA PROJECT
GETGREEN VIETNAM – SUSTAINABLE LIVING
AND WORKING IN VIETNAM

Empowering Vietnamese consumers for more sustainable living and working



**1 099 Vietnamese consumers act as change agents
in the transition towards sustainable consumption**



The Challenge

With the global shortage of raw materials, creating sustainable products is a new dawn for international and Vietnamese manufacturers, recognising the importance of the ecological balance and preservation of natural resources. In order to support sustainable production, a demand side pull is required in parallel. In 2012, several SWITCH-Asia projects in Vietnam focused on delivering more sustainable products to both export and local markets. However, awareness of local consumers regarding sustainability is low, which is important to be increased in order to create a demand for sustainable products.

Objective

The *GetGreen Vietnam* project was conceived to rise to the challenge of increasing sustainable consumption in Vietnam.



The project aimed at:

- contributing to an increased share of sustainable consumption by Vietnamese consumers in general;
- increasing capacity of consumer organisations in convincing and supporting consumers in making the choice for more sustainable consumption behaviour; and
- connecting companies and consumers to co-create sustainable products and services.

TARGET GROUPS

- Consumer groups
- Consumer organisations
- Small and medium-sized companies

Final Beneficiaries:

- Consumers were educated as to what sustainable consumption is and how it affects their life and that of next generations;
- Consumer organisations and related NGOs benefitted from increased knowledge, capacity and practice with various sustainable consumption approaches;
- Small and medium-sized companies gained insights into consumer needs and benefitted from active collaboration with consumers.

Activities / Strategy

To achieve its objectives, the project activities were focussed on increasing the capacity of consumer organisations to enable them to convince and support consumers in making the choice for more environmentally friendly behaviour.



Capacity Building in Consumers

The project reached out to Vietnamese consumers through networking events and information dissemination activities, including a website, guidebooks and training sessions. These were intended to establish communication and reach out to a large community of 1 099 members in 52 *GetGreen* groups acting as “change agents.” The change agents later disseminated knowledge of sustainable working and living in Vietnam, and ensured a future for the developed methods and educational material after the project had finished.



Co-creation between Consumer Groups and SMEs

An active collaboration involving consumer groups and SMEs, also called “co-creation”, ensured better mutual understanding. This ensured a greater offering of sustainable products for consumers and therefore a stronger position for the product portfolio of SMEs.

The project conducted training on sustainable consumption for 52 middle income consumers groups of 15-25 participants each, aged 18 to 70, which were sub-categorised into Students (aged 18-25), Office Workers (aged 26-50), Community (aged 50-70) in Hanoi, Hochiminh City, Da Nang and Can Tho. Co-creation sessions involving 16 consumer groups and 16 SMEs were conducted. The co-creation sessions had the result of generating ideas on sustainable products and services.



Outreach

Dissemination and outreach activities were organised to broadcast the benefits of sustainable consumption and the impact of the project, including 10 networking events – ‘Sustainability Days’ – held to connect *GetGreen* groups in the 4 cities:

- 1 Stakeholders Review Meeting to summarise and evaluate the project;
- 3 Dissemination Workshops to communicate the results and impacts of the project;
- 64 inspirational short video clips to promote knowledge on sustainable consumption;
- 52 ‘Stories of Change’ video clips to inspire the next generation.

The project also involved the media and was covered by 35 online newspapers.

Scaling-up Strategy

The key problem to scaling up is the low level of sustainable consumption in Vietnam. This is linked to the current unsustainable consumption patterns associated with the growing prosperity of the middle class in Vietnam. Transition to more sustainable consumption can only be achieved through a multi-stakeholder approach. Despite being clearly in their general mandate, consumer organisations in Vietnam have a very low involvement in activities related to sustainable consumption. With various initiatives focussed on production of more sustainable goods and products, market development will be suppressed if demand does not increase simultaneously. Companies have influence over this by sustainable branding and other marketing approaches, but are unable to influence consumers. It is therefore essential to create strong links between supply and demand.



Train the Trainers

The GetGreen trainers came from various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or consumer social organisations (CSOs), universities, professional unions and social clubs. Their different backgrounds and traditions ensured the widest possible implementation of sustainable consumption in the longer-term. Two project partners, VNCPC and AITVN, integrated the newly acquired skills and expertise into the palette of services that they offer.



Spreading Information about Sustainable Consumption

Sustainable tips and information were collected and shared via the project website and social media, together with a project guidebook and training materials. A series of inspirational video clips and stories illustrating change also helped promote sustainable consumption. Change agents do not only change their own behaviour, but also share knowledge with friends, family, colleagues and others, inspiring them all to change together, further broadening the project's impact. An "online exhibition of change agents" was constructed to further inspire consumers and recruit change agents, which also served as a platform for co-creation with local SMEs.



Co-creation session

GetGreen Chain of Activities for Scaling-up Sustainable Consumption

1

Collection of consumer baseline information

- Focus Groups
- Interviews
- Desk study

formation of overall framework & test groups members

2

Implementation of 10 Test Groups in North & South Vietnam

- 5 meetings
- 10 groups x 10 members

Evaluation of the performance of each group by the Sustainability Review Method & Networking among group members

3

Development of the GetGreen Guidebook & Change agent training material

- Platform for co-creation
- Web-based interaction platform

4

Building the pool of change agents

- 40 change agents
- 2 training workshops

25 change agents selected for implementation

5

GetGreen groups identification and Selection

- 6 promotion workshops

6

Implementing GetGreen methodology in consumer groups

- 52 groups x 20 members
- Case studies & lessons learned

7

Networking among GetGreen groups in 4 cities

- 10 networking events
- 52 'Stories of Change'

- Events
- Groups
- Deliverables

Results



Guidebook and Training Toolkit

A set of GetGreen guidebooks with 75 tips was developed and divided into 8 clusters; for every tip, the environmental benefits and personal benefits are displayed. The guidebook offers sustainable alternatives for various daily activities such as living, working, eating and moving, as well as consumption stages, such as buying, using and disposing. The training toolkit includes a sustainable consumption handbook, presentations on the eight topics, and other inspirational materials. Three “Train the Trainers” (ToT) sessions were organised to train 56 outstanding applicants from related organisations on sustainable consumption.



Building Capacity

The project also involved NGOs/CSOs; the trainers were selected for their outstanding experience and passion in social activities, rich knowledge in the field of sustainable development, and meeting the requirement of geography and cultural context adaption. Within the ToT sessions, the trainers were equipped with knowledge on sustainable consumption using the GetGreen Vietnam approach, and skills to organise consumer groups and help consumers translate their awareness into actions. The final 32 trainers were required to possess good training and facilitation skills and to have the ability to motivate other people, as well as having a wide professional network.



I am a second year student at Can Tho University and support protecting the environment. However, for me, a ‘green lifestyle’ meant more than just planting trees and I realised that while I was not directly destroying or harming the environment, I was also doing nothing to help it. Participating in the project helped me understand that I could do more than I thought by changing my unsustainable habits; I also felt challenged and motivated to convince people around me. Surprisingly, the more I started to change others, the more successful I became at influencing others positively, starting with my parents and relatives. Maybe now, they do not understand that what they have done was sustainable consumption but practically, they have made positive changes for the environment.



Nguyen Duc Tai,
Student and Change Agent



Handmade products by Da Nang consumers to reduce waste



Green market by Tra Que organic farm



52 GetGreen Groups with 1 099 Change Agents

The project’s full approach was implemented in two batches, each encompassed 26 consumer groups involving the groups of office workers, students and communities, equivalent to 1 099 change agents empowered in the cities of Hanoi, Hochiminh City, Da Nang and Can Tho. After the project’s end, the change agents continue to work in the GetGreen Vietnam network.



16 Co-Creation Sessions

Sixteen co-creation sessions were conducted between customers and companies in the food, transportation, and tourism sectors. Key achievements include Viet Lien developing new packaging design for their organic tea products; Tra Que Herb farm (Hoi An, Quang Nam) successfully organised a Green Market on-site with a variety of organic local vegetables, which attracted over 300 local consumers and international tourists. Another result was one of largest companies in Vietnam – Saigon Food – implemented further co-creation sessions for their marketing and development team.

Impact in Numbers

<p>Economic Impact</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 products reviewed in 16 co-creation sessions involving consumer groups and SMEs • Achieved monetary savings, especially in energy efficiency and transportation 	<p>Climate Benefits</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in energy use (electricity, fuel)
<p>Environmental Impact</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in water use • Reduction in waste generation and use of plastic bags • Increased procurement of sustainable products, especially organic food and energy efficiency (EE) appliances, by individuals and organisations 	<p>Target group Engagement</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged 17 SMEs in GetGreen training sessions, 16 SMEs in co-creation sessions, and 5 consumer organisations in other project activities
<p>Social Impact</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built capacity of 1 099 change agents in four cities and 56 trainers in sustainable consumption • Improved living and working environments by applying sustainable tips (e.g., switching to sustainable products, reducing use of plastic bags, printing on both sides of paper) 	<p>Europe-Asia Cooperation</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organised four joint workshops involving European and Asian experts • Provided study opportunities for 1 PhD candidate and 3 Master students from Europe • Promoted knowledge transfer on sustainable consumption, social changes and co-creation



GetGreen training course for Women Union in Da Nang



The project team with trainers



1 099 change agents of the GetGreen Vietnam project are contributing their part to improving the environment in Vietnam by changing their behaviour towards more sustainable buying, using and disposing of products. This is only the beginning. I am confident that in the coming years together we can involve more and more people in Vietnam in the switch towards sustainable consumption.



*Dr. Marcel Crul,
Project Coordinator,
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Legend

- Eligible 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.

OBJECTIVES

The project aimed at contributing to an increased share of sustainable consumption by Vietnamese consumers in general. This has been realised by a number of concerted actions on targeted consumer groups in living and working contexts.

DURATION



PROJECT TOTAL BUDGET

EUR 1,368,070
(EU Contribution 80%)

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