

Terminal Evaluation Report

Helping Vietnamese SMEs to adapt and adopt CSR for improved linkages with global supply chains in sustainable production

UNIDO project: EE/VIE/08/A07; EC ref. SWITCH Asia 2008 - VN 171-192



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Independent Evaluation

Helping Vietnamese SMEs to adapt and adopt CSR for improved linkages with global supply chains in sustainable production

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Preface

The report in hand is the final version of the:

**Final evaluation of the SWITCH CRS Action: Helping Vietnamese
SMEs to Adapt and Adopt CSR for Improved Linkages in Global
Supply Chains in Sustainable Production**

hereafter also referred to as “the Evaluation”. Following desk review of documents made available by the UNIDO Project Office, the Consultant interviewed stakeholders in Hanoi and Ho Chin Minh City during the period 15-22 May 2013.

The report in hand contains a brief introduction to the background for the UNIDO project in Viet Nam (also referred to as “the Action”) and the mandate of the Consultant, followed by an introduction to the Action itself. Thereafter comes a presentation of the Consultant’s observations and assessments.

The First Draft Report was submitted 31 May 2013. UNIDO gave immediate comments and the Second Draft Report was submitted 8 June 2013. The Final Report was prepared following further comments from UNIDO and the main project partners.

The Evaluation was undertaken by Mr. Tore Laugerud, Nordic Consulting Group Norway (“the Consultant”).

The Consultant wants to thank all partners and stakeholders met with for their open and kind contribution during the fieldwork. In specific should be mentioned the positive attitude, forth comingness, prompt effectiveness, and not the least patience, of the staff at the CSR Action Office in Hanoi, Mr. Florian Beranek and Ms. Nguyen Thi Huong Giang, the latter arranging the logistics and preparing a comprehensive meeting programme, in addition to accompanying the Consultant.

18 July 2013

Tore Laugerud,

Senior Consultant

Nordic Consulting Group (NCG) Norway

Abbreviations and acronyms

ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
AUU	Awareness, Understanding and Uptake
BMO	Business Membership Organization
CA	Contracting Authority
CBI	Center for Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (The Netherlands)
CG	Company Guide
CMT	Cut-Make-Trim
CO	Country Office
CoC	Code of Conduct
CPU	Cleaner and Sustainable Production Unit (of UNIDO)
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DED	German Development Service (Deutscher Entwicklung Dienst)
DoA	Description of Action
EC	European Commission
EMB	Environment Management Branch (of UNIDO)
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
EUR	Euro (currency)
EUROCHAM	European Chamber of Commerce in Viet Nam
FLA	Fair Labour Association
GC	(UN) Global Compact
GiZ	German International Development Corporation (former GTZ)
GRI	Global reporting Initiative
HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City
HQs	Headquarters
ILSSA	Institute of Labour, Science & Social Affairs (Viet Nam)
ILO	International Labour Organization
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ISO	International Organization for Standardisation (“International Standards Organization”)
IT	Information Technology
JSC	Join Stock Company
KOTRA	Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency
Lefaso	(Viet Nam) Leather and Footwear Association
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
MDG	Millennium Development Goal

MEUR	Million Euros
MTEC	National Metal & Materials Technology Center, Thailand
NCG	Nordic Consulting Group
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PO	Project Office
PTC	Programme Development and Technical Cooperation Division (of UNIDO)
QST	Quick Start Tool
RBM	Result-Based Management
REACH	Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals
RoHS	Restriction of Hazardous Substances
ROM	Result Oriented Monitoring
REAP	Responsible Entrepreneurs Achievement Programme (a CSR-based management and reporting tool developed by UNIDO)
REAP26	REAP based on ISO 26000
SA	Sector Association
SC	Steering Committee
SCP	Sustainable Consumption and Production
SDforB	Sustainable Business for Development (under VCCI)
SEDP	Socio-Economic Development Plan
SEQUA	Service Organization for the German Chambers and Employer's Association
SMEs	Small and Medium Size Enterprises
SR	Social Responsibility
STAMEQ	Viet Nam Directorate for Standards and Quality
TBL	Triple Bottom Line (integration of economic, environment and social issues)
TNC	Trans-National Corporation
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
VCCI	Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce & Industry
VEIA	Viet Nam Electronics Industry Association
VITAS	Viet Nam Textile & Apparel Association
VNCPCC	Viet Nam Cleaner Production Centre
WTO	World Trade Organization

Glossary of evaluation-related terms

Baseline	The situation, prior to an intervention, against which progress can be assessed.
Conclusions	Conclusions point out the factors of success and failure of the evaluated intervention, with special attention paid to the intended and unintended results and impacts, and more generally to any other strength or weakness. A conclusion draws on data collection and analyses undertaken, through a transparent chain of arguments.
Effect	Intended or unintended change due directly or indirectly to an intervention.
Efficiency	A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results/outputs.
Effectiveness	The extent to which the development intervention's results/ outputs and objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.
Indicator	Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor. Indicators should preferably be measured in quantitative terms, but also qualitative indicators are used.
Institutional development impact	The extent to which an intervention improves or weakens the ability of an institution/organization, community, sector, country or region to make more efficient, equitable, and sustainable use of its human, financial, and natural resources, for example through: (a) better definition, stability, transparency, enforceability and predictability of institutional arrangements; (b) better alignment of the mission and capacity of an organization with its mandate, which derives from these institutional arrangements; and/or (c) better alignment and cooperation with partners and external stakeholders. Such impacts can include intended and unintended effects of an action.
Intervention	An external action to assist a national effort to achieve specific development goals.
Lessons learned	Generalizations based on evaluation experiences with projects, programs, or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations. Frequently, lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome and impact.
LogFrame	Management tool used to improve the planning and design of interventions, most often at the project level, also in literature referred to as LFA – Logical Framework Approach. It involves identifying strategic elements (means (also referred to as “inputs”), activities, expected results (outputs), specific objective and overall objective) and their causal relationships, indicators, and the assumptions or risks that may influence success and failure. It thus facilitates planning, execution and evaluation of a development intervention. Related term: results-based management (RBM).

Outcome	The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects (including policy and institutional changes) of an intervention's outputs. Will materialise <i>after</i> the intervention outputs have been delivered and is clearly outside the control of the project management. Related terms: result, outputs, impacts, effect.
Recommendations	Proposals aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, quality, or efficiency of a development intervention; at redesigning the objectives; and/or at the reallocation of resources. Recommendations should be linked to conclusions.
Relevance	The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies. Note: Retrospectively, the question of relevance often becomes a question as to whether the objectives of an intervention or its design are still appropriate given changed circumstances and framework conditions.
Results	The output, outcome or impact (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) of a development intervention at various levels and points in time. Related terms: outcome, effect, impacts (the Result Chain refers).
Risks	Factors, normally outside the scope of an intervention, which may affect the achievement of an intervention's objectives.
Target groups	The specific individuals or organizations for whose benefit an intervention is undertaken.
(Expected) Results/ Outputs	The products, capital goods and services which result from a development intervention (the "deliverables"); may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes. The outputs are fully within the responsibility and control of the project management.
Sustainability	The likelihood of continuation of benefits (and prospects of the expansion and/or replication thereof) from a development intervention <i>after</i> major development assistance has been completed, and the external funding has ended (the probability of continued long-term benefits/impact). The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.

Executive summary

Introduction and background

The idea of a project on social and environmental performance in export-oriented sectors in Viet Nam surfaced in regular consultations between VCCI and UNIDO in the early 2000s. The Description of Action (DoA, in some literature referred to as “Project Document”) was initiated in 2007 and finalised and submitted in May 2008 to EU’s SWITCH Programme for support. A Contribution Agreement was signed in December 2008 between UNIDO as consortium lead and the EC as Contracting Authority (CA). Yet the Vietnamese ODA approval was not given before October 2009. When “real” implementation started in early 2010, the framework conditions for the Action had changed significantly since the DoA was prepared (world-wide economic crises had worsened and preparation of the ISO 26000 on Social Responsibility was developing faster than expected). The intervention strategy and LogFrame, thus had to be revised, which was completed after extensive stakeholders’ consultations in late 2010.

The Evaluation Consultant’s Mandate and Approach

The Evaluation largely covers the period from the revised strategy was instigated by UNIDO until project completion (May 2013), concentrating on the appropriateness and success of the strategy and activities. (During project implementation, the CA commissioned separately a Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM, an interim evaluation of project strategy, in October 2010) and a verification mission (verification of adherence to contractual terms and conditions, in September/October 2011). As a final evaluation, and taking into consideration the facts, a separate impact survey was commissioned. The intention was not to review all the details in the Action, but merely concentrate on the strategic level of interventions, especially related to the complexity and emerging environment of the Action.

The Consultant undertook document review followed by field visit with interviews in Viet Nam, both in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC). In addition to EUD (representing the CA) and UNIDO, the Consultant met with the national lead partner Viet Nam the Chamber of Commerce & Industry (VCCI); the three Sector Associations taking part (SAs, Viet Nam Leather & Footwear Association (Lefaso), Viet Nam Textile & Apparel Association (VITAS), and Viet Nam Electronics Industry Association (VEIA)); in addition to a few selected industrial enterprises; and several of the national CSR consultants educated under the Action.

It was noted that if the Evaluation had been staged a couple of months later, it would be able to capture the last year's progress reporting and the conclusions from the ongoing survey of "Awareness, Understanding and Uptake (AUU) of CSR". Also, it was noted that some more time could preferably have been set aside for the fieldwork. On the other hand, the evaluation findings and conclusions could still be incorporated in the Final Narrative Report of the Action, being an advantage.

Observations and assessment

Brief Introduction to the Action Objectives and Design

Overall Objective: *To contribute to the increased adoption of sustainable production patterns and behaviors among Vietnamese SMEs for reduced environmental impact, improved labour conditions and enhanced international competitiveness through an increased understanding and strengthened cooperation between Europe and Viet Nam.*

Specific Objective: *To enhance the sustainable integration of Vietnamese SMEs into global supply chains through an increased awareness, understanding and uptake of Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).*

There are three Expected Results (ERs) from the Action, comprising altogether 10 key activities and 52 detailed activities:

ER A: Awareness and understanding of Triple Bottom Line (TBL) CSR approach among Vietnamese SMEs, consumers and other relevant stakeholders increased.

ER B: Compliance with CSR procurement standards among Vietnamese SMEs increased in selected sectors.

ER C: Policy and regulatory recommendations for promotion of sustainable production practices and behaviours identified through participatory processes.

There are 10 partners in the Action: Lead Partner – UNIDO; Business Member Organizations – Lefaso, VITAS and VEIA (the three also jointly being referred to as the Sector Associations (SAs)), VCCI (appointed as the national counterpart, also referred to as "national coordinator"), and European Chamber of Commerce in Viet Nam (EuroCham); Government partners - Institute of Labour, Science & Social Affairs (ILSSA) and Viet Nam Directorate for Standards and Quality (STAMEQ); Other partners – National Metal & Materials Technology Center, Thailand (MTEC), and Service Organization for the German Chambers and Employer's Association (SEQUA). A project Office (PO) was established in Hanoi

in May 2010, lead by an International Project Coordinator/Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) and 4 national supporting staff.

Action Reformulation

Following the economic crises and the quickly advancing preparation of the ISO 26000 International Guidance Standard on Social Responsibility (SR), the intervention strategy was reformulated and refined at the level of the key and detailed activities in October 2010. The reformulation was a participatory and transparent process with the key stakeholders involved through several consultation meetings. The UNIDO PO in Hanoi took on a more hands-on coordinating role than initially intended. This might have weakened the national ownership of the interventions, but surely benefitted the Action at large. This, especially because the CTA was a very motivated, dedicated, and experienced professional. The partners undertook specified activities in the Action based on “normal” Service Contracts with UNIDO.

Relevance and Ownership

The Action has kept its strong relevance also following the reformulation, really meeting the requirements in Viet Nam for CSR awareness raising and increased understanding. The SMEs producing/assembling for export are experiencing a continuous tightening of the international buyers procurement guidelines. The Action therefore met with the clear needs and challenges of the three sectors involved. Based on interviews with the national partners, the Consultant concludes that they still have strong ownership to the CSR principles, but the means to operationalize them at grassroots level seem largely still lacking with the partners (CSR advisory services are not commensurate with the mandate and (human and institutional) capacities of the SAs).

Efficiency of Implementation

The efficiency was relatively low during the first half of the Action (delays, including as a result of reformulation of intervention strategy, largely outside the control of the project management), but there was good progress experienced during the second half, although project resources were only partly utilised (around 75%). In spite of the headquarters-based project management modality of UNIDO, leading to delays in payments (and frustration amongst national partners), the overall efficiency over the total project implementation period is considered *satisfactory*.

Effectiveness of Implementation

With the ISO 26000 (International Guidance Standard on Social Responsibility) being launched by International Standardisation Organization (ISO) on 1 November 2010, the core subjects and issues defined therein became the focus of attention in the Action, and the activities related to development of sector-wise Codes of Conduct (CoCs), initialled planned for, was taken out. The Action has delivered most of its planned outputs, and there were good reasons for taking out some activities. The project management has exercised good judgement and flexibility during implementation of the Action. Especially the open-for-all Calendar Forums, dealing with topics of importance and prevalence in the public discourse all related to the main topics of ISO 26000, were very much appreciated by the stakeholders. These may be the most successful events of the Action. The Calendar Forums reached out to several sectors, not only the three ones participating in the Action (constituting only 11% of the participants in the Forums). The Consultant considers the overall effectiveness of the Action to be *good*.

Impact and Sustainability

It is too early to detect, and assess, the long-term development changes/impact of the interventions, or even the likeliness of such being sustained in the far future. *Sustainability* normally comprises several elements, amongst others the continuation of the *means* (supporting the activities) and continuation of the *impact/results*. There are good indications of the latter, with e.g. increased awareness and understanding of CSR with the SMEs, increased skills with the CSR consultants, and the Government's launch of CSR standards. Also, the preliminary results from the Awareness, Understanding and Uptake (AUU) Survey (being undertaken in May 2013) indicate some very promising findings of increased CSR understanding since the baseline survey three years ago. However, it is clear, amongst others from the interviews with the national project partners, that there are few confirmed solid means (read: financial resources) available at present to continue the activities started and/or to replicate them. Also, there seems to be no formulated plans (or interest?) with the Sector Associations to continue the interventions or keep up the momentum. Additionally, there seems to be little ability to pay for assistance and coaching of CSR services and measures in the SMEs (including paying for the services of the national CSR consultants educated in the Action). Donor funding is thus required to continue the activities. UNIDO is pursuing several very promising possibilities to continue the efforts at various levels in the foreseeable future, including supporting the CSR consultants with their marketing activities. Thus, even if the *means* are unsustainable at present, some *results* achieved are likely to be maintained.

Coordination and Management

The management team has cooperated well and performed as efficient as they could within the framework set by the programme guidelines for the SWITCH Programme and conditions set by the Contracting Authority. Especially the dedication of the resident International Project Coordinator/CTA has proven to be a success, and he was delegated much freedom to make day-to-day decision. However, the relatively bureaucratic centralised management model of UNIDO (“top-down”) has lead to inevitable time delays and frustration (as some partners were obviously not fully prepared for the administrative and financial requirements imposed on them as full partners to the EC Action). The PO staffing was sufficient to ensure a proper local coordination and monitoring of the activities.

There was a general consensus amongst the persons interviewed by the Consultant that the Action had too many partners, and at least a couple of them became merely “sleeping partners” by default, following the revision of the intervention strategy. It was important to have the governmental partners on board, in order to smoothen implementation and enhance the uptake of CSR into policies (ISO 26000 has been translated into Vietnamese and domesticated by STAMEQ). In addition to VCCI, the three SAs were the most active national partners.

Reporting to EU followed a pre-set format, and lead to several rounds of comments and revisions of the draft Narrative Reports, not so much on contents but merely on the detailed formality requirements. This might seem “over to the top” for outsiders. The Steering Committee met five times, dealing with overall decision-making and not involving in the day-to-day decision-making of the Action (which was neither expected).

The Action has not *officially* cooperating with other projects, as the Vietnamese ODA rules do not allow for that. However, several initiatives on *informal* communication and minor cooperation with other institutions (including donors) have materialised, on the initiative of the project management (GIZ, UNIDO KOTRA, UN Global Compact, etc.). Some synergies have therefore surfaced.

Main conclusions and recommendations

The Action has lead to improved awareness and understanding of CSR, still being relevant at the end as well as when the Action started. There are few (if any) tangible proofs on improved uptake and usage of the CSR knowledge in the enterprises, although the CSR consultants and STAMEQ have started to use

their acquired CSR knowledge (the latter in translating and domesticating ISO 26000). Based on the interviews, the Consultant concludes that several of the participating SMEs need more and continued coaching to be able to implement the CSR theory with practical measures. The funds to buy such coaching are however to a large degree lacking with the SMEs, and the SAs claim that they do not have financial resources (or interest?) to undertake such support. For this, including the use of the national CSR consultants from the Action, external funds are needed. Such funds are not on the table yet, but there are good hopes of some funds coming onboard to continue key activities. The project management is commended for pursuing several funding possibilities.

The Consultant's few recommendations are that the CSR consultants should, regardless of further monetary support or not, continue staying together as a group and market themselves as a group, through e.g. producing simple flyers, presenting themselves at seminars, and presenting the individual consultants on their CSR platform website (which they can use out 2014, prepaid by the Action). They could form a "knowledge pool" for UNIDO. In case of financing being available, a second phase of support to the 15 SMEs (where coaching has started) could be considered (starting with establishing a baseline). UNIDO should consider mainstreaming CSR as a crosscutting issue in the Organization (with case studies from SMEs). A *general* recommendation to UNIDO is that the institution should bring all decisions, as far as possible, including financial and contractual management, closer to the beneficiaries.

1. Background and introduction

1.1 Background

The *idea* of launching a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) project in Viet Nam was born as early as 2002, when representatives of the two main partners in the Action, Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce & Industry (VCCI) and UNIDO in Hanoi, started informal discussions around this topic in the country. Notably, the Director General of VCCI had already in 1999 started working with CSR issues, as one of the very first professionals in Viet Nam to take this theme up nationally.

The Action was conceptualised by UNIDO during 2007, in consultation with its nine consortium partners (who all eventually signed the Description of Action (DoA, often referred to a "Project Document" in other projects). Following the proposal for support submitted in May 2008, the European Commission (EC) approved the funding under its SWITCH Regional Programme for Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) in Asia. The Action largely aims at building awareness, understanding and implementation of CSR in Viet Nam, in particular in SMEs. Three sectors were singled out as specific target groups: textile and garments; leather and footwear; and electronics, all already at the start having significant export to the European markets.

Box 1: SWITCH-Asia

SWITCH-Asia is promoting Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) across the Asia region. The overall programme objective of SWITCH-Asia is to promote economic prosperity and poverty reduction in Asian countries through sustainable growth with reduced environmental impact by industries and consumers, in line with international environmental agreements and processes. The purpose of the SWITCH-Asia programme is to promote sustainable production and sustainable consumption patterns and behavior in the Asia region, through an improved understanding and strengthening cooperation between Europe and Asia, notably by mobilizing the private sector, i.e. SMEs, retailers, producer and consumer organizations, along with relevant public sector authorities at policy-making level in formulating and implementing of SCP-related policies.

Under its objective to promote sustainable production, which the proposed Action aims to address, the Programme points out a number of themes. Among these themes are "Corporate Social Responsibility-CSR" and "Supply Chain Management". A €152 million budget is earmarked for the programme under the Regional Strategy for Asia covering the period 2007-2013.

The key modality for implementation is through projects, for which the SWITCH programme has so far issued five calls for proposals with specific guidelines (including requirement for implementation of consortium including multiple non-governmental, not for profit organizations from both EU as well as Asia as full implementation partners). The present Action was submitted under the first call for proposals, launched in 2007.

The Contribution Agreement was signed with EC on 9th December 2008, and the implementation period started formally on 9th February 2009 with a foreseen duration of 36 months. Government approval under Vietnamese regulations for Official Development Assistance (ODA) was obtained in October 2009, being a requirement for start-up of implementation. At that time however, the Action assumptions from 2007-2008 had been overtaken by events, and in 2010 the strategy of the Action had to be revised, in particular as a result of the onset of the global financial crisis and consequent economic downturn in autumn 2008 (negatively affecting the growth forecasts for manufacturing and trade in Viet Nam).

In particular however, the launching of the ISO 26000 in November 2010, providing clear guidance on the “what” of CSR, gave a strong justification for revising some of the key activities of the Action. The revision of the intervention strategy was done in close consultation with national stakeholders and the donor, leading to a revised and updated logical framework, being the starting point for this Final Evaluation (“the Evaluation”). At the request of UNIDO, acting on behalf of the consortium, the project implementation period was in January 2011 extended by 15 months at zero additional costs, leading to an effective end of implementation period on 8th May 2013. *Figure 1.1 in Annex 6* illustrates some key milestones of the Action in a timeline.

As per UNIDO technical cooperation guidelines, a final evaluation is a mandated part of completion of the UNIDO implemented project, in order to assess its achievements and impacts and present conclusions and recommendations aimed at cementing and furthering CSR achievements in Viet Nam, and for replicating and scaling-up the CSR promotion internationally, particularly in the ASEAN region. The final Evaluation was also included in the DoA and hence it was part of the Action, during project implementation, the CA commissioned separately a Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM, interim evaluation of project strategy, in October 2010) and a verification mission (verification of adherence to contractual terms and conditions, in September/October 2011). Financial, administrative and contractual obligations are not at all touched upon in the Final Evaluation in hand.

1.2 The Evaluation Consultant’s Mandate and Approach

1.2.1 The Evaluation Consultant

The consultant undertaking the Final Evaluation (“the Consultant”), Mr. Tore Laugerud from Nordic Consulting Group (NCG) Norway, was directly contracted by UNIDO Vienna, as he (incidentally) could undertake the Evaluation on short notice. Tore had previously worked for UNIDO as a Team Leader for the UNIDO Evaluation in PR China in 2011¹. The Consultant was fully independent and was given the mandate to submit his own assessments and recommendations regarding the Action.

1.2.2 Evaluation Objectives, Approach and Methodology

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Evaluation are enclosed in *Annex 1*, and focus on the appropriateness and success of the revised strategy, which was based on the synergy of the following main stages:

1.Improved awareness of the scope and business case of CSR	2.Improved understanding of potential for and multi-faceted nature of CSR implementation	3.Improved usage of CSR practices by SMEs
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The Evaluation was based on desk review of project documents, in particular the annual Interim Narrative Reports (covering the period February 2009–January 2012) and the interim evaluation on behalf of the donor (undertaken in October 2010 and presented in the form of a Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM)). The Interim Narrative Report for the period February 2012-January 2013 was under preparation at the time of the Evaluation, so the updated information of the last year’s activities was at large given verbally by the project staff.

A baseline survey of “Awareness, Understanding and Uptake (AUU) of CSR” was conducted among 400 SMEs during 2010 (²), and was in the process of being repeated as end-line/impact survey at the time of the Final Evaluation. Although the survey had not been concluded at the time of the Evaluation, some

¹ “Independent UNIDO Evaluation in PR China. Final report 16 May 2011”, undertaken by a 6-person team of international and national experts.

² 2010 Baseline Survey Report: Awareness, Understanding and Usage of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) among Vietnamese Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), <http://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/26226608/Publications%20CSR%20Action/CSR%20Baseline%20Survey%20EN.pdf>

preliminary findings revealed underway are touched upon in this report.

The desk review of background documents were undertaken during the beginning of May and the fieldwork in Viet Nam was undertaken during the period 15-22 May 2013. Upon travelling to Viet Nam, the Consultant prepared a brief Inception Note (enclosed in *Annex 1*), following a fruitful telephone conversation with the Project Manager sitting in UNIDO HQs in Vienna. The Note concludes that the ToR is clear and concise. With the relatively short time set aside for the fieldwork of such a magnitude of activities/sub-activities and partners, it was emphasised that the Evaluation could possibly not review all the details of the Action.

It was mutually agreed that, although the Evaluation should look at some detailed activities in order to understand the grassroots level actions, the Evaluation should concentrate on the strategic level of the intervention, as related to the complexity of these and the emerging environment in which the Action was implemented. It was also understood that, due to the limited time for the Evaluation, the Consultant would to a large degree also have to depend on the written reports and the statements of the persons that were interviewed in Viet Nam.

Furthermore, it was appreciated that some *outcomes*, and the longer-term *impacts*, could *not* be seen at this stage in time, as they will materialise later. However, the likelihood of such outcomes/impacts materialising could to some degree be elaborated upon based on plans and commitments of beneficiaries.

The ToR state: *“The terms and conditions ... did not allow a complete reshuffle in the organizational set up for the Action, which has resulted in a degree of mismatch between organizational set up and Action strategy. ... In its assessment of efficiency and effectiveness of the Action the evaluation will therefore focus on the practical opportunities available within the constraints of the contractual and administrative requirements on the Action”.*

Clearly, as the Action was formally completed at the time of the Evaluation, there is of course no room for adjusting the organizational set-up (and neither was this feasible). However, the Consultant has made some reflections on the set-up, with its mostly positive sides.

Issues related to *results/outputs* have been considered mainly related to quality and appropriateness. The LogFrame matrix showing all the sub-activities has been updated by verbal information and used for assessing the effectiveness.

The Consultant's approach to the Evaluation followed a common and well-proven modality: data collection through review of documents, and semi-structured interviews with project stakeholders. The Consultant invited the persons met to give their honest views and opinions on both project implementation in general, and the managerial set-up in particular, and in that respect the Evaluation was somehow quasi-"participatory".

The Consultant visited both Hanoi and Ho Chin Minh City (HCMC) during the field visit, and in addition to meeting with the donor EUD (representing the CA) and UNIDO's Country Office (CO) and the CSR Project Office (PO) staff, also met with: Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce & Industry (VCCI), which had been designated by Vietnamese Government as the national counterpart; the three Sector Associations (SAs) being Viet Nam Leather & Footwear Association (Lefaso), Viet Nam Textile & Apparel Association (VITAS), and Viet Nam Electronics Industry Association (VEIA); a few selected industrial enterprises; and several of the national CSR consultants that were educated during the Action (the latter proved to be very useful and interesting). The list of persons met and consulted and the fieldwork itinerary are enclosed in *Annex 2*.

During the Evaluation the Consultant was accompanied by the Assistant Training Coordinator of the Action (Ms. Thi Huong Giang Nguyen), who facilitated the meeting schedule and travelling logistics. The fact that the Assistant Training Coordinator worked with the UNIDO CSR team did not pose any problems or limit the independence of the Consultant's work. On the contrary, it proved to be an advantage for the Consultant to be accompanied by a project staff who was fairly familiar with the project implementation and partners, and this thus increased the usefulness of the Evaluation.

Although rarely any evaluation comes at the "right" time, the Consultant wants to comment that the Evaluation had benefitted from being undertaken a couple of months later than was the case. This because neither the progress report from the last 16 months of project implementation, nor the last impact survey, were completed at the time of the Evaluation. As some of the assessments in this report necessarily had to depend on the *verbal* information given by the project staff and indicative survey results, some elements of the Action might have missed the Consultant's attention during the relatively short (read: too short) time set aside for the field visit, which is regrettable and unfortunately unavoidable. The broad impression of the Action however still stands. However, the Evaluation's findings and conclusions would form an important input to the Final Narrative Report of the Action that will be prepared by the project management. This is clearly an advantage.

1.2.3 Relevant Previous Evaluations

An independent country evaluation – “*UNIDO activities in the Socialist republic of Viet Nam*”³ - was published in April 2012. The evaluation had the Inception Phase in May 2011, followed by interviews with the project managers in UNIDO HQs in October 2011 and finally with fieldwork in Viet Nam in November 2011. The evaluation covered the whole portfolio of UNIDO in the country and it is fair to emphasise that at the time of the evaluation a lot of the activities in the present CSR Action were in the middle of implementation, some had just started and some not started at all. It is also said that the time the evaluation team spent with the CSR staff was very limited. This has naturally coloured the assessment of this country evaluation team, who amongst other, concluded that:

- Action design and implementation structure: “*The design as a stand-alone CSR project does not seem well adapted to the Vietnamese SME reality where SMEs work with small margins, in sectors with low value added. It therefore seems difficult to induce changed behaviour and adoption and internalisation of CSR as part of a business philosophy, unless the SMEs perceive immediate economic benefits. ... As regards increasing consumer awareness, which might contribute to increasing domestic pressure on SMEs, the project design includes only few activities, whereas it would be necessary to take a strategic approach given the nascent nature of consumer and community organizations. Given the multitude of stakeholders, no PMU has been placed in a Government institution....*”
- Relevance: “*The issues addressed (social, economic and environmental) as well as the three targeted sectors (garments and textiles; leather and footwear, and electrical and electronics) are all relevant in the current Vietnamese context and in line with Government policies. The CSR approach is also relevant to UNIDO and its mandate*”.
- Effectiveness: “*The project faced difficulties in identifying interested enterprises. The project design does not provide clear entry points for introducing CSR perspectives to SMEs. The members of the participating Business Membership Organizations (BMOs) were approached for participation but the refusal rate was so high that alternative ways for identifying SMEs had to be found. As implementation progressed, additional changes were agreed, such as to replace the formulation of sector-specific Code of Conducts (CoCs) by the formulation of practical guidance for SMEs*

³ Mr. Peter Loewe, Ms. Henny Andersen and Ms. Tran Thi Hanh, The Consultant received a hard copy of the report by the UNIDO Representative in Hanoi across the table in their meeting the first day of the fieldwork.

on how to adopt CSR principles and reconcile different buyer requirements. Such adaptive management and implementation has contributed to effectiveness. The extent to which the expected outputs will be reached is however difficult to assess. Unfortunately, the project has missed the opportunity to conduct a baseline survey against which the potentially increased consumer awareness could be measured. ... There is no automatic relationship between the expected outputs (certified CSR consultants, baseline assessments and plan, various publications, case studies, etc) and the expected output of increased compliance”.

- Efficiency: *“More time and effort than anticipated had to be spent on getting access to SMEs, which has decreased efficiency. Although the implementation rate is assessed as acceptable, there are quite a few activities which remain to be done during the few months left of the project duration”.*
- Ownership: *“There are signs of strong ownership in various partners – although there is no single Vietnamese institutional owner of this project (given its multitude of implementing partners). It seems that the project was designed without close consultation with Vietnamese partners”.*
- Sustainability and impact: *“The prospects for sustainability of project benefits are assessed as weak. The baseline study revealed that many Vietnamese SMEs did not perceive any benefits from adhering to CSR standards. Unless capacity building is linked to binding constraints for the SME to adhere to CSR principles it seems unlikely that such potential improved awareness will translate into changed practices”.*
- UNIDO synergies: *“In the project document potential for synergies with other UNIDO projects is acknowledged. Specific reference is made to the potential to find ample opportunities to share information, expertise and most likely some joint activities with the SME Cluster Development project⁴. It is noted that the CSR project fits well with UNIDO’s trade promotion interventions and investment related policies. Further, UNIDO’s action on SMTQ infrastructure⁵ is seen as offering opportunities for information sharing and collaboration. No other synergies have as of yet materialised, although the project management is considering closer coordination with the SME Cluster project”.*

⁴ Consultant’s info: *“Immediate objective is to strengthen up to 3 SME clusters/company networks, including those that may be export oriented, and industry associations for twinning with Italian SME clusters/company networks and industry association and to facilitate business partnerships between selected Vietnamese and Italian enterprises”.*

⁵ *“Trade Capacity Building in the Mekong delta Countries of Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam, through strengthening institutional and national capacities related to standards, methodology, testing and Quality (SMTQ) – Phase II”.*

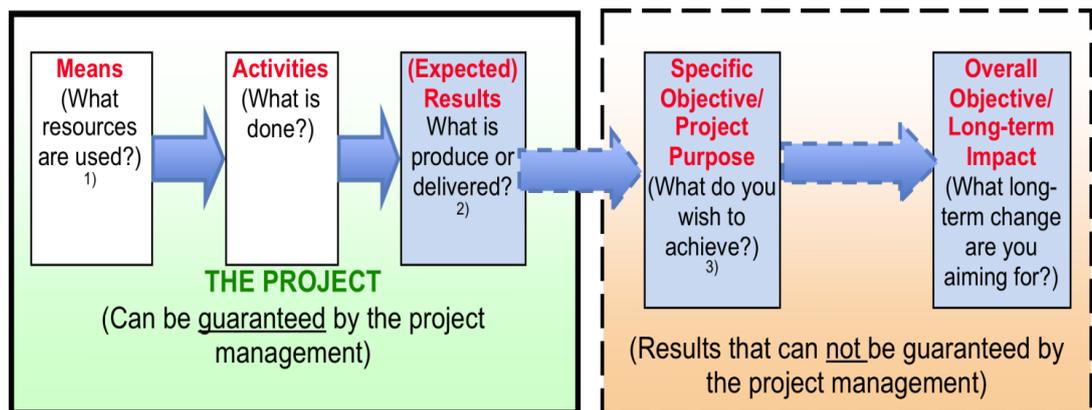
- One UN synergies: “The project document acknowledges that Viet Nam is a pilot ‘UN Delivery as One’ country and the CSR project has accordingly been included in the second One UN plan”.
- Cross-cutting contributions: “Despite its CSR focus the project does not explicitly contribute to enhancing gender equity or poverty reduction and achievement of MDGs. There are also no explicit contributions to south-south cooperation”.
- Conclusions and recommendations: “... It is recommended to reconsider the project design for a second phase, in particular to link the CSR perspectives to other SME interventions.”

2. Observations and assessments

2.1 Brief Introduction to the Action Objectives and Design

For easy reference and as a useful backdrop to the Evaluation, the main design of the Action is briefly presented. The Consultant however anticipates that the reader largely knows the main elements of the Action beforehand, realising that the target audience of the Evaluation is the main project partners - EC, UNIDO, VCCI and all project partners.

As a general backdrop to the presentation of the Action, the “Result Chain” elements of a LogFrame, as defined in the EU terminology⁶, are highlighted below:



1) In the OECD DAC guidelines, and the “*Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM). European Commission, EuropeAid Co-Operation Office. ROM Coordination EuropeAid / E5, July 2009*”, being referred to as “Inputs”.

2) In the OECD DAC guidelines (“*Glossary of key terms in evaluation and result based management. 2010*”) being referred to as “Outputs”.

3) In the EuropeAid ROM guidelines, and in the ROM guidelines, referred to as “Project Purpose”.

Notably, OECD, EU and various bilateral donors have slightly different definitions on the LogFrame elements. This does not pose any problem when the prevalent

⁶ “Aid Delivery Methods. Volume 1: Project Cycle Management (PCM) Operational Guidelines, May 2004. Supporting effective implementation of EC external assistance.”

definitions and guidelines are clearly spelled out from the start, like for the Action. The elements that can be guaranteed (controlled) by the management, and the ones that are clearly outside such control, are similar in all LogFrames (although slightly different terms are used). The management can guarantee the Expected Results/Outputs, but can clearly not be held *formally* responsible for fulfilment of the Specific Objective/Purpose! (It is also noted that the boxes shaded in blue are the “results”, meaning one result resulting from the previous, but obviously EU in the SWITCH project did not use this terminology).

As seen from the figure, the *Specific Objective* of any project is (with a large degree of probability) resulting from the (*Expected*) *Results* (also in popular terms referred to as the “outputs”). The Overall Objective will materialise in the farther future⁷.

The three main Expected Results as formulated in the DoA, in addition to the Specific Objective and the Overall Objective, are shown below. These results and objectives were *not* revised when the activities were revised in 2010 (see below)⁸. The main *rationale* for undertaking any project, and the Action, is always the *Specific Objective*.

The Consultant notes that the project management claims that the Expected Results defined are the “*deliverables*”, or “*goods and services produced*” (term used from the ROM handbook). The Consultant however, wants to comment on the *actual formulation*, and semantics, of the Expected Results. Formally speaking, the management can only guarantee that awareness raising, training, educational exercises are carried out as planned during the implementation (activities), but they can clearly not guarantee that the *awareness*, and especially the *understanding* has increased. If all participants (in theory) “slept” during lessons, but the lessons (services) were held and list of participants were presented as planned, the awareness and understanding might be dubious. The reason is that the brains of the participants must be able to digest the ideas and understand them. However, Expected Result A is most likely delivered, at least with some of the participating SMEs, and could (with good will) pass as “real”

⁷ Some agencies use the term “Impact” on the long-term benefits, and the (EC) PCM Operational Guidelines defines the impact as “*The effect of the project on its wider environment, and its contribution to the wider policy or sector objectives (as summarized in the project’s Overall Objective)*”. The (EC) ROM Handbook defines it as: “*Impact describes how and to which degree the project has contributed to the solution of the problem and to the achievement of the overall objective. Actual Impact can only be measured ex-post. ROM monitoring for ongoing projects nevertheless scrutinizes the impact prospects, i.e. the project’s likely contribution to the project’s Overall Objective*”.

⁸ Only small change is noticed: the DoA in the overall objective says “Europe and Asia”, whereas the revised LogFrame says “Europe and Viet Nam”. In a LogFrame modality the latter is formally speaking the most appropriate one as it brings the overall objective “closer to” the specific objective, but this has no practical implication on the results and activities of the Action as such.

result. Nevertheless, it is *formulated* as a specific objective/outcome.

Expected Result B clearly has as a main prerequisite that the participants have *understood* the concept of the training/education, and that they actually *implement* the new principles in the SMEs on the grounds and can *show compliance* with CSR standards. In other words, ER B depend on ER A to succeed, and it was clear from the interviews with the SAs and SMEs that so far very few tangible actions of compliance have materialised, simply because there has been no control/monitoring of such compliance post-Action. ER B is clearly *formulated* as a specific objective/outcome (and could actually be formulated as such one in the first place).

Expected Result C is easier, as the “identification“ of policy and regulatory recommendations has materialised, being a real *result*.

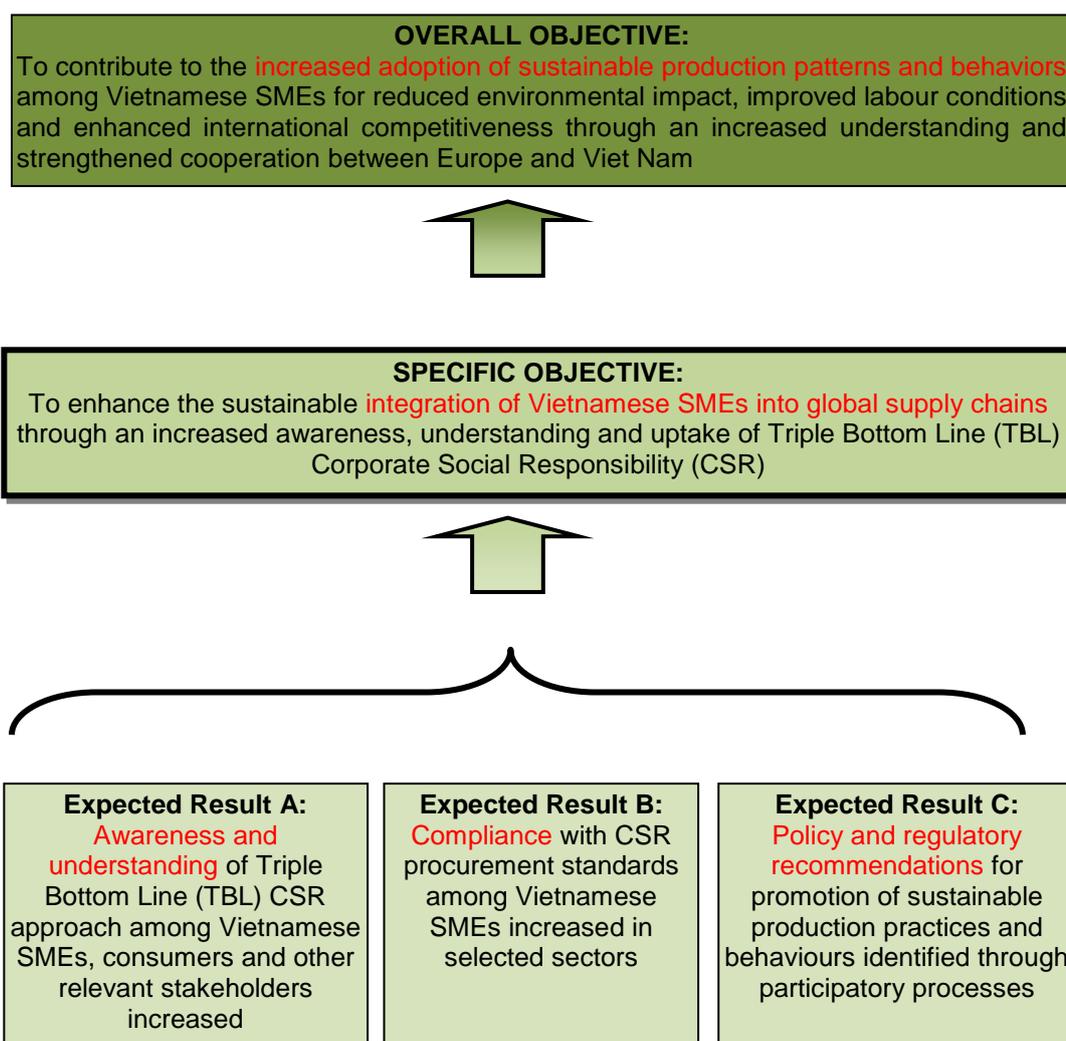


Figure 2.1 in Annex 6 also gives an overview of the main activities under each main Expected Result. There are a number of activities, with sub-activities identified (also referred to as “detailed activities” in the Action LogFrame), leading up to each expected result:

- Expected Result A - 4 key activities and 18 detailed activities;
- Expected Result B - 3 key activities and 21 detailed activities;
- Expected Result C - 3 key activities and 13 detailed activities.

Each detailed activity again involved several interventions and events (“deliverables”), so it could be concluded that the Action is rather *comprehensive*, although individually each activity is not necessarily *complicated* in the technical sense. Yet, a few of the activities were complex and multifaceted, such as for example the 2011 and 2012 CSR Calendar Forum series which each involved the planning, organization and hosting of 10 multi stakeholder workshops (half thereof in Hanoi and half in HCMC). It is the variety of activities during a relatively short implementation period that has made the Action challenging. (Reference is made to the assessment of achievements below for the specification of the detailed activities in the Action).

The Action has one applicant (or Consortium Leader, being UNIDO) and nine partners, with VCCI appointed in the ODA approval as the national counterpart and de-facto being the National Lead Implementing Partner. UNIDO and VCCI are co-chairing the Steering Committee, the highest joint organ of the partnership of the Action, where the other eight partners have one representative each, in addition to EUD having one. All the partners signed the initial DoA, but obviously not all of them were as active in the partnership as others, as seen below. The partners are:

Leading partners:

(Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce & Industry)

Sector Associations
(SAs):



(Viet Nam Leather & Footwear Association)



(Viet Nam Textile & Apparel Association)



(Viet Nam Electronics Industry Association)

Government partners:



(Institute of Labour Science & Social Affairs, under Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs - MoLISA)



(Viet Nam Directorate for Standards and Quality, under Ministry of Science and Technology - MoST)

Other partners:



(European Chamber of Commerce in Viet Nam)



(National Metal & Materials Technology Center, Thailand)



(Service Organisation for the German Chambers and Employer's Association)

Figure 2.2 in Annex 6 illustrates the main elements of the administrative/managerial set-up of the Action. The main target groups of the Action are the Vietnamese SME's⁹ in the textile & garment, leather & footwear and electronics & electrical sectors, the national Business Membership Organizations (BMOs), and the government agencies dealing with policies on CSR adoption.

The Action set up a Project Office (PO) in Hanoi (moved into permanent rented offices 15.05.2010), with a permanent International Project Coordinator/ Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) and support staff (Office Manager and Training Coordinator, each with one assistant). The Action has been reporting to the CA (donor), represented by the EUD in Hanoi.

⁹ A "small" enterprise in Viet Nam has less than around 200 employees (approximate figure), a medium size enterprise up to around 1,500 workers and a large more than this.

2.2 Action reformulation

As mentioned above, the initial DoA was prepared largely during late 2007/early 2008 and submitted to the EU SWITCH programme for funding in May 2008. Although the *formal* implementation start-up date was 9 February 2009, the implementation of activities could not start before the Vietnamese Government had approved the ODA, which was in October 2009. The real implementation “on the ground” however, in practical terms started during the first quarter of 2010, with the dispatch of the international project coordinator and conclusion of cooperation agreements with the partners, in addition to the first Steering Committee meeting being held. Already at this time it was clear that the project strategy and activities had to be revised, as some of the assumptions made during the DoA preparations had been “nullified” by events totally *outside* the control of the Action. These were mainly:

- The international financial crises had strongly materialised, with economic regression starting already second half of 2008. As basis for the activities in the DoA it was e.g. expected (key assumptions) that industrial activities in Viet Nam and international trade/export would continue growing. The opposite eventually happened, with manufacturing enterprises closing down, workers going into unemployment, existing supply chains being discontinued¹⁰, etc.
- The work on preparing the ISO 26000 on Social Responsibility (SR) progressed much faster than anyone had expected two years earlier (eventually the final version was officially launched 1 November 2010), and making the Action much more in line with ISO was therefore imminent and unavoidable. (Neighbouring China’s early adoption of the ISO 26000 also made Viet Nam wanting to adopt it as well.) Therefore, amongst others, the focus on developing Codes of Conduct (CoCs) for the enterprises, as outlined in the DoA, was with the new ISO standard not so relevant any more.

¹⁰ The issue of “global supply chain”, as referred to in the title of the project, was thus not so relevant any more.

Box 2: Social Responsibility (SR) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)?

The main difference between SR and CSR is that the former also includes governmental institutions whereas CSR only deals with corporations/enterprises.

ISO26000 defines Social Responsibility as: “*the responsibility of an organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment through transparent and ethical behaviour*”. SR contributes to sustainable development including health and the welfare of society; takes into account the expectations of stakeholders; is in compliance with applicable law and consistent with international norms of behaviour; and is integrated through the organization and practiced in its relationships.

The EU definition of CSR: refers to firms integrating “*social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis (...) not only fulfilling legal expectations, but also going beyond compliance*”. This definition connects CSR practice with a firm's core business operations, thus excluding corporate philanthropy, and makes a “business case” for CSR.

The first consultations amongst the partners to revise the project strategy started around April 2010, following the first Steering Committee (SC) meeting on 8 March 2010. During the next half-year several consultation meetings (10-12 in total) amongst the key partners took place at different locations, with the CA (EUD) being in the loop with information all the time. Obviously some partners, being the Sector Associations (SAs), and the two “managing” partners, were more active in this process than others.

The revision of the intervention strategy seemed to be rather challenging as the changes had to be within the EC Guidelines for the SWITCH Programme, respecting the Terms and Conditions of the Standard Agreement between EC and United Nations Agencies and maintaining the *scope* identified in the initial DoA. This e.g. resulted in the refined strategy (the three steps mentioned above) not being exactly identical to the three expected results¹¹, leading to a not fully internally consistent LogFrame, although being a workable compromise. The Action reformulation was however necessary for substantive reasons (grim economic outlook for SMEs and publication of ISO 26000), and resulted in a markedly different set of activities, for example use of ISO 26000 as a content framework, inclusion of Calendar Forums (as part of a much broader awareness, communication and stakeholders engagement strategy), elimination of Codes of Conduct (not being necessary in view of the SMEs consulted), redevelopment and customization into REAP26, and changing emphasis for the partnership programme (ambitions of new supply chains were lowered, given grim economic outlook).

¹¹ Expected Result A combines awareness and understanding, ER B was reformulated in terms of result (compliance) from usage, and ER C is policy/enabling framework.

The reformulation of activities obviously had a follow-on impact on roles and responsibilities of the different partners. There were main challenges in terms of administration resulting in part from:

- the administrative and legal set up of the SWITCH Programme (all contributors are in EC terminology “Partners” to the Action and are therefore bound by the same administrative and financial and narrative reporting requirements as UNIDO, yet these might have been underestimated during formulation of the Action, even though all partners were signatories to the DoA); and
- the operational modalities available for project implementation to UNIDO, whereby UNIDO had to “contract” the partners as a legal basis to effectuate payments, and thereby de facto “undermining” to a certain extent the initially desired partnership.

The DoA also assumed that the Action would be “*managed*” by the Steering Committee (SC), with a Project Office (PO) located with one of the national project partners. The initially suggested managerial set-up as intended in the DoA is shown in *Figure 2.3* in *Annex 6*, with the partners and UNIDO Country Office (CO) steering the Action at an “equal” level. It was assumed that the UNIDO CO should “*devote significant time to provide technical input during implementation*”. In reality however, the managerial set-up was modified to the modality indicated in *Figure 2.2*, where the Project Office (PO), lead by a CTA/International Project Coordinator got a much more prominent role in daily management of the Action than initially intended, much more like a “contents provider”, with VCCI and the SAs playing a less hands-on role.

As mentioned, in absence of an offer from any of national partners, UNIDO eventually had to establish a PO in a separate location *outside* of the national partners and UNIDO CO, lead by the CTA with four national staff. Eventually therefore, the daily project activities were driven much more according to a “top-down” management modality than initially planned for. Despite regular meetings with representatives of all national partners, routine day-to-day decisions had to be taken by the CTA upon consultation of partners and affiliates of the Action (being an “expanded” CSR network, including, yet not limited to the national project partners, fed by the success of above all the CSR calendar forums).

This “shifting” implementation modality created a lot of discussion before it finally was mutually agreed to and understood by the partners. The financial resources were distributed to the partners through Service Contracts covering specific tasks

agreed to as per the work plans (notably mostly technically-related seminars/workshops in the three sectors), prepared by the PO and executed by the UNIDO HQs in Vienna. Eventually, the distribution of funds between the partners was not exactly as indicated in the DoA, which seemingly caused lengthy discussions between the partners and UNIDO. The partners assumed that the DoA budget figures should be strictly followed, whereas UNIDO (and the CA) saw the DoA budget only as *indicative*, to be utilised and distributed amongst the partners according to *real* needs as the Action progressed (and activities changed)¹². Eventually, the national partners largely were allocated the funds indicated in the initial budget.

Notably, the national *ownership*, through the partners being responsible for managing their own budgeted funds, was an important issue with the donor in the revision discussions. Through this switch in coordinating responsibility, it is assumed that some of the initially intended national ownership inevitably *might* have got lost, however on account of a more effective hands-on management by the UNIDO CSR PO, presumably leading to most of the intended results being delivered in time and to required quality.

Notably, the “Baseline Survey on Awareness, Understanding and Usage of CSR in Viet Nam”¹³ should have been undertaken in the Inception Phase of the Action but were delayed of various reasons. The fieldwork took place during the months March-May 2010, the results were discussed and reviewed with partners and CA in August/September, and the final report was submitted in October 2010. The findings gave useful input to the revision process as it indicated in which areas the efforts of the Action should be focused. Also the independent review undertaken by EU, referred to as the Result-Oriented Monitoring (ROM), undertaken by an external consultant in October 2012 (final report submitted 5 November 2010), gave important guidance to the revision process.

An asset in the process of revising the strategy was clearly that the externally contracted CTA became involved in the Action from October 2009, and was permanently stationed in the PO in Hanoi from December 2009, when also the Project Manager in Vienna changed (due to resignation of the initial Project Manager). This CTA had previously been working close with the ISO 26000 working groups and had gained useful experience from such work in e.g. Sweden and Brazil. He therefore became a key contributor and local driving force in the revision of the project strategy, and this was in the Consultant’s opinion, a

¹² One example was that a planned study tour to Europe did not materialise, as the UNIDO project management believed the Action could make much more efficient use of the money by going to Thailand instead. This created discussions with the partners....

¹³ Undertaken by the consulting company TNS, specialised in public and social research – both in Viet Nam and internationally.

blessing in disguise for the Action.

The Consultant concludes that the process of revising the intervention strategy and activities in 2010 was a *participatory* and *transparent* process, where all partners took part and could bring their views on the activities to the table for discussion. The beneficiaries, being the SMEs in the three focus sectors (textile/garment, leather/footwear and electronics), got their views to the table represented by the respective interest organization (Sector Associations). The buyers were, of natural reason, not *directly* represented in this revision process, rather than the project partners being fully aware of the requirements of the buyers, making sure to incorporate such demands (which is a main rationale behind the Action per se!!). The guidelines of the donor (EU) regarding managerial and administrative modalities made the discussion between UNIDO and EUD, but resulting from an open dialogue such obstacles were sorted out and were in the end not found to be a constraint to the formulation of detailed targeted activities and interventions in the Action. The findings of the baseline survey gave good input on where to focus the activities in the Action. During this process, UNIDO got a more prominently daily and hands-on managerial role than initially intended for, but with the dedicated and experienced CTA, backed by senior Project Manager based in Vienna, yet regularly in the field and also being key in this process, the Action largely benefitted from this.

3. Assessment

3.1 Relevance and Ownership

Needless to say, the Action was in its initiation, and still was at the time of its completion; very relevant to meet the challenges of the exporting manufacturing sector in Viet Nam (otherwise it would not have received support from the EU SWITCH Programme in the first place!). Viet Nam became a middle-income country during the 2006-10 Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP), accessed the WTO in January 2007 and aims to become an industrialized country by 2020. The national economy to a large degree depends on an upkeep (and hopefully and increase) of the export of consumer goods (crude oil-declining, garments and textiles, leather and footwear, seafood and coffee). Export industries are still largely dependent on exploitation of an abundant and cheap labour force and natural resources; and, thereby vulnerable to intensive global competition.

The selected sectors have significant contribution to job creation in the country and income and export revenue generation. In addition, particularly the garment sector employs a large number of migrant workers (mostly women), including those belonging to ethnic minorities, who remit a significant portion of their earnings back to their local communities with positive impact on reducing poverty. Sustainable production in these sectors and adoption of CSR by small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) is expected in the long-term to contribute to significant economic and social impacts as competitiveness, working conditions and environmental protection improves.

Additionally, following the international discourse on labour force and environmental conditions, the export buyers are continuously tightening their procurement guidelines to comply with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) requirements and expectations of their consumers. The introduction of ISO 26000 in November 2010; in addition to e.g. the EU Directives on Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) for electronics products; Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) for all product groups; and eco-labelling for textiles, garments and footwear products; increased this pressure. These requirements pose serious constraints on many Vietnamese enterprises, of which over 90% are SMEs.

As mentioned earlier, the three Sector Associations (SAs) were fully involved in the formulation of the initial DoA and revised strategy of the Action in 2010,

through several rounds of consultations lead by UNIDO and VCCI within the partnership group. Throughout the Action implementation it is clear to the Consultant, based on interviews with the partners that the SAs have participated actively in the activities, as the focus of the Action still meets with their clear needs and challenges. The target groups are continuously, and even more strongly than when the Action started, meeting the increasing demands of the international buyers and the stiff competition of export of similar consumer goods from other competing countries.

As such, the defined outputs in the revised project LogFrame (see sections below) have all through project implementation been relevant to the beneficiaries, and still are at the completion of the Action. However, it is also clear that the results of the Action, although giving the SMEs a boost in pursuing the CSR, are by far insufficient to reasonably achieve the Specific and Overall Objectives of the Action.

Definitely, the Action has increased awareness on CSR amongst the SMEs, as seen below, and party also understanding of the triple bottom principles of CSR. However, there is still some way to go until the SMEs will *uptake* such principles as an integral part of daily operations. This is a gradual process where many factors will influence the speed and extent of uptake, all being outside the influence of the Action. The national projects partners, being the SAs and the SMEs alike, clearly showed increased awareness of the importance of CSR in their operations, but all persons from the SAs and SMEs interviewed, almost without exception, expressed a need for more exposure and support in the field. The ownership of CSR principles is thus there, but the *means* to operationalize them are only developing and largely still lacking with the partners. There is a profound wish or more support of the same kind and add-on from external supporters.

3.2 Efficiency of Implementation

The main financial input to the Action is provided by the CA (EC) with EUR 1.611 million, which was 80% of the total project budget (EUR 2.014 million). The total eligible cost of the Action was calculated to EUR 1,882,555 (including contingency reserve of 5% - EUR 89,645), and with adding 7% administrative fee for UNIDO (EUR 132,779), and the co-financing by UNIDO and its consortium partners (EUR 402,867), the total project budget ended at EUR 2,014,334.

However, the Verification Mission in 2011¹⁴, conducted at the direction of the CA,

¹⁴ By Pricewaterhouse Coopers

found that there was insufficient evidence to consider the calculated co-financing in terms of contributions by staff of national key partners' eligible expenditure (VCCI, VITAS, VEIA and LEFASO). (The partners could simply not provide valid written evidence of the claimed in-kind contribution in form of staff salaries¹⁵).

The UNIDO country evaluation report from April 2012 concludes that efficiency has been decreased due to the time and efforts spent on getting access to the SMEs and mentions that a lot of activities remained to be undertaken until the end of the implementation period. Surely, the efficiency in the first stage of the Action, from the *formal* start-up date in February 2009 (see *Figure 1.1*), was very low. This was mainly due to the fact that the Vietnamese ODA approval came 8 months after the formal start-up and that no activity could be officially undertaken until such approval was on the table. By the time of the real physical start-up, being even some months after the formal ODA approval, the framework conditions, in which the Action should operate, had changed significantly as mentioned earlier (financial crises started to surface already in second half of 2008 and gradually worsened throughout, and ISO 26000 had been developed much faster than anticipated), so the strategy and activities had to be reconsidered and revised.

This led to further delays in physical start-up of *some* key activities. Until January 2011 the progress thus was considered to be relatively low, because of reasons clearly outside the control of the project management. In January 2012 the Action therefore got an extension of 15 months. Truly enough, at the time when the above-mentioned country evaluation team did their fieldwork in Viet Nam many of the activities were still outstanding, but the momentum was continuously boosted during 2011 and beginning of 2012. In 2012 and first quarter of 2013 the Action implemented all the activities planned for, leave alone a few that of "natural" reasons were taken out (see section on *Effectiveness* below). *Annex 5* lists all the main events of the Action and it shows clearly from the list of activities from 2011 that the last say 2 years of the Action have been the most active period.

The managerial setup of the Action is described in detail in *Section 2.7*, and it is here just concluded (by the Consultant) that the operation modality of UNIDO in general, with e.g. the contractual and financial obligations being done from the HQs in Vienna, is not seen as an optimal solution in development cooperation at large, with less efficiency that if the management had been located closer to the

¹⁵ It is believed that as most of the staff in at least the three SAs were working honorary, there was in fact no salaries paid to them or the salaries were much lower than the ones claimed in the initial budget as "real" salaries. In fact, the SAs did not have a "tax code", and was thus not registered as tax/social charges-paying entities. VCCI claimed they were not "allowed" to hand out the papers that proved the salaries.

beneficiaries¹⁶. Having said this, it is understood that in the Action specifically, the CTA was given a lot of freedom to manoeuvre within the activities, backed by the Project Manager, and as such “made the best out of it” in the prevalent system.

Notably also, adding to this overall somewhat “top-heavy” field-home working modality UNIDO is in the process of implementing a comprehensive Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. This system is gradually introduced with the Project Management Modules being operational from January 2012, Project Personnel Modules were added during 2012, and the Finance Module being introduced in January 2013. Notably, the Consultant has no overview of, or insight into, this ERP system, being far beyond the mandate of the Evaluation. However, based on consultations with the project management it is understood that the ongoing transition continues to be a “rocky road” and has unfortunately adversely impacted on the efficiency of the Action.

Adding to these challenges, there have been some cash flow obstacles in the Action, mainly due to the outstanding issues in regard to eligible costs for staff employed by national counterparts and by UNIDO (follow up to the findings of the Verification Mission). As a result thereof, the interim financial report for 3rd project year (February 2011-January 2012) still remains unapproved and payments of the EC grant to UNIDO have stalled. UNIDO therefore had to find ways, respecting the financial rules and regulations imposed by UNIDO member states, to pre-finance the completion of the Action during 2012-2013. At completion of the implementation period of the Action, less than 60% of the committed grant from EC had been actually transferred to UNIDO accounts. Nevertheless, these obstacles do not seem to have hampered the efficiency, or effectiveness for that matter, of the Action.

In spite of the above challenges, a *good* progress has been maintained, especially during the last part (say 2 years) of the Action. This is first and foremost thanks to the continuous hands-on coordination of a dedicated CTA in Hanoi, with close backing by the Project Manager in the HQs. The CTA has been given a wide mandate and flexibility in local management in the PO, not anticipated to the same extent in the initial DoA, and the excellent cooperation climate between the CTA and the Project Manager has boosted this success. This, in addition to UNIDO’s ability to cope with the cash flow challenges has largely contributed to securing a “favourable” efficiency. From the Consultant’s assessment, also the quality of the activities delivered is according to plans and

¹⁶ The Consultant realises that this issue is not at stake in the Evaluation, and that it is heavily contested by some UNIDO staff, which is understandable. The Consultant however maintains that the *general* efficiency in UNIDO operations at large *could* have been better by decentralising all the financial and the managerial responsibilities to the UNIDO offices in the beneficiary countries, like most of the other UN institutions have done and most of the bilateral development agencies did some 15-20 years ago all around the world.

as expected, so the overall efficiency of the Action is assessed as *satisfactory* for the whole period of the Action. On the other hand, taken the challenging framework condition described above being outside the control of the project management, the efficiency of the Action management has evidently been *good*.

3.3 Effectiveness of Implementation

In second half of 2010, the revised strategy was concluded, with some initial activities taken out and some new ones taken on board the Action. One of the major changes was that the preparation of Codes of Conducts (CoCs) in the enterprises was no longer a priority, and simply not needed, with the ISO 26000 (“International Guidance Standard on Social Responsibility”) officially published by the International Standardization Organization (ISO) in Geneva on 1 November 2010¹⁷. It was also realised that most of the exporting enterprises already had to comply with multiple Codes of Conduct as imposed by different international buyers. The initial plan of trying to make sector-specific national CoCs did therefore not gain momentum, as there was no interest amongst the SMEs to do so, and the activity was eventually dropped. Instead, companies expressed need to find a way through the “jungle of private standards” (a finding that was echoed by UNIDO’s own project on private sector standards¹⁸).

The Consultant agrees that the revision of the intervention strategy and the subsequent list of activities and project LogFrame were simply absolutely required, and it was also endorsed and agreed to by the EUD and the national partners. It is however noted that the three stages used by the project management in the refined strategy (i.e. awareness, understanding and usage) are not exactly identical to the three expected results. Yet, the resulting revised LogFrame was a workable compromise, although clearly not a fully internally consistent LogFrame.

Annex 4 shows the revised logical framework with the “key activities” and “detailed activities”. The table also shows the indicators with which the fulfilment of the activities were measured and the degree of achievement, as reported in the last available progress report and verbally by the CTA (for the last year of implementation). As seen from the annex, most of the activities have been implemented as planned, and the table is mostly self-explanatory. Some few comments however follow below:

¹⁷ The development process was officially started in 2004 with the participation of more than 90 countries and over 40 organizations. The required voting amongst the participating member states of ISO was held in September 2010 leading to over 80% acceptance.

¹⁸ “*Make Private Standards Work for You. A guide to private standards in the garments, footwear and furniture sectors. 2011*” (prepared by UNIDO in cooperation with CBI, funded by Norad), to which the present Action contributed and benefited from.

- The end of project survey on Awareness, Undertaking and Uptake (AUU) was ongoing at the time of the Final Evaluation, and only some preliminary, although very encouraging, findings were unofficially available to the Consultant (see below).
- Activities A.3.9 & 10: of six planned Calendar Forums only five were undertaken. The one skipped was on the topic “human rights”, which was considered to be too politically sensitive in Viet Nam. The Consultant appreciates this kind of flexibility and pragmatism with the project management, not pursuing the planned agenda at all costs.
- Activity A.4.2 (follow up survey amongst recipients of the 2011 CSR awards) was taken out. It is worth noting that rules and regulations for national awards were drastically changed by the Government of Viet Nam in 2011, and hence going back to the 2010 recipients of the rewards was less appropriate. There were multiple contributions to the re-development of the CSR award scheme, based on the insights gained from the Action activities (in particular the Calendar Forums).
- Activities B.1.3, 4 & 5 (recruitment of CSR consultants for training) was partly achieved. The initial hope was to recruit 60 consultants, but it was too short time set aside to find suitable candidates so only 50 met on the first introductory event, and 35 started on the training course. Essentially after the first round of consultant’s training (with the 35 trainees) and their initial work with enterprises (in 2011), it was found that a much broader education of the consultants was needed, for them to become fully competent as CSR coaches/advisors. Hence, the advanced education over the course of 2012, which eventually led to the 17 “senior” CSR consultants receiving a certificate for completed education at the end of the Action. In addition, in 2012 a second tier of national experts was trained as local CSR advisors, a less advanced level. This training was completed by 105 national experts. In total therefore 140 were trained, 105 at a basic (understanding) level, 18 at more topical level and 17 at advanced (advisory) level. The “drop-outs” underway was partly explained by lack of interest amongst the potential target groups, and the project management aimed at having dedicated and competent consultants, so more dropped out during the courses. Another reason was that the education required a lot of time from the students/consultants, estimated to be close to 3 months with homework, fieldwork, and formal classroom education, and not all participants simply had the possibility to set aside so much time for the education. Obviously, the national experts did not know the full extent of the education at start-up and the project management did not know either in the beginning how much effort was required. A couple of the consultants were very experienced beforehand but most of them did not have background or skills as consultants, so more training than anticipated were required.

- Activity B.1.6 (establish CSR platform). The platform comprised a physical meeting arena and an online webpage (a “Google forum”).
- Activities B.1.7, 8, 9 & 10 (specific workshops and coaching for the Sector Associations). This activity was taken out. According to the project management: During the first BMO trainings in fall 2010 there was limited interest of the SAs, and no clear scope and operational modality could be confirmed for the sector units. In 2011, with the first national expert trainings and company assessments, capacity limitations of the SAs became even more evident, with the SAs having a quasi governmental status, and having limited outreach beyond state-owned enterprises to SMEs. Moreover, it then also became obvious that comparable support for sector unit formation had already been provided in the past with different EU funding, and hence in late 2011 it was decided to abandon sector unit development at the national level, and instead focus with a more modest mandate on supporting locally based BMOs (as was done in 2012 with the regional roll-out for REAP26 in collaboration with the local branches of VCCI).
- Activities B.2.1, 2 & 3 (application of Quick Start Tool for CSR (QST-CSR)). The total target amount of 40 enterprises was in practical terms achieved (with total 38, 20 in 2011 and the rest in 2012 and 2013). It is understood that the QST-CSR was discovered not to be so very useful, and another approach was chosen later, in line with the developed improved modality of “REAP26”, being a more dialogue-based closing-in on the challenges and problems in the enterprises.
- Activities B.3.3 & 4 (partnership match-making events and technical follow-up support) were dropped, due to total lack of interest amongst members of Euro Cham (international buyers), resulting from economic downturn and therefore unwillingness to invest in development of new suppliers, and consequently the SAs and enterprises. Notably, most enterprises already exporting had an existing “partnership”/cooperation with international buyers.
- Activity B.3.8 (prepare partnership success stories) was in the process of being prepared at the time of the Evaluation, as part of the Final Narrative Report.
- Activity C.1.3 (policy re. SME compliance with international technical standards). This is a key activity of the Action as a whole, and it was agreed to focus on ISO 26000 instead of sector specific standards! (ISO 26000 was said to already have been officially translated into Vietnamese language and domesticated by STAMEQ at the time of the Evaluation, outside the Action, with funding partly by the Government, through the Ministry of Science and Technology, i.e. the supervising ministry of STAMEQ)).
- Activity C.2.4 (coach SAs to advocate CSR agenda...) was taken out, as the topics were foreseen to be integrated in other activities with the SAs (B.1.7-

10), and as it was part of the “Sector Unit Facilitation” (also referred to as SME “Cluster Facilitation Skills Initiative” or “Nucleus Unit Training”).

- Activity C.3 (SDforB platform...), which is referring to “Sustainable Development for Business”, in fact being the project managing counterpart department in VCCI. This department will continue its “business as usual” after completion of the Action.
- Activity C.3.3 (updating of CSR website), which was done by the PO, commendably presenting photos from the events within 24 hours of the event had taken place. The CSR consultants have got “@csr-vietnam.eu” email addresses, and the right to use these is secured through 2014, at which time the consultants themselves must pay for maintaining the domain name.
- Activity C.3.4 (CSR newsletters) was discontinued, as it was replaced by updates linked to CSR Calendar Forum events.
- Activity C.3.5 (press releases and events) has been a continuous activity throughout the Action, with newspaper articles, TV appearances on short news and 6*45 minutes talk shows on TV (the only media events paid for, with € 2,200 per event). The Consultant commends the Action for the active outreach activities.

Box 3: REAP and REAP26

The ‘Responsible Entrepreneurs Achievement Programme’ (REAP) is a CSR-based management & reporting tool. It was developed by UNIDO in order to assist Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in their efforts to implement socially and environmentally responsible business approaches and operation methods. REAP allows for

- Effective assessment of SMEs’ CSR performance
- Implementation of CSR concepts in line with the business case, productivity considerations and operational costs savings
- Marketing and positioning of SMEs in global value chains
- Reporting of CSR activities to business partners, government and other stakeholders, including the UN Global Compact network.

EAP26 = REAP based on ISO 26000

REAP26 is an extension of REAP, searching for solutions - “*What has to be done to generate the real commitment for change?*” inside an organization. It has been accompanied by public activities like Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (Calendar Forums, Media, Cross Action Initiatives, etc.). REAP26 was always intended to be utilized by professional coaches/experts.

- It is based on the principle of replacing isolated action by long-term strategic approaches.
- The REAP Roadmap (see *Figure in Annex 6*) aims at responsible, sustainable and successful businesses.
- REAP26 is an Open Framework for Change, Creativity and Non-Linear Development: reaching out to the foundations of an organization’s understanding and identity to make responsibilities, changes and improvements “their own”.
- Follows the core subjects of ISO 26000: Organizational governance; human rights, labour, environment, fair operating, consumers, community involvement and development
- REAP26 comprises 3 steps: Preparation Process (PRE); Policy Development Process (POL); and Continuous Improvement Process (CIP).

From the UNIDO REAP flyer and PowerPoint presentation

The main type of events is of course related to the awareness raising, training and education at various levels. *Figure 2.4* in *Annex 6* shows a (slightly modified) version of the Action Manager's figure presented in the closing project workshop PowerPoint presentation. It gives a good overview of the various main awareness/training/education activities in a timeline, also related to the various intervention levels of the Action: awareness – understanding – usage (the latter comprising mobilising resources and the *real* uptake of change in the enterprises), with reference to Section 1.2.2 above. What is related to the education and activities in the enterprises of the national CSR consultant is shown in beige colour. The last activity of the consultants in the Action was the assessment in 15 enterprises with submission of an assessment report (named "CSR Enterprise Coaching" in the figure). This is further commented upon below.

In order to facilitate the understanding of the various events as related to the different target/beneficiary groups for an "outsider", the Consultant has prepared *Figure 2.5* in *Annex 6*. The figure tries to capture the main events/deliverables connected to the main target groups of the Action. The following brief introduction to some of the main events might also boost the understanding:

- Training of cluster facilitation skills: (also referred to as "Nucleus Unit Training"/"Sector Unit Training") was intended to be the initial training for the SAs to get to know the tools to manage the sector units, and grouping together of the enterprises working in an area (marketing, cooperatives, etc.). This, which was done informally, seemed to have been a good idea, but there was eventually no need for this initiative. A staff from SEQUA trained the SAs and provided them with a comprehensive manual. The intention was that the SA should then themselves facilitate and train clusters of similar enterprises (in say a neighbourhood), with an open door to SEQUA for coaching in case of need. The idea was to use the SAs' existing structure, but these structures proved to be weak, and as many enterprises were only undertaking Cut-Make-Trim (CMT) activities, such clustering was not construed as being *that* important. In the electronics sector there were clearly a lack of companies to form clusters and in the textile the largest cluster was already the state-owned ones. Also, the SAs asked the Action for monetary support, which was not budgeted for or intended.
- CSR Marketplace for Trans-National Companies (TNCs): This was arranged twice by EuroCham with a German tutor, with national and international participants, using the workshop methodology of "market place", where the participants "spent" their given money on the 37 issues from the ISO standard. Notably, in HCMC the participants were more active than in Hanoi. The feedback from participants was that the issues as presented were difficult

to understand. The course was discontinued and practical examples were prepared, being used in other later events.

- CSR Kitchen Table: This was an idea by the CTA, being one of the forerunners for the later Calendar Forum. 10-15 minutes keynote followed by discussion in an open, frank informal atmosphere – an “experience-sharing workshop”. This was arranged with assistance of UNDP, but the responsible UNDP people left, momentum was lost and it was discontinued.
- (Regional) CSR Roundtable: A sensitisation workshop on specific topics arranged by VCCI, with open discussion on equal terms with no persons having privileged position at the table. Discontinued and taken over by the Calendar Forum.
- Local Company Advisors Training: This was a 2-day introduction course aimed at relevant staff in SMEs, who then should act as “trainer” and catalysts in their own enterprise, “preaching the gospel” to own colleagues and trying to instigate positive changes. Of the 105 people participating in the training, ¼ came from outside the three key sectors, and of the three, 80% came from textile/garment and only 4% from the electronics sector.
- National CSR consultant education: This has been a very extensive education, where 17 consultants, coming from NGOs, universities, freelance jobs, etc., with different professional background and interest, went through theoretical and practical education from A to Z, and finally received a certificate, as a token proof of participation. The consultants had to invest considerable own time to complete the education, assumed to be close to 3-months occupation, for which they received a token contract under the Action. As elaborated below, the consultants will need more exposure to secure sustainability of the education efforts.
- Calendar Forum: A total of 10 forums have been arranged, with topics and timing as illustrated in *Figure 2.6* in *Annex 6*. The forums, opening with a close to one-hour speech/lecture by a key speaker, normally lasted ½ day, ending with joint lunch served, where the open discussion from the workshop continued around a “lunch table”. As seen from *Figure 2.6*, all the main topics of the ISO 26000 were covered, except “human rights” issues, which proved to be too controversial and politically sensitive to put on the agenda in Viet Nam. All themes were run in two subsequent similar forums, one in Hanoi and one in HCMC. It is noted that the first forum dealt with “Fair Operating Practices”, which in reality was an entry theme to approach corruption in business, also a sensitive issues in Viet Nam, where caution had to be exercised when dealing with the issues in open forums. This was however handled very properly by the project management.

The Calendar Forums, approved by the Steering Committee (but in principle never by the UN system, which should not be necessary in any case), were often

combined with other education/training when international experts lecturing already were in Viet Nam for other purposes. The themes of the forums were chosen in order to enforce and boost present prevailing issues in society, media and the public discourse at large, and these were announced on rather short notice. The events became very popular and were highly praised by almost everyone interviewed by the Consultant during the Evaluation. Often the press was present, and in some cases short interviews with lecturers/participants were shown on the evening news the same day.

In the Consultant's opinion, the Calendar Forums were may be the most successful events in the Action, as it was open to all interested parties (institution and individuals alike) reaching far beyond the three sectors that were the key ones in the Action. Upon request from the Consultant the Assistant Training Coordinator in the PO grouped the list of participants in the forums in the three key sectors and "other sectors". Of the 1,770 participants in the forums, only 11% came from the three key sectors, with half of these coming from textile/garment, the rest coming from other sectors. The Consultant wants to commend the project management for this wide outreach in the Calendar Forums, being real awareness raising (and understanding) in a wide society¹⁹. It should be noted that the Calendar Forums were not only "just" awareness raising, but given that CSR is based on understanding and addressing stakeholders' expectations, they were de facto also "Practising CSR".

As seen from *Annex 4*, almost all of the activities planned have been delivered by the Action, There are natural and practical reasons why some of the activities were taken out or changed, and this is a proof of the project management being flexible and pragmatic as to the formulated LogFrame, adjusting the activities to the prevalent national situation and enabling environment at any point in time.

The Expected Results in the LogFrame are, as previously commented upon, in reality the "outputs" of the activities to be guaranteed by the project management. Notwithstanding the fact that a couple of the expected results are mere *formulated* as "purposes"/"outcomes", the Consultant's comments on the achievement of the indicators are as follows:

¹⁹ The project management in their comments to the Second Draft Report claim that the calendar forums were construed as part of the *understanding* and not part of the *awareness*. "Awareness" was connected to the CSR starters, regional introduction workshops, TV programmes, etc., but the forums were explained to be interactive and aimed to explore good practices and share experiences. The management also emphasised that "*if calendars move to awareness, then strictly speaking the action had no detailed activities at the level of understanding*". The Consultant takes a note of this, although it is clearly arbitrary where one puts the border between "awareness raising" and "understanding". As such, the calendar forums might be seen to capture both.

Expected result	Indicator	Consultant's comment
A: Awareness and understanding of Triple Bottom Line (TBL) CSR approach among Vietnamese SMEs, consumers and other relevant stakeholders increased	20% increase in Awareness and Understanding, reported in end of project survey compared to baseline survey.	How do we define "awareness"? The baseline survey gave a rather high figure of awareness in the enterprises (high/fair awareness scored 80-90% across the sectors!) and it is very difficult to increase an already high figure substantially. The indicator was probably formulated in a SWITCH requirements framework and was not changed when the LogFrame was revised in 2010. As it is formulated now, it has no real meaning and is <i>not</i> useful at all as a measure of the result having been achieved. The end of project survey indicates a positive trend, but not directly on the <i>general</i> awareness level (see below).
B: Compliance with CSR procurement standards among Vietnamese SMEs increased in selected sectors	40 SMEs gained understanding of their CSR issues and opportunities and 15 SMEs achieved measurable environmental and social improvements	The Quick Start Tool (QST) was used in 35 enterprises for a first assessment, and was to a large degree similar to an "audit light". Later, a wider and "softer" approach was chosen more in line with ISO 26000 (being "REAP26"). Around 35 enterprises participated in the use of QST assessment. As no baseline study was undertaken in the SMEs however, there is no proof that the SMEs really have initiated measures for environmental and social improvements. No SMEs have reported or shown proven improvements, and based on the interviews the Consultant believes that few can really show tangible improvement results.
C: Policy and regulatory recommendations for promotion of sustainable production practices and behaviours identified through participatory processes	Improved consensus within and between business and government sectors on policies and strategies for mainstreaming and up-scaling CSR in Viet Nam	It is very difficult to measure "improved consensus". However, the fact that ISO 26000 is well accepted and adopted by the Government and key stakeholders in Viet Nam lead to the conclusion that there is fact an improved consensus. It is realised that the UNIDO CSR Action has been visible in the public discourse on CSR and the Action has kept an open door for continued discussions in all sectors on the CSR issues, first and foremost thanks to the Calendar Forums where almost 1,800 people have participated. How much the Action has contributed to boosting the mainstreaming of CSR in Viet Nam is impossible to say, but it is assumed that the Action has contributed a great deal, as it has been so visible and active. ISO 26000 has taken a stronghold in society and has been translated into Vietnamese language and domesticated under the Minister of Science and Technology (following a wide stakeholder consultation process), being a very good indicator of effects and uptake.

The Consultant believes that the indicators for the results/effect/outcome were not well formulated in the first place. This is understood partly to be due to the indicators being prepared for the initial Dao, where the CoCs were the key issue at stake, and effects could more easily have been measured through audit-like monitoring (of the "performing/non-performing checklist"-type). It is also assumed that the indicators were formulated in line with some specific SWITCH requirements at that time. In order to measure tangible effects following from the

delivering of the expected results, one needs well-defined target groups, where baseline studies have been undertaken.

Based on the interviews with SA, enterprises and national CSR consultants, the Consultant believes that the target beneficiaries (being the participating SMEs) only to a limited degree have used the deliverables produced in the Action directly for tangible measures in their processes and procedures. Neither was this expected, as changing attitudes and old habits simply takes longer time and as such the Action was just a start of a longer process. The further use of the deliverables (meaning achieving the Specific Objective) will be “around the corner”, but that again requires a certain momentum to be maintained, as seen in the next section. In spite of this, the Consultant considers the overall effectiveness of the Action to be good, largely because almost all of the planned activities have been delivered as planned and yielded their respective results.

3.4 Impact and Sustainability

3.4.1 General

The 2012 evaluation report on UNIDO in Viet Nam said the following about sustainability of the Action: *“The prospects for sustainability of project benefits are assessed as weak. The baseline study revealed that many Vietnamese SMEs did not perceive any benefits from adhering to CSR standards. The capacity for promoting the adoption of CSR principles is being strengthened, but most likely not sufficiently to overcome such resistance. Unless capacity building is linked to binding constraints for the SME to adhere to CSR principles it seems unlikely that such potential improved awareness will translate into changed practice”,* and further: *“The project team has to ensure that there is enough spin/momentum to allow self-development of the CSR initiative; the question is whether or not there will be enough critical mass created to support the momentum for the self-development of this platform”.*

Although the statements were made only halfway through the Action, parts of them are still valid, as seen below.

In general, because the Action had just been completed by the time of the Final Evaluation, it is far too early to assess any long-term development changes or “impact” of the interventions²⁰. Such long-term changes are of course impossible to *detect* at this stage. In principle also, it is a matter of “taste”, and semantics, what the difference is between “outcome” and “impact”, as they in practical terms

²⁰ “Impact” is defined as the long-term effect that hopefully will occur as a result of the Action, but not only as a result of the Action alone, as many other factors might influence the impact).

might mean the same (and many people mix up the terms). It is thus impossible at the point in time of the Evaluation to say whether such long-term effects could be sustained into the farther future or not.

In principle, although the awareness raising/training/education events have been delivered as planned and expected, the project management is, needless to say, not able to guarantee that there is any short-term (Specific Objective) or, even less so, any long-term (Overall Objective) impact from the efforts, as this is clearly *outside* the control of the management (the Result Chain figure in *Section 2.1* refers). In this case, the wanted state following the delivery of the project interventions is clearly formulated by the Specific Objective (“*enhanced sustainable integration of Vietnamese SMEs into global supply chains through an increased awareness, understanding and uptake of triple bottom line CSR*”), where the three Expected Results (covering awareness, compliance and policy recommendations, commented upon above) are the pillars on which the Specific Objective is built.

The *sustainability* issue is normally comprising several “elements” (e.g. financial/economic, institutional, technical, environmental), and could in this case practically boil down to two important aspects: sustainability depending of the means continuing (supporting activities like calendar forums, company assessments, trainings, etc.); and sustainability related to continuation of the impacts/results (improved skills and capacities of national experts, the decision of the Vietnamese Government to launch a national CSR standard, the measures taken by enterprises to improve their social and environmental performance, etc.). Both of these aspects must be present in order to secure *overall* sustainability of the Action²¹.

The Consultant interviewed several stakeholders and, without exception, they all claimed that they had a much better understanding and knowledge of CSR now as compared to when the Action started (national consultants, representatives of the SAs and staff of the SMEs alike). Nothing else was expected, as the ones interviewed during the Evaluation were key stakeholders and consultants all in all maintaining an overall positive attitude towards the Action. There are solid indicators that this impact will live on (enterprises that are probably doing better now, would presumably not revert back to old wasteful practices, consultants are not going to de-learn the skills they have acquired, the Government cannot easily backtrack on its announcement to launch CSR standard, etc.). This means that the short-term impact of the interventions is indeed positive and thus being a good basis to secure sustainability. Does that mean that the *overall* sustainability is secured? The Consultant would claim: not necessarily, as this to a large extent

depends on also the *means* being continued.

In this case, the interventions under the Action are merely a start to achieve CSR across the sectors, and surely the means will have to continue to a certain degree in order to gain full effect of the interventions in the future.

For example: the Action stopped when the first assessment in 15 enterprises was undertaken and reported by the national CSR consultants²². Following such reporting, it is up to the enterprises to pick up the assessment recommendations and continue working with experts to improve the internal social and environmental situation, which again is a long-term continuous process. The positive statements of the enterprises on the importance of CSR is however unfortunately no guarantee of the enterprises *actually* developing improvements on the ground. In order to succeed, in addition to the positive attitude towards CSR work at large in the enterprises, funds will have to be found to pay the consultants/experts to continue the work, and to pay for measures once the “low-hanging fruits are picked”. Lack of funding to continue could in fact be a stumbling block to the *overall* sustainability, even if the impact/attitude of the participants is present.

Following the interviews with the SAs and the SMEs, the Consultant got the impression that such required funding is to a large extent not available locally at present. In some (larger) SMEs with a “reasonably” solid financial basis, the efforts could continue, and hopefully will. However, without additional donor funding coming on the table to support maintaining and boosting the processes, many potential positive measures might not materialise. As per the time of preparing the Evaluation Report, there are no *confirmed* solid financing ready to keep things moving, although there are great hopes, and good prospects, that some funding will be available (see below).

Thus, *impact* has been achieved at a limited scale and there are leading indicators for continuation and sustainability, and the results achieved are likely to be maintained, However, regrettably the *means* are not sustainable at present, but there are good signs that new funding support could be mobilized, making also means sustainable within say 1/2-year’s time.

3.4.2 The Awareness, Understanding and Uptake (AUU) Survey

A baseline survey was undertaken in April-May 2012, managed by SEQUA and partly outsourced to TNS (a large international world-wide insight, information

²² In fact, some of the consultants were in the process of reporting at the time of meeting with the Consultant, so they had not yet got a feedback from the enterprises on their report.

and consultancy group). That survey showed a relatively high awareness of CSR in the enterprises already at project start-up. However, *what* the respondents related to the term “awareness” was not clear (just having heard about it or understanding which elements the CSR encompassed?).

A new survey was in the process of being undertaken at the time of the Final Evaluation (by TNS alone this time) and it would be completed by end May 2013. Some preliminary interim data as per 20 May from the survey had however surfaced following the answers from 218 enterprises (60% of the interviews undertaken)²³. The following trends were noted at this time:

- The general level of awareness about CSR was still high, basically at the same high level as in the baseline study. (This was also expected, because how high can it be when it in the baseline already was 80-90 %?).
- The awareness of the importance of maternity leave and health insurance being available to the employees has risen.
- The level of “own knowledge” of CSR has gone significantly up, including all aspects of “association with” CSR (“*be responsible for employees, secure employment, be responsible for society as a whole, show ethical and moral values, be responsible for clients and suppliers*”).
- The reason “lack of funds” for not implementing CSR had gone up significantly from the baseline. Market situation has obviously become tougher.
- The extent of which CSR having an impact on the company growth, cost reduction, social commitment, risk management, has increased significantly.
- The extent of the enterprise’s responsibility towards suppliers, employees, local community and society as a whole has increased significantly.
- The group that answered positively to the question of the enterprises having to abide to social and environmental standards in order to export has increased significantly (almost doubled; now being around 85%).
- On the question: “*Would you like to hire a professional consultant to help company deal with the compliance of standards?*” the number answering “no” significantly increased (from 53 to around 70%). This gives a challenge to the national CSR consultants having been trained by the Action in marketing themselves and getting assignments in the enterprises.
- More enterprises had taken on board private, buyer standards related to social and environmental requirements, transparency issue, cleaner production and resource efficiency.
- Significantly more enterprises had initiated measures regarding “sustainable transport options” (whatever that is).

²³ The project management in their comments to the Second Draft Report has confirmed that the final survey report confirm the preliminary results referred to in this report.

- More enterprises asked for credit facilities to gain more economic success, than in the baseline.
- In general, a much higher percent demands various services from their Sector Associations (information, training, fair participation, business delegations to foreign countries, business matching (although it was noted by the Consultant that the interest during the Action was very low!), local business promotion, trade regulations and product development.) This is may be not so strange when the enterprises are invited to present a wishing list in a survey!
- But are they willing to pay for such services by the SA? Surprisingly enough around half of the respondents said “yes” (a doubling since the baseline). The Consultant believes that the ones that *really* would pay more are very few (what comes first: higher quality of services or increased payment for such services?).

Although the preliminary results come from just a part of the total number of survey respondents, it shows a positive trend indeed. The conclusion is that the real awareness about CSR elements has been significantly raised the last three years. Is this then to the credit of the Action? Nobody can really tell, as the international pressure and public discourse in general have put more of the issues in the limelight during the period (a couple of prominent examples over the past few years could be the suicides at Foxconn in China and factory fires in Bangladesh and Pakistan²⁴).

The Consultant however, with a high level of probability, believes that the Action has indeed contributed to the positive raise in awareness regarding CSR, not the least due to the fact that it has been visible on the national area (media and press) and part-taking in the public discourse, especially through the Calendar Forums that have picked up prevalent trends and issues and brought various people together to discuss them openly. The Consultant dear even say that this impact from the Action is believed to have been *significant*.

3.4.3 The National CSR Consultants

The Consultant was impressed by the national CSR consultants he met with in Hanoi and HCMC! They were highly motivated and dedicated and were eager to continue working with the enterprises following the first assessments already undertaken. Such working together with and in the enterprises is a condition for keeping up the momentum of their consultancy, as most of them lack the practical experience from working at grassroots level in the industries. They might

²⁴ The collapse of the textile factory building in Bangladesh in 2013 has even more put the focus on the condition of the textile workers, but this was after the impact survey was undertaken.

spend a little time out of own pocket and interest (as acquisition), but largely need that someone pays for their work in the enterprises. The SAs believed that very few SMEs can afford paying for such consultants under the prevalent hard financial circumstances. May be only the larger companies can afford buying such services, so financial support from outside should preferably materialise to keep the consultants going.

The Consultant had constructive conversation with the national CSR consultants on their future prospects and gave his humble opinion on the situation. The following points were discussed:

- Stay together as a group. It is important that the 17 CSR consultants stick together and keep up the common momentum created. They all know each other well following the education, and they should keep the platform alive, being the regular meetings, the CSR website (created under the Action and paid for until 2014) and the closed Google group they have created of own initiative. Some of the consultants also maintain a Facebook group. Others could of course be invited into the group as time goes. There are some innovative and forward-looking individuals amongst the group and those should be given the opportunity to play out the innovativeness for the benefit of all, including maintaining and updating the websites.
- Continue to present themselves as a group. Although the group is not formally speaking a formalised established “group”, but today merely a *network*, they should continue to present themselves jointly as “group” or strong network. As they cover various fields under CSR, the group would towards the society, donors and enterprises appear as a “resourceful” group, together being able to cover a wide range of sectors and services. Colleagues will fill in gaps of other individual consultant’s expertise and knowledge, and if one is incapable for undertaking an assignment (getting sick or indisposed) another in the group can take over²⁵.
- A brief presentation handout leaflet should be produced. This could be distributed at seminars, workshops where enterprises, multilateral and bilateral donors are present. May be the group could get a few minutes in some seminars to present themselves, especially the ones arranged by the EU, UN organizations and the SAs. A website with the names, photos, background and sector should also be readily available on the open website. *Annex 7* shows the consultants with key information presented (some info already outdated, though). As seen from the annex, the consultants are coming from many walks of life and various institutions, covering a wide

²⁵ It was informed that at the time of the final examination and certificate awarding, the group of consultants agreed on a semi-formal charter that commits them to use the REAP26 in a cooperative and open manner as a group.

spectre of issues. Such marketing could be supported by the SAs (also with links posted on their websites), and key donors (e.g. EU) and implementing agencies (e.g. UNIDO).

Notably, the EU delegation in Hanoi, arranging a high-level meeting with representatives from the Member States in June 2013, has promised the UNIDO PO to give the group time to present itself. There are also hopes that the member states might support the group of CSR consultants with trade promotion, etc. Notably, not much is required to keep the wheels rolling at an appropriate and relevant level.

3.4.4 Possible Continued Activities

Ideally, in a sustainability context, the national Sector Associations would have been expected to be the appropriate institutions to keep up the momentum created in the activities once the Action is completed, and possibly roll-out the activities to more SMEs in new provinces. This, because the SAs should ideally care for the interest of their members and their respective sectors at large. Unfortunately, experience from the Action shows that such promotion has not materialised to the extent expected, and it is doubtful whether such service delivery to the enterprises would be their first priority. Following the interviews with the SA, this impression was unfortunately enforced, and the Consultant is very much in doubt whether the SAs will continue the interventions. All three associations claim that they have hardly any income from the membership fees paid by the member enterprises, and it was understood that the management of the SAs are to a large degree working honorary for their institution. Thus they claim they have no financial resources to undertake such activities. The membership bases of all three SAs are also limited (Lefaso-150 members; VITAS-400 (official) members (and 900 unofficial ones, as several institution members have more sub-members); and VEIA-150 members).

On the other hand, all three SAs expressed concern about CSR and emphasised the importance of continuing the awareness raising work amongst their members. However, none had any strategic approach to the issue or any plans on how to implement such work. They however assessed the Action to be a “*success*” and claimed they “*of course will have to continue the activities*” and they “*must continue*” as “*there is no way back*”. They claimed that would improve step by step as resources allow. That might be so, but the Consultant remains with the impression that the SAs are not very proactive and eager to continue the work in the enterprises on CSR.

Box 4: Roll-out ability of the three SAs

Lefaso (Viet Nam Leather and Footwear Association) also mentioned that they wanted to “go deeper” with some pilots in selected industries, in order to demonstrate the impact of the CSR. This seems to be a good approach, in addition to continue awareness raising for a wider audience, but still the financing is lacking to do so. This SA also mentioned the continued use of to the national CSR consultants post-project. VEIA is the smallest and presumably the weakest of the three SAs, and the one having the smallest number of participating enterprises in the Action. (But then it is also understood that the electronics sector in Viet Nam mostly comprise enterprises that assemble components for large international companies, and that very little is produced in the country at present).

VITAS is the largest of the three SAs, and “hopes” to get financing for a continuation, with more tangible activities in the enterprises. The institution has no strength to support the enterprises further and claims it is “*not easy for the associations to plan for a Step 2 of the Action*”. However, VITAS will encourage its members to continue the CSR work, but have no own project to pursue the issue rather than some small support from the Export Promotion Programme run by the Government.

VEIA, the smallest of the three SAs, claimed they had “*nowhere to apply for financing to continue activities*”, but claimed that training still is needed. They actually claimed themselves to be an “NGO” with no available funding (which is of course a misuse of the term, and a mix-up with being “non-profit”).

VCCI seems to have the most forward-looking view of the national project partners, and this institution is “the one to call” when it comes to CSR. (Notably also, the VCCI/SDforB Department Director has now accepted a seat on the Board of the ASEAN CSR Network). On the issue of utilising the national CSR consultants in further work, the following initiatives were pointed at, where VCCI is involved: Global Compact Network Viet Nam (VCCI, with its SDforB Department providing the national secretariat), Integrity and Transparency in Business Initiative for Viet Nam, Action Training on Cleaner Production and Waste Management for Enterprises in Viet Nam, and Viet Nam Business Council for Sustainable Development (VBCSD, established by and within VCCI). However, there were no concrete plans on how to do this²⁶, although the representative from VCCI claimed that these initiatives had funds so there was “*no reason to worry*”. VCCI referred to the ongoing discussion with UNIDO to find resources to continue the project initiatives, as “*stopping is never a choice*” (see below).

The Consultant thus concludes that there seems to be an expressed positive will to continue the activities amongst the *national* project partners (SAs and enterprises), but no concrete national plans to do so and definitely no finances to pursue any major initiative are on the table yet. The Sector Associations however claim they will *encourage* their members to continue the work on CSR, step by step. VCCI, being the most prominent partner on CSR in Viet Nam, will seemingly use its existing channels to try to get funds to continue some of the activities, but

nothing concrete so far. VCCI is also discussing with UNIDO possibilities on how the two can continue activities and keep up the good momentum created in the Action (see below).

It is also noted that three of the national CSR consultants are lecturers at universities (Viet Nam National University, University of Agriculture and Forestry, and Ho Chi Minh City Open University) and these have taken the CSR elements on board their curriculums, following the education in the Action. This means that they will “spread the gospel” in their classes, and such awareness raising to students might in the longer term lead to tangible pick-ups of some issues in practical life once the students start their working carriers. These are indeed encouraging activities.

According to the UNIDO PO, the following possibilities exist and are pursued:

- The PO will apply to the EUD for small amounts to continue some activities on “low gear”, with focus on supporting the national CSR consultants’ network and continuation of the work in the 15 enterprises where assessments by the CSR consultants already have been undertaken. The support will help the consultants forming a stronger *network*, alternatively a more formalised *group* (may be aiming at forming a *company* in the longer run), producing presentation material and assisting in marketing activities. Notably, the EUD is willing to host a seminar in June 2013, where such request for minor support will be put forward to the member states and the CSR consultants will have an opportunity to present their network and competencies.
- The CTA has got a 6-months assignment based in UNIDO Viet Nam, to work on a smaller regional CSR initiative, starting with assisting Malaysia. (This could follow the same working modality as the project staff used when raising awareness and doing some quick assessment in enterprises in Cambodia during implementation).
- An outline/concept proposal was prepared in March 2013 for an “EU Partnership Instrument”, and submitted to the UNIDO liaison office in Brussels (but seemingly not yet officially submitted to EU, as the details of the partnership instruments are not fully finalized²⁷). The project would last 4 years and would cover some 10 ASEAN members states, Viet Nam included, with an indicative budget of EUR 5 million. The project is linked to the Renewed EU Strategy 2011-2014 for CSR (25 October 2011, COM (2011) 681), and will contain a better alignment of good practices, management systems, and methods and policies for CSR between EU and ASEAN. It targets SMEs to deliver direct benefits to employees, communities and the local environment in the region, whilst also enabling European importers to

²⁷ Information from the UNIDO CTA answering comments from EUD to the Second Draft Report.

respond to European consumers' requests for improved environmental and social performance in sourcing of consumer goods.

- UNIDO is in the process of preparing for proposal under the national One-Plan Fund, aiming to strengthen and expand the UN Global Compact Network Viet Nam (under the VCCI - SDforB) by e.g. providing training and awareness raising activities. The plan is to utilise the services of the CSR consultants and partly other actors in the project network, like the Sector Associations and VCCI HCMC. The project might also involve (as required by One UN rules) cooperation with another UN organization (most likely UNICEF and/or UNEP²⁸).
- Discussions are underway to get the CSR consultants' network into closer contact with the Netherlands-based Center for Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI, partially funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands) and its initiative for the textile sector).
- Discussions are also underway with the UN Global Compact and its Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) on Sustainability Reporting in Viet Nam (where VCCI's SDforB is once more the national counterpart). GRI has shown great interest in the CSR consultants and the project network at large.

(The PO sent an application in 2012 for support from EU SWITCH to pursue the ISO 26000, but it was unfortunately not successful, as it lost some points on cost-effectiveness, notably the costs of implementation were high, due to essentially decentralized delivery in eight regions around Viet Nam).

It is noted that the Action has developed good training and education material for CSR, improving existing material following practical use and adding new topics. Everything was compiled in a CSR Toolbox, the final version completed in 2012 (also referred to as the "REAP26 toolbox"). The CSR Toolbox (including CSR starters, Quick Start Tool (QST-CSR) and Implementation Guide (IG-CSR)) is intended as the main tool for the use of professional coaches/experts, and was handed over to the CSR consultants to sustain their work. It is divided into six themes with direct reference to the ISO 26000 (*Figure 2.7 in Annex 6 shows the Road Map, a good example illustrating how the concepts are visualised in the toolbox*).

²⁸ UNICEF for the reason that they co-authored the recently published "Children Rights & Business Principles" in cooperation with UN Global Compact and Save the Children. These principles have clear relations and linkages with the ISO 26000 and would therefore fit perfectly into the REAP26 framework (as many other new initiatives already do and will do in future).

Box 5: The CSR Toolbox (also reefered to as the “REAP26 toolbox”):

The *CSR Toolbox* is a resource for CSR experts. It provides them with both guidance and practical tools for supporting the implementation of CSR in SMEs in particular in garment, footwear and electronic sectors. It brings together international best practice methods and blends in specific knowledge and experiences from Viet Nam, from the Action as well as other sources. The tools are divided by three stages of CSR adoption by enterprises: preparation (PRE), policy formulation (POL) and continuous improvement process (CIP), visualized on a roadmap (see *Figure 2.7*). The topical information is organized in the six core subjects taken from ISO 26000 (fair operating practices, environment, labor, consumer rights, community development and governance, and human rights). The components of the toolbox are:

***CSR Tool Box Guidebook**: a manual describing the steps required for the adoption of CSR, from preparation on to continuous improvement including a summary of available tools for subsequent stages;

***Documentation Workbook**: (‘walking the CSR roadmap’) comprising easy-to-use documentation worksheets to summarize and monitor the adoption process (i.e. track the results of subsequent stages and results from the application of tools);

***CSR Starters**: fact sheets on each of the six CSR core subjects, with illustrations from Viet Nam;

***Policy Guide**: (earlier referenced as Company Guide (CG-CSR)): a resource for undertaking the policy formulation stage, which includes detailed descriptions of each of the 37 issues under the six core CSR subjects (with extensive references back to ISO 26000). For each issue it also contains suggestions for policy formulation at different commitment and aspiration levels. The policy guide is supported by a [Stakeholder Map](#) (to identify and prioritize stakeholder groups based on their interest and influence) and set of [37 Planning Cards](#) (one for each issue) which serve to evaluate the relevance and urgency of company action on the respective CSR issue and provide suggestions for key performance indicators (with default reference to Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Guidelines version 3.1);

***Collection of Examples**: (earlier referenced as the Implementation Guide (IG-CSR)): a resource for undertaking the continuous improvement phase, which includes CSR solutions and quick actions to guide actual implementation. The example solutions are also organized by the six core subjects;

***Quick Assessment Tool**: a comprehensive set of evaluation questionnaires for assessing the company’s performance on each of the 37 CSR issues, which can be used at different stages (e.g. initial audit and follow-up internal audits);

***Supporting Materials**: including guide on CSR indicators (as published by the GRI), [CSR Market Place](#) (interactive exercise for CSR sensitization), [CSR Weather Report](#) (two quick survey instruments (and electronic analysis tool (excel workbook) targeting employees respectively on employees’ CSR perceptions and employees’ job satisfaction), and both generic and specific tools (including [CSR dice](#))

Taken from the 3rd Interim Narrative Report

This toolbox exists in hard copy only, as there is a copyright discussion ongoing regarding the material²⁹. This means that the material cannot be made available

²⁹ This is an issue of licence to print and publish in Viet Nam for which permission has not yet been obtained – it would then only be done for the “starters”. The question of copyright itself seems to be rather complex, as it refers/integrate partly content under third parties’ copyrights such as e.g. the ISO26000, the ONR192500 or GRI. REAP is a UNIDO programme and under UNIDO’s copyrights. REAP26 builds upon this basic REAP programme and also relates to the REAP+ programme under the same overall UNIDO approach. Individual authorships are recognized in all programmes. The publication and public access/usage is open under both the UNIDO and EU regulations. This question will have to be further discussed and resolved in the next stage of international usage, needing legal expertise, probably by using a “creative common licensing model”. Reference is

in electronic version. At the same time however, the toolbox is a resource for experts. The project management states that it does not make too much sense to make it in full available to the “general public” as they would not immediately be able to work with it and furthermore the outsider could get overwhelmed by the sheer amount of information and turn away³⁰. In the Action also the national partners got copies of the English and Vietnamese versions. The basic workbook and the Quick-Assessment Kit, in addition to the “CSR Starters” were handed over to all participants of the 2-days CSR Advisor workshops. REAP26 could nevertheless be a very good asset for UNIDO to use in the marketing of their CSR education product.

All in all, the Consultant concludes that although there is little sustainability of the Action activities undertaken by the Action and momentum gained at present, there is highly likelihood that some of the mentioned initiatives can be sustained into the foreseeable future, mostly under UNIDO and VCCI. This especially goes for supporting the CSR consultants’ network in their further marketing and work with the enterprises. The national Sector Associations are not expected to make any move by themselves due to lack of funds, rather than verbally encouraging member enterprises to take up the CSR principles. The “horse is still behind the wagon”, it seems.

3.5 Action Coordination and Management

During the initial stage of the project implementation, a Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) was recruited on permanent basis at the Project Office (PO) in Hanoi, to maintain a close hands-on local coordination of the activities. Also in the DoA an International Project Coordinator was foreseen and budgeted for, together with long-term national and short-term UNIDO experts working with the Sector Associations (SAs). To the Consultant’s understanding, the intention was that the national project partners should play a more active role in project coordination than really materialized with the CTA in place.

Locating a more active CTA in Hanoi seems to have been a very wise move, first of all as the PO then became a focal point for the Action with which the national partners could communicate and cooperate; and secondly because the personal qualifications of the CTA surely boosted the activities. He had a very strong CSR

made to www.creativecommons.org for more info. This model is widely used by e.g. universities, governments, the EU, etc.).

³⁰ According to information from the PO, the Action was following the same policy that UNIDO applies to the other two programmes under the reap family (“REAP” and “REAP+”): The full set of materials is made available only to those who participated successfully in the respective UNIDO training/education programmes.

background, had very good communication skills, maintained appropriate socio-cultural sensitivity and showed proper political “correctness” to be respected by the partners. Additionally, he was very dedicated and passionate about everything connected to CSR. Without exception, his skills and personality was highly praised by everyone interviewed by the Consultant. A lucky choice with the right man in the right position!

The Project Manager, sitting in Vienna, has also been very active and dedicated in the Action, with frequent visits to Viet Nam, maintaining a good communication and cooperation with the CTA in Hanoi. The two key staff in the UNIDO management has worked well and openly together, were able to find collective solutions for implementation of the Action and the road ahead. The CTA has at the same time been given sufficient flexibility to make decision and operate relatively smoothly at local level on a day-to-day basis. He maintained good and close cooperation and communication with the national partners, especially VCCI, as the two institutions are co-chairing the Steering Committee of the Action. All in all the management and coordination has been as good as could be expected within the prevalent UNIDO administrative set-up. However, *that overall set-up obviously has its potentials for improvement (especially regarding contractual and financial management, as mentioned earlier).*

Centralized administration in UNIDO

It is a fact that UNIDO is not undertaking “national execution” in development cooperation. Also the project management stated that *“the SWITCH guidelines do not allow to outsource project implementation, and hence should UNIDO have had a national execution model, the Action could not have been funded and implemented under SWITCH programme”*. The project managers sit in the HQs in Vienna, and all larger procurements are undertaken from there, although there is scope for local procurements being utilised in the Action. All the contracts are issued in Vienna, the technical reporting and financial management system is operated from there, so also payment requests are effectuated from there. This means that in such system some time delays are inevitable, as some activities will have to wait for high-level approval in a system where the project managers in Vienna in general are covering a large portfolio with many having an extensive travel agenda, thus being away from the office several weeks of the year.

Even with modern communication systems, such lack of geographical proximity to the Action and its national partners is clearly noted as a disadvantage and a “progress-hampering” factor by the association partners interviewed. (Statements noted during interviews: *“If the UNIDO management had been decentralised it would have given a better [national] ownership”*. *“Money transfer was quite slow*

as compared to the implementation pace". "Action has been delayed compared to the schedule. HQs had to verify/approve each service contract. Difficult to start next activity before this is in place". "There was problem with finances from UNIDO HQs. With the advance – no problem, but later we had time delays".) The CTA also confirmed that there had been complaints on delays and attributed some of this to gradual introduction of new Enterprise Resource Planning System by UNIDO since January 2012, still not operating satisfactorily. Some of the accounting had to be done manually, being much more time consuming than should be necessary and all original receipts and bills had to be sent to Vienna.

The Consultant concludes that the somewhat "old-fashioned" management system in UNIDO is may be unnecessary bureaucratic and cumbersome, but at the same time undoubtedly it instigates good control of the quality of reporting and other documents, and use of money in the projects. It is also an advantage for the aggregated accounting in UNIDO that a standardised system is introduced all through the organization, and run by the same staff in the home office. However, this could be done even with a decentralised managerial set-up.

Another comment noted from the interviews was that the partners claimed that they were not well informed about these administrative and managerial routines of UNIDO from the start-up of the Action ("*UNIDO should have made the procedures clear from the beginning*"). The Consultant is convinced that UNIDO *did* inform about the procedures, as all the procedures regarding administration were laid down in either the overall Project Document (Description of Action) and/or the subsequently signed service agreements with each of the project partners. In addition, guidance and assistance were given by the project office staff in close cooperation with Vienna HQ/PM to all partners. Some constraints (e.g. co-funding, pre-financing requirements of partners) may however have arisen from the direct execution modality UNIDO has to follow as the sole responsible against the donor EU. Additionally also, during the 3-years implementation of the Action some adjustments in procedures had to be made. It also seems that EUD had not been fully consistent in its requirements, leading to delays and rework by UNIDO (e.g. in reporting), and the Action partners were also affected by such changing rules³¹.

Although the system of HQs management is understood, the partners especially complained about late payments of planned/undertaken activities. The Consultant did not have time, or the mandate, to verify the *real* nature of the payment/cash

³¹ According to the project management, this pertains in particular to the financial report, which was in first iterations for Years 1 and 2 prepared as per the Action Application budget and split by source of funding (i.e. what was funded from the EC grant and what was funded from other sources). Yet UNIDO was then requested to provide just *total* eligible expenditure, without source of funding. In terms of narrative reports, 2nd and 3rd year narrative reports were revised and extended following two rounds of comments from the EUD.

flow cycle of the Action and in UNIDO at large. However, from experience elsewhere (notably from the UNIDO country evaluation in PR China in 2011 where the Consultant took part) it is believed that such delays surely have materialised also in Viet Nam. This was also partly confirmed by the CTA, notably amongst others as the Project Manager has had frequent travels outside the HQs, thus being unavailable for periods, as he is a well-known and wanted scholar in the field of CSR.

As explained in a previous section, the financial resources for the Action came to the most extent from EUD and UNIDO, as the factual cost of some project partners' staff assigned to the Action was not accepted as eligible due to the lack of evidence required as described in the General Conditions of the Contribution Agreement under Article 14.2."). Financial resources to the partners have been made available through Service Contracts (the partners in fact being treated as "sub-contractors"), which are concluded and signed by the UNIDO HQs in Vienna.

Too many partners

There are effectively 10 partners in the Action, and all project staff interviewed believed that this was too many. (*"UNIDO pushed to have many partners". "Too many partners with different interest. Some loose connections".*) None of the partners interviewed did understand the rationale behind bringing so many partners on board in the first place, and the UNIDO staff that initially formulated the DoA, was not available or approached for an explanation. It is however to remind that SWITCH Asia projects in the first round (to which this Action applied) seemingly encouraged large scale consortia, a situation that was in later rounds redressed by the CA³². Given the prevalent situation in Viet Nam, and internationally, in addition to the obvious needs at that time, it is nevertheless possible even for outsiders to understand the various roles and input in the Action of the various partners. All partners signed the initial DoA, and when the framework conditions changed and the Action was reformulated in 2010, the partnership had to be maintained, due to the requirements from SWITCH of keeping the structure of the Action, on the basis of which they won support. Notably, with the new approach, a couple of the partners in reality became "sleeping partners".

Of the nine partners (UNIDO excluded), the two with the least input was National

³² Such information was verbally given during the SWITCH briefing in Brussels in December 2007. Moreover the SWITCH Guidelines included a statement that it was expected that actions should target implementation in at least some 500 enterprises, for which cooperation with multiple business intermediaries might be required. Consortia should comprise as a minimum of one European and one Asian partner. However, given the highly diversified topics of CSR in the modern view, an engagement with a wide range of stakeholders appeared appropriate.

Metal & Materials Technology Center in Thailand (MTEC, just participated in review of a report, initially should have contributed with e.g. CoC in the electronics sector); and Service Organization for the German Chambers and Employer's Association (SEQUA, which was quite active in the very beginning, especially during the partly outsourced baseline survey and assessment of Business Membership Organizations (BMOs) needs analysis, but thereafter understood to have no significant role, as their training was not required. "*SEQUA supported the project in the first year, we expected more from them, but they dropped out*"). MTEC never participated in any Steering Committee meetings, whereas SEQUA participated in person in the two meetings of March 2010 and 2011.

EuroCham³³ took part in organising some training and networking for EU companies in Viet Nam (during the first year), but it is understood that they first and foremost participated of "political reasons". ("*We have not many results from EuroCham*"). EuroCham also hosted the successful final workshop in HCMC, which was the single largest event of the Action. The two Governmental institutions, Institute of Labour, Science and Social Affairs (ILSSA, involved in policy formulations) and Viet Nam Directorate for Standard and Quality (STAMEQ) were understood to be merely in the Action in order to be informed and updated on activities on CSR that could later feed into policies. Having such official institutions on board is very important in Viet Nam to secure a smooth implementation and avoid hindrances from above. Eventually STAMEQ has been involved in the translation and domestication of ISO 26000 into an authorised Vietnamese version (at present undergoing a wide stakeholder consultation process), a very important and commendable activity for sure³⁴. In addition to VCCI, the three SAs were the most active national partners.

It is understood that having so many partners also created challenges in the accounting system. For example cost of seminars where all partners were present had in the beginning to be split between them, as they all had got their budget allocated and tried to minimise costs. This created some additional, and unnecessary, work for the CTA, yet this practice was redressed from 2011 onward.

³³ It is understood that EuroCham's mandate is to obtain business for EU enterprises in Viet Nam and not to help Vietnamese companies entering the international market.

³⁴ Information from the director of VCCI's office Sustainable Development for Business (SDforB): the Ministry of Science and Technology assigned STAMEQ to lead the process of an officially recognized translation/transcription of the ISO 26000-2010 to finally become a Vietnamese standard. The process of translation was reported as finished already in April 2013 and a wider stakeholder consultation process for further discussion on the final formulation was initiated. VCCI therein is represented through its SDforB Department.

Overall coordination and monitoring

Thanks to the fact that there was a permanently located CTA in Hanoi at the PO, the overseeing and administration of the activities have been hands-on and successful. The CTA has had one Office Manager with assistant and one National Training Coordinator with assistant to support in the operations. From what the Consultant observed this has been sufficient to ensure a proper coordination and monitoring of the activities, making sure that feedback and reporting from the various partners were properly taken on board and the activities adjusted accordingly, when required. The PO has obviously shown the required flexibility in the operations, and their coordination work was highly praised by the partners. This also can be said on the self-evaluations by the participants following every major event (training, workshop, and seminar). Such feedback has been properly analysed and considered, and the necessarily adjustments made before the next event of similar nature.

Reporting

Three Annual Reports have been prepared and submitted to EU so far, each covering the period from February to January (called Interim Narrative Reports). The report from the last year (February 2012 – January 2013³⁵) was in the process of being prepared at the time of the Evaluation and could therefore not be reviewed by the Consultant. The report follows a standardised reporting format provided by the CA, and is orderly and to the point. It contains the revised LogFrame with indicators for the outputs, and reports the achievements to date. The not-so-well formulated indicators of the Expected Results are, of natural reasons, not reported upon and neither were (needless to say) any achievements towards the objectives reported on (which was not expected and required, and no indicators had been formulated for the objectives). The Narrative Reports contained listing of all the important events, as the PO kept a detailed record of these (enclosed in *Annex 5*).

The Consultant noted that several versions of the progress reports have been prepared. The first draft of the 2nd Interim Report, formally due for submission 28.02.2011, was dated 28.03.2011. Following comments from EU, the extended second draft was submitted 18.07.2011, the third draft (with minor additions) was submitted 19.08.2011 and the fourth draft (with minor comments) was submitted 5.09.2011, being the last official version made available to the Consultant. The last version was approved 12.10.2011. (The 3rd Interim Report, second Draft Version dated 7.09.2012, was “informally” approved by email 25.09.2012).

³⁵ The “strange” reporting period is due to the fact that the Action officially started in February 2009, and the reporting follows from this date accordingly.

“Official” approval of the reports can only be made together with the financial reports, and still some financial issues remain unsolved. (As mentioned earlier, only 60% of the committed EC grant had been transferred to UNIDO account by the closing of the implementation period, largely due to the reporting modality). The first draft of the last year’s report (4th Interim Report) was not available to the Consultant at the time of the Evaluation.

The Consultant does not fully understand this reporting modality and why the reporting in general should take so relatively long time, but seemingly there have been “delays” both at EUD in Hanoi, in the UNIDO HQs and in the PO. It was informed that the delays and several rounds of comments from the EUD were due to minor issues connected to the technical *formalities* rather than to the *contents* of the reports, with several persons involved in the review of the reports at different times.

The Steering Committee

Figure 1.1 indicates the dates of the Steering Committee (SC) meetings. There has been one every year in March/April, in addition to one Interim Meeting in October 2010 (when the revised strategy was considered). (Notably, MTEC never took part in any SC meeting and SEQUA participated in March 2010 and 2011). The SC has been an overall decision-making organ, only concerned with overall matters, endorsing reports and plans (being formally approved by the CA). As the SC meets so seldom, it cannot have, and was not intended to have, any effective steering and adaptive management of the Action. Such steering at day-to-day level was undertaken by the CTA assisted by the PO staff, in close communication and cooperation with the other lead partner VCCI, and other national partners, as required.

Synergies

The UNIDO evaluation in 2012 concluded on the issue of synergies: *“In the Action Document potential for synergies with other UNIDO projects is acknowledged. Specific reference is made to the potential to find ample opportunities to share information, expertise and most likely some joint activities with the SME Cluster Action. It is noted that the CSR project fits well with UNIDO’s trade promotion interventions and investment related policies. Further, UNIDO’s action to SMTQ Infrastructure is seen as offering opportunities for information sharing and collaboration. To date, the project used VNCPC as sub-contractor. No other synergies have as of yet materialised. Although the project management is considering closer coordination with the SME Cluster Project. The projects are however supported by top different donors, which is perceived*

as an obstacle. The PD acknowledges that Viet Nam is a pilot "UN Delivery as One" country and the CSR project has been included in the second One UN plan".

Project management has through the implementation period had good communication and interaction with the UNIDO Country Office in Viet Nam. Although cooperation with the other UNIDO projects mentioned in the 2012 evaluation report has not been reported organised in any systematic way, it is understood that representatives from the various projects have met informally on seminars, workshops and the like, when the topics at stake were suitable and of interest for joint considerations.

This also seems to be the case with other UN and non-UN initiatives dealing with similar topics, both nationally and in the region. Representatives from the project partners have participated in several CSR-related events that have not been arranged by the Action itself. Reference is made to the event list in *Annex 5*. The PO informed that formalised cooperation was in fact very difficult to establish, as the project framework for ODA in Viet Nam is rather strict and "new approaches" not are immediately appreciated. (The Consultant experienced himself how difficult it was to obtain correct information about similar activities from the national partners). Thus, the solution was informal contacts, and the following examples could be mentioned:

- Joint training workshop on Making Private Standards Work, organized in cooperation with UNIDO global programme, hosted in HCMC in April 2011.
- The Action, together with GIZ (at that time DED), developed a fire-safety training programme, aiming for inclusion of employees' families and local community. These successful 2-days "happening" was run in one of the target companies outside Hanoi³⁶.
- This informal network with GIZ also led to the assignment of two of the CSR consultants running respective trainings in the Mekong-Delta region (November 2012).
- On the regional stage, some activities were initiated by the CTA and undertaken by himself and four of the CSR consultants in Cambodia under a UNIDO KOTRA (Korea) project.
- Five of the CSR Consultants were also selected to become part of the Canadian "BIZ-Camp" Program and received a respective 5-days training in February 2012.
- The cooperation with UN Global Compact (UNGC) Network Viet Nam actually has been permanent as SDforB under VCCI is the hosting national organization of UNGC. The Action supported and marketed UNGC

³⁶ See: www.youtube.com/watch?v=2gEbNEXz-xQ

throughout all activities co-organized the annual meetings (packed into the general awareness raising program and dedicated manpower to the maintenance of the UNGC's basic communication). It is noted that several events were a kind of joint-program between the Action, UNGC and the VBCSD, which made sense as the overall objectives were quite matching.

- Finally, the Action's reputation, image and education quality led some of the CSR consultants to related new assignments at e.g. BetterWork (an ILO/IFC consulting program, FLA (Fair Labour Association, the one that became famous with their work for Apple at Foxconn), or Bureau Veritas.

The Consultant therefore concludes that some synergies have materialised mostly based on informal contracts and open communication between the Action and other similar initiatives. The project management is commended for seeing and utilising such opportunities of mutual benefits with others.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The intention of the project strategy, building on the three main components of improved awareness; improved understanding, and improved usage of CSR, was, and still is, *relevant*. There are strong indications that relevant awareness and understanding regarding the CSR's holistic and cross-cutting nature has gained proper foothold with the national stakeholders. The Action's extensive outreach activities and participation in the public discourse regarding the issues have largely contributed to this encouraging result.

The Consultant had problems detecting any tangible evidence of the improved usage of this improved knowledge amongst the SMEs, as the Action simply did not reach that far in its endeavours³⁷. In the initial DoA, one activity comprised implementation “...of *in-depth pilot projects for partnership between SMEs and TNCs and adoption of sustainable production practices by SMEs, ...*”, but these elements were toned down in the revised LogFrame, and sustaining the partnerships obviously did not become *that* important. When looking at the list of *activities* alone in the project LogFrame, it might look like uptake of CSR in the enterprises was not really planned for during the Action (although by intent the Action was certainly aimed at usage at enterprise level). Nevertheless, the assessments undertaken *in* the 35 enterprises were clearly *aimed* at usage of CSR, and there are additional indicators that CSR knowledge is being used outside the enterprises: i) the trained CSR experts have started to incorporate the CSR knowledge in their other activities (e.g. curricula at universities, compliance auditing, etc.); and ii) STAMEQ (and its partners) has used the CSR knowledge of the project in translating and domesticating ISO 26000.

In general, the revision of the intervention strategy was a pragmatic and necessary exercise. The Action has delivered most of the activities leading to realization of the Expected Results, so the *effectiveness* is good. The overall *efficiency* is satisfactory, with a slow start and boosted activities during the last half of the implementation period. The *ownership* of the initiatives is good with the national partners, but the *means* to operationalize the CSR principles in the SMEs are still weak and developing. The awareness raising *activities* in the Action have been very good, especially the Calendar Forums reaching all sectors

³⁷ The project management, following the review of the First Draft Report informed that all the 12 companies awarded with a 2012 Vietnam CSR award, actively involved in the CSR Action.

and interested parties. The Action has been visible and active in the public discourse on CSR, partly thanks to a dedicated project management, especially the resident CTA. The UNIDO implementation modality with centralised administration has caused some delays (and frustration) in the implementation, mostly due to delayed processing of contracts and payments (partly also due to cash flow problems caused by outstanding EC payments and changes in project management, contracting and accounting systems). The high number of project partners has put unnecessary challenges on the management, amongst other in accounting.

The Consultant concludes that Expected Result A in the Action (awareness and understanding) has been reached to a large extent. Expected Result C (policy and regulatory recommendations) has been reached to some extent, whereas Expected Result B (compliance with CSR standards) has not properly materialised yet, as this will need more follow-up and support. The activities with the SMEs have reached the stage where assessments of the needs have been reported by the national CSR consultants educated in the Action, but from here the “real work” begins.

The SMEs (and the SAs) need coaching on how to go from here and improve, in case the management of the enterprises are willing to pursue the matter at all. With the continuous toughening conditions for the SMEs in export sectors in Viet Nam, external financial support is needed to push the CSR further. The Sector Associations have no resources (or willingness?) to pursue this alone. The prospects of sustainability of some of the Action’s impact and activities are nevertheless promising, as UNIDO is pursuing several channels to “keep the wheels rolling”, some of which will probably be bagged.

4.2 Recommendations

As the Action is completed, it is irrelevant to recommend improvements in the Action itself. It is however noted that:

- In an attempt to maintain the momentum of the efforts in the Action, UNIDO is following several possibilities to attract financing, and the Consultant commends such activities to continue.
- The CSR consultants trained in the Action should, without delay, make joint efforts to boost marketing themselves as a group externally (preparing flyers to be handed out, presenting the individuals on the website, present

themselves in seminars and workshop, etc.). The consultants could form a “CSR knowledge pool” for UNIDO.

- The Sector Associations should continue encouraging their member SMEs to take on board the CSR principles and improve their conditions, with the assistance of the trained CSR consultants.,
- A possible second phase of the CSR support to these SMEs could be considered, where A baseline should be established in the 15 enterprises where coaching has started.
- UNIDO should try to mainstream CSR in the Organization, being a crosscutting issue through several departments, having the same approach and language all through. The experience from the Action in Viet Nam (case studies from SMEs) could be a useful input here.

And finally, UNIDO is recommended to make decisions in its projects as close as possible to the market and beneficiaries, including contract and financial management issues. In this Action the delegated responsibilities to the CTA have to a large degree compensated for such lack of proximity to beneficiaries.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

Helping Vietnamese Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to Adapt and Adopt Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for Improved Linkages in Global Supply Chains in Sustainable Production

www.csr-vietnam.eu

Final Evaluation of Action

April – May 2013

1. Background

The European Commission (EC) funded the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) under its SWITCH Regional Programme for Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) to implement in partnership with its nine partners ⁽³⁸⁾ the Action entitled “*Helping Vietnamese Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to Adapt and Adopt Corporate Social Responsibility for Improved Linkages in Global Supply Chains in Sustainable Production*” (hereinafter the Action, EC reference 2008-VN 171-192). The Action is aimed at improving awareness, understanding and implementation of CSR in Viet Nam, in particular for SMEs in the target sectors (textile and garments, leather and footwear; and electronics) with potential to supply to European markets.

The Action was formulated by UNIDO in consultation with its partners during 2007 and submitted in May 2008 for consideration in the first round of calls for proposals under the SWITCH programme. The Contribution Agreement was executed on 9th December 2008, and implementation period started formally on 9th February 2009 with a foreseen duration of 36 months. Government approval under Vietnamese regulations for Official Development Assistance was only obtained in October 2009, which in turn was a requirement for start of implementation. At that time however basic assumptions for the Action had changed substantively relative to the economic optimism prevalent at the time of formulation of the Action, in particular as a result of the onset of the global financial crisis and consequent economic downturn in Autumn 2008 (negatively affecting the growth forecasts for manufacturing and trade for Viet Nam) and the

³⁸ Respectively: Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) (Vietnam); Leather and Footwear Association (LEFASO) (Vietnam); Vietnam Textile and Apparel Association (VITAS) (Vietnam); Vietnam Electronics Industry Association (VEIA) (Vietnam); European Chamber of Commerce in Vietnam (EuroCham) (Vietnam); Institute of Labor Science and Social Affairs (ILSSA) (Vietnam); Vietnamese Directorate for Standards and Quality (STAMEQ) (Vietnam); National Metal and Materials Technology Center (MTEC) (Thailand); and Service Organization of the German Chambers and Employers' Associations (SEQUA) (Germany).

rapid progress in formulation, review and approval of the international standard for Social Responsibility (ISO26000, finally approved and launched in November 2010) ⁽³⁹⁾. In consultation with national stakeholders and donor, the strategy for the Action was refined during 2010, leading to revised and updated logical framework (see annex 1). At the request of UNIDO, acting for the consortium, the Action implementation period was in January 2011 extended at zero additional costs by 15 months, leading to an effective end of implementation period on 8th May 2013.

A final evaluation of the Action is now required as part of completion of the Action to assess its achievements and impacts and distil conclusions and recommendations aimed at cementing and furthering CSR achievements in Viet Nam and for replicating and scaling-up the CSR promotion internationally, particularly in the region (in first instance member states of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)). The evaluation can built upon earlier reports, in particular the interim-evaluation on behalf of donor (presented in form of a Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM), undertaken in October 2010) and annual narrative reports to donor (approved for years 1-3 (February 2009 – January 2012) and under preparation for year 4). Moreover, a baseline survey was conducted of Awareness, Understanding and Uptake of CSR among 400 SMEs during 2010 ⁽⁴⁰⁾, and is being repeated in April 2013 as end-line/impact survey.

2. Rationale and Purpose

The UNIDO evaluation policy foresees end of project evaluations for projects with a UNIDO implemented budget exceeding 1MEUR. Even though the original budget of the present Action (2 MEUR) is well above this threshold, the comparison with the UNIDO evaluation threshold is somewhat obscured by the fact that the Action is implemented by consortium of nine organizations (hence not under the solely implemented by UNIDO), that the budget will not be fully utilized (some 70-75% only) and the inclusion of UNIDO's project cycle management costs in the budget. Yet, as adherence to good evaluation practices is also a priority for the donor, a streamlined final evaluation is proposed, that would constitute a meta level assessment and synthesis of participation,

³⁹ ISO26000 defines Social Responsibility as “*the responsibility of an organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment through transparent and ethical behavior. Social Responsibility: Contributes to sustainable development including health and the welfare of society; Takes into account the expectations of stakeholder; Is in compliance with applicable law and consistent with international norms of behavior; and is integrated through the organization and practiced in its relationships*”.

⁴⁰ 2010 Baseline Survey Report: Awareness, Understanding and Usage of Corporate Social Responsibility(CSR) among Vietnamese Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).
<http://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/26226608/Publications%20CSR%20Project/CSR%20Baseline%20Survey%20EN.pdf>

evaluation and impact data already collected within the framework of the project (end-line survey, exit surveys of various events, on-line polls, media reports, reflective narrative annual reports and the external ROM and verification reports).

The objectives of the evaluation are:

- to assess the performance of the Action (covering its implementation and management) in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability; and
- to provide lessons learnt and potential recommendations with a view to furthering the uptake of CSR in SMEs in Viet Nam and possibly the South East Asian Region as input for relevant programmes of EU (in particular the EU's SWITCH Asia Programme and Viet Nam country programme) and UNIDO (in particular its global CSR and related green industry initiatives and Viet Nam country programme).

The evaluation's dual purpose is to account for the grant funding and other resources utilized by the Action and to document and systematize the experiences gained with one of the first large scale CSR promotion projects in Viet Nam and the region as a whole.

The evaluation takes place at the final end of the implementation period of the Action, with a view to make use of all data collected during the Action. The findings and recommendations from the evaluation can then still be incorporated into the final narrative report for the Action, which is due for submission and approval at the latest six months after completion of the implementation period. It is at present not foreseen to proceed directly with a follow up Action in a comparable set up or mandate.

3. Scope and focus

The scope of the final evaluation is limited to the period after the ROM mission, roughly the last 2.5 years of implementation of the Action, starting from October 2010. Substantive changes in the context of the Action had taken place in the period between project formulation (late 2007/early 2008) and in country implementation (early 2010), in particular through the onset of the global financial crisis and the rapid progress with international guidance standard development on CSR. De facto, these developments had nullified key assumptions of the original Description of the Action, and over the first 9 months of 2010 an alternative action strategy was gradually developed that put more emphasis on business case, adaptation and promotion of the international guidance standard, capacity building of business service providers and multi stakeholder consultations and consensus building. The revised log frame was accepted as an

equivalent to the original, and hence the final evaluation of the Action is to be undertaken with reference to this revised log frame. The October 2010 start point for the final evaluation also coincides with the completion of the baseline CSR survey (which provided greater insight in SME perceptions and initiatives on CSR) and the completion of the ROM mission.

The final evaluation therefore focuses on the appropriateness and success of the revised Action strategy which is based on combined and synergistic pursuit of:

1. Improved awareness of the scope and business case of CSR, through such activities as informative booklets, website, contributions to third party seminars and events, media initiatives (TV, Radio, print) and CSR awards;
2. Improved understanding of potential for and multi-faceted nature of CSR implementation, in particular at level of SMEs, through such activities as multi-stakeholder topical forums (calendar events) and sector level technical and management seminars and workshops;
3. Improved usage of CSR practices by SMEs through the provision and application of adequate CSR toolbox (with hands-on and interactive tools for training, appraisal and management integration), training and coaching of CSR expert group, capacity building of local CSR advisors, and appraisal and coaching of enterprises.

The terms and conditions set by the Contribution Agreement (and the overarching guidelines for the SWITCH Programme, in particular for its first round of applications to which this Action was a response) did not allow a complete reshuffle in the organizational set up for the Action, which has resulted in a degree of mismatch between organizational set up and Action strategy. This has already been documented and reflected upon in the narrative progress reports and the verification mission. In its assessment of efficiency and effectiveness of the Action the evaluation will therefore focus on the practical opportunities available within the constraints of the contractual and administrative requirements on the Action.

4. Evaluation issues and key evaluation questions

The following are the key issues to be addressed through the final evaluation.

i. Action Reformulation

The extent to which:

- The views, perceptions and experiences of the target group (SMEs in particular in the textile/garment, leather/footwear and electronics sectors), as

reflected in early consultations in 2010 and the baseline survey, have been considered, addressed and incorporated in the revised Action strategy (and the updated log frame);

- The views, perceptions and capacities of the consortium partners (in particular the Vietnamese Business Membership Organizations) were assessed and addressed in the revised Action strategy (and updated log frame);
- The views, perceptions and expectations of business partners (in particular buyers) and key stakeholders (including government at different levels, society and consumers) were considered and addressed in the revised Action strategy (and updated log frame); and
- The guidelines of the donor (in particular for the SWITCH Programme) enabled, or as the case might have been, constrained the formulation of a targeted Action.

ii. **Ownership and relevance**

The extent to which:

- The partner organizations have been appropriately involved and were participating in the identification of the critical problem areas of the target beneficiaries and in the development of technical cooperation strategies and were actively supporting the implementation of the Action including through in-kind and/or cash contributions; and
- The outputs, as formulated in the revised logical framework, were relevant to the target beneficiaries and sufficient to reasonably achieve the expected outcomes and objectives.

iii. **Efficiency of implementation**

The extent to which:

- The resources and inputs of UNIDO (including those made available through the donor) and its partner organizations have been provided as planned and were adequate to achieve the requirements of the Action and respond to the needs of the target beneficiaries; and
- The quality of the inputs and services provided by UNIDO and its partner organizations were as planned and led to the production of the planned outputs.

iv. **Effectiveness**

Assessment of:

- Quality and appropriateness of outputs produced and how the target beneficiaries use (and/or could use) these outputs; and
- Achievement of outcomes or likelihood of their achievement through further utilization of the outputs.

v. **Impact and sustainability**

Assessment of:

- Long term developmental changes (economic, environment and social) that have occurred or are likely to occur as a result of the Action and are these likely to be sustained after its completion;
- Replication and/or multiplication of the activities and outputs by partner organizations and/or other stakeholders; and
- Provisions made for sustaining the impacts achieved by the Action

vi. **Project coordination and management**

The extent to which:

- The management, coordination and administration of the Action through the Project Office and UNIDO Country Office have been efficient and effective, including for mobilization of resources and inputs by the partner organizations;
- The management, coordination and quality control have been efficient and effective;
- Monitoring and self-evaluation was carried out, were based on indicators for outputs, outcomes and/or objectives and using that information for the steering and adaptive management of the Action;
- The operation of the Project Steering Committee enabled and achieved effective steering and adaptive management of the Action; and
- Synergy benefits were achieved in relation to other activities of UNIDO and/or the partner organizations in Viet Nam and/or elsewhere.

5. Evaluation approach and methodology

The evaluation is to be undertaken using good international practice in a transparent and accountable way, taking input from:

- Narrative progress reports of the Action and minutes of the meetings of the Project Steering Committee;

- Substantive reports produced, in particular reports on the two cycles of CSR calendar forums, training and coaching of the CSR expert group, summaries of enterprise quick assessments, the baseline and end-of-action surveys and REAP26 CSR toolkit;
- Reports prepared on behalf of donor, particularly Results Oriented Monitoring report and Verification Mission Report;
- Fact finding interviews with key partners of the Action, in particular UNIDO, EU Delegation, VCCI, LEFASO, VITAS and VEIA, and selected beneficiaries (CSR experts group and enterprises).

6. Time schedule and deliverables

The evaluation of the Action is to be completed between 15th April and 31st May 2013. One mission to Viet Nam is foreseen, tentatively 3 working days in Hanoi and 2 working days in Ho Chi Minh City.

The indicative time table is as follows:

- Contract signed with evaluator (24th April);
- Desk review, planning of evaluation mission and drafting of inception note (to be completed by 10th May);
- Field mission (to be completed by 24th May);
- Elaboration of draft report (to be completed by 31st May);
- Finalization of evaluation report (to be completed within 5 working days after receipt of consolidated set of comments).

A debriefing (teleconference) of the evaluation consultant is foreseen upon submission of his or her draft report.

A brief inception note is to be submitted at the end of the desk review, which should outline the key issues to be further clarified and assessed during the field mission. The complete draft report is to be submitted on or before 31st May. Comments will be sought from UNIDO, VCCI and EUD by 10th June.

7. Evaluation team

The evaluation will be undertaken by international expert in evaluation of technical cooperation projects. (S) he should have an appropriate academic background, have substantive project evaluation experience (over 5 years), be an excellent communicator and report writer in English, and have demonstrated familiarity with private sector development and/or corporate social and/or environmental responsibility. Demonstrated experience in South East Asia is also required and specific experience in Viet Nam would be positively looked upon. The Job Description is attached to these ToR (annex 2).

The evaluation will be managed and supervised by an evaluation manager appointed from the Evaluation Group of UNIDO. The UNIDO Country Office and Project Office (including project manager, international project coordinator and UNIDO representative) will be available as resource to the evaluator and evaluation manager.

The project office will assist with the planning and logistics of the evaluation mission. The national expert for training will accompany the evaluator to support the evaluation mission and provide essential translation and interpretation where needed.

8. Governance and management of the evaluation process

The ToR for this final evaluation was drafted by the Project Manager upon consultation of the donor (through EUD in Viet Nam) regarding scope, focus and objectives of the final evaluation. The ToR were next reviewed and endorsed by the Evaluation Manager.

The Evaluation Manager will approve the inception note and evaluation report after having given an opportunity for review by project manager, UNIDO representative and international project coordinator, and EUD and VCCI (both only for the evaluation report).

9. Quality assurance

Commensurate with UNIDO evaluation policy, this evaluation is subject to quality assessments by the UNIDO Evaluation Group. Quality control is exercised throughout the evaluation process. The quality of the evaluation report will be assessed and rated against the criteria set forth in the Checklist on evaluation report quality, attached as annex 3.

10. Annexes

1. LogFrame of the Action
2. Job description evaluator
3. Checklist on evaluation report quality

Annex 1 of Terms of Reference

Logical Framework

(updated year 2, taking into consideration observations and recommendations of October 2010 Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) mission)

	Intervention	Objectively Verifiable Indicators of achievement	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Overall objectives	To contribute to the increased adoption of sustainable production patterns and behaviours among Vietnamese SMEs for reduced environmental impact, improved labour conditions and enhanced international competitiveness through an increased understanding and strengthened cooperation between Europe and Vietnam	Proportion of SMEs reporting an improved environmental, social and/or productivity benefit in the leather and footwear, textile and garments and electrical and electronics sectors. <u>Target:</u> about 20% of SMEs surveyed a second time report at least one environmental, social and/or productivity benefit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSR Awareness, Understanding and Uptake (AUU) surveys • Monitoring reports of project • Industry statistics 	
Specific Objective	To enhance the sustainable integration of Vietnamese SMEs into global supply chains through an increased awareness, understanding and uptake of triple bottom line Corporate Social Responsibility	Number of SME-TNC partnerships active at the end of the intervention in the targeted sectors. <u>Target</u> 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSR Awareness, Understanding and Uptake (AUU) surveys • Project progress reports 	Viet Nam will continue to have a positive economic outlook over the project duration and international buyers and investors will continue to improve and increase their sourcing from domestic firms
Expected Results	A: Awareness and understanding of Triple Bottom Line (TBL) CSR approach among Vietnamese SMEs, consumers and other relevant stakeholders increased	20% increase in Awareness and Understanding, reported in end of project survey compared to baseline survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSR Awareness, Understanding and Uptake (AUU) surveys • Project progress reports • Media coverage • Publications and statements of BMOs and other stakeholders 	Domestic firms' commitment to sustainable production issues will continue to increase as newly issued regulations and legal and private business standards come into effect and business environment reforms continue to enhance transparency and more affluent consumers will start to become more demanding
	B: Compliance with CSR procurement standards among Vietnamese SMEs increased in selected sectors	40 SMEs gained understanding of their CSR issues and opportunities and 15 SMEs achieved measurable environmental and social improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project progress and completion reports • Consultants' and buyers' reports 	Pressure on SMEs to comply with environmentally and socially friendly business practices, while improving productivity will be sustained at pre-action levels (and may even increase)

	Intervention	Objectively Verifiable Indicators of achievement	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
	C: Policy and regulatory recommendations for promotion of sustainable production practices and behaviours identified through participatory processes	Improved consensus within and between business and government sectors on policies and strategies for mainstreaming and up-scaling CSR in Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project progress and completion reports Project evaluation 	Government's climate change, environment and business development agendas will continue to focus attention of firms and policy makers on sustainable production practices

	Key Activities	Means	Sources of Verification	Pre-Conditions
Result A	A.1. Conduct two (at start up and during final year) Awareness, Understanding and Usage (AU&U) surveys of CSR among SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telephone surveys and results analysis at start up and completion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey reports published and disseminated 	Once approved for funding the Action would require Government approval to start implementation. While obtaining government approval may require time (and hence result in delayed start up), it is not expected to pose a serious constraint as promotion of CSR has been incorporated into One Plan II of the United Nations in Viet Nam. This is expected to be signed on 9 th June 2008 between the Government of Viet Nam and all participating United Nations Agencies, one of which is UNIDO.
	A.2. Develop through a consultative multi-stakeholder process with the leading Sector Associations (SAs) a ' <i>domesticated</i> ' Company Guide to CSR (CG-CSR) for SMEs from any sector for them to define their company's CSR commitment and a pathway for its achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expert resources, stakeholders' consultation, guide drafting, trial and review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CG-CSR published, disseminated and used as part of project's CSR toolbox 	
	A.3. Develop and implement a coherent and ' <i>domesticated</i> ' communication and advocacy strategy aimed at creating CSR awareness and understanding and foster learning on CSR practices among SMEs, through introductory booklets (<i>CSR Starters</i>), good practice forums (<i>CSR Calendar</i>), sector specific workshops (with SAs) and executive courses (through business schools)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two cycles of annual sector-specific CSR workshops completed in Hanoi and HCMC (total 12 workshops) Two cycles of each six topical good practice forums delivered in both Hanoi and HCMC (total 24 forums) Publications Expert resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary reports of workshops and good practice forums CSR introductory booklets published, disseminated and used as part of project's CSR toolbox 	
	A.4. Strengthen SDfB/VCCI annual CSR awards to cover an additional industry and to increase recognition by the international business society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human resources for award development and evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary report on CSR awards 	

	Key Activities	Means	Sources of Verification	Pre-Conditions
Result B	B.1. Train and coach national CSR consultants, guide the creation of a CSR Consultants' Platform and in parallel strengthen the service-delivery capacity of leading SAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of Implementation Guide CSR (IG-CSR) Introductory training and follow up training and coaching for CSR consultants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IG-CSR published, disseminated and used as part of project's CSR toolbox Reports of introductory training, target 60 national experts Completion of advanced training of senior CSR advisors (target 20) 	
	B.2. Develop and apply Quick Start Tool for CSR (QST-CSR) to identify CSR opportunities and promote these for implementation, including through partnerships involving TNCs, exporters and their SME suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation and trial of QST – CSR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QST-CSR published, disseminated and used as part of project's CSR toolbox Summary reports of trial application of QST CSR in target of 60 enterprises 	
	B.3. Support implementation of in-depth pilot CSR projects, as prioritized and agreed upon by exporters, their TNC buyers and SME suppliers (<i>'partnerships'</i>), and monitor and disseminate their results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical seminars and expert advice on sector-basis, targeting sector-specific priority CSR subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved sourcing and strengthened buyer-producer cooperation Publication of 15 case studies 	
Result C	C.1. Conduct comprehensive policy review, incorporating capacity assessment of CSR related institutions (SAs, SDFB, conducted under Key activity A.1) and consumer associations and other private/civil institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expert human resources, review reports and stakeholders consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study reports published and widely disseminated 	
	C.2. Assist participatory preparation of policy and regulatory recommendations including a coasted action plan for consideration by policy makers, with special attention to CSR adoption among SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings of National Steering Committee Coaching support to Sector Associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity reports of SAs 	
	C.3. Strengthen and facilitate the existing SDFB platform to hold multi-stakeholder dialogues on CSR friendly regulatory frameworks and policy options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicity and visibility actions National conference Support for business driven initiatives, including GC-VN, VBCSD and BCSI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project progress and completion reports Evaluation 	

Annex 2 of Terms of Reference: Job Description

Post title:	International Expert (Project Evaluation)
Duration:	One month – 5 working days on mission in Vietnam (Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh)
Dates:	25 th April 2013, completed before 15 th June 2013
Duty station:	Project Office (PO) Hanoi, with travel within Vietnam, as required
Counterpart:	Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI)

Under the direct supervision of the UNIDO Headquarters Evaluation Manager and with the support of the Project Manager and International Project Coordinator/Chief Technical Advisor (CTA), the International Expert in project evaluation is responsible to carry out the following tasks:

Tasks	Expected Duration	Expected results
Undertake desk review of management, activity, output and related documents of the Action and prepare initial set of evaluation findings and questions for clarification and additional data collection during field mission	6 working days	– Inception note with key findings and outstanding issues, submitted to evaluation manager on or before <u>10th May 2013</u>
Prepare and undertake field mission to Viet Nam to consult project partners and beneficiaries, to verify and complete preliminary evaluation findings from desk review	7 working days	– Completed additional data collection on or before <u>24th May 2013</u>
Prepare and submit draft report of final evaluation	6 working days	– Draft evaluation report submitted to evaluation manager for review on or before <u>31st May 2013</u>
Finalize evaluation report, on basis of comments and suggestions received through evaluation manager	2 working days	– Final evaluation report submitted to evaluation manager on or before <u>15th June 2013</u>

Requirements

Relevant university degree; over 5 years project evaluation experience; excellent oral and written communication skills in English; demonstrated familiarity with private sector development and/or corporate social and/or environmental responsibility. Demonstrated experience in South East Asia is also required and specific experience in Viet Nam would be positively looked upon.

Annex 3 of Terms of Reference: Criteria for evaluation report

Report quality criteria	UNIDO Evaluation Group Assessment notes	Rating
a. Did the report present an assessment of relevant outcomes and achievement of programme objectives?		
b. Were the report consistent and the evidence complete and convincing?		
c. Did the report present a sound assessment of sustainability of outcomes or did it explain why this is not (yet) possible?		
d. Did the evidence presented support the lessons and recommendations?		
e. Did the report include the actual programme costs (total and per activity)?		
f. Quality of the lessons: Were lessons readily applicable in other contexts? Did they suggest prescriptive action?		
g. Quality of the recommendations: Did recommendations specify the actions necessary to correct existing conditions or improve operations ('who?' 'what?' 'where?' 'when?'). Can they be implemented?		
h. Was the report well written? (Clear language and correct grammar)		
i. Were all evaluation aspects specified in the TOR adequately addressed?		
j. Was the report delivered in a timely manner?		

Rating system for quality of evaluation reports

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1, and unable to assess = 0.

Inception Note

Evaluation of the Action: Helping Vietnamese Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to Adapt and Adopt Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for Improved Linkages in Global Supply Chains in Sustainable Production. Vietnam 2013

Background

1. Reference is made to the ToR for the evaluation of May 2013. The ToR presumes that following the home office desk review of background documents and planning of evaluation mission, the Consultant should prepare an Inception Note. The ToR indicates that such Note should be submitted by 10 May, and the Note should outline the key issues to be further clarified and assessed during the field mission.
2. However, as the preparations for the contract formalities took time, and as the Consultant got the background documents rather late, also the Inception Note is somewhat delayed. The Note is made following the first telephone conversation with the Project Manager at UNIDO, and really in a hurry by the Consultant being on his way to Vietnam. The Note in hand is therefore short and to the point, and summarises the understood main modus operandi of the evaluation.
3. The field visit to Vietnam is undertaken during the period 14-23 May 2013, and the Draft Evaluation Report should be submitted by the 31 May.

Scope and Focus of the Evaluation

4. The ToR is clear and concise, and does not involve any “surprises” to the Consultant, so far. The evaluation should focus on the **appropriateness and success** of the Action strategy (since the revision of the action LogFrame in second half of 2010), which is based on:
 - a. Improved awareness of the scope and business case of CSR.
 - b. Improved understanding of potential for and multi-faceted nature of CSR implementation.
 - c. Improved usage of CSR practices by SMEs.
5. After having read the background documents provided, the Consultant was “overwhelmed” by the magnitude of activities at various levels within the Action. First of all, the Action involves numerous partners (9 altogether), and secondly there are so many activities and sub-activities that unless one is intimately acquainted with the Action, it is almost impossible to get on top of everything in such a short period the evaluation lasts. Thus, it was clear after

having consulted the Project Manger that it is not expected that the Consultant should review all the details of the Action, mostly due to time constraint.

6. It was mutually agree that, although the evaluation should look at some detailed activities in order to understand the grassroots level actions, the evaluation should concentrate on the strategic level of the intervention, as related to the complexity of these and the emerging environment in which the Action is developed. It is important not to get bugged down with studying “the leaves on the tree”, but rather to review the totality of the tree itself. Details will be looked into as far as time allows.
7. Due to the limited time for the evaluation, the Consultant would to a large degree also have to depend on the written reports and the statements of the persons to be interviewed in Vietnam. Triangulation of findings will be undertaken as far as possible, but in this case the Consultant does not have many expectations that this is possible.
8. The following issues will be covered, as far as possible:
 - a. The reformulation of the Action (in 2010)
 - b. The ownership and relevance of the Action.
 - c. The “normal” evaluation elements (DAC) of efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Clearly some impacts (outcomes) cannot be seen at this stage in time, as they will materialise later. However, the likelihood of outcome/impact might be elaborated upon.
 - d. Project coordination and management. The ToR state: “The terms and conditions ... did not allow a complete reshuffle in the organizational set up for the Action, which has resulted in a degree of mismatch between organizational set up and Action strategy. ... In its assessment of efficiency and effectiveness of the Action the evaluation will therefore focus on the practical opportunities available within the constraints of the contractual and administrative requirements on the Action”.

Clearly, as the Action is nearly completed, there is no room for adjusting the organizational set-up (and neither is this wanted or of course even feasible). To the degree possible however, the Consultant will reflect on the set-up that has prevailed, with its positive sides and shortfalls, and *might* indicate possible improvements in a possible new similar intervention or a further roll-out of the efforts.

9. The ownership of the Vietnamese partners/stakeholders in the projects will be an important issue to consider, hereunder also their participation in the project preparation and design (notably in 2010), in addition to their commitments through possible allocation of own resources in the continuation of the interventions (sustainability). The survey report on Awareness Understanding and Usage now being drafted will be an important input to the assessment of changed attitudes and perception of the CSR modality (the draft is hopefully available during the field visit in Vietnam).
10. Issues related to outputs would be considered mainly related to quality and appropriateness. The LogFrame matrix will be updated with the last achievements since the last progress report, related to the formulated indicators. (The UNIDO staff might also, if time allows and if found relevant, be asked to make a simple self-assessment of work programme of activities).
11. The Consultant will visit both Hanoi and Ho Chin Minh City during the field visit, and the CSR Project Office is in the process of preparing a draft meeting programme, which is very much appreciated.

13 May 2013
Tore Laugerud
Consultant
Nordic Consulting Group Norway

Annex 2: List of people met

Name	Position	Institution
HANOI		
Mr. Rene Van Berkel	Project Manager	Cleaner Production Unit (CPU), Environment Management Branch (EMB), Programme Development and Technical Division (PTC), UNIDO, Vienna
Mr. Florian Beranek	Chief Technical Advisor/ International Project Coordinator	CSR Project Office, UNIDO, Hanoi
Ms. Nguyen Thi Huong Giang	Project Assistant	CSR Project Office, UNIDO, Hanoi
Mr. Patrick J. Gilabert	UNIDO Representative	UNIDO Office, Hanoi
Ms. Hoang Mai Van Anh	Programme Officer	UNIDO Office Hanoi
Mr. Hoang Thanh	Programme Officer	Rural Development & Environment Co-operation Section, EU Delegation, Hanoi
Ms. Pham Thi Phuong Hoa	Deputy General Director	Hung Yen Garment Corporation JSC
Mr. Chu Huu Nghi	Executive Manager	Hung Yen Garment Corporation JSC
Ms. Nguyen Thi Tong	(Former) Secretary General	Vietnam Leather and Footwear Association (Lefaso)/ Association of Vietnam Retailers/ Centre for Development and Integration
Mr. Tran Van Ha	Sector Expert	Lefaso
Mr. Nguyen Quang Vinh	Director General	Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Office for Business Sustainable Development (OforSD)
Ms. Do Thi Thuy Huoing	Sector Expert/Board Member	Vietnam Electronics Industry Association (VEIA)/ Vietnam Electronics and Informatics JSC
Mr. Nguyen Quang Hung	General Secretary	VEIA
Mr. Bui Dinh Chu	CSR Consultant	Local NGO, Hanoi
Ms. Nguyen Thi My Chau	CSR Consultant	Local NGO, Hanoi

Ms. Nghiem Thi Kim Hoa	CSR Consultant	Freelance consultant, Hanoi
Ms. Ngo Bach Ngan	CSR Consultant	Freelance consultant, Hanoi
Ms. Ngo Mai Hoa	CSR Consultant	Partly freelance consultant and Bureau Veritas
Ms. Luu Minh Huyen	(Former) Training Coordinator	CRS Office, UNIDO, Hanoi
Ms. Dang Phuong Dzung	Vice Chairwoman/ Secretary general	Vietnam Textile and Apparel Association (VITAS), Hanoi
Ms. Nguyen Thi Hac Dinh	Vide Director/ Trade Policy/	International Cooperation- Communications, ---“---
HO CHI MINH CITY		
Ms. N'Diep Kiet Nhi	Officer	Social Environment Affairs Dept., Din Sim Enterprises CO. Ltd., outside HCMC
Ms. Nguyen Thi Lan Anh	Officer	Social Environment Affairs Dept., Din Sim Enterprises CO. Ltd., outside HCMC
Ms. Ly Thanh Thao	Import & export Manager	Hoang Fruit farm Co. Ltd, Ham Tuan Nam District, outside HCMC
Mr. Thi Nguyen	CSR Consultant	Partly freelance, partly Director Environment and Energy Efficiency Dept., Mekong Renewable Resource Fund, Indochina Capital, HCMC
Ms. Le Thi Thu Huyen	CSR Consultant	The organization JETRO, HCMC
Ms. Lynn Luc	CSR Consultant	Freelance/own company (Kind Management Int.), HCMC
Mr. Le Van Lang	CSR Consultant	Lecturer, Univ. of Agriculture & Forestry, HCMC
Mr. Kieu Nguyen Truong Ca	CSR Consultant	Part time freelance, part time Swedish Trade Council, HCMC
Ms. Truong My Diem	CSR Consultant	Lecturer, HCMC Open University
Ms. Le Bich Ngoc	CSR Consultant	Project Officer, Fair Labor Association, Hanoi
Ms. NguyenThi Hing	Vice General Director	Dong Tien JSC – DOVITEC, Bien Hoa City outside HCMC
Ms. Nguyen Hong Ha	Deputy General Director	VCCI, Ho Chi Minh City Branch

Consultant's Field Visit Itinerary

Wed 15 May

Later afternoon: Consultant arriving Hanoi from Europe.

Thu 16 May (Hanoi)

09h00 - 10h00: Meeting with UNIDO Country Office

11h00 - 12h00: Meeting with EU Delegation to VN

13h00 - 17h00: Visit Hung Yen Garment JSC

Fri 17 May (Hanoi)

09h00 - 10h00: Meeting with Leather & Footwear Association (LEFASO)

10h30 - 13h00: Meeting with CRS team

13h30 - 14h30: Meeting with Vietnam Chamber of Commerce & Industry (VCCI)

15h00 - 16h30: Meeting with CSR team

17h00 - 18h00: Meeting with VN Electronic Industries Association (VEIA)

Sat 18 May (Hanoi)

09h00 - 11h00: Meeting with CSR Expert Group in Hanoi

11h00 – 15h00: Meeting with CSR team

Sun 19 May (Hanoi/HCMC)

Domestic flight Hanoi – Ho Chi Minh City: 14h30 - 16h30

Mon 20 May (HCMC)

09h00 – 10h00: Visit to textile factory outside HCMC

15h00 - 16h00: Meeting with fruit company representative and CSR consultant

18h00 - 19h30: Meeting with CSR Expert Group in Ho Chi Minh City

Tue 21 May (HCMC/Hanoi)

09h00 - 10h00: Visit Dong Tien Garment JSC outside HCMC

15h30 - 16h30: Meeting with VCCI HCMC

Domestic flight Ho Chi Minh - Hanoi: 19h00 - 21h00

Wed 22 May (Hanoi)

09h00 - 10h00: Meeting with VITAS

10h30 - 11h00: Report writing

11h00 – 13h: 00: Meeting with CSR team

13h00 – 14h00: Debriefing meeting UNIDO/CSR

Late afternoon: Consultant leaving from Europe

Annex 3: Bibliography

General Documents

UNIDO and partners. Project Document. October 2009

UNIDO Project Management. (First) Interim Narrative Report. 4 June 2010

UNIDO Project Management. (Second) Interim Narrative Report (forth draft). 5 September 2011

UNIDO Project Management. (Third) Interim Narrative Report (second draft).7 September 2012

UNIDO. Monitoring Report, MR- 137122.01. EU, Hoang Thanh Pascal Lardinois. 5 November 2010

UNIDO Project Management. Response to Monitoring Report. MR-137122.01 dated 5 November. 31 January 2011.

UNIDO Project Management. Overview of CRS consultant training and Quick Assessment in 2011. March 2011

UNIDO. Project Management. Report on CSR Calendar Events 11 March 2012

UNIDO. Peter Loewe, Henny Andersen, Tran Thi Hanh. Independent Country Evaluation. UNIDO Activities in the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam April 2012

UNIDO Project Management. Rene van Berkel, Helping Vietnamese SMEs (PowerPoint Presentation). 23 April 2013

UNIDO Project Management. (List) Activities per EOA. 22 April 2013

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UNIDO Project Management. The CSR Starter. UNIDO reap26

ISO Central Secretariat. ISO 26000 Project Overview .2010

VCCI, SdforD, Swedish Embassy, British Embassy, Siemens, TI, Int. Business Leaders Forum, Baker & McKenzie. Integrity and Transparency in Business Initiative for Vietnam

SdforB, VCCI. Project Training on Cleaner Production and Waste Management for Enterprises in Vietnam

Global Compact Network Vietnam. Project Training on Cleaner Production and Waste Management for Enterprises in Vietnam

VCCI. Vietnam Business Council for Sustainable Development (VBCSD).

Annex 4: Project achievements

Summary of achievements of activities

(Based on progress reports and updated information by the Vietnam Project Office, consulting the Project Manager)

Logical Framework

Key Activities	Detailed Activities (as per updated set of activities from application) ⁽⁴¹⁾	Indicators ⁽⁴²⁾ and Achievement
Expected Result A: Awareness and understanding of Triple Bottom Line (TBL) CSR approach among Vietnamese SMEs, consumers and other relevant stakeholders increased		20% increase in Awareness and Understanding, reported in end of project survey compared to baseline survey. Survey ongoing in May 2013
A.1. Conduct two (at start up and during final year) Awareness, Understanding and Usage (AU&U) surveys of CSR among SMEs	A.1.1. Publication and dissemination of baseline AU&U survey	Report published and disseminated. (English and Vietnamese versions, hard copy and online). Achieved
	A.1.2. AU&U survey of CSR business practices (end-of-action)	Report published and disseminated. Will be achieved - ongoing to the end of May 2013.
A.2. Develop through a consultative multi-stakeholder process with the leading Sector Associations (SAs) a 'domesticated' Company Guide to CSR (CG-CSR) for SMEs from any sector for them to define their company's CSR commitment and a pathway for its achievement ⁽⁴³⁾ .	A.2.1. Draft, publish and disseminate CG-CSR (Continued promotion and use of CG-CSR in all other project activities)	CG CSR published and disseminated as integral part of the CSR Toolbox. Achieved

⁴¹ The numerical system for key activities and activities (as 1.1. etc. and 1.1.1 etc) used in the application for the action were replaced with an alphanumeric system (respectively A.1.1 and A.1.1.2) to reflect the refinements in the project strategy as documented in the second interim narrative report.

⁴² Extended and updated upon recommendations from the Results Oriented Monitoring and Verification Missions in 2010 and 2011.

⁴³ The initial round of workshops and consultations revealed an abundance of sector specific CoCs, often even vendor specific. Companies reported to "struggle" with the plethora of requirements, and were seeking for guidance on how to transpose – elements of – different CoC and supplier standards in an efficient and effective manner into their own operations (a finding also encountered by UNIDO in other countries in regard to private standards). The idea was therefore conceived and endorsed to develop a guidance document for any enterprise that enables it to set its own goals and aspirations for CSR (its "magnetic north") and then develop and implement policies and practices to achieve such. This is the trust of the Company Guide on CSR.

Key Activities	Detailed Activities (as per updated set of activities from application) ⁽⁴¹⁾	Indicators ⁽⁴²⁾ and Achievement
A.3. Develop and implement a coherent and 'domesticated' communication and advocacy strategy aimed at creating CSR awareness and understanding and foster learning on CSR practices among SMEs, through introductory booklets (<i>CSR Starters</i>), good practice forums (<i>CSR Calendar</i>), sector specific workshops (with SAs) and executive courses (through business schools) ⁽⁴⁴⁾	A.3.1. First annual sector-specific workshop on CSR in Leather and Footwear in Ha Noi and HCMC	Two workshops organized and delivered, twice in each of the 3 sectors. In (Given common topic of planning and policy formulation for CSR, the CSR workshops for the three sectors were combined. Total of six theme specific workshops took place – in total 12 workshops. June-Aug 2010 and Des-Jan 2010/11). Achieved
	A.3.2. Second annual sector-specific workshop on CSR in Leather and Footwear in Ha Noi and HCMC	
	A.3.3. First annual sector-specific workshop on CSR in Textile and Garments in Ha Noi and HCMC	
	A.3.4. Second annual sector-specific workshop on CSR in Textile and Garments in Ha Noi and HCMC	
	A.3.5. First annual sector-specific workshop on CSR in Electronic and Electronics in Ha Noi and HCMC	
	A.3.6. Second annual sector-specific workshop on CSR in Electronic and Electronics in Ha Noi and HCMC	
	A.3.7. Finalize, publish and launch series of CSR starters	CSR starters published and disseminated as integral part of the CSR Toolbox. (First edition of CSR starters launched on 29 March 2011 and have been used for CSR calendar forums. Updated versions prepared and integrated CSR toolbox). Achieved
	A.3.8. Establish annual series of six thematic CSR good practice forums (CSR Calendar)	CSR calendar launched. (Format for CSR calendar agreed upon, promoted and launched on 28 March 2011). Achieved

⁴⁴ The communication and advocacy strategy is aimed at providing and reinforcing the same core elements of CSR (as per the main subject areas in the ISO 26000 standard) at different levels of detail and in different forms. At an awareness level there are starters, i.e. 4 page, plain language booklets. At understanding level there are good practice forums where leading businesses and experts exchange good domestic and international practices, to be further captured and disseminated as illustrations for the starter booklets, including through e.g. the website. At uptake/implementation level this is further supported with sector specific workshops (focusing on managerial, operational and technical solutions to key issues in each sector) and executive education (focusing on formal training of managers in best practice management tools and systems for CSR implementation).

Key Activities	Detailed Activities (as per updated set of activities from application) ⁽⁴¹⁾	Indicators ⁽⁴²⁾ and Achievement
	A.3.9. Conduct first series of CSR Calendar (2011) (6 forums in HCMC and 6 in Ha Noi)	Five sets of two calendar events organized. (Achieved repeated and extended media coverage. Consolidated participants' base of some 80 professionals in both Hanoi and HCMC, with total of 1000+ participations over the entire series. Awareness and understanding of key CSR subjects improved, as reported by participants and media coverage.) Achieved (5 instead of initial 6, as Human Rights issues were taken out due to the political sensitivity of the issue).
	A.3.10. Conduct second series of CSR Calendar (2012) (6 forums in HCMC and 6 in Ha Noi)	Five sets of two calendar events organized. (Awareness and understanding of key CSR subjects improved, as reported by participants and media coverage). Achieved (human rights issues taken out).
	A.3.11. Formalize further agreements for joint course development and delivery	Agreement concluded for 2011 and 2012 course delivery. (Cooperation foreseen with UNDP on course development project did not materialize. Alternative agreement to deliver executive courses under VCCI banner was agreed upon, using Vietnamese university lecturers). Achieved
	A.3.12. Development of Executive Course	Agreed course content developed. (Course content developed on consumer protection issues in consultation with BMO representatives). Achieved
	A.3.13. Launch Executive Course in HCMC and Hanoi	Executive courses delivered. (Delivered one-day course on consumer protection in Hanoi and HCMC in 27 and 29 December 2011). Achieved
A.4. Strengthen SdF/VCCI annual CSR awards to cover an additional industry and to increase recognition by the international business society	A.4.1. Assist VCCI to improve criteria and procedure for the 2011 CSR awards	New award criteria and guidelines released. (Had to wait until March 2012, in order to comply with governmental regulations on award schemes. Award in several categories) Achieved .
	A.4.2. Conduct follow up survey among recipients of 2011 CSR awards	Summary report on impact of CSR award on company performance. Taken out.
Expected Result B: Compliance with CSR procurement standards among Vietnamese SMEs increased in selected sectors		40 SMEs gained understanding of their CSR issues and opportunities and 15 SMEs achieved measurable environmental and social improvements
B.1. Train and coach national CSR consultants, guide the creation of a CSR Consultants' Platform and in	B.1.1. Finalize, publish and disseminate IG-CSR B.1.2. Continued promotion and use of IG-CSR in all other project activities	IG CSR published and disseminated as integral part of the CSR Toolbox. Achieved

Key Activities	Detailed Activities (as per updated set of activities from application) ⁽⁴¹⁾	Indicators ⁽⁴²⁾ and Achievement
parallel strengthen the service-delivery capacity of leading SAs ⁽⁴⁵⁾	B.1.3. Recruitment and selection of CSR consultant trainees B.1.4. Conduct CSR Consultants' Training in Hanoi and HCMC	<i>Number of CSR consultants trained: target 60, but only 35 were recruited in 2011 going through the first training. (Several others fell out during the education and finally 17 got the certificate).</i> Partly Achieved.
	B.1.5. Award consultants' certificates after successful completion of in-plant CSR assessments (with B.2.3)	<i>Number of CSR consultants awarded with certificate for completion of company CSR assessments. Target 50, finally 17 qualified. (Completion awards delivered after course. Comprehensive awards to be issued to those consultants that have completed CSR assessments in enterprises, during first platform meeting of national consultants).</i> Partly Achieved.
	B.1.6. Support establishment of CSR Consultants' Platform, including through drafting of its charter	<i>Active networking and peer learning among national CSR consultants. (Online platform launched in March 2011 and operation extended with over 100 active participants. First physical meeting of consultants platform, with the 18 certified national CSR consultants, took place in March 2012 with a 3-day "retreat". Additionally, the CSR consultants have established their own Google network forum).</i> Achieved.
	B.1.7. Conduct advanced workshops and coaching addressing capacity building needs identified for each SA	Approach changed to capacity building and coaching through locally based BMOs. Taken out.
	B.1.8. Develop and agree counsellor system with SAs	
	B.1.9. Provide training and coaching for counsellors	
	B.1.10. Pilot and evaluate counsellors' system for SAs	

⁴⁵ The initial interactions with consultants and BMOs identified a need to combine individual capacity building (training and up-skilling of national experts) with collective and institutional capacity building on CSR, to ensure that consultants continue to have access to best practice methods and tools and regularly exchange results and experiences with their peers and colleagues, in order to build collective capacity for adapting and adopting CSR in SMEs in Vietnam. Moreover, the release of ISO 2600 necessitated an extension of the previously used training materials (including REAP), to achieve broad coverage of CSR topics, beyond the traditional environment and occupational health and safety domains.

Key Activities	Detailed Activities (as per updated set of activities from application) ⁽⁴¹⁾	Indicators ⁽⁴²⁾ and Achievement
B.2. Develop and apply Quick Start Tool for CSR (QST-CSR) to identify CSR opportunities and promote these for implementation, including through partnerships involving TNCs, exporters and their SME suppliers ⁽⁴⁶⁾	B.2.1. Finalize, publish and disseminate QST-CSR	<i>Easy to use, yet comprehensive tool available for assessment of enterprise CSR performance.</i> (First draft of QST released in March 2011 and since then used for CSR assessments in 35 SMEs QST. Later improved and being published as part of CSR Toolkit). Achieved.
	B.2.2. Finalize recruitment and selection of SMEs for in-plant assessments	<i>Minimum of 40 SMEs recruited as pilot companies for in plant assessment.</i> (Identified from target sectors with the help of national sector associations). Almost Achieved (35 instead of 40).
	B.2.3. Complete in-plant CSR assessments using the QST-IG in 40 SMEs covering three target sectors by CSR trainees consultant	<i>CSR assessments completed in 40 SMEs.</i> (Initiated in 35 SMEs from target sectors in 2011, and completed for 20. Additionally, 18 SMEs in 2012 and 2013). Achieved. (38 instead of 40).
B.3. Support implementation of in-depth pilot CSR projects, as prioritized and agreed upon by exporters, their TNC buyers and SME suppliers ('partnerships'), and monitor and disseminate their results. ⁽⁴⁷⁾	B.3.1. Confirm scope of partnership programme based on findings from in-plant CSR assessments	<i>Confirmed scope of partnership programme.</i> (Initial focus on chemicals management agreed for all three sectors). Achieved.
	B.3.2. Promote CSR partnership programme through CSR Calendar (A.3.8)	<i>Partnership programme promoted.</i> (Active promotion to multiple sourcing regions through network and as spin off from CSR calendar forum and the publicity these created). Achieved.
	B.3.3. Conduct CSR Partnership matching events	<i>Match making event organized.</i> (Planned for 2012, but did not materialise. Considered, but no partnership event organized, due to lacking interest. Instead agreed to take <u>regional approach</u> targeting key sourcing regions). Taken out – revised approach.
	B.3.4. Provide technical support for CSR Partnership Program	<i>Partnership programme effectively supported.</i> (Planned for 2012, but did not materialise due to lack of interest. Approach concentrated on the technical seminars – see below). Taken out.
	B.3.5. Conduct textile and garment technical seminar for CSR Partnership Program	<i>Two technical seminars arranged in each of the 3 sectors.</i> (Total of six technical seminars on responsible chemicals management delivered jointly

⁴⁶ The Quick Start Tool was conceived as a logical companion to the company and implementation guides for CSR. It operationalizes the CSR topics into a practical tool for CSR experts to assist with the rapid identification of CSR issues and development of appropriate response strategies, which could then either be implemented directly by the respective SME or in partnership with its TNC buyers.

⁴⁷ As the establishment of new business relationships is often beyond the capacity/influence of the project partners it was agreed to also focus on improvement of existing business ties also in order to enhance compliance.

Key Activities	Detailed Activities (as per updated set of activities from application) ⁽⁴¹⁾	Indicators ⁽⁴²⁾ and Achievement
	B.3.6. Conduct leather and footwear technical seminar for CSR Partnership Program	for three sectors, in HCMC, Dong Nai, Hai Phong, Hung Yen and Hanoi. Arranged by the 3 national sector associations under their budgets. December 2011). Achieved.
	B.3.7. Conduct electric and electronic technical seminar for CSR Partnership Program	
	B.3.8. Monitor results of CSR Partnership Program and prepare success stories	<i>Publish 15 SME success stories of improved environmental and social performance. (With a focus on eight key sourcing regions). In the process of being achieved (compilation ongoing at the time of the evaluation).</i>
Expected Result C: Policy and regulatory recommendations for promotion of sustainable production practices and behaviours identified through participatory processes		Improved consensus within and between business and government sectors on policies and strategies for mainstreaming and up-scaling CSR in Vietnam
C.4. Conduct comprehensive policy review, incorporating capacity assessment of CSR related institutions (SAs, SDfB, conducted under Key activity 2.1) and consumer associations and other private/civil institutions	C.1.1. Complete comparative assessment of national legislation and international labor standards	<i>Report published and findings actively disseminated. (In English and Vietnamese). Achieved.</i>
	C.1.2. Complete comparative assessment of national legislation versus international technical standards	<i>Report published and findings actively disseminated. (In English and Vietnamese). Achieved.</i>
	C.1.3. Develop and promote policy recommendations supporting SME compliance with international technical standards	<i>Improved compliance of SMEs with international hazardous substances regulations. (Agreed to focus on ISO26000 standard instead of sector specific technical standards. This is the core change in the project!! ISO 26000 is now being translated into Vietnamese outside the project). Achieved and continuous following revised approach.</i>
	C.1.4. Develop and promote policy recommendations supporting SME compliance with international hazardous substances regulations	<i>Improved compliance of SMEs with international hazardous substances regulations. (Undertaken within framework of partnership programme for which 6 responsible chemicals' workshops were delivered (see B.3.4.- B.3.6). Achieved under revised approach.</i>
C.5. Assist participatory preparation of policy and regulatory recommendations including a costed action plan for consideration by policy makers, with special attention to CSR adoption among SMEs	C.2.1. Second annual meeting of NSC	<i>Annual workplan approved. (In second annual meeting of NSC took place on 29th March 2011). Achieved.</i>
	C.2.2. Final meeting of NSC	<i>Annual workplan approved. (In third NSC meeting in March 2012). Achieved.</i>
	C.2.3. Interim meetings of NSC on as-needed basis	N/A (Not called for due to lacking need)

Key Activities	Detailed Activities (as per updated set of activities from application) ⁽⁴¹⁾	Indicators ⁽⁴²⁾ and Achievement
	C.2.4. Train and coach SAs to advocate CSR agenda in their dealings with government, businesses and other organizations	SAs better equipped to undertake advocacy on CSR agenda. (Topic “integrated” in other activities with the SAs). Taken out (as formulated).
C.6. Strengthen and facilitate the existing SDfB platform to hold multi-stakeholder dialogues on CSR friendly regulatory frameworks and policy options	C.3.1. Advocacy for business-driven approach to CSR and SCP through contributions to activities of project partners organized outside current Action, including in particular VBCSD and GC-Network	Ongoing advocacy for business-driven approach to CSR implementation. (E.g. facilitated the operation of the GC-Network in Vietnam; participated in launch and annual meeting of VBCSD; participated in one BSCI forum). Achieved – continuous activity.
	C.3.2. Organize national CSR conferences	National conference successfully conducted. (Organised 8 th October 2011). Achieved.
	C.3.3. Continue operation and updating of CSR webpage	Ongoing operation and updating of project website. (Website maintained, updated and expanded. Photos from events posted on website within 24 hours of the event closing. Website domain, in Germany, is paid by the project until early 2014. The 18 certified CSR Consultants all have CSR email addresses). Achieved – continuous activity.
	C.3.4. Publication of CSR newsletters	Ongoing communications and information dissemination on CSR. (Discontinued, replaced by updates linked to CSR calendar events). Taken out.
	C.3.5. Advocacy and outreach through relevant press releases and events	Continued press coverage of key project activities. (Short news on TV; 12 national TV appearances (of which 6 * 45 minutes talk-shows (the only ones paid for by the project); and over 50 news paper articles). Achieved.

Annex 5: List of Project Events



1	Mission of Switch Asia Network Facility Mr. Gerhard Weihs	7.3.10-12.3.10	Hanoi
2	First Steering Committee Meeting with presence of EU Hanoi, Switch Network Facility and UNIDO HQ	8.3.10	Hanoi
3	Workshop "CSR - More than a nice to have?" for project partners representatives	8.3.10	Hanoi
4	Quick-assessment BMO by SEQUA report by May 2010	8.3.10-11.3.10	Hanoi
5	Seminar on CSR Basics for academic staff and students at RMIT (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology) Hanoi Campus	13.4.10	Hanoi
6	Starting date of LT NE for Textile, Footwear and Electronics as well as CSR & Training	1.5.10	Hanoi
7	Opening the project office at 52 Yet Kieu Lane, Hoan Kiem District in cooperation with the Switch Asia MEET-BIS project	15.5.10	Hanoi
8	Active participation in the World Economic Forum South Asia side-event, organized by our governmental counterpart VCCI.	5.6.10	HCMC
9	Focus Group on Code of Conducts and CSR jointly for the three sectors	7.6.10	HCMC
10	Focus Group on Code of Conducts and CSR jointly for the three sectors	9.6.10	Danang
11	Focus Group on Code of Conducts and CSR jointly for the three sectors	11.6.10	Hanoi
12	Focus Group on Code of Conducts and CSR Textile (VITAS)	21.7.10	Thai Binh
13	Seminar "CSR for PR" in cooperation with iPro Vietnam	30.7.10	Hanoi
14	Focus Group on Code of Conducts and CSR Footwear (LEFASO)	4.8.10	Hai Phong
15	Focus Group on Code of Conducts and CSR Electronic (VEIA)	8.8.10	Hue
16	Workshop on Strategy Development for BMO at LEFASO	21.9.10	Hanoi
17	Workshop on Strategy Development for BMO at VITAS	22.9.10	Hanoi
18	Workshop on Strategy Development for BMO at VEIA	23.9.10	Hanoi
19	Training for BMO representatives on sector unit facilitation	27.9.10-30.9.10	Hanoi





20	first intermediate Steering Committee Meeting	30.9.10	Hanoi
21	ROM Mission to visit the project - report will follow by November	4.10.10-8.10.10	Hanoi, Thai Binh
22	Participation in the Switch Asia Network Conference in Beijing	11.10.10-15.10.10	Beijing
23	Participation of project representative in the Asian Forum on CSR	21.10.10-23.10.10	Kuala Lumpur
24	Field trip greater Hanoi to visit SME of the textile and garments sector	9.11.10	greater Hanoi
25	Field trip greater Hanoi to visit SME of the leather and footwear sector	12.11.10	greater Hanoi
26	CSR Roundtable with VCCI and introduction to ISO26000 (Martin Neureiter)	29.11.10	Hanoi
27	CSR Kitchentable open space	29.11.10	Hanoi
28	CSR Marketplace for TNC (Mr. Neureiter)	30.11.10	Hanoi
29	Workshop for professionals on ISO26000 (Standardization, Auditing, Government, ...)	2.12.10	HCMC
30	CSR Marketplace for TNC (Mr. Neureiter)	3.12.10	HCMC
31	Consultation WS on CoC and Company Policy Development for Leather and Footwear	6.12.10	HCMC
32	Consultation WS on CoC and Company Policy Development for Textile	7.12.10	Dong Nai
33	Consultation WS on CoC and Company Policy Development for Leather and Footwear	13.12.10	Hai Duong
34	Consultation WS on CoC and Company Policy Development for Textile	15.12.10	Hung Yen
35	Active participation in the VCCI Forum on SD and the launch of the VnBCSD (WBCSD)	17.12.10	Hanoi
36	CSR Roundtable with VCCI	22.12.10	Danang
37	CSR Roundtable with VCCI	23.12.10	Can Tho
38	Consultation WS on CoC and Company Policy Development for Electronic	24.12.10	Binh Duong



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39	Active participation in a high level (vice minister) workshop by MOLISA and ILSSA on the current status and challenges of CSR in Vietnam	30.12.10	Hanoi
40	Active participation in the National Conference for SD (highest level), providing VCCI's inputs	6.1.11	Hanoi
41	Consultation WS on CoC and Company Policy Development for Electronic	20.1.11	Bac Ninh
42	Participation in Energy Efficiency Workshop by Meet-Bis (Switch) including weather report	4.3.11	Hanoi
43	Consultants Course	21.3. - 25.3.11	Hanoi
44	CSR Calendar Forum on Anticorruption	28.3.11	HCMC
45	CSR Calendar Forum on Anticorruption	29.3.11	Hanoi
46	2nd Steering Committee Meeting	29.3.11	Hanoi
47	Workshop on international private standards in cooperation with HQ (Muge Dolun)	5.4. - 7.4.11	HCMC
48	Consultants Course	25.4. - 29.4.11	HCMC
49	Entech Hanoi (joint booth with Switch projects) and speech (26.5.11)	25.5. - 27.5.11	Hanoi
50	Field mission with EU Delegation to textile company Hai Nam	27.5.11	Hanoi
51	Project presentation at MPI Donors meeting	3.6.11	Hanoi
52	Fieldmission to Phu Xuyen Shoe Village	20.7.11	Hanoi
53	Launch of CSR-Platform Vietnam (Beta)	1.8.11	web
54	CSR Calendar Forum on Labour	23.8.11	HCMC
55	CSR Calendar Forum on Labour	25.8.11	Hanoi
56	Singapore CSR Summit 2011 and ASEAN CSR Network Meeting	4.9. - 7.9.11	Singapore
57	Seminar with Students (University Innsbruck) at National University Tech/Science)	12.9.11	Hanoi



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58	Project Presentation at Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS)	15.9.11	Hanoi
59	Seminar on CSR with students HCMC Open University	16.9.11	HCMC
60	CSR Project Presentation at BSCI Workshop	23.9.11	HCMC
61	Large CSR Conference with VCCI	8.10.11	Hanoi
62	CSR Calendar Forum on Environment	11.10.11	Hanoi
63	CSR Calendar Forum on Environment	13.10.11	HCMC
64	Participation in the Switch-Asia Network Conference	24.-27.10.11	Jakarta
65	Participation in Consultation Workshop on Green Industry Policy Development	28.10.11	HCMC
66	Company visit and half day lecturing on CSR with Alumnis of Maastricht School of Mgmt.	29.10.11	HCMC
67	Field-visit to Hai Nam Textile Company with Mr. Jens Norgaard (EU-Switch)	3.11.11	Hanoi
68	Participation in the 10 th Asian Pacific RT on SCP (project represented by VEIA, LEFASO and VITAS)	8.11.11-12.11.11	Yogyakarta, Indonesia
69	Participation in the UNIDO Green Industry conference (project represented by VCCI)	15.11.11-18.11.11	Tokyo
70	Participation in the GBS and SBA networking event	21.11.11	HCMC
71	CSR Calendar Forum on Community	25.11.11	Hanoi
72	Firefighting Exercise with Hai Nam Company and Gia Lam Community	27.11.11.-28.11.11	greater Hanoi
73	CSR Calendar Forum on Community	30.11.11.	HCMC
74	Workshop Chemical Management	1.12.11	HCMC
75	Workshop Chemical Management	2.12.11	Dong Nai
76	Workshop Chemical Management	6.12.11	Hai Phong
77	Workshop Chemical Management	7.12.11	Hung Yen



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78	Workshop Chemical Management	8.12.11	Hanoi
79	Workshop Chemical Management	9.12.11	Hanoi (on-site)
80	Workshop CSR Policy Development (Consultants)	10.12.11	Hanoi
81	Workshop CSR Policy Development	13.12.11	Hai Phong
82	CSR Conference in coop. with GCNV	14.12.11	HCMC
83	Workshop CSR Policy Development	14.12.11	HCMC
84	Workshop CSR Policy Development	15.12.11	HCMC
85	Workshop CSR Policy Development	16.12.11	Danang
86	Workshop CSR Policy Development	17.12.11	Hanoi (on-site)
87	Consumer Issues Course under VCCI	27.12.11	Hanoi
88	Consumer Issues Course under VCCI	29.12.11	HCMC
89	Active participation in conference on sustainable/green tourism	10.1.12	Hoi An
90	CSR Conference	11.1.12	Can Tho
91	CSR Calendar Forum on Consumer	12.1.12	HCMC
92	CSR Calendar Forum on Consumer	13.1.12	Hanoi
93	5 selected CSR consultants joining 5 days training on BIZ-Camp (CIDA-SNV)	20.2.12-25.2.12	Danang
94	Active contribution to the VASS conference on CSR	8.3.12-9.3.12	Hanoi
95	Workshop on CSR Marketplace at Singapore international School	9.3.12	Hanoi
96	Third Steering Committee Meeting	13.3.12	Hanoi
97	Workshop on reap26 with CSR Consultants	16.3.12-18.3.12	Hoian
98	Workshop at HARCO on CSR Roadmap, reap26 follow-up	20.3.12	Hanoi
99	Fieldtrip to Thanh Hoa Province with company visits	28.3.12-30.3.12	Thanh Hoa, Bim Som
100	CSR Calendar Forum on IPR	4.4.12	Hanoi



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101	Meeting with CSR Consultants	4.4.12	Hanoi
102	CSR Calendar Forum on IPR	6.4.12	HCMC
103	Meeting with CSR Consultants	6.4.12	HCMC
104	Active contribution to CSR workshop at VASS (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences)	13.4.12	Hanoi
105	Company visits with IE Mr. Chin Yeow	25. – 26.4.12	Hanoi, Binh Duong and HCMC
106	Lecture on CSR and Marketplace Exercise with 120 MBA students Open University HCMC	14.5.12	HCMC
107	CSR Calendar Forum on Environment	15.5.12	HCMC
108	CSR Calendar Forum on Environment	17.5.12	Hanoi
109	Participation EU-Vietnam Trade Forum FTA	18.5.12	HCMC
110	CEO Course on CSR improving linkages between business and education with VCCI	23.5.12	Hanoi
111	Introduction Workshop for local CSR Advisor Training at VCCI Thanh Hoa	30.5.12	Thanh Hoa
112	CEO Course on CSR improving linkages between business and education with VCCI	13.6.12	Danang
113	Introduction Workshop for local CSR Advisor Training at VCCI Danang	14.6.12	Danang
114	Lecture on CSR and Marketplace Exercise with 30 high school students at Singapore International School	15.6.12	Hanoi
115	Participation and contribution on CSR at a workshop of Batik International (FRA) for the textile industry	25.6.12	Hanoi
116	Two days workshop on ISO26000 and the basics of integration in Cambodia in preparation of the assignment of VN Experts to Cambodia	28. – 29.6.12	Phnom Penh



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117	Participation and contribution in the UNIDO Green Industry Consultation Workshop	2. – 3.7.12	HCMC
118	CEO Course on CSR improving linkages between business and education with VCCI	4.7.12	HCMC
119	Workshop on reap26 for national CSR Experts (Consultants) – 3 days	12. – 15.7.12	Hoian
120	Introduction Workshop for local CSR Advisor Training at Thai Binh Business Association	17.7.12	Thai Binh
121	Workshop on consulting and intervention methodologies for CSR Experts	20.7.12	Hanoi
122	Two days local CSR Advisor Training with VCCI Thanh Hoa	24. – 25.7.12	Thanh Hoa
123	Introduction Workshop for local CSR Advisor Training with VCCI Hai Phong	27.7.12	Hai Phong
124	Workshop on consulting and intervention methodologies for CSR Experts	28.7.12	HCMC
125	Two days local CSR Advisor Training with VCCI HCMC	2. – 3.8.12	HCMC
126	VCCI CSR Award Kick-off event	27.8.12	Hanoi
127	VCCI CSR Award Kick-off event	29.8.12	HCMC
128	VCCI CSR Award Kick-off event	30.8.12	Danang
129	Lecture on CSR for VN and Austrian students at National University for Science and Tech.	5.9.12	Hanoi
130	Two days local CSR Advisor Training with Thai Binh Business Association	13. – 14.9.12	Thai Binh
131	Workshop reap26 for Leather and Footwear	17.9.12	Hanoi
132	Workshop reap26 for Textile and Garment	20.9.12	Dong Nai
133	Workshop reap26 for Electronics	21.9.12	HCMC



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134	Active participation the ASEAN CSR Network Summit in Singapore including a full day workshop on reap26	25. – 28.9.12	Singapore
135	Active participation and contribution to the BSCI Roundtable for VN suppliers	26.9.12.	Hanoi
136	Active participation and contribution to the BSCI Roundtable for VN suppliers	27.9.12	HCMC
137	Workshop reap26 for Electronics	2.10.12	Hai Phong
138	Active participation and contribution to the Vietnam Supply Chain Conference	2. – 3.10.12	HCMC
139	Workshop reap26 for Textile and Garment	4.10.12	Nam Dinh
140	Workshop reap26 for Leather and Footwear	5.10.12	Hai Duong
141	Workshop on QM and Cost Control in the light of sustainable business development in the Electronic sector	29.10.12	Bac Ninh
142	Workshop on QM and Cost Control in the light of sustainable business development in the Leather and Footwear sector	31.10.12	Binh Duong
143	Workshop on QM and Cost Control in the light of sustainable business development in the Textile and Garment sector	1.11.12	Danang
144	Workshop on QM and Cost Control in the light of sustainable business development in the Electronic sector	2.11.12	Hue
145	Workshop on QM and Cost Control in the light of sustainable business development in the Leather and Footwear sector	6.11.12	Hai Phong
146	Workshop on QM and Cost Control in the light of sustainable business development in the Textile and Garment sector	7.11.12	Hung Yen
147	Participation of CTA and VCCI representative in the annual SWITCH Asia conference and the Switch Asia – UNEP SCP conference	12. – 15.11.12	Bangkok
148	CSR Calendar Forum on Community	19.11.12	Hanoi



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149	CSR Calendar Forum on Community	20.11.12	HCMC
150	Regional CSR Conference with VCCI Hanoi and Vung Tau	21.11.12	Vung Tau
151	Two days local CSR Advisor Training with VCCI HCMC and Li & Fung	27. – 28.11.12	Dong Nai
152	Introduction Workshop for local CSR Advisor Training at Tra Vinh (in cooperation with GIZ)	30.11.12	Tra Vinh
153	3 days Training national CSR Experts Group including examination	6. – 9.12. 12	Hue
154	half-day Seminar for students National University for Agriculture, Forestry and Aquaculture (Walker, Beranek and Prof. Lang)	11.12.12	HCMC
155	half-day Seminar for students Open University HCMC on sust. Product-Life-Cycle (Walker, Beranek, Prof. Diem)	11.12.12	HCMC
156	Two days My Company CSR Advisor Training with VCCI HCMC	20. – 21.12.12	Binh Duong
157	CSR Calendar Forum on Consumer	19.1.13	HCMC
158	Introduction to CSR with last year's students at HCMC Technical University	21.1.13	HCMC
159	CSR Calendar Forum on Consumer	22.1.13	Hanoi
160	Presentation and Panel discussion at the EU-Vietnam Business Forum	8.3.2013	Hanoi
161	CSR Calendar Forum on Labour	19.3.13	HCMC
162	CSR Calendar Forum on Labour	21.3.13	Hanoi
163	Workshop "The new labour code vs. higher productivity?" for the Leather and Footwear Industry - LEFASO	26.3.13	Hanoi
164	Workshop "The new labour code vs. higher productivity?" for Textile and Garment Industry - VITAS	27.3.13	Hung Yen
165	Contribution to WS for national CSOs/NGOs under Batik Project and MoET initiatives	27.3.13	Hanoi
166	Workshop "The new labour code vs. higher productivity?" for the Electronic Industry - VEIA	28.3.13	Hanoi



167	Vietnam CSR Award 2012 Ceremony under VCCI lead	30.3.13	Hanoi
168	Workshop "The new labour code vs. higher productivity?" for the Textile and Garment Industry - VITAS	10.4.13.	HCMC
169	Workshop "The new labour code vs. higher productivity?" for the Leather and Footwear Industry – LEFASO	11.4.13	Dong Nai
170	Workshop "The new labour code vs. higher productivity?" for the Electronic Industry - VEIA	12.4.13	Binh Duong
171	Interactive Conference on "Standards - Common Problems, Common Solutions?" cooperation Eurocham and PO	17.4.13	HCMC
172	Active participation and leading discussion round at VITM (Vietnam Tourism Market - Hanoi) in cooperation with EU Sust. Tourism Project	20.3.13	Hanoi (on-site)
173	Steering Committee meeting	22.3.13	Hanoi (on-site)
174	Final CSR Calendar Forum "The Journey continues .." and Closing Act	22.4.13	Hanoi
	throughout 2012-2013 6 TV Talkshow on the 6 topics á 45 min VITV		
	several TV program between 20 and 60 minutes in VTV2, VITV, VTC, etc		
	Presentation of project results and approaches during UNGC Global Meeting and WBCSD Global Meeting both April 2013		

Annex 6: Maps, figures and tables

Figure 1.1: SWITCH CSR Action Vietnam, important milestones

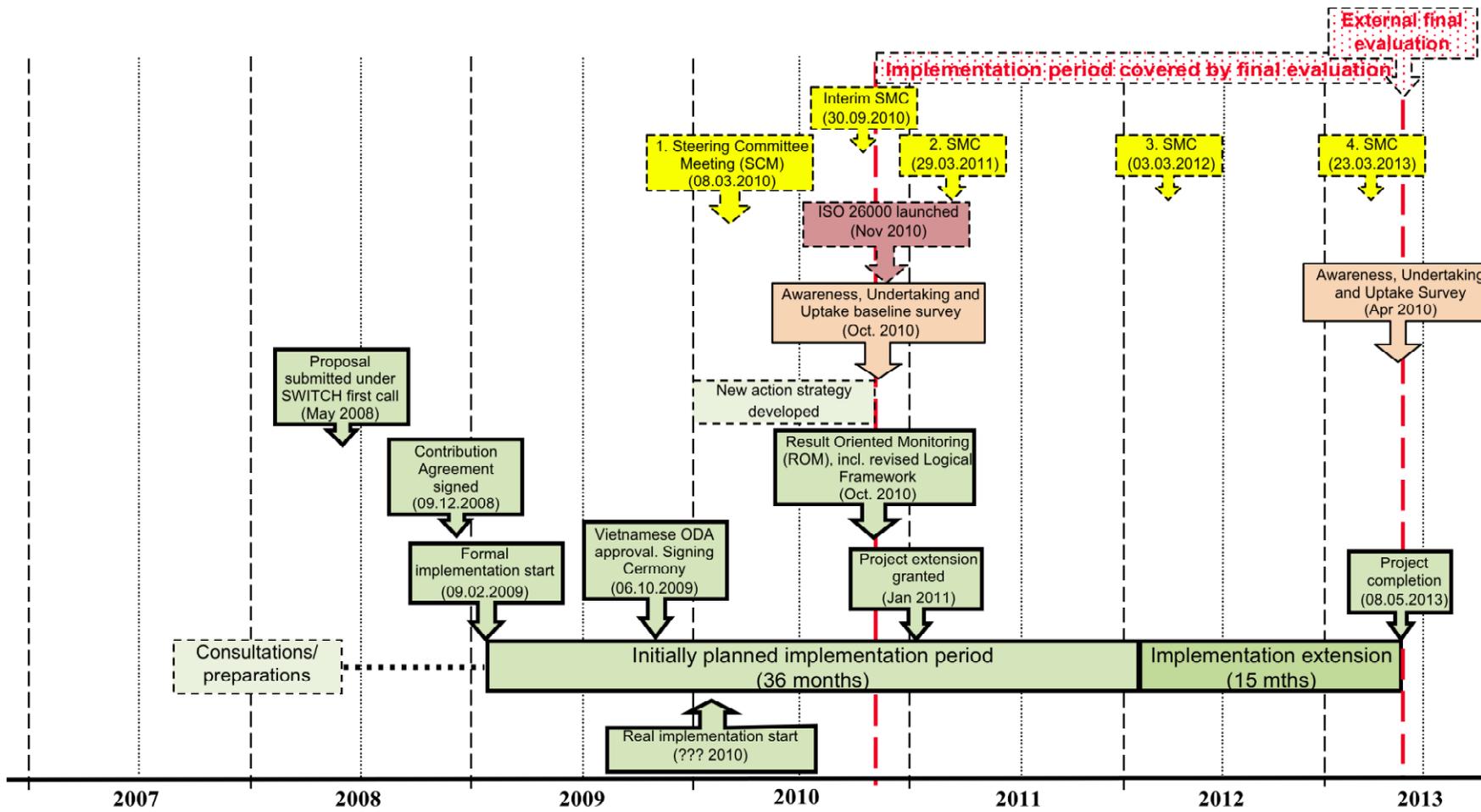


Figure 2.1: SWITCH CSR Action Vietnam, main LogFrame

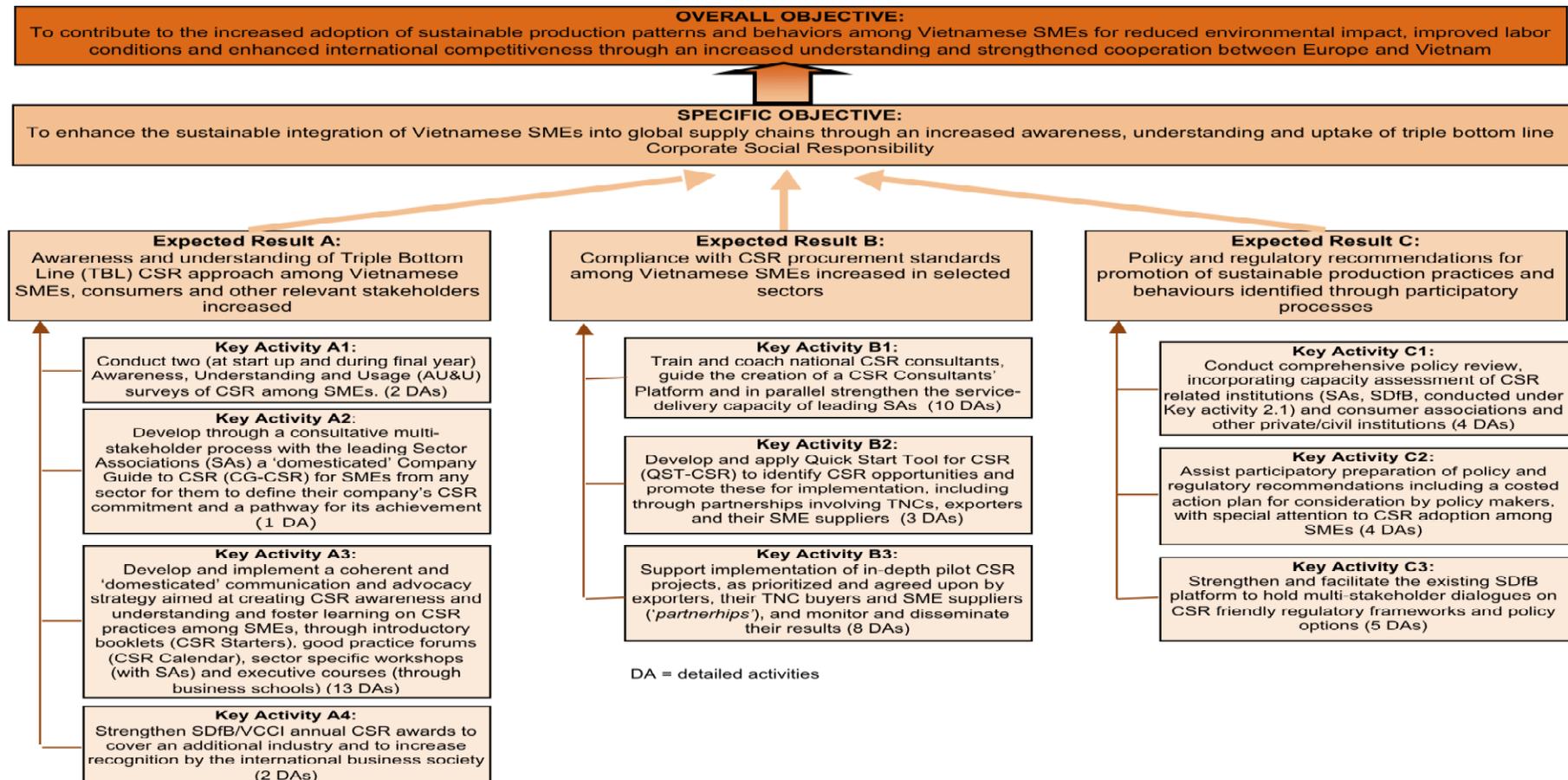


Figure 2.2: SWITCH CSR Action Vietnam, main administrative /managerial set-up

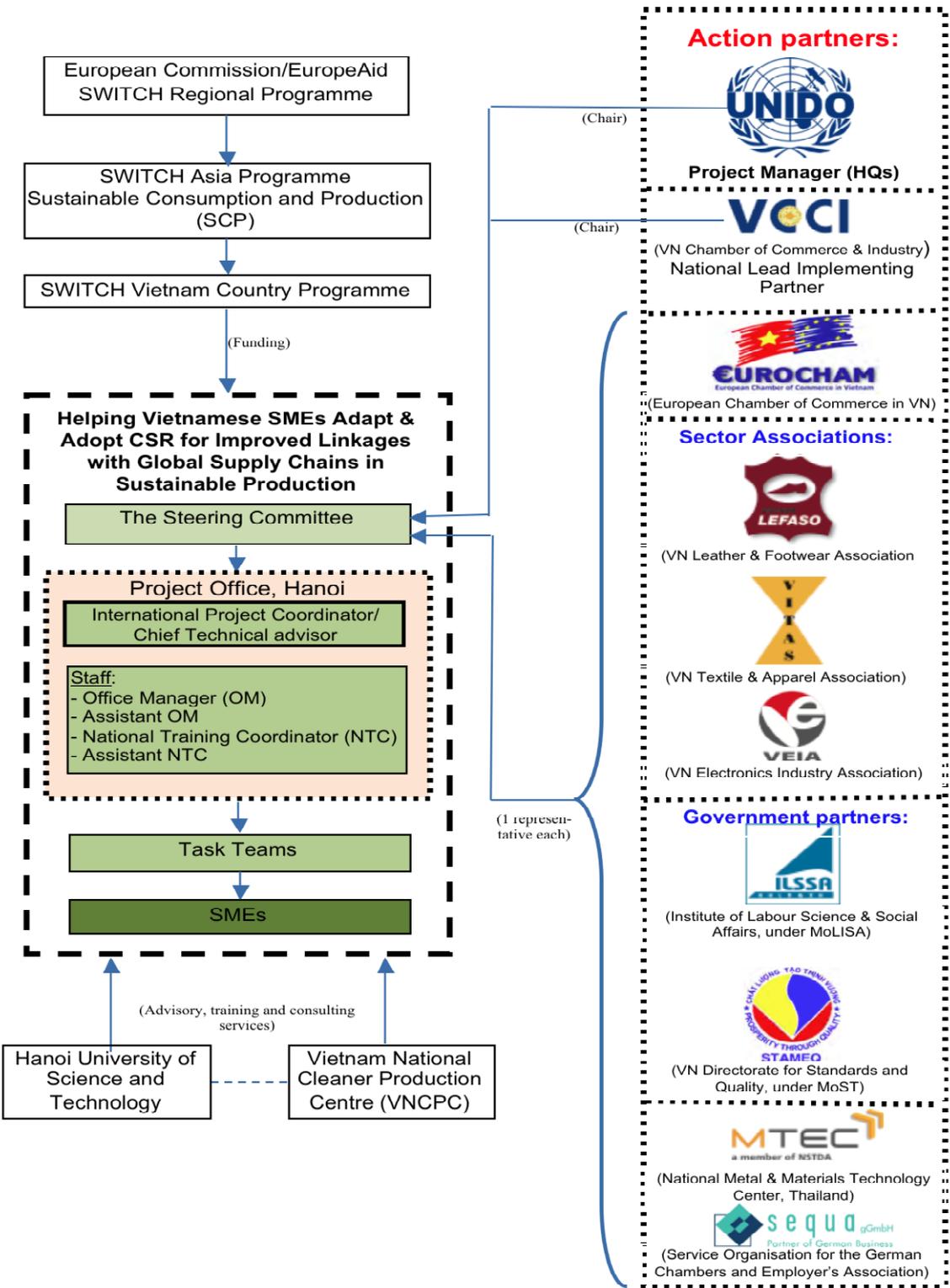


Figure 2.3: SWITCH CSR Action Vietnam, initially suggested managerial set-up (Description of Action)

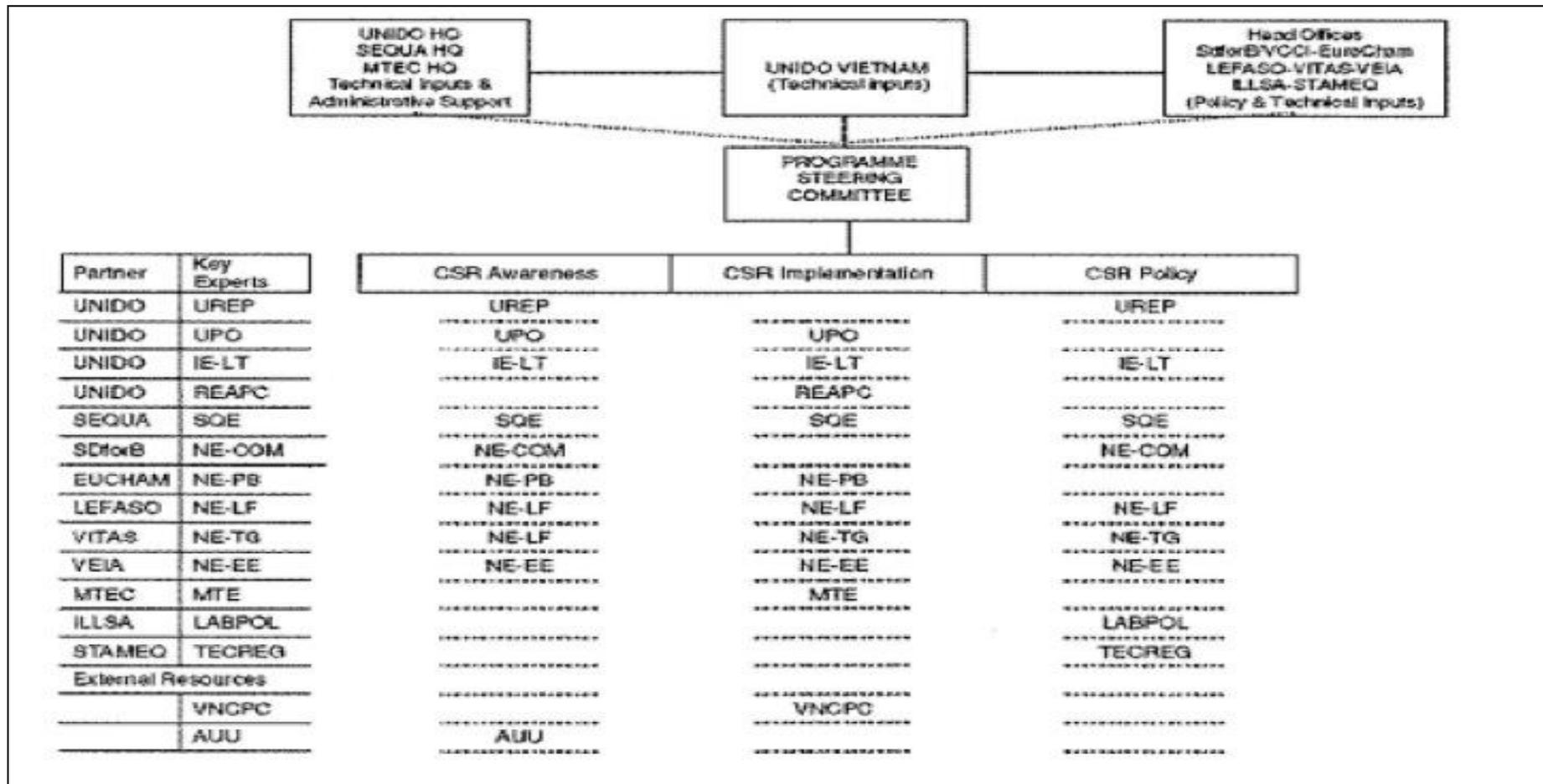


Figure 2.4: SWITCH CSR Action Vietnam, overview of the various main awareness/training/education activities in a timeline
 (Source: Project Manager's PowerPoint presentation)

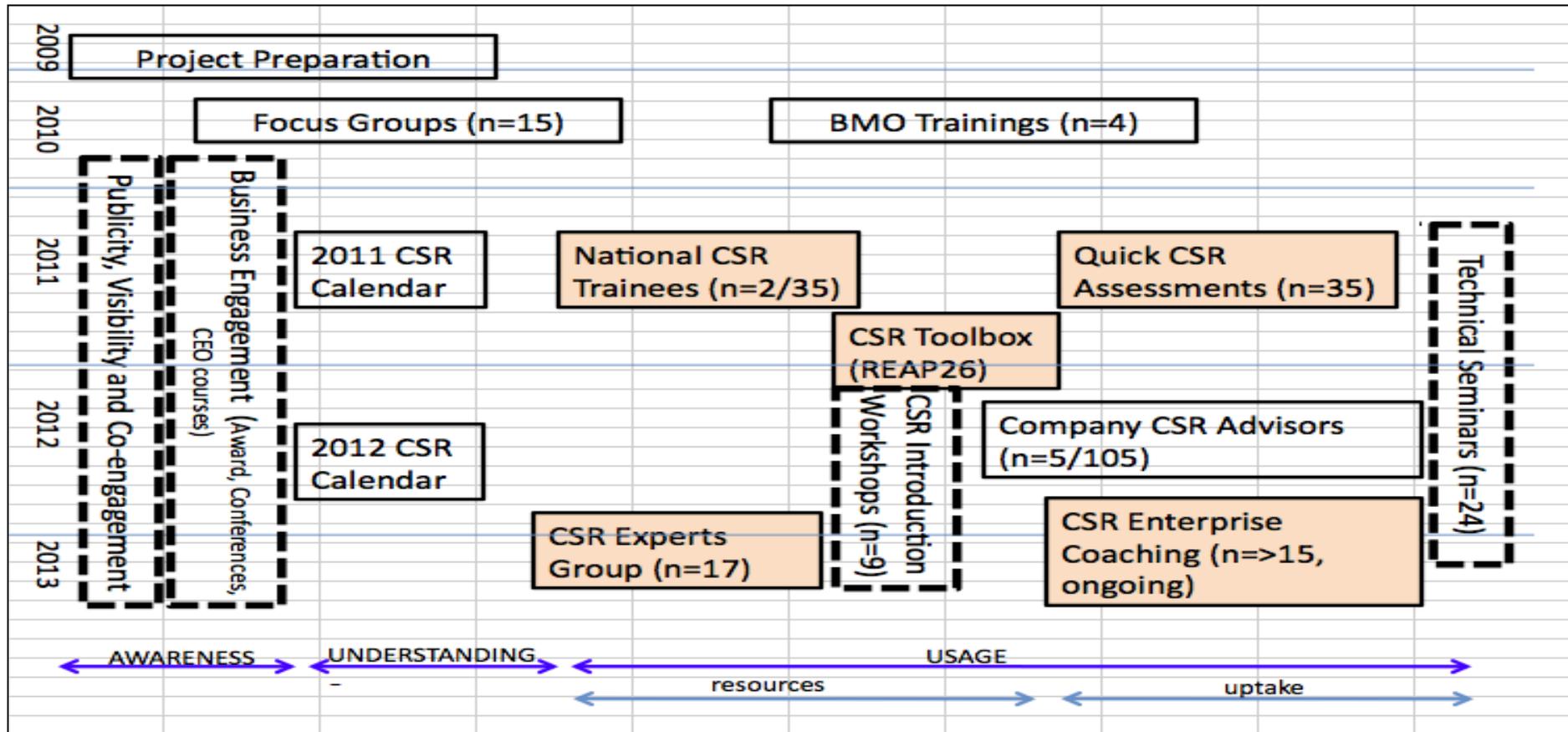


Figure 2.5: SWITCH CSR Action Vietnam, some main events connected to target groups

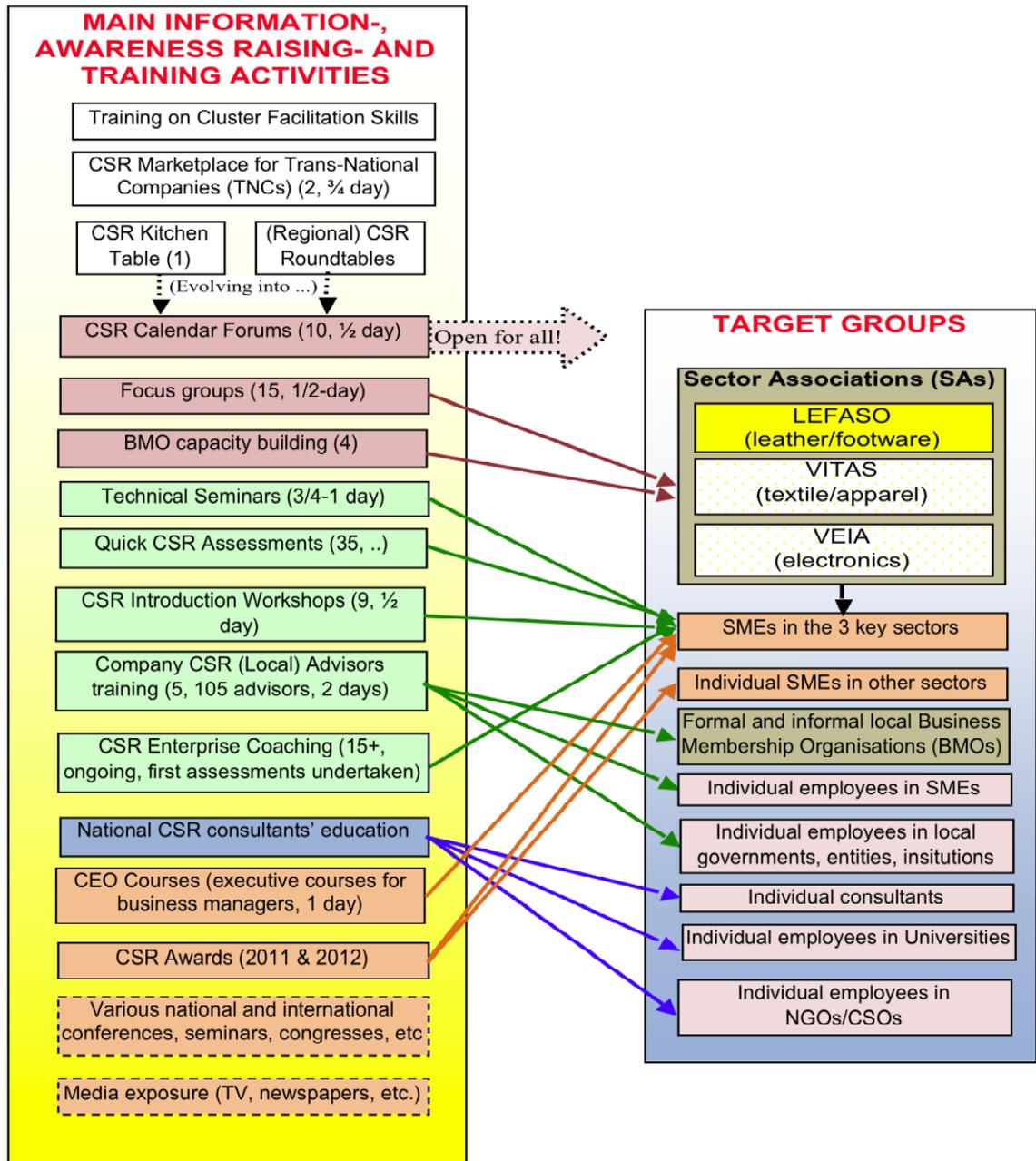


Figure 2.6: SWITCH CSR Action Vietnam, overview of the Calendar Forums

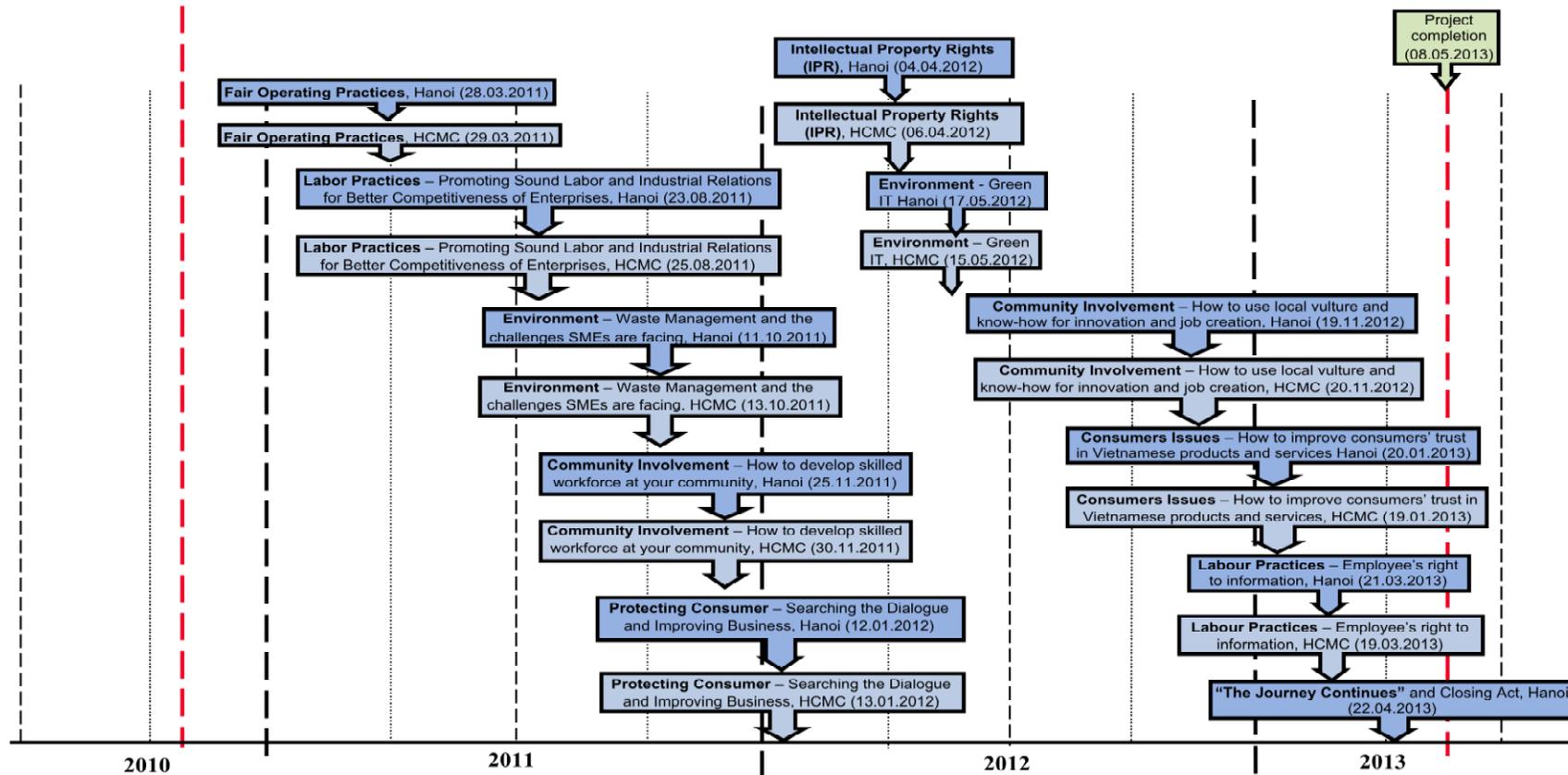
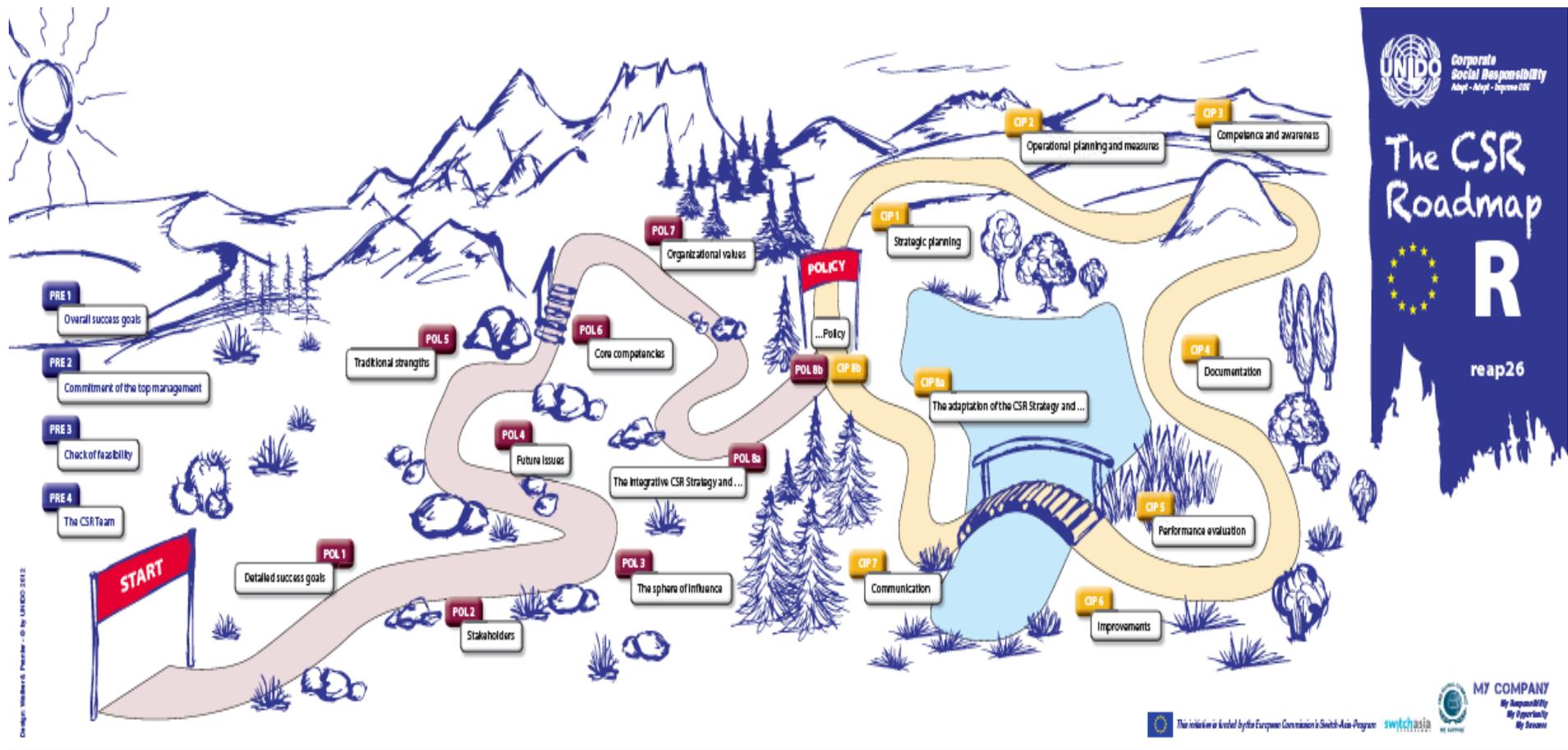
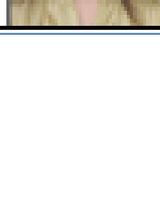


Figure 2.7: SWITCH CSR Action Vietnam, the CSR Road Map (produced by the UNIDO Project Office)



Annex 7: National CSR Consultants

Ord		Name	Occupation	City
1		Nguyen Thi My Chau	Civil Social Organization	HN
2		Le Bich Ngoc	Project Officer, Fair Labor Association	HN
3		Nghiem Thi Kim Hoa	Consultant in Human Right & Development, Centre for Development & Integration	HN
4		Ngo Bach Ngan	Freelance Consultant	HN
5		Ngo Mai Hoa	Advisor, Bureau Veritas	HN
6		Bui Dinh Chu	Coordinator, CORIN ASIA	HN
7		Nguyen Dang Anh Thi	Investment Director of Environmental Services, Mekong Renewable Resources Fund, Indochina Capital Corporation	HCM
8		Nguyen Phuong Mai	Lecturer, Vietnam National University	HN
9		Le Thi Thu Huyen	JETRO	HCM

10		Lynn Luc	Executive Director, Kind Management International	HCM
11		Duong Quoc Thong	Specialist in Oil & Gas, Smart Solution Group	HCM
12		Le Van Lang	Lecturer, University of Agriculture & Forestry	HCM
13		Pham Ngoc Tan	Corporate Trainer & Management Consultant, Entrepreneur's Training & Consulting	HCM
14		Nguyen Thi Thanh Tuyen	Manager, Kind Management International	HCM
15		Kieu Nguyen Truong Ca	Consultant, Swedish Trade Council	HCM
16		Nguyen Tuan Kiet	CEO, trainer & consultant, People & Organization Development	HCM
17		Truong My Diem	Lecturer, Hochiminh City Open University	HCM

