



FINAL EVALUATION

Vietnam

Thematic window
Development and the Private Sector

Programme Title:

Green Production and Trade to Increase
Income and Employment Opportunities for the
Rural Poor

Prologue

This final evaluation report has been coordinated by the MDG Achievement Fund joint programme in an effort to assess results at the completion point of the programme. As stipulated in the monitoring and evaluation strategy of the Fund, all 130 programmes, in 8 thematic windows, are required to commission and finance an independent final evaluation, in addition to the programme's mid-term evaluation.

Each final evaluation has been commissioned by the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) in the respective programme country. The MDG-F Secretariat has provided guidance and quality assurance to the country team in the evaluation process, including through the review of the TORs and the evaluation reports. All final evaluations are expected to be conducted in line with the OECD Development Assistant Committee (DAC) Evaluation Network "Quality Standards for Development Evaluation", and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) "Standards for Evaluation in the UN System".

Final evaluations are summative in nature and seek to measure to what extent the joint programme has fully implemented its activities, delivered outputs and attained outcomes. They also generate substantive evidence-based knowledge on each of the MDG-F thematic windows by identifying best practices and lessons learned to be carried forward to other development interventions and policy-making at local, national, and global levels.

We thank the UN Resident Coordinator and their respective coordination office, as well as the joint programme team for their efforts in undertaking this final evaluation.

MDG-F Secretariat

The analysis and recommendations of this evaluation are those of the evaluator and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Joint Programme or MDG-F Secretariat.



JOINT PROGRAMME ON GREEN PRODUCTION AND TRADE
TO INCREASE INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE RURAL POOR

Independent Final Programme Evaluation Report

Daniel Paul Keller, International Consultant, Team Leader
Nguyen Thi Thu Que, National Consultant

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We would like to express our gratitude to all persons met. Our special thanks go to the programme team for the excellent support provided in preparing and conducting this evaluation.

We hope that the proposed recommendations will contribute to the further development of similar initiatives both within and outside Viet Nam.

Notes

Mention of company names and commercial products does not imply the endorsement from the evaluators, FAO, ILO, ITC, UNCTAD and UNIDO.

The views and opinions of the evaluators do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations, and the Governments of Spain and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CBI	Center for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (Netherlands)
CP	Cleaner Production
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
DaO	Delivering as One Initiative (of the United Nations)
DNPD	Deputy National Programme Director
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GoV	The Government of Viet Nam
ILO	The International Labour Organization
ITC	The International Trade Centre
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JP	Joint Programme
MDG(s)	Millennium Development Goal(s)
MOIT	Ministry of Industry and Trade
MTR	Mid-Term Review (of the JP)
NPD	National Programme Director
NSC	National Steering Committee
NTPs	National Target Programmes (of the GoV)
OECD	Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PMC	Project Management Committee
PMU	Programme Management Unit
RBM	Result-Based Management
SMEs	Small- and medium-sized enterprises
STA	Senior Technical Adviser
SYB	Start Your Business
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	The United Nations
UNCTAD	The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNIDO	The United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VIETCRAFT	Viet Nam Handicrafts Exporters Association
VIETRADE	The Vietnamese Trade Promotion Agency

GLOSSARY OF EVALUATION RELATED TERMS

Term	Definition
Baseline	The situation, prior to an intervention, against which progress can be assessed.
Effect	Intended or unintended change due directly or indirectly to an intervention.
Effectiveness	The extent to which the development objectives of an intervention were or are expected to be achieved.
Efficiency	A measure of how economically inputs (through activities) are converted into outputs.
Impact	Positive and negative, intended and non-intended, directly and indirectly, long term effects produced by a development intervention.
Indicator	Quantitative or qualitative factors that provide a means to measure the changes caused by an intervention.
Intervention	An external action to assist a national effort to achieve specific development goals.
Lessons learned	Generalizations based on evaluation experiences that abstract from specific to broader circumstances.
Log frame (logical framework approach)	Management tool used to guide the planning, implementation and evaluation of an intervention. System based on MBO (management by objectives) also called RBM (results based management) principles.
Outcomes	The achieved or likely effects of an intervention's outputs.
Outputs	The products in terms of physical and human capacities that result from an intervention.
Relevance	The extent to which the objectives of an intervention are consistent with the requirements of the end-users, government and donor's policies.
Risks	Factors, normally outside the scope of an intervention, which may affect the achievement of an intervention's objectives.
Sustainability	The continuation of benefits from an intervention, after the development assistance has been completed.
Target groups	The specific individuals or organizations for whose benefit an intervention is undertaken.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Background

This report covers the independent final evaluation of the “Joint United Nations Programme Green Production and Trade to Increase Income and Employment opportunities for the Rural Poor” (“the JP”), which was guided by the Terms of Reference (ToR) dated March 2013 enclosed in Annex C.

The JP is part of the Thematic Window “Private Sector and Development” under the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F), which received total funding of €608 million from the Government of Spain. It is jointly executed by five UN Agencies: the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Trade Center (ITC), the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). ITC is the coordinating agency. With the National Trade Promotion Agency of Vietnam (VIETRADE) as official counterpart and the Viet Nam Handicraft Export Association (VIETCRAFT) as national implementing partner, the JP supports Viet Nam’s handicrafts sector. Its overall development objective is to create sustainable income and employment opportunities, targeting about 4,500 poor farming and crafts producing households and 50 companies (buyers). Within the handicraft sector, the JP focuses on seven value chains in four Northern provinces: Bamboo, rattan, sea grass, sericulture (two value chains), lacquer and hand-made paper. It aims at developing better integrated, pro-poor and environmentally sustainable “green” value chains, enabling poor growers, collectors and producers to improve their products and linking them to more profitable markets. The key feature of the JP is a comprehensive, holistic approach to strengthen all stages of the value chains, using the “value link” methodology and ensuring a broad stakeholder involvement. With a total original budget of US\$ 4.1 million (including US\$ 120,000 in-kind contributions of counterparts), the JP started on 3 February 2010 under the framework of the One Plan II in Viet Nam. It will end in June 2013, following an extension by 4 months and 25 days with US\$ 345,610 additional funding.

B. Purpose, methodology and limitations of this evaluation

The purpose of this independent final evaluation commissioned by the ITC was to assess whether the JP provided the right type of support, to the right beneficiaries, in the right way and whether it achieved its objectives. The emphasis was on organizational learning of the MDG-F Secretariat, the participating UN agencies and the Government of Viet Nam (GoV). The evaluation team consisting of one National and an international evaluator applied the Evaluation Norms of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). In evaluating the JP according to the criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and the likelihood of sustainability, different evaluation tools were combined to ensure an evidence-based qualitative and quantitative assessment. Particular emphasis was given to cross-validation of data and the plausibility of evaluation results obtained. The methodological mix included desk studies, semi-structured interviews – both individual and with focus groups; and direct observation. The evaluators applied a participatory learning approach. The process itself was designed to contribute to continuous improvement of the organizations involved. Recommendations and lessons learned are mainly aimed at enhancing future similar programmes.

The short term available for preparation, the fact that some outputs are still being delivered and the lack of an updated implementation report beyond January 2013 limited the depth and the extent of the evaluation. Nevertheless, the evaluators were able to gather sufficient factual information for a well-substantiated assessment.

C. Key findings

- (1) Programme identification:** The JP was timely and an appropriate response to emergent and important development challenges. These challenges include improving livelihoods of the disadvantaged segments of the rural population (including ethnic minorities), address environmental issues of handicraft production, diversification and value addition to Vietnamese exports in order to spur economic growth. The JP identified a good opportunity to capitalize on the combined strengths of five participating UN agencies to contribute towards one objective using a single methodology. Unlike many similar projects, the JP covered the entire value chain and strengthened the supply and demand sides in parallel. Also innovative was the adoption of some of the capacity building tools that were primarily developed for larger scale production (e.g. Cleaner Production) of rural enterprises.
- (2) Preparation and management:** The JP was designed based on a careful strategic needs assessment. Although national and local authorities were consulted, preparation was rather “top down” and driven by the participating UN agencies. The programme document includes a logical framework with clear, mostly objectively verifiable indicators, which was applied for monitoring. Budgets for base-line and end-line studies were made available, which is a good practice. Considering the scope and scale of the JP, its planned duration, which was limited by the lifespan of the MDG Fund, was not adequate and did not allow for sufficient follow-up on technical capacity building. An exit strategy was not spelt out in the programme document, but developed at a later stage through a sustainability plan. The organizational structure was complex and responsibilities did not match competencies to make decisions. In line with the “agency execution mode” applied, operational decision making in all important matters remained centralized at headquarters level of UN agencies. The PMU played a crucial role in coordinating agency inputs and moving implementation forward. Furthermore, the PMU was effective as a bridge between the JP, participating UN agencies, suppliers and the provinces. Strong support by the PMU significantly mitigated the difficulties of non-resident agencies to implement project activities. On the other hand, while physically based at VIETRADE, the PMU operated largely as a parallel structure and was not fully integrated into VIETRADE. The Deputy Director General of VIETRADE acted as the National Programme Director (NPD). He was responsible to “lead the PMU”, but de facto not closely involved in daily operations. The NPD did however chair the periodic Project Management Committee (PCM) Meetings. By virtue of his domain knowledge, the Vice-Chairman of VIETCRAFT who acted as the Deputy National Programme Director (DNP) provided valuable advise to the PMU and the PMC, which was sometimes taken up. Moreover, VIETRADE and VIETCRAFT contributed to and benefited from a number of selected activities. The governance mechanism provided by the Programme Document was generally applied in practice. Meetings of the Project Management Committee (PCM) took place, although not always regularly. Due to their lack of field presence in Vietnam, some agencies were not always able to participate. Many of the tasks for which the PCM would have been responsible were in practice assumed by the PMU. Using the “National Steering Committee” shared with all other Joint Programmes in Viet Nam for governance ensured overall coordination and exchange of experience within the UN system and with the GoV. On the other hand, little time was available to discuss JP-specific strategic issues in depth. Therefore, the PMC also discussed matters that would be typically the tasks of a Steering Committee. To a large degree, participating agencies continued to work in parallel, although harmonizing and coordinating their inputs. While the JP was jointly formulated, it was not really jointly implemented. During practical implementation, communication flows and reporting lines

remained unclear, which led to significant coordination challenges and sometimes delays. In practice, the counterparts at national and provincial levels still had to liaise with five agencies separately, depending on who was responsible for a certain activity. Coordination at and involvement of the provincial level was initially very weak, but improved substantially after the appointment of provincial coordinators. Management was responsive and actively addressed implementation challenges, e.g. through a systematic follow-up on the recommendations of the Mid-Term Review (MTR).

- (3) Relevance:** Generally, all objectives are highly relevant to all target beneficiaries. The JP was further highly relevant to international and national priorities, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the “Aid for Trade” agenda and Viet Nam’s Comprehensive Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy. Objectives are consistent with the GoV’s sector-specific policies, in particular the plan to develop the handicraft sector as a source of additional incomes. The JP complements well a number of the GoV’s National Target Programmes. While responding to the “harmonization” and “alignment” objectives of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the JP was clearly “donor”- rather than “partner-led”. Promoting the use of intellectual property rights (in particular trademarks, geographical indications) as a powerful tool to add value to Vietnamese handicrafts would further increase the relevance of value chain projects.
- (4) Effectiveness:** Most outputs were delivered as planned. The evaluators generally endorse the results reported by the JP, based on a selective validation and triangulation of data. Direct observation revealed an insufficient follow-up on trainings. At some production facilities, serious environmental problems remain and elementary principles of labor safety are still disregarded. The JP contributed to different degrees to income creation and poverty reduction of the target population. However, results at outcome and impact levels are clearly not fully attributable to the JP alone, but strongly influenced by other factors, including existing support by the GoV.
- (5) Efficiency:** Most outputs were delivered in good quality. Beneficiaries expressed satisfaction with the content of support received. The Vietnamese experts and partner organizations were closely involved in trainings and there is evidence of skills transfer. Standard “training packages” were being adapted to the particular context. The evaluators noted a gradual shift from an initially rather supply- to a more demand-driven service approach, especially after provincial coordinators were appointed. Some of the machines provided are however not complete, not fit for use or not suitable for the purpose they were aimed at. The fact that most of them were only procured towards the end did not allow for sufficient training and follow-up on technical problems. Apart from sharing a PMU and some mutual learning, economies of scale and scope remained limited. Efficiency gains were partially offset by coordination challenges, which absorbed significant management time and led to delays as well as sequencing problems.
- (6) Potential sustainability of results:** Perspectives are mixed. Not all technical and organizational changes within beneficiary organizations (household businesses, SMEs) are likely to be maintained without the availability of further follow-up support. A number of local institutions seem to continue to provide trainings (e.g. the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry for different training packages provided by the ILO; VIETRADE for EMPRETEC). The evaluators further noted follow-up investments by a few enterprises. At least one village is in the process to establish a dedicated “handicraft zone”, partially using input provided. Furthermore, some key elements promoted by the JP are being mainstreamed into different national and provincial policies. Last but not least, the existing and planned support of other donors (Switzerland, JICA, OXFAM, and CBI) is likely to expand and deepen some of the JP’s results.

D. Conclusions

- (1) Careful preparation led to a high degree of relevance in regards to national policies, government strategies, international priorities and the needs of key target beneficiaries.
- (2) RBM principles were consistently applied during the whole programme cycle, except in financial planning and reporting.
- (3) Bundling services of UN Agencies in areas of their core competencies within one framework is an effective way to address poverty reduction, gender and environmental objectives of the MDGs. The application of a single mutually agreed methodology and a common programme identity were essential to align the five participating UN Agencies towards common objectives.
- (4) The holistic value chain strengthening approach was effective and led to tangible results. Important features were (a) the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders, (b) support along the entire value chain, (c) strengthening the supply and demand sides and (d) contributing to enabling external conditions, such as the policy framework, access to credit and community building.
- (5) “Joint-programming” was a particular strength, but “joint-implementation” has not fully materialized. “Joint-programming” contributed to the harmonization of UN support in the sense that UN input was well coordinated. The clear separation of tasks at the design stage prevented overlaps, but also did not encourage joint activities. While inputs converged at the beneficiary level, agencies still worked rather in parallel than jointly. Apart from sharing a PMU and some mutual learning, economies of scale and scope remained limited. Efficiency gains were partially offset by coordination challenges. Those absorbed significant management time and led to delays and sequencing problems.
- (6) While the PMU worked well and was pivotal for successful programme implementation, it operated to a large degree as a parallel structure. This resulted in weak ownership from counterparts.
- (7) The agency execution modalities applied, implying centralized decision making at every UN agency’s headquarter separately, is not in line with the spirit of the Paris Declaration and no longer adequate for Viet Nam. Applying full-fledged national execution modalities in technically complex fields requiring highly specialized expertise might however negatively affect aid effectiveness. Identifying and engaging the right experts would for instance be challenging for the GoV. Joint implementation as an alternative model might ensure both aid effectiveness and ownership. It is essential to strike a good balance and craft the execution modalities in a way that allows both local counterparts and the UN to capitalize on their particular strengths. While the UN might add most value in sourcing international expertise and ensuring quality control, the role of the Vietnamese counterparts could be to ensure overall management through a national PMU and local procurement of services. From both the UN and the GoV’s sides, “joint-delivery” would require a single programme manager who is empowered to make day-to-day management decisions. Delegating day-to-day management decision making to one single UN focal point in the field would reduce the risks of delays caused by overloaded programme managers at headquarters. It would also free capacities to focus on strategic matters and backstopping.
- (8) The appointment of provincial coordinators was a step into the right direction to anchor the programme in the target regions. Mobilizing provincial resources would require an official registration of the programme at the local level.
- (9) While generally, the JP provided the right type of support to the right target groups in good quality, sustainability of some of the results achieved will require sustained, long-term, support. Maintaining results achieved over long-term requires follow-up by the GoV through establishing an

enabling policy framework, and institutionalizing support to stakeholders at all stages of the value chains. Towards the end, the JP thus rightly started focusing on mainstreaming results at the policy level.

E. Recommendations

To the GoV (through VIETRADE under MOIT):

- Reinforce Vietnam's policy framework to create enabling conditions for the development of the handicraft sector, in particular enacting implementing guidelines for Decision Nr 11 dated 18th Feb 2011 of the Prime Minister (support to the Bamboo sector) as soon as possible.
- Allocate national and provincial budget and resources to continue providing technical assistance to the handicraft sector (raw material producers, processors, SMEs and exporters).
- Consider establishing a quality mark for handicrafts that might be hosted either by a government agency or a strong sector association, as recommended by UNIDO. Its use should be linked to the fulfillment of clear conditions that are certified by an independent accredited body and registered at the National Office of Intellectual Property for all key markets.
- Explore the possibility to support the establishment of registered Geographical Indications for handicrafts and raw material (agricultural products).

To UN Agencies:

- Consider replicating the comprehensive and holistic approach to value chain strengthening through combining the services of different agencies for other programmes, taking into account lessons learned from this JP. Synergies should be further strengthened through shifting from implementing activities in parallel towards jointly implementing activities.
- Projects with a strong focus on the provincial level should be formally registered and a project management board should be established.
- Project documents should define clear responsibilities that match competencies to decide. Detailed operational procedures should be established and consistently implemented.
- In order to provide meaningful information for project managers, a financial reporting system should be established that links UN budget lines with expenditures according to outcomes.
- Beneficiaries should be closely involved in the selection and procurement process for equipment. Equipment should be delivered as early as possible in the programme, balancing the needs to assess best possible, most appropriate technical solutions and the need for sufficient training and follow-up in case of technical problems. Delivering of seedlings and machinery to farmers should be timed to agricultural production cycles.
- In line with the commitments of the Paris Declaration and to ensure "Delivering as One" future "Joint Programmes" should be organized around the following core principles:
 - (a) PMUs should be strongly anchored within the Vietnamese administrative system
 - (b) In order to shift towards a more "partner-led" approach, a form of "Joint-Execution" would be appropriate whereas the counterpart assumes the overall programme coordination, while the UN provides services on a demand-basis, following a clear implementation plan and budget.
 - (c) While local expertise could be procured by the GoV, sourcing international expertise, technology and quality assurance should remain the responsibility of the UN agencies.
 - (d) One "Programme Coordinator" embedded in the "One UN Office" should be the single focal point for the PMU and formally represent all participating agencies. He/she should be

responsible to coordinate inputs of all UN Agencies and to the degree possible be empowered to take day-to-day management decisions. This requires decentralizing day-to-day management competencies from headquarters to field offices. Headquarters would add most value through technical backstopping and providing expertise.

- UNIDO should jointly with STAMEQ use its expertise in providing VIETRADE with support in establishing quality standards and marks for the handicraft sector.
- UNCTAD should ensure follow-up on EMPRETEC courses by establishing partnerships with more local “business service providers” that will be able to follow-up on trainings and facilitate the EMPRETEC network (not only VIETRADE exclusively).
- ILO should continue support to VCCI and other organizations in delivering trainings to rural householder enterprises (SYB, OHS and GET Ahead).
- ITC should integrate intellectual property aspects (geographical indications, trademarks, designs, copyright) into the trade promotion support provided to enterprises, where needed in partnership with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) or other specialized institutions.

F. Lessons learned

- (1) Value chains are a field where joint-delivery by FAO, ILO, ITC, UNCTAD and UNIDO has a significant potential to create economies of scales and scope. Aligning on a single, clearly defined methodology and a common “programme identity” are key success factors for joint-programmes. Capitalizing on synergies to the full extend would require the development of joint products or services”, for instance capacity building activities incorporating the expertise of several agencies.
- (2) Effectively “Delivering as One” requires a single Programme Manager from the UN side who should be a technical staff based in the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator to ensure effective agency coordination and monitoring. He/she should be (a) the only focal point for the local counterparts and (b) empowered to make day-to-day management decisions. Delegating operational decision making to a single, field-based Programme Manager would free resources at headquarters to concentrate on technical backstopping.
- (3) For complex “joint programmes”, in particular those involving non-resident agencies, well functioning and programme specific PMUs are pivotal to coordinate agency inputs and to move implementation forward. Strong PMUs may significantly mitigate the difficulties of non-resident agencies to successfully transfer their know-how in a local context..
- (4) Programmes with a strong focus on providing services to individual beneficiaries require – in addition to a PMU at national level - a dedicated project coordination structure at the level of local government administrative units (e.g. provinces, depending on the country).
- (5) National Steering Committees for all Joint-Programmes within one country allow for coordination and some exchange of experience among the programmes and with the government. Since the limited time available does not allow for programme specific in-depth discussions, they are however not effective for the strategic steering of individual programmes. This implies that the strategic coordination role for individual programmes needs to be fulfilled by a management body at the programme level. An option to be explored is to leave the responsibility for operational management entirely to a PMU and replacing the PMC by a programme-specific Steering Committee.

Table 1: Key strengths and weaknesses of the Joint-Programme

Key strengths	Key weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint programming (yet not joint-implementation) • Appropriate partners selected • High relevance of objectives with national and international priorities, including the Millennium Development Goals • Innovative, holistic approach (value link) that covers the entire value chain at all stages comprehensively and promotes an enabling policy framework • Value chain approach allowed the five participating agencies to work towards a common objective and to harmonize their programme inputs • Strong visibility and consistent “joint-branding” of the JP • Management responded actively to emerging challenges during implementation; clear action plan to follow-up on recommendations of the Mid-Term Review • With some exceptions, the JP was well targeted to the needs of beneficiaries • Generally, good quality of services provided • Although not sufficiently specific exit strategy, some evidence for follow-up by other donors, organizations, companies, and the GoV. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak ownership of VIETRADE due to limited empowerment • Weak ownership of provincial governments that were not officially involved into project management • Project was clearly UN-driven and not partner led (obvious contradiction in the Programme document “national implementation using agency execution mode”) • Implemented through a highly complex “parallel structure”. Coordination difficulties and lack of delegation of decision making power to the field level led to delays • Agencies worked in parallel, not really jointly. In practice, UN agencies were not represented through a common focal point • Economies of scale and scope limited (except common PMU and some limited cross-fertilization). • The National Steering Committee allowed for coordination and some exchange of experience among Joint-Programmes and with the GoV. Time available for meetings was however insufficient for in-depth discussions and an effective for strategic management of the JP itself.

I. INTRODUCTION

This report covers the independent final evaluation of the “Joint United Nations Programme Green Production and Trade to Increase Income and Employment opportunities for the Rural Poor” (“the JP”), which was commissioned by the International Trade Centre and guided by the Terms of Reference (ToR) dated March 2013.

1. Background

In December 2006, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Government of Spain signed a partnership agreement for the amount of €528¹ million to establish the framework of the “Millennium Development Achievement Fund (MDG Achievement Fund). Main aim was to contribute to progress towards reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other development goals through the United Nations (UN) System. The JP under evaluation is funded under the MDG Achievement Fund’s Thematic Window on “Private Sector and Development”², which seeks “to facilitate the achievement of the MDGs through interventions that promote the development of the private sector, through enabling policy frameworks, the growth of inclusive markets and the establishment of pro-poor public-private partnerships that create and sustain decent and productive employment.” With a total original budget of US\$ 4,120,000 (4 million from the MDG Achievement Fund), the JP formally started on 3 February 2010 under the framework of the One Plan II in Viet Nam (OPII) (2006 – 2010; 2011 as an extension year). It will end in June 2013, following an extension of 4 months and 25 days and US\$ 345,610 additional funding. The JP supports Viet Nam’s handicrafts sector, which provides a major source of income for smallholder farmers and has a high potential for creating employment opportunities in rural areas. The aim of the JP was to create sustainable income and employment opportunities targeting about 4,500 poor farming and crafts producing households and 50 companies (buyers). Within the Vietnamese handicraft sector, the JP focused on seven (originally planned were five) value chains: bamboo, rattan, sea grass, textile (sericulture/silk and hemp), lacquer and hand-made paper in four Northern provinces - Phu Tho, Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa, and Nghe An. For those seven product categories, the JP aimed at developing better integrated, pro-poor and environmentally sustainable “green” value chains, enabling poor growers, collectors and producers to improve their products and linking them to more profitable markets.

The key feature of the JP is its integrated approach that provided holistic support through promoting sustainable production and entrepreneurship along the entire value chain, starting from crafts raw material producers and collectors in four selected provinces until export-oriented SMEs. Both the supply and demand sides of the above mentioned value chains were addressed.

The following five UN Agencies contributed to the JP: (the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The main types of support provided included:

¹ An additional € 80 million were committed in 2008. The MDG-F invested USD 700 million dollars for joint programmes, the overall donation of Spain, including interest is estimated in USD 900 million. The Private sector thematic window received USD 63 Million, the second smallest among the eight.

² One of eight thematic windows, including Gender, Culture, Youth, Nutrition, Environment and Climate Change, Private Sector and Development.

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- Increasing availability and quality of raw materials (mainly FAO) by providing support to growers
 - Increasing productivity through health and safety improvements, entrepreneurship for household businesses/cooperatives, and micro-finance (mainly ILO)
 - Cleaner Production (CP), vocational training and technology transfer (equipment), sustainable design, productivity improvements, mitigation of environmental impact (UNIDO)
 - Product design and diversification, connecting producers to the market (market linkages) (ITC)
 - Entrepreneurial skills for SMEs through delivering EMPRETEC training (UNCTAD)
 - Support provinces and the GoV in establishing an enabling policy framework (ITC).

ITC is the coordinating agency of the JP. On behalf of the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT), the National Trade Promotion Organization VIETRADE was the national implementing partner. A full-time Senior Technical Adviser contracted by ITC under the budget for the Programme Management Unit (PMU) was appointed as a Joint Programme Coordinator of the UN Agencies. Under the overall supervision of VIETRADE, the Viet Nam Handicrafts Exporters Association VIETCRAFT was designated as the lead partner responsible for the day-to-day management.

An independent review of all five Joint-Programmes in Viet Nam³ (including this JP) was conducted in 2011, which primarily looked at the operational mechanisms and modalities that are funded and coordinated by the UN in Viet Nam under the “Delivering as One (DaO) Initiative”⁴. Furthermore, an independent mid-term review (MTR) of the JP took place at the end of 2011⁵, which mainly aimed at providing an analysis on the design, management modalities and efficiency and effectiveness of implementation. Following the MTR, an action plan⁶ was established to implement the key recommendations provided.

2. Evaluation purpose and scope

The key purpose of this independent final evaluation was to assess whether the JP provided (a) the right type of support to (b) the right beneficiaries (c) in the right way and (d) whether it achieved its objectives. As a final evaluation, it was essentially summative. The evaluators were in addition required to identify best practices and lessons learned that could be useful to other development interventions at national (scale up) and international levels (replicability).

The ToRs defined the following specific evaluation objectives:

- Measure to what extent the JP has contributed to solve the needs and problems identified in the design phase.
- To measure the JP’s degree of implementation, efficiency and quality delivered on outputs and outcomes, against what was originally planned or subsequently officially revised.

³ Three of them funded by the MDG Achievement Fund

⁴ Final Report, “Independent Review of Joint Programmes under Delivering as One (DaO) Initiative in Viet Nam”, by Tim Dyce and Nguyen Van Phuc, 7 July 2011

⁵ Draft Report: Mid-term Review of the Joint Programme “Green Production and Trade to Increase Income and Employment Opportunities for the Rural Poor, Vincent Lefebvre and Tuan Phan Manh, January 2012

⁶ See improvement plan, recommendations of the PMU

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- Measure to what extent the JP has attained development results to the targeted population, beneficiaries, participants whether individuals, communities, institutions, etc.
 - To measure the JP's contribution to the objectives set in their respective specific thematic windows as well as the overall MDG fund objectives at local and national levels (MDGs, Paris Declaration, and Accra Principles, Hanoi Core Statement and UN reform).
 - To identify and document substantive lessons learned and good practices on the specific topics of the thematic window, MDGs, Paris Declaration, Accra Principles and UN reform with the aim to support the sustainability of the JP or some of its components.

Evaluations are a snapshot in time. In order to ensure consistency among the different findings, the basis of this evaluation will be the status of the JP as per 3 May 2013 (end of the field mission). Financial implementation will be reported against the latest available figures (31 December 2012). Subsequent developments (activities implemented) were not taken into account, with the exception of incorporating the results of the impact survey conducted by the JP into the final version of the report.

3. Methodology and evaluative steps

The evaluation was conducted based on the UNEG evaluation norms and standards⁷ and ethical guidelines. Both evaluators fulfill the criteria of competence and ethics. They had no prior interaction with the JP and are free from conflict of interests. The evaluation applied the OECD/DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance through an assessment of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability⁸. Accordingly, the assessment of whether the programme has provided the right type of support to the right beneficiaries in the right way and whether it has achieved its objectives was based on the DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance through an assessment of the following key criteria:

- **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
- **Efficiency:** How economically inputs (e.g. funds, expertise, time) were converted into results
- **Effectiveness:** The extent to which the JPs objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance
- **Sustainability:** The likelihood of continuation of project benefits after major development assistance has been completed.

In line with the ToRs, the quality of **project preparation** and **management** were assessed separately. The emphasis of this particular evaluation was on organizational learning of the MDG Secretariat, participating UN Agencies and the GoV. Consequently, the evaluators applied a participatory learning approach. The process itself was expected to contribute to continuous improvement of the organizations involved. Recommendations and lessons learned aim at enhancing the programme framework of future similar interventions in Viet Nam and other countries. In order to facilitate follow-up, the evaluators attempted to formulate clear, targeted recommendations.

⁷ Standards for Evaluation in the UN System (UNEG/FN Standards 2005, last updated in 2012)

⁸ See DAC Guidelines and Reference Series, Quality Standards for Development Evaluation, OECD Development Assistance Committee, OECD 2010

Different evaluation tools were combined to ensure an evidence-based qualitative and quantitative assessment. In elaborating on their findings and conclusions, the evaluators mainly used deductive reasoning.⁹ Particular emphasis was given to cross-validation of data and an assessment of plausibility of the results obtained. The methodological mix included desk studies, literature review, individual interviews, interviews of focal groups and direct observation. Interviews were conducted directly in the Vietnamese language (without interpretation) in the form of guided discussions (semi-structured) in order to ensure that discussions are not limited to what the evaluators or the commissioners of the evaluation considers as important. A “semi-open” evaluation agenda is in particular essential for evaluations that aim at contributing to organizational learning. A detailed list of persons interviewed and documents reviewed are included in Annexes A and B.

The evaluators conducted the following main evaluative steps:

- Briefing with the PMU and VIETRADE in Hanoi (separately)
- Desk study of documents received
- Establish inception reports in English and Vietnamese (including key questions for interviews)
- Field missions to all beneficiary provinces and to Ho Chi Minh City (handicraft fair)
- De-briefings in the field¹⁰ for factual verification of the evidence base and to explain the evaluation findings with key stakeholders in order to improve their take-up.
- Submission of the English and Vietnamese version of the draft report for factual verification
- Establishing this final report in English and Vietnamese based on factual corrections received.

Discussions with stakeholders were in general open and constructive. All stakeholders were willing to openly share information and exchange views. The evaluators were able to work freely and without interference. ITC, VIETRADE and the provincial coordinators supported the evaluation process actively and provided access to all relevant information. Direct observation further validated the findings and conclusions. Whenever possible, while maintaining independence, the evaluators attempted to obtain alignment of key stakeholders on their key conclusions and recommendations. Acceptance by addressees of recommendations will enhance chances that those are subsequently implemented. Overall, factual information obtained has been comprehensive, consistent and clear. The key evaluation results presented below received endorsement by key stakeholders.

4. Limitations

A key limitation to this evaluation was, firstly, the very short time available for preparation, inception report and desk study (four instead of 22 days according to the ToRs). Secondly, major parts of the impact study conducted by the JP were only available after the field mission. Validating study results by the evaluators during the field mission was therefore not possible. Thirdly, the JP is still under implementation. In particular, some equipment provided to beneficiaries was not yet commissioned. An assessment of the use of some outputs (outcome level) or even wider intended/unintended effects (impact level) was only possible to a limited extent.

Nevertheless, despite these limitations, the evaluators were able to establish a sufficient evidence base to provide a well-substantiated assessment of the JP.

⁹ Conclusions and recommendations are based on evaluation findings.

¹⁰ Separately with the donor, the Project Management Committee and the ITC Programme Manager

II. FINDINGS AND ASSESSMENT

This section presents the findings of the evaluation and provides an assessment of the project against the DAC evaluation criteria. Project preparation and management are discussed in separate sections.

1. Programme preparation

(a) Identification

Programme identification provided a timely and appropriate response to emergent and important development challenges in Viet Nam. Better integrated, pro-poor and environmentally sustainable “green” value chains, enabling poor growers, collectors and producers to improve their products and link them to more profitable markets, addresses in particular:

- The problem of persistent rural poverty and widening income gaps among different segments of the population and geographical regions
- The problem of environmental pollution, in particular in craft villages
- The need of diversifying and adding value to Viet Nam’s exports in order to spur economic growth.

(b) Choice of intervention approach

The *value-links*¹¹ approach works towards reconfiguring value chains¹² for particular products in a way that more value is generated, through reducing production cost, reducing time and transaction cost of intermediaries and logistical actors and increasing sales prices and volumes. The concept for assistance combined strengthening both supply and demand for handicrafts. On the supply side, enhancing productivity and product quality aimed at increasing margins at each stage of the value chain. Fostering demand included mainly supporting marketing-related activities and linking producers to buyers. Furthermore, the JP also worked towards improving external framework conditions, such as for instance enabling policies and access to credit.

While the value link approach has been widely used before, some distinctive features of the programme concept were innovative and incorporated lessons learned of similar programmes:

- Support covered the entire value chain from raw material supply to exports rather than only parts of it, such as for instance only raw material supply or processing.
- The combination of strengthening both the demand for and the supply of products
- Bundling a holistic set of services under one assistance framework, as opposed to assuming support of other donor interventions that subsequently often does not materialize as planned.
- Addressing constraints relating to some external framework conditions (policies, access to credit)

¹¹ Developed by the GIZ (Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, Germany)

¹² The “**value chain concept**” looks at activities of an organization or an industry to get products to market. Value chain activities are operations that transport or transform elements of the final product. The primary value chain activities are sourcing, inbound logistics, operations (transforming inputs into finished products and services) and outbound logistics. Businesses are successful when the total value added throughout the value chain is higher than (a) the cost of value chain activities and (b) higher than the value added by competitors. Framework conditions (e.g. enabling policies, access to credit) are important contextual factors affecting value added either positively or negatively).

- Targeting support to specific value chains (products, geographical locations) rather than strengthening bamboo value chains in the country in general.

Beyond the overall intervention strategy, adopting some concepts that were originally developed for industrial production to the rural producers were innovative as well. Examples include the use of the CP Methodology (UNIDO), entrepreneurship training and improvement of working conditions (ILO).

Identification seized a natural opportunity to capitalize on the competencies of different UN agencies to jointly strengthen value chains under the “DaO-Framework”. The deliberate choice of a single approach was pivotal to align the different participating UN Agencies around a common objective. “Joint-branding” of the JP was also an important tool to foster a team spirit among the agencies.

(c) Programme design

Generally, the Programme Document¹³ is comprehensive and incorporates good practices of PCM.

Design process: A careful needs assessment at the strategic level led to a high relevance of programme objectives at all levels (see assessment in section II.3 below). Lessons learned from other donor interventions were explicitly taken into account (see above). Because of the broad geographical and thematic scope of the project and the limited budget for preparation (US\$ 20,000), a detailed needs assessment of individual direct beneficiaries (enterprises, cooperatives, households) at the design stage (prior to programme approval) was not possible. This required further extensive analytical work on each value chain, which took almost one year. Although national and local authorities were consulted during an extensive preparation mission¹⁴ preparation used a “top-down-approach”. The fact that many of the planned activities are part of the agencies’ “standard repertoire” shows that preparation was to a certain degree “supply-driven”. Nevertheless, most suggestions received from stakeholders were incorporated. Considering the programme’s complexity and its short duration, the choice to primarily replicate existing “service packages” was appropriate. Not starting from scratch contributed to the quick start-up and limited efficiency losses by “trial and error”.

Financial planning: A detailed budget presents expenditures according to outputs, agencies and timeline. For each output and agency, the respective main UN budget lines are indicated as well. While this is a significant step into the right direction, proper results-based budgeting linking expenditures according to all different UN budget lines to individual outputs would be required to (a) ensure financial transparency and (b) to make financial planning useful as a management tool.

Programme duration: Considering its ambitious scope, the JP’s initial planned duration of 36 months given by the lifespan of the MDG Fund was clearly not commensurate. Other similar interventions typically span over several project phases of three to four years each. Since the JP was designed as relatively short, single-phase, articulating a clear exit strategy at the design stage would have been important.

The monitoring and evaluation framework of the programme document meets good practices. Objectives are clear and properly translated into a logical framework (“Joint Monitoring Framework”)

¹³ United Nations and Government of Vietnam, Programme Document “Joint Programme for Green Production and Trade to Increase Income and Employment Opportunities for the Rural Poor”, signed on 28 December 2009

¹⁴ The Vice Chairman of VIETCRAFT (one of the key implementing partners) and Deputy Director of the JP

with specific, objectively verifiable indicators at output, yet not at outcome/impact levels¹⁵. Defining baseline and end-line surveys as programme outputs is in line with best practices for Result-Based Management (RBM).

Execution modalities: The Programme Document (p. 32) reads: “(...) This Joint Programme is *nationally implemented*, with participating UN organizations using the *agency execution modality* for administering recruitment, procurement and contracting actions and making direct payments to co-implementing partners in return for services delivered (...)”, which seems to be a contradiction in itself. Despite the commendable intention to shift towards more “partner-led” implementation, the need to accommodate different practices of the participating UN agencies resulted in a traditional “agency execution structure”. For VIETRADE, which had been implementing programmes under a type of “joint-execution” arrangement with the ITC before, this was a significant step backwards.

Organizational structure and management procedures: Detailed ToRs for each of the participating agencies and the PMU are included in the Programme Document. Operational procedures (e.g. workflows) were however not sufficiently spelled out¹⁶. The PMU was designed as a joint-unit of the GoV and all UN agencies that would be largely responsible for programme implementation, including decision making relating to day-to-day implementation. This included approving ToRs and signing-off on all contracts issued by the UN agencies. A closer look at the management structure indicates that the PMU was largely designed as a traditional UN programme support structure, executing the decisions taken by the different agencies, although some recommendations made the PMU seem to have led to adjustments in the work programme of agencies. There are several reasons for this: *Firstly*, responsibilities allocated to the different managerial functions are inconsistent with competencies to decide. Formally, the PMU was headed by the National Programme Director (NPD) and the Deputy National Programme Director (DNPD) acting as representatives of the GoV. While they are designated as “(...) lead partners in managing and coordinating inputs and delivering outputs by being responsible for the day-to-day management and operations of the PMU (...)”, the “agency execution mode” left the decision making power on fund use in line with approved work plans to the sole discretion of allotment holders at agencies’ headquarters. The general principle provided by the Programme Document, which made the commitment of funds conditional to the PMU’s approval, was subsequently not consistently implemented. Sharing detailed and meaningful financial information (e.g. how much funds are left under each budget line), which is key for well-informed decision making, was also not required. *Secondly*, both the NPD and the DNPD designated in the Programme Document hold full-time senior positions¹⁷, yet were expected to “lead” the PMU. From hindsight, assuming that they would have the capacities to actively contribute to daily management was unrealistic. Meanwhile, the three UN staff at the PMU worked full-time and formally reported to the ITC (STA) respectively the STA (support staff) - not to VIETRADE or all agencies¹⁸. This explains why the

¹⁵ Some indicators were adapted in an amended logical framework, because they would only have been objectively verifiable significantly after the end of the JP. Some of the outputs would probably be rather outcomes (e.g. “improved business management is a result of training provided”).

¹⁶ See Programme Document page 28: “Detailed guidelines for operational coordination and reporting will be developed and put into practice during programme implementation.”

¹⁷ NPD: Deputy Director General of VIETRADE; DNPD: Vice Chairman of VIETCRAFT

¹⁸ According to the ITC, only the STA had a direct ITC contract, while the two national collaborators were recruited under UNDP issued contracts. According to ITC, the STA was however always encouraged to consult and copy NPD/DNPD in all communications with ITC relating to the JP.

well-meant intention to convey the responsibility of managing the PMU to VIETRADE did not materialize.

If PMU's for joint programmes are integrated into counterparts and led by a National Programme Director, a dedicated coordinator from the UN side is needed. The coordinator should be a technical staff based in the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator and primarily be responsible to ensure effective agency coordination and monitoring. He/she should (a) represent all participating agencies and (b) be empowered to make day-to-day management decisions based on mutually agreed work plans and budgets. The Coordinator from the UN side needs to be a very experienced programme manager (not merely an administrator) who is familiar with the technical fields covered. In-depth technical knowledge would not be needed, as it could be provided by short-term specialist missions.

Donor coordination: No mechanism for coordination with important non-UN development agencies key target provinces working in the same field, such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), was established.

2. Programme management

The quality of programme management was mixed. Key challenges included a lack of involvement of local counterparts, unclear communication flows and reporting lines and coordination difficulties among the participating agencies. At least initially, provinces were only marginally involved into programme planning and implementation. This improved however significantly over time.

Management problems were actively addressed and mechanisms continuously improved. This included a systematic follow-up on the MTR recommendations through a specific action plan.

Especially after the MTR, the JP gradually shifted from a clear top-down, UN-led to a more participatory, partner-led approach at both national and provincial levels.

The JP was able to start up quickly and to implement an impressive number of activities. This is even more remarkable considering the broad geographical and thematic scope of the JP. Results-based monitoring conducted during implementation met good practices and was a particular strength.

(a) Programme governance

The governance mechanism provided by the Programme Document was generally applied in practice. Meetings of the Project Management Committee took place, although not always regularly. Due to their lack of field presence in Vietnam, some agencies were not always able to participate. Many of the tasks for which the PCM would have been responsible were in practice assumed by the PMU. Using the "National Steering Committee" shared with all other Joint Programmes in Viet Nam for governance ensured overall coordination and exchange of experience within the UN system and with the GoV. On the other hand, little time was available to discuss JP-specific strategic issues in depth. Therefore, the PCM also discussed matters that would be typically the task of a Steering Committee.

(b) Operational management

The PMU played a crucial role in coordinating agency inputs and moving implementation forward.

Strong support by the PMU also significantly mitigated the difficulties of non-resident agencies to implement project activities with a specific country context. Furthermore, the PMU was effective as a bridge between the JP, participating UN agencies, suppliers and the provinces. VIETRADE's

involvement into operational management was limited to more important decisions (e.g. participation in the recruitment of the STA).

While the PMU was physically based at VIETRADE, it operated as a traditional UN support unit. Unlike foreseen in the Programme Document, core functions of planning and implementation remained in practice centralized at UN agencies headquarters. The idea to get ToRs and contracts endorsed by the PMU was in practice not implemented. UN agencies have a long history of working independently. A certain resistance to change and a persistent tendency to fall back on traditional routines was a consistent challenge during the implementation of the JP.

While several persons interviewed referred to specific “working modalities” developed during implementation, the evaluators found no evidence that those appropriately agreed upon and, documented modalities were consistently implemented. As a result, communication flows and reporting lines remained unclear.

Coordination was complex and absorbed a lot of management time that could have been used in a more meaningful way. For the implementation of activities, partners at national, provincial and communal levels still coordinated separately with all five agencies rather through a single focal point.

(c) Coordination at the provincial level

Coordination at the provincial level was at the beginning very weak, but subsequently significantly strengthened through providing provincial coordinators with a more active role. Nevertheless, local authorities were not always sufficiently kept informed and involved. In several instances, expert missions were fielded without prior consultation of local authorities. This led to awkward situations for the provincial coordinators who are responsible to report to their leadership. Moreover, a decision was taken to not formally register the JP at the provincial level and not to set up provincial management unit boards. This would have been important to mobilize national resources (provincial budget) for co-funding of activities. This is a missed opportunity for coordination and synergies with provincial programmes, which would also be important to increase chances of long-term sustainability of results (see section II.6 below).

(d) Programme monitoring

Monitoring followed the framework defined in the Programme Document. Reports assess results against targets defined in the logical framework, which is good practice.

In contrast, overall day-to-day monitoring at activity level was rather weak. The PMU did not always have up-to-date information on what happened in the field. It appears that UN Agencies monitored activities in provinces either directly or “delegated” this task to their subcontractors (consultants, local institutions). Subsequently, the PMU received information in the course of periodical reporting. Typically, proper monitoring at the field level would require extensive travel to all field locations, ideally at least four times a year. A more regular presence of the PMU in field locations would also have been important to maintain close relations to beneficiaries, which is of primordial importance for the successful implementation of any project in Viet Nam, where informal coordination is often more important than official meetings.

(e) Donor coordination outside the UN system

According to the Programme Document, coordination with interventions outside the UN system was the responsibility of the NSC, which did not fulfill this role in practice. Nevertheless, the PMU informally

communicated, yet not actively collaborated, with development actors outside the UN system.¹⁹ The active cooperation with the Center for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries of the Netherlands (CBI), initiated by the STA remained an exception.

3. Relevance

Relevance assesses the degree to which project objectives were consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' policies.

(a) International priorities

Programme objectives were of high relevance to international priorities, in particular to the following Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): MDG 1 "Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger", MDG 3 "Promote gender equality and empower women" and MDG 7 "Ensure environmental sustainability". Relevance in regards to MDGs 1 and 7 are rather obvious, as poverty reduction and environmental sustainability were programme objectives. Relevance in regards of MDG 3 (gender) was high because firstly, target beneficiaries included a high percentage of women and secondly, doing successful business potentially enhances the position of women in society in many ways (e.g. more financial autonomy, self-confidence etc.). It should also be noted that many of the training modules delivered integrated gender aspects in capacity building.

Objectives furthermore link well into the core aim of the on-going "Aid for Trade" initiative of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which is to help developing countries to benefit from trade opportunities. Systematic strengthening of value chains for handicraft products through increasing competitiveness and connecting sellers to buyers is an example of fostering trade in areas where developing countries have a comparative advantage.

(b) National priorities and policies

Objectives are consistent with Vietnamese development plans, such as Viet Nam's "Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy", to which the UN's "One Plan" is aligned to. They relate in particular to its objective 1 (economic growth), objective 2 (job creation) and objective 4 (improve living standards, preserve and maintain the ethnic minority cultures).

The development of the handicraft sector as a source of additional rural incomes is a top priority of the GoV. This is inter alia reflected in several objectives of the Vietnamese National Target Programmes (NTPs), in particular: NTP 1: "focusing on job creation and vocational training for rural labor", NTP 13 aiming to support the development of "new rural economy" and NTP 16 (tackling pollution, in particular objective 1 "resolving environmental pollution at handicraft villages").

The JP responds well to several recently enacted policies and strategies, such promoting the development of rural industries, and the Prime Minister's Decision on developing the bamboo sector.

(c) Relevance to the international agenda on aid effectiveness

The JP was partially relevant to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Accra Declaration for Action²⁰ and the Hanoi Core Statement²¹. Programme design was highly relevant to the principle of

¹⁹ JICA in Phu Tho and Hoa Binh Province, which worked on strengthening the same value chains; Oxfam and LUX in Nghe An, both active in rural development

²⁰ The Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action are founded on five core principles: The development of own national development strategies of beneficiary countries (**ownership**); for donors to support these strategies (**alignment**) and work to streamline their efforts in-country

aligning donor assistance to national development plans. Furthermore, it was relevant to aid harmonization within the UN system, but not with other development actors. The results-based monitoring system responds well to the principles of “managing for results”.

On the other hand, the JP’s “execution modalities” are not in line with the objective of gradually delivering aid through national systems, including avoiding parallel structures (PMUs) for day-to-day management and implementation of aid financed projects and programmes. The programme was clearly “donor”- rather than “partner”- led. Also, the potential for decentralization and delegation of authority to the country level was not maximized as required by the Hanoi Core Statement.

To put the assessment above into a perspective, it should be highlighted that the application of national execution modalities does not necessarily increase aid effectiveness. Using national systems for project implementation may even reduce aid effectiveness and increase transaction costs. For instance, national procurement systems are often not yet ready to cope with the sourcing of sophisticated technical equipment. Also, gaining access to the right, highly qualified expertise is not an easy task for developing countries.

The key challenge is to strike a balance between commitments to alignment of aid delivery and the effectiveness of projects, considering the specific absorption capacities of each country. Ensuring efficient and effective implementation of interventions, while at the same time achieving a minimum degree of ownership and sustainability through strengthening local structures, calls for delivery modalities that are tailored to institutional capacities of counterparts.

VIETRADE has a proven track-record in international cooperation. Thus a form of “joint-execution” or “mixed execution” combined with mutual accountability would possibly have been the most appropriate implementation model for this JP.

(d) Relevance to the “One UN Plan” and “Delivering as One”

The JP was partially relevant to the “One UN Plan” and “**Delivering as One**” for Vietnam.

While the JP was in line with the coordination and harmonization objectives of the One UN Plan, implementation modalities were not designed in a way that support was provided through one channel.

(e) Relevance to key target beneficiaries

All programme objectives were potentially highly relevant to the respective target groups (e.g. farmer households, cooperatives, companies, women, ethnic minorities) and fully aligned with their needs.

Relevance could have been further increased by incorporating intellectual property protection into “marketing support”. In particular branding through strong trademarks protected in key markets could be a powerful tool to add value to Vietnamese handicrafts. Depending on the product, protection through registered industrial designs, patents, utility solution (petty patents) may help producers to gain a competitive edge and technological lead. Registered geographical indications are an excellent way to add value to agricultural products. They help add value to agricultural products, ensure quality, protect producers from illicit completion and also contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage.

(**harmonization**); for development policies to be directed to achieving clear goals and for progress towards these goals to be monitored (**results**); and for donors and recipients alike to be jointly responsible for achieving these goals (**mutual accountability**). Source: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/34428351.pdf> retrieved on 15 May 2013

Vietnam has currently around 30 protected geographical indications, many of which successfully achieved their objectives. Some of the target provinces have already experience in applying the concept of geographical indications for agricultural products, for instance Phu Tho (Doan Hung Grapefruit) and Vinh (Vinh Orange). Phu Tho Province reportedly has a plan to register Lacquerware Trees as a Geographical Indication. Intellectual property in general is a crucial aspect for successful trade capacity building and should be part of any value chain project that includes “market linkages”.

4. Effectiveness

Effectiveness assesses the extent to which the development objectives of an intervention were or are expected to be achieved.

(a) Outputs

The following table summarizes the outputs delivered as reported by the JP²² and selectively validated by the evaluation team through desk studies, interviews and personal observation.

Outputs	Status and comments
Outcome 1: Improved understanding of handicraft and small furniture value chains in four provinces	
Output 1.1: Baseline and monitoring studies in four provinces, good practice cases on raw materials producers/collectors and their suppliers.	<i>A baseline survey for the raw material suppliers and farmers has been completed. Recommendations for specific value chains support in terms of crop production developed.</i>
Output 1.2: Baseline and monitoring studies in four provinces, good practice cases on grassroots crafts and furniture producers, collectors, traders, buyers and exporters.	<i>A quantitative survey for grassroots crafts and furniture producers in four target provinces has been completed. Assessment of labor standards and OHS for five value chains has been conducted (SMEs and producers).</i>
Output 1.3: Integrated value chain baseline and monitoring studies & dissemination.	<i>Baseline and monitoring studies were delivered as planned. A five day value chain workshop was held in 2010 including some 30 participants from project partners and provinces. Four provincial inception workshops were conducted in June 2010. Five value chain studies have been completed, validated and disseminated (hard copy and website).</i>
Outcome 2: An environmentally and economically sustainable increase in craft raw material growers' and collectors' incomes in four provinces	
Output 2.1: Improved production capacity of farmers (quantity and quality).	<i>Training material for mulberry cultivation and silkworm rising, sea grass cultivation and pest and disease control; bamboo and rattan production; cultivation and harvest of lacquer; and (v) “Duong/Do” tree cultivation for paper production. TOTs have been conducted for the farmers of respective value chains.</i>

²¹ “Hanoi Core Statement” translated the core principles of the Paris Declaration into the Vietnamese context has been agreed by the delegations present at The Mid-term Consultative Group Meeting for Viet Nam, held in Can Tho City on June 2 - 3, 2005.

²² Document “MDGF-2065_-_Joint_Monitoring_Report_Jan_2013” provided by the STA.

Outputs	Status and comments
	<p><i>All value chains (hand-made paper, lacquer, bamboo, rattan, sea grass) received specific support, such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Training of farmer households on building nurseries, planting and management techniques for different raw material plants</i> • <i>Seedlings for nursery gardens</i> • <i>Support to establishing farmer groups</i> • <i>Exploitation of wild growing bamboo</i> • <i>Training of extension service staff</i> • <i>Market link facilitation between farmers and local collectors and companies (rattan)</i> • <i>Support to farmers of silkworm eggs for self sufficiency of the variety at local area.</i> <p><i>Several documentary movies illustrating the achievements and the contributions of UN agencies were produced and published.</i></p> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Documentary movies were an additional activity that was originally not planned.</i> • <i>No evidence of establishment of farmer field schools found.</i> • <i>Validation of number of (a) farmers trained and (b) plantation areas was not possible.</i>
<p>Output 2.2: Improved farmer sales capacity Comment evaluators: the expected activity was to establish price information systems for farmers.</p>	<p>Comment: the evaluators found no evidence of price information systems for farmers. Raw material prices are included into the survey produced under output 1.1 but this only provides a snapshot in time.</p>
<p>Output 2.3: International and national links established</p>	<p><i>Three study domestic and international study tours conducted with participants from 4 provinces, including government staff, private sector and farmers.</i></p>
<p>OUTCOME 3: A sustainable increase of crafts related rural households' and enterprises' incomes in four provinces</p>	
<p>Output 3.1: Improved offer of market intelligence, market linkages and design services to rural crafts buyers and crafts producing communities /SMEs.</p>	<p><i>Reported activities include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Missions of VIETCRAFT to key markets to promote the LifeStyle Fair in Vietnam.</i> • <i>VIETCRAFT was assisted to develop an on-line exporter, including self-assessment tools for key voluntary market standards (e.g. BSCI, Fair Trade) and improved showroom.</i> • <i>Training for companies on EU and US markets.</i> • <i>Training of provincial trade promotion authorities</i> • <i>Support in product design and the development of craft collections</i> • <i>Training on business group formation for</i>

Outputs	Status and comments
	<p><i>enterprises report/list of participants.</i></p> <p>Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On line exporter tool not checked. • It was not possible to check the number of beneficiaries for each of the trainings. • No evidence for the establishment of a “design center found” (planned activity)
Output 3.2: Improved market knowledge and market links of key crafts enterprises for the four provinces.	<p><i>Reported activities include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Marketing prospecting “missions” and study tours for enterprises (Laos, China, USA)</i> • <i>Trainings for companies in how to participate in trade fairs, with prior export readiness assessment.</i> • <i>Support to companies in participating in the LifeStyle Fair and in domestic trade fairs (Nam Dinh, Hanoi)</i> • <i>Workshop on product and range development (with CBI)</i> • <i>Match making between ethnic minority groups and fair-trade exporters</i> • <i>Establishment of export marketing guidelines.</i>
Output 3.3: Improved business management and business plan implementation capacity of SME crafts & small furniture producers	<p><i>Reported activities include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>EMPRETEC training was adopted to the local context and translated. Master trainers were trained. Courses were delivered to SMEs.</i> • <i>Through the Vietnam Productivity Center, trainings in Total Quality Management for the handicraft sector were delivered.</i> • <i>An agreement with VIETRADE has been signed to host EMPRETEC trainings in Vietnam.</i> • <i>Field assessment on working condition and labour standard in four provinces.</i> • <i>Studies on productivity and labor law coverage of home workers were conducted and presented at a workshop with the MOLISA.</i> • <i>Workshop “Labour law coverage, employment relationship” with reference to the situation of handicraft home workers.</i> • <i>Study on handicraft good practices and benchmark</i> • <i>Establishment of a labour standard - occupational safety and health manual (WISH plus)</i> • <i>Two refresher TOT courses on GET AHEAD and SYB were organized</i>
Output 3.4: Improved production and clean design capacity of SME crafts &	<p><i>Reported activities include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assessment on CP and D4S needs of handicraft's</i>

Outputs	Status and comments
	<p><i>producers and traders was conducted</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Quick-scan assessment in cleaner production conducted for companies to define production and process gaps</i> • <i>Companies were supported with equipment and technical guidance to apply new cleaner production techniques</i> • <i>Integrated training materials on Cleaner Production and Sustainable Design were developed for 5 value chains.</i> • <i>SMEs and vocational schools participated in 3 TOTs on Cleaner Production and Sustainable Design (D4S)</i> • <i>Companies were supported to develop sustainable products and new collections, which were displayed at Lifestyle 2011 and 2012</i> • <i>Joint development of “Craft and Design” book with ITC versions 2011 and 2012</i>
<p>Output 3.5: Improved business management skills and business representation of grassroots crafts & furniture producers.</p>	<p><i>Reported activities include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ToT in SYB, GET Ahead and Mini WISH</i> • <i>Delivery of TOEs trainings to household producers on SYB, Get AHEAD, working improvement (OSH) and BGF.</i> • <i>Delivery of trainings to household producers</i> • <i>Various training material produced (posters, leaflets, picture book) and distributed</i> • <i>Follow up supports to business group development in four provinces (capacity building, forum, study visit, formulation of cooperatives/pre-cooperatives for better access with bigger market, formalizing and protecting right for people through processing and job contract.</i> • <i>Trainings on micro-finance to improve financial management skill for people who do business</i> • <i>Studies and mapping on micro-finance with follow-up validation workshops. Needs and requirements of MFI suppliers and entrepreneur in four provinces were identified and connected</i> <p>Comment evaluators: Evidence for follow-up activity in Nghe An Province conducted by a law firm (including an assessment on the current status of the relationship between producers and company (ii) provide training to raise awareness of grassroot producers/groups on contracting and (iii) facilitating the contract signing</p>

Outputs	Status and comments
	between company and producer groups.
Output 3.6: Improved green production capacities of grassroots crafts & furniture producers.	<p><i>Reported activities include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Grass-roots training (CP and vocational skills)</i> • <i>CP trials for grass root producers</i> • <i>Hands-on advice for silk, lacquer and bamboo production improvement</i> • <i>Study tour to China for Lacquerware producers</i> • <i>Branding initiative for Vietnamese handicraft: a manual has been developed.</i> <p>Comment evaluators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition, training manuals were produced (but not reported under this output). • Not all equipment had been delivered. Some equipment was not complete or inoperative, which was confirmed by observation. VNCP has committed to a follow-up in June 2013.
OUTCOME 4: Improved policies and regulatory frameworks at the provincial and national level that meet the needs of rural small enterprises, in particular raw materials and crafts producers, processors and traders	
Output 4.1: Provincial action plans for crafts and small furniture sectors in each province developed and backed by the public and private sector.	<p><i>Reported activities include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Orientation training workshop on “Local Economic Development” in four provinces</i> • <i>Inputs to local economic development strategies</i> • <i>Local economic development Dialogue Forums</i> • <i>Moderator Training workshop on COMPASS of local competitiveness (evaluation) with follow-up workshops in all target provinces</i>
Output 4.2: Policy recommendations for the national and international level for the sustainable development of income generation for the poor.	<i>The JP provided policy advice and advocacy both at the national and provincial level</i>

With the exceptions mentioned above, all planned outputs have been completed. The quality of outputs is assessed in section II.5 on efficiency below.

(b) Outcomes and impact observed at household and enterprise levels

The end-line survey²³ conducted by the JP identified changes at household and enterprise levels in regards to different parameters, by comparing the data of the baseline survey with the situation in April 2013. The key findings of the JP's draft impact assessment report can be summarized as follows²⁴:

²³ The survey covered 300 identical households (sample). 227 out of the 300 households participated in the project. 73 households did not participate in any project activity and form the control group. Only four households of the baseline survey could not be identified again, as they

- Increase of household income in total:** The average annual household income of JP beneficiaries (“sample group”) increased from 27.7 million VND in 2009 to 58.4 million VND in 2012 (nominal increase of 110.8%), which is equivalent to an inflation-adjusted real overall income increase of 52.4%. The average annual income from surveyed products – i.e. the products of the respective value chains such as bamboo & rattan, sericulture/silk, sea grass, lacquer/lacquer ware and handmade paper - increased from 4.7 million VND in 2009 to 9.2 million VND in 2012 (increase of 97.5%), which is equivalent to a real income increase from surveyed products of 41.5%. The comparison between sample group and control group at aggregated level (craft producers and raw material growers combined) shows that the overall income developed similarly. The JP sample group still has a higher total income and the income difference between sample group and control group remained stable (5.5 million VND in 2009 compared to 6 million VND in 2012). While the overall income increase does not show a big difference between sample group and control group, the income development from surveyed products (bamboo/rattan, sericulture/silk, sea grass, lacquer(ware) and hand-made paper) does. The income increase from surveyed products is nearly three times higher in the sample group than in the control group. This is particularly the case for the sericulture/silk value chain, where the income from surveyed products contributes 26.5% to the overall household income in 2012 (compared to 16.7% in 2009), while the control group’s income from sericulture/silk only contributes 8.2% to the overall household income in 2012.
- Income from craft production:** On average, craft producers supported by the JP increased their overall income from 31.1 million VND per household to 50.1 million VND per household. This means an inflation adjusted real income increase of 16.5% compared to 9.2% for the control group. The income from surveyed crafts contributed 23% to the overall household income of the sample group in 2012, while this is only 8.5% in the control group. The annual income of supported raw material suppliers from surveyed products increased from 2.7 million VND in 2009 to 7.5 million VND in 2012 (real income increase of 100.8 %) despite the fact that first effects from the plantation of bamboo & rattan and lacquer trees can only be expected in 2014.
- Income increase female versus male beneficiaries:** 70% of the main JP beneficiaries in the households were women, but the remaining 30% of male JP beneficiaries indicated a higher income increase.
- Income increase comparing different ethnic minorities:** Out of the ethnic minorities, Muong people (47 people surveyed in three value chains) reported the highest income increase (243%). Thai people fared the worst (based on 10 households interviewed in Chau Hanh).
- The number of households living below the national poverty line** went down from 88 households in 2009 to 65 households in 2012 in the group of JP beneficiaries (decrease of 26.1%). This means that the poverty rate in the sample group decreased from 16.8% to 12.4%. The decrease in the group of JP beneficiaries is stronger than in the control group.

moved to other provinces. The supposed lacquer ware beneficiaries were taken off the sample, as none of them reportedly produced any kind of lacquer ware neither at the time of baseline survey nor at the time of the end-line survey. Lacquer ware is only produced by SMEs. Household activity for lacquer, however, was included in the survey for raw material growers as lacquer trees growers.

²⁴ Draft Report, Impact Assessment, Main Findings of the Endline Survey Aimed to Assess the Impact of the Joint Programme for Rural Households and Companies, Hanoi, June 2013.

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- **Food security of the households increased from 81 to 97%, but not in the control group.**
 - **The percentage of households claiming to apply “environmental regulations” went up from 1% to 52%.**
 - **The percentage of households reporting occupational accidents decreased from 31% to 8%, yet control group reported even less accidents. The survey did not have an explanation for this.**
 - **Production volume and value did not go up.** The income increase seems to be mostly due to higher value products and productivity increase.
 - **The survey noted a strong increase in cooperative membership for the sample group, compared to a decrease in the control group.**
 - *The 21 surveyed SMEs, which participated in the JP developed much better than the 10 SMEs surveyed in the control group. The average annual turnover of the surveyed SMEs supported by the JP more or less doubled from 18.0 billion VND in 2009 to 36.9 billion VND in 2012. This is equivalent to a real turnover increase of 47.9% which compares to a real turnover decrease in the control group of 46.3% in the same period. The turnover increase achieved by the SMEs supported by the JP suggests that the capacity building activities undertaken by the JP were successful and that the support indeed made a difference to the SMEs.*
 - *The successful development of the SMEs supported by the JP led to a significant employment increase. In the SMEs in the sample group, the number of jobs on average more than doubled from 41.2 fulltime jobs/SME in 2009 to 87.2 fulltime jobs/SME in 2012. This means that 966 new fulltime jobs have been created in the surveyed 21 SMEs supported by the JP. Two-third of the newly created fulltime jobs benefit female employees (665 new fulltime jobs for women). Part-time employment also went up sharply, from 91.9 part-time employees per company in 2009 to 370.8 part-time employees in 2012. The total number of part-time jobs created in the 21 surveyed SMEs supported by the JP is 5,857.*
 - *With regard to an increase in the average cultivation area per household, an impact can only be observed in the sericulture/silk value chain, where the average area per household doubled from 0.55 ha/household to 1.13 ha/household in the beneficiaries group, while the control group remained more or less at the same level as before. While there is no important change in the area under cultivation/harvesting per household (except in sericulture), the number of trees planted has been significantly increased with support from the JP. Bamboo & rattan households planted on average 1,414 bamboo & rattan seedlings per household, which is nearly two times more than in the control group. For the 104 bamboo & rattan households surveyed in the sample group, this makes a total of 147,056 new plants. In sericulture, sea grass and handmade paper, the sample group planted a large number of high-quality and new hybrid variety seedlings as well (average of 2,156 mulberry trees per farmer, 1005 sea grass seedlings per farmer, 1,579 trees for handmade paper production per farmer), while no new planting activities were observed in the control group. The planting activities undertaken by the farmers are long-term investments and can be a stable source of income from which the households and communes can benefit in future.*
 - *The JP has also made a contribution towards environmental protection as large areas of bamboo & rattan are now under protection in the supported communes. Some communes report that up to 700 ha of natural bamboo forest have been preserved in the commune. Based on sustainable exploitation, commune examples suggest that this generates an income of about 6 million VND/household and year for a large number of households.*

- *With the start-up support to LifeStyle Vietnam, the JP contributed substantially to establishing an important international platform for business matchmaking which impacts the whole handicraft sector in Vietnam. 300 exhibitors at LifeStyle Vietnam 2013 saw 1,400 international business visitors and mostly reported good business from the fair. The impact reached with the start-up support to LifeStyle Vietnam is an important contribution to the overall development of the handicraft sector in Vietnam.*

(c) Validation of the JP's impact assessment report by evaluators

- Personal observation in most of the household business and enterprises visited did not confirm the JP's findings on "compliance with environmental rules and OHS". The evaluators indeed observed considerable environmental problems. Elementary principles of OHS continued to be disregarded. The survey findings might be a result of the way the surveyors asked the respective questions. Who would admit to not comply with environmental rules? Do small household businesses really know the Vietnamese environmental regulations? No explanation is provided why labor accidents should have decreased by 75% in both the control group. Enrolling small household businesses into applying environmental standards and OHS would need repeated follow-ups over a long time.
- Interviews and personal observation of the evaluators clearly indicate that external factors also contributed to the positive changes. The population also receives support from the Vietnamese government and in some locations, other donors are active.
- Moreover, it should be noted that the JP rightly focused on beneficiaries that were committed to receive support. Those are typically more active and interested to improve their livelihoods anyway, with or without donor support.
- Attributing changes solely to programme inputs does not seem plausible. The survey confirms the positive changes the evaluators observed among JP beneficiaries. While the JP did contribute to them, a sound estimate to what degree it did was not possible.

(d) Other outcomes observed by the evaluation team

Interviews, personal observations and a validation of "case stories" compiled by the JP²⁵ result in the following assessment:

- **Business skills at household level** (SYB, GET Ahead, and Mini WISH): Based on interviews and personal observation at a sample of beneficiaries, the key benefit seems to be a "change of mindset", more confidence and stronger negotiation skills with buyers.
- **New plant varieties**: As many of the plantations are not yet ready for harvest, it is in most cases too early to assess whether the new plant varieties introduced by the JP will lead to better raw material supply.
- **Silk work breeding**: Support in breeding techniques seems to have successfully contributed to enhancing the production of silk worms (e.g. less loss to diseases).
- **Support to enterprises to participate in trade fairs and matchmaking** seems to have resulted in significant business opportunities. Furthermore, support to promoting the LifeStyle Vietnam fair internationally was an important factor to attract more buyers. It should however be emphasized that the LifeStyle Vietnam fair itself is not a direct outcome of the JP alone, although the JP provided start-up support. Another important factor was the improvement in product designs,

which also benefitted from input of UNIDO. In 2012, JP companies that participated in the fair reported approximately 200,000 USD worth of orders. Ethnic minority producer groups and cooperatives supported to participate in domestic trade fairs (Nam Dinh, Hanoi) reported USD 6,000 worth of direct sales and about USD 25,000 of direct orders.

- **Technical trainings and skill transfers** resulted in some, but not all, of the SMEs visited in higher productivity and product quality. The challenge was to practically apply the good research and assessments produced with assistance of the JP. Where productivity was increased, it was mainly due to the reduction of raw material input (resource efficiency), the optimization of processes and new machinery. The evaluators also found evidence for a positive influence on product quality (including consistency) at some of the companies.
- **Entrepreneurship trainings for SMEs:** Some enterprises visited confirmed that they apply the EMPRETEC principles in practice. Whether this resulted in specific improvements on the way companies are managed is difficult to assess at this stage. The companies of some of the entrepreneurs interviewed are still at the initial stages of development. While the management does seem to have developed a basic understanding about enterprises (e.g. the concept of “managerial”, marketing, accounting and branding), those companies would need significant additional support to really be able to reach a different level. This is inter alia also evidenced by the quality of some of the business plans.
- The draft Joint-Circular on development of the Bamboo sector development is evidence that in some cases, the JP facilitated the cooperation among Vietnamese authorities.
- The People’s Committees of Nghe An and Thanh Hoa established Provincial Advisory Boards to sustain JP results. In April 2013, the People’s Committee of Nghe An Province approved a decision to develop the bamboo/rattan and sericulture value chains. Objectives include the creation of 5,000 permanent and 8,000 part-time jobs by 2015 and 8,000 permanent and 30,000 part-time jobs by 2020. The decision furthermore aims to generate income of VND 3,500,000 per month for regular employees and 2.5 million VND per month for casual labor in 2020.

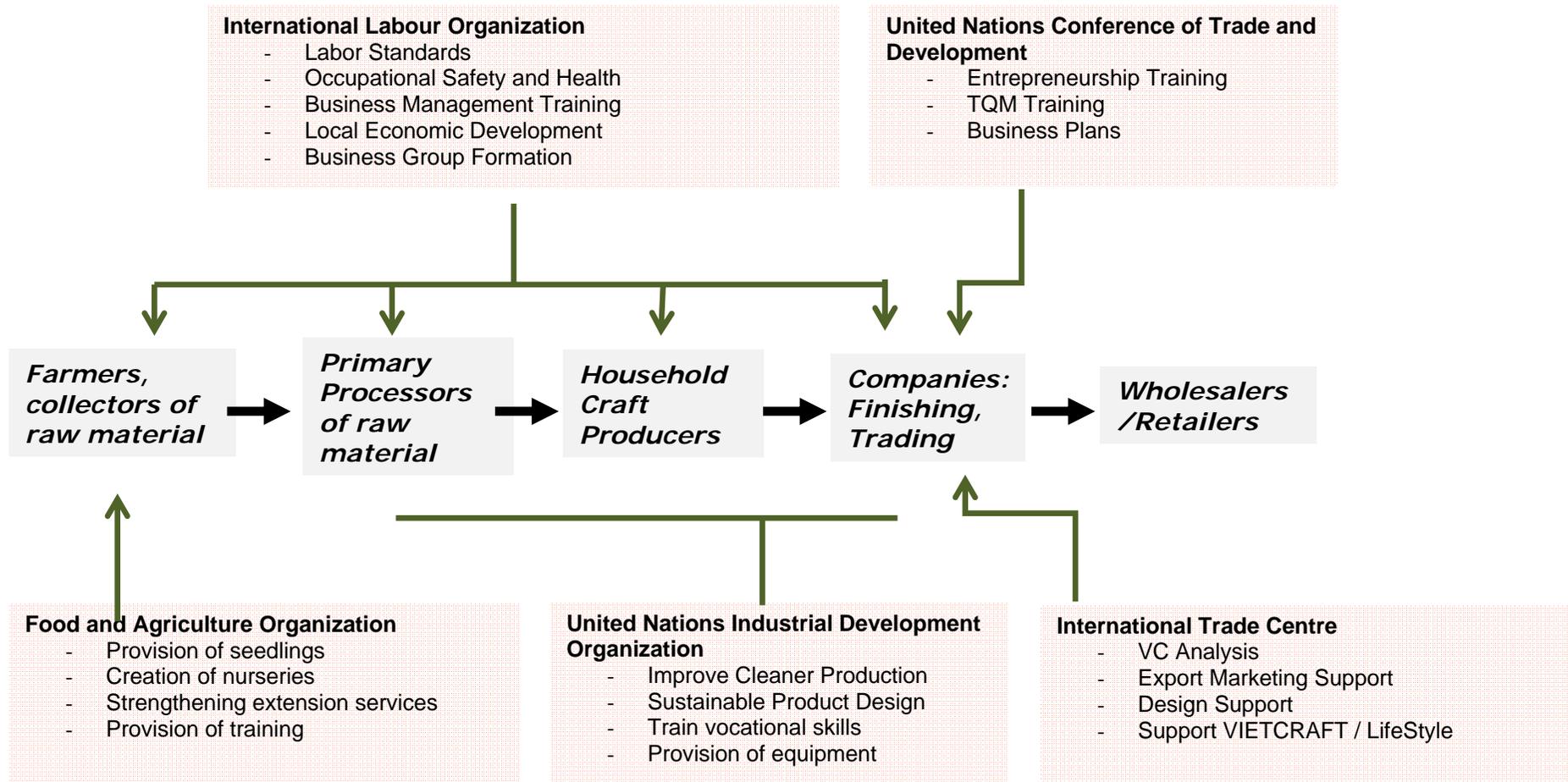
²⁵ Document “In-depth interviews revised” provided on May 10, 2013 by UNIDO

Table 1: Number of target beneficiaries²⁶ (as reported by the JP)

	Men	Men from Ethnic Minority Groups	Women	Women from Ethnic Minority Groups	National Institutions	Local Institutions
Targeted Number	1,450	374	3,000	400	30	20
Reached Number	1,677	406	2,530	916	111	87
Targeted - Reached						
%Difference	113%	108%	83%	229%	100%	100%

²⁶ Note: the figures indicate the total number of participations by men or women household beneficiaries in JP training events, as reported by the JP. Ethnic minorities according to the terminology are Vietnamese citizens that are not ethnic “Kinh”. Selective cross-validation by the evaluators showed some negative and positive deviations, but overall, the figures seem to reflect the number of direct beneficiaries. It was not possible to estimate the number of indirect beneficiaries. Some households participated in more than one training event.

Table 2: Agency inputs at different stages of the value chains²⁷



²⁷ Source: Courtesy Mr. Koen Oosterom, Senior Technical Adviser, Joint Programme for Green Production and Trade (amended by evaluators)

5. Efficiency

Efficiency measures how economically inputs (through activities) are converted into outputs. Assessing value for money in detail would require a detailed analysis of financial reports according to categories of expenditures and outputs. The JP however only reports expenditures according to outputs²⁸, without allocating funds disbursed to UN budget lines. Moreover, no updated financial report that is congruent with the implementation status at the time of the evaluation is available. Comparing how funds were used in order to achieve planned results was thus not possible. In order to derive meaningful recommendations for future improvements, the evaluation looked specifically at (a) synergies in terms of economies of scale and scope generated by delivering services through the JP and (b) the quality of services provided.

(a) Synergies through the programme approach

The JP resulted in some limited economies of scale (e.g. the shared PMU), which were however partially offset by significant personnel input required for coordination among agencies. Another disadvantage of the programme approach was that late service delivery by one agency occasionally led to the delay of the entire programme. In addition to economies of scale, coordination of inputs through one programme JP approach did result in some, although rather limited, exchange of experience and expertise and “cross-fertilization among participating agencies (see below). The clear division of tasks between agencies prevented overlaps. The flipside was that it did not stimulate synergies (e.g. joint-activities). A typical example would be joint modules of the ILO that combine CP, OHS and basic business skills (SYB and GET Ahead). Some positive exceptions are noted (e.g. UNIDO and ITC’s joint-input on product design, UNIDO, ILO and ITC on baseline and endline surveys). Although agencies worked largely in parallel, their input did converge at the beneficiary level. Exchanging experiences between Vietnamese and Lao handicraft producers is a meaningful example of small scale “south-to-south” cooperation that should be further promoted.

(b) Quality of outputs delivered

Generally, with some exceptions, outputs delivered were of high quality. Beneficiaries were mostly satisfied with the content of equipment, trainings, advice and hands-on support received.

- **Documentation (all agencies):** Most of the comprehensive documentation published²⁹ in the Vietnamese language, is of excellent quality and practical use. This relates in particular to the various manuals, which are user-friendly, self-explanatory and allow for replication of the approaches used in other government- or donor-funded programmes. The same applies for training manuals (ILO, UNIDO, UNCTAD, ITC), which have been transferred to partner institutions (e.g. the VCCI, VNCPC, VIETRADE, VIETCRAFT), but are unfortunately not published on the programme website.
- **Raw material supply:** Support to growers (FAO) of raw material and to silk worm breeders resulted in higher yields and better quality of raw material. The Agricultural Extension Service at local levels actively participated in trainings and benefitted from capacity buildings. Efficiency was however reduced by procurement delays. Some seedlings arrived at a time it was not possible to plant them.

²⁸ In accordance with the relevant MDGF reporting guidelines for semi-annual monitoring reports

²⁹ See also: <http://www.greentrade.org.vn/mdl/library> and list of documents in Annex A. Most documents were both printed and published on Internet.

- **Entrepreneurship training for SMEs:** Capacity building through EMPRETEC courses was of particular use to the more advanced, larger among the targeted SMEs. Interviews revealed that for smaller companies, cooperatives, know-how built through such training was probably of less practical applicability. Further strengthening the alumni network,³⁰ would add significant value, in particular in the Vietnamese business environment where relationships are everything.
- **Marketing and market linkages:** Advice in product design (ITC/UNIDO) and company support to participate in trade fairs (ITC) added significant value to them. The fact that this part of the JP was indeed successful was also evidenced by interviews with buyers and experts of similar programmes who attended the LifeStyle Vietnam Fair in Ho Chi Minh City.
- **Reduction of environmental impact:** The combination of tools that lead to a “win-win-situation” for entrepreneurs is a promising approach to reduce the environmental footprint of handicraft production. The CP methodology aims improving resource efficiency of production (less energy and raw material consumption), which increases the bottom line for producers, while benefitting the environment. The same applies to the concept of environmentally friendly design (D4S), which combines resource efficiency with quality and marketability.
- **“Community building” integrating gender issues:** A particular benefit was to include activities aiming at what could be described as “community and organization building”, in particular through some of the training modules of the ILO. While this might not lead to immediate changes, changing mindsets is important to create a fertile ground for long-term development of rural communities.
- **Equipment provided for producers:** The strategy on providing equipment to companies and producers was not consistent and not clearly communicated to different stakeholders. The intention of UNIDO was to transfer technology and know-how to demonstrate good practices in resource efficient and sustainable production. In the Programme Document it had been foreseen to purchase international best available technology in particular for silk dyeing and lacquer refining. Yet upon more rigorous technology assessment, it turned out that best practice silk dyeing (both with natural and synthetic dyes) could be achieved with much more affordable local equipment and that internationally available lacquer refining technology was unlikely to be effective given distinctively different chemistry of Vietnamese lacquer. Hence, lower cost technical solutions were pursued for these pre-identified problems. Subsequently, with direct short-term poverty reduction of the JP in mind, the relatively small share of the budget (US\$ 100,000) was used to distribute equipment to as many beneficiaries as possible. This resulted in broad, yet scattered support of rather simple, relatively low-priced equipment (150 items in total) with expected large replicability after and outside the JP. Due to the limited budget, it was subsequently not possible to buy some originally planned, more costly equipment that would have allowed to demonstrate “Best Available Techniques” and “Best Environmental Practices”. Under the perspective of enhancing competitiveness of handicraft production, transferring “Best Available Techniques” and “Best Environmental Practices” to a limited number of “producers” at each stage of selected value chains would have been more appropriate. Simple equipment that is already used in other provinces does not really make producers nationally or internationally more competitive, as they do not have first-mover advantage. Supporting the establishment of “role-

³⁰ The JP reported that initial steps have been undertaken through a website, networking events and Facebook, see also: <https://www.facebook.com/empretec.vietnam>

model craft villages” that are replicable would be a more efficient way of technology transfer. Most of the equipment procured was useful and did increase productivity significantly. Some equipment however was obviously not a real priority to the beneficiaries, which is evidenced by the fact that it had never been used prior to the visit of the evaluators. The fact that part of the equipment was procured towards the end of the programme³¹ did not allow for proper commissioning and training of users. Moreover, individual beneficiaries were not clearly informed what equipment they would receive by when. The evaluation noted at least two cases where equipment was delivered incomplete and one case where equipment was inoperative. UNIDO committed to a follow-up through the VNCPC prior to the end of the JP.

- **Micro-finance:** Access to small credits seems to be a challenge in some of the locations visited by the evaluators. ILO’s rather limited support focused on linking poor grassroots craft producers to existing microfinance institutions. Experience in other projects shows that a well-functioning micro-credit system³² anchored within strong institutions is of high importance to increase incomes of the rural population and merits appropriate attention.
- **Lack of follow-up trainings:** The evaluators observed in many cases a limited take-up of important concepts promoted, in particular OHS and CP. Serious environmental problems remain in most of the production facilities visited by the team. Toxic waste water of the paper and one lacquer producer is discharged into surrounding vegetable gardens. Some bamboo and rattan producers still use traditional methods to protect material against insect infestation (sulfur, which is highly toxic and banned in Europe). Elementary principles of using protective equipment are disregarded (e.g. wearing protecting gears while operating cutting and splitting machines and boilers). Implementing concepts such as CP and enhancing labor conditions requires sufficient time for repeated follow-up, which was not possible.

6. Sustainability

As the JP was still under implementation while evaluated, it is rather early to assess potential sustainability of results. Nevertheless the following assessment is possible at this stage:

- As a general observation, the JP did not have a clear “exit strategy”, for example how to gradually phase out or hand over support. Perspectives for technical sustainability at the level of direct beneficiaries are mixed. In a few of the companies and cooperatives visited, the evaluation noted follow-up investments and a strong commitment to continuous improvement. Some but not all companies and cooperatives expressed that they would continue participating in trade fairs, using the know-how they have obtained in the course of the programme. In some cooperatives and companies, there is little evidence that capacities built will be maintained without further external support. Initial technical and organizational improvements within beneficiary organizations are unlikely to be sustainable without follow-up support. Lifestyle Vietnam is organized by VIETCRAFT and has never been a programme activity. Improvements triggered by the JP provide confidence that VIETRADE will be able to organize the fair on its own without further financial or technical support.

³¹ Some additional equipment was funded and delivered during the extension phase

³² As for instance the model used by the GRAMMEEN Bank, Bangladesh, adapted to the local Vietnamese context through capitalization on experience gained by other micro-credit funds run by the Women’s Union.

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- There is emerging evidence that key elements of the JP were taken up by the government and mainstreamed into national and provincial policies. Examples are sector strategies (central level) and local development plans. The allocation of sufficient resources to implement those policies and strategies would be pivotal for a continuation of benefits generated by the JP. One village is in the process to establish a dedicated “handicraft production zone”, which will receive support through the provincial budget (e.g. for waste water treatment). Furthermore, VIETRADE’s ongoing trade promotion support to enterprises should be mentioned as well.
 - The JP was intended to deliver its services in cooperation with a number of partner institutions, thus increasing the likelihood that local capacities are built and institutionalized. There are some indications that training packages delivered by the JP have been taken up by local institutions, which plan to replicate them either with donor or government support. The Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) have already integrated the ILO training packages (“Start Your Business”, Occupational Safety and Health” that focus on improvement of working condition to increase productivity and GET AHEAD) into their own training programmes. The same applies for VNCPC, which continues to provide support to companies under different donor- and government funded programmes. Following extensive training, UNCTAD has signed a MoU with VIETRADE, which will host the EMPRETEC programme in Vietnam.
 - Provincial advisory boards were established in Nghe An and Thanh Hoa provinces. The mandate of the Provincial Advisory Boards, which will continue to exist beyond the duration of the programme, is to foster interdepartmental collaboration to support the creation of income and employment opportunities for poor rural households engaged in craft-related value chains, such as bamboo, rattan and mulberry. In addition, the Board is responsible for creating favourable conditions for the successful implementation of relevant projects/programmes and providing policy recommendations and guidance for local economic development. Lessons learned from the programme encouraged provincial advisory boards already to mobilize sources of provincial funding for up-scaling and replication of programme activities. Following the decision to establish the board in Nghe An province, the provincial authorities developed a decision from the Provincial People’s Committee to develop the bamboo/rattan and sericulture value chains. Objectives include the creation of 5,000 permanent and 8,000 part-time jobs by 2015 and 8,000 permanent and 30,000 part-time jobs by 2020. The decision furthermore aims to generate income of VND 3,500,000 / month for regular employees and 2.5 million VND / month for casual labor in 2020.
 - The cooperation with Vietnamese partner institutions led to some skills transfer from international to Vietnamese experts (e.g. Meiji University from Japan and the Chinese Academy of Forestry with the VNCPC and the Hanoi University of Technology). Most training activities were jointly conducted by mixed national-international expert teams working hand in hand.
 - Planned additional donor support³³ will allow for deepening and consolidating results achieved.

³³ Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, JICA, OXFAM, CBI plus possible continued support of the UN agencies under other framework as planned for the One Plan 2012-2016)

III. CONCLUSIONS

1. Careful preparation led to a high degree of relevance in regards to national policies, government strategies, international priorities and the needs of key target beneficiaries.
2. RBM principles were consistently applied during the whole programme cycle, except in financial planning and reporting.
3. Bundling services of UN Agencies in areas of their core competencies within one framework is an effective way to address poverty reduction, gender and environmental objectives of the MDGs. The application of a single mutually agreed methodology and a common programme identity were essential to align the five participating UN Agencies towards common objectives.
4. The holistic value chain strengthening approach was effective and led to tangible results. Important features were (a) the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders, (b) support along the entire value chain, (c) strengthening the supply and demand side and (d) contribute to enabling external conditions, such as the policy framework, access to credit and community building.
5. “Joint-programming” was a particular strength, but “joint-implementation” has not fully materialized. Joint-programming contributed to the harmonization of UN support in the sense that UN input was well coordinated. The clear separation of tasks at the design stage prevented overlaps, but also did not encourage joint activities. While inputs converged at the beneficiary level, agencies still worked rather in parallel than jointly. Apart from sharing a PMU and some mutual learning, economies of scale and scope remained limited. Efficiency gains were partially offset by coordination challenges. Those absorbed significant management time and led to delays and sequencing problems.
6. The PMU played a crucial role in coordinating agency inputs and moving implementation forward. The support by the PMU mitigated the difficulties of non-resident agencies to transfer their expertise in a specific local context. Furthermore, the PMU was effective as a bridge between the JP, participating UN agencies, suppliers and the provinces. While the PMU was pivotal for successful programme implementation, it operated to a large degree as a parallel structure. This resulted in weak ownership of the counterparts.
7. The agency execution modalities applied, implying centralized decision making at every UN agency’s headquarter, are not in line with the spirit of the Paris Declaration and no longer appropriate for Viet Nam. Applying full-fledged national execution modalities in technically complex fields requiring highly specialized expertise might however affect aid effectiveness. Reaching and commissioning the right experts would for instance be challenging for the GoV. Joint implementation as an alternative model might ensure both aid effectiveness and ownership. Essential is to strike a good balance and craft the execution modalities in a way that allows both local counterparts and the UN to capitalize on their particular strengths. While the UN might add most value in sourcing international expertise and ensuring quality control, the role of the Vietnamese counterpart could be to ensure overall management through a national PMU and local procurement of services. From both the UN and the GoV’s side, “joint-delivery” would require a single programme manager who is empowered to make day-to-day management decisions. Delegating day-to-day decision making to one single UN focal point in the field would reduce the risks of delays caused by overloaded programme managers at headquarters. It would also free their capacities to focus on strategic matters and technical backstopping.

8. The appointment of provincial coordinators was a step into the right direction to anchor the programme in the target regions. Mobilizing provincial resources as a contribution to the programme would require an official registration of the programme at the local level.
9. While generally, the JP provided the right type of support to the right target groups in good quality, sustainability of some of the results achieved at producers' and companies' levels will require a sustained long-term technical support. Maintaining results achieved over long-term requires follow-up by the GoV through establishing an enabling policy framework, and institutionalizing support to stakeholders at all stages of the value chains. Towards the end, the JP thus rightly started focusing on mainstreaming results at the policy level.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To the Government of Vietnam (through VIETRADE under MOIT)

The evaluation team respectfully recommends to:

- 1.1 Reinforce Vietnam's policy framework to create enabling conditions for the development of the handicraft sector, in particular enacting implementing guidelines for Decision Nr 11 dated 18th Feb 2011 of the Prime Minister (support to the Bamboo sector) as soon as possible.
- 1.2 Allocate budget and resources to continue providing technical assistance to the handicraft sector (raw material producers, processors, SMEs and exporters).
- 1.3 Consider establishing a quality mark for handicrafts that might be hosted either by a government agency or a strong sector association. Its use should be linked to the fulfillment of clear conditions that are certified by an independent accredited body and registered at the National Office of Intellectual Property for all key markets.
- 1.4 Explore the possibility to support the establishment of registered Geographical Indications for handicrafts and raw material (agricultural products).

2. To all participating UN Agencies

- 2.1 Consider replicating the comprehensive and holistic approach to value chain strengthening through combining the services of different agencies for other programmes, taking into account lessons learned from this JP. Synergies should be further strengthened through shifting from implementing activities in parallel towards jointly implementing activities.
- 2.2 Projects with a strong focus on the provincial level should be formally registered and a project management board should be established.
- 2.3 Project documents should define clear responsibilities that match accountabilities and competencies to decide. Detailed operational procedures should be established and consistently implemented.
- 2.4 In order to provide meaningful information for project managers, a financial reporting system should be established that links UN budget lines with expenditures according to outcomes.
- 2.5 Beneficiaries should be closely involved into the selection and procurement process for equipment. Equipment should be delivered at the beginning of the project in order to ensure appropriate training and follow-up in case of technical problems. Delivering of seedlings and machinery to farmers should be timed to agricultural production cycles.

2.6 In line with the commitments of the Paris Declaration and to ensure “Delivering as One”, future “Joint Programmes” should be organized around the following core principles:

- (a) PMUs should be strongly anchored within the Vietnamese administrative system
- (b) In order to shift towards a more “partner-led” approach, a form of “Joint-Execution” would be appropriate whereas the counterpart assumes the overall programme coordination, while the UN provides technical advice and services on a demand-basis, following a clear implementation plan and budget.
- (c) While local expertise could be procured by the GoV, sourcing international expertise, technology and quality assurance should remain the responsibility of the UN agencies.
- (d) One Joint “Programme Coordinator” embedded in the “One UN Office” should be the single focal point for the PMU and formally represent all participating agencies. He/she should be responsible to coordinate inputs of all UN Agencies and to the degree possible be empowered to take day-to-day management decisions. This requires decentralizing day-to-day management competencies from headquarters to field offices. Headquarters would add most value through technical backstopping and providing expertise.

3. To individual agencies

- 3.1 UNIDO should use its expertise in providing VIETRADE with support in establishing quality marks for the handicraft sector.
- 3.2 UNCTAD should ensure follow-up on EMPRETEC courses by establishing partnerships with more local “business service providers” that will be able to follow-up on trainings and facilitate the EMPRETEC network (not only VIETRADE exclusively).
- 3.3 ILO should continue support to VCCI and other organizations in delivering trainings to rural householder enterprises (SYB, OHS and GET Ahead).
- 3.4 ITC should integrate intellectual property aspects (geographical indications, trademarks, designs, copyright) into the trade promotion support provided to enterprises, where needed in partnership with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) or other specialized institutions.

V. LESSONS LEARNED

- (1) Value chains are a field where joint-delivery by FAO, ILO, ITC, UNCTAD and UNIDO has a significant potential to create economies of scales and scope. Aligning on a single, clearly defined methodology and a common “programme identity” are key success factors for joint-programmes. Capitalizing on synergies to the full extend would require the development of joint products or services”, for instance capacity building activities incorporating the expertise of several agencies.
- (2) Effectively “Delivering as One” requires a single Programme Manager from the UN side who is (a) the only focal point for the local counterparts and (b) empowered to make day-to-day management decisions. Delegating operational decision making to a single, field-based Programme Manager would free resources at headquarters to concentrate on technical backstopping.
- (3) For complex “joint programmes”, in particular those involving non-resident agencies, well functioning and programme specific PMUs are pivotal to coordinate agency inputs and to move implementation forward. Strong PMUs may significantly mitigate the difficulties of non-resident agencies to successfully transfer their know-how in a local context.

- (4) Programmes with a strong focus on providing services to individual beneficiaries require – in addition to a PMU at national level - a dedicated project coordination structure at the level of local government administrative units (e.g. provinces, depending on the country).
- (5) National Steering Committees for all Joint-Programmes within one country allow for coordination and some exchange of experience among the programmes and with the government. Since the limited time available does not allow for programme specific in-depth discussions, they are however not effective for the strategic steering of individual programmes. This implies that the strategic coordination role for individual programmes needs to be fulfilled by a management body at the programme level. An option to be explored is to leave the responsibility for operational management entirely to a PMU and replacing the PMC by a programme-specific Steering Committee.

ANNEX A: LIST OF REFERENCE DOCUMENTS RECEIVED

[Status: 20 May 2013]

1. Received from STA prior to assignment

- 1.1 Project Document "Technical assistance to Green Production and Trade to Increase the Income and Employment Opportunities for the Rural Poor"
- 1.2 Baseline Value Chain Survey for Handicraft Producers and SMEs, prepared by Vietnam Rural Industries and Development Institute (VIRI) and Vietnam Handicraft Research and Promotion Centre (HRPC), 2010
- 1.3 Outline "End-line Survey" (*To measure key impact indicator: Sustainable income and employment increase*) conducted in 2013
- 1.4 Final Report "Independent Review of Joint Programmes under Delivering as One (DaO) Initiative in Vietnam, January – March 2011", by Tim Dyce, Director Asia Pacific Enterprise Training Centre Sydney and London and Nguyen Van Phuc, Faculty of Business Management, National Economics University Hanoi, July 2013
- 1.5 Improvement Plan of the Joint Programme 'Green Production and Trade – Viet Nam', 2011 - 2013
- 1.6 Job Description for the post of "Team Leader End-line survey / Impact Assessment" of the Project VIE/1A/01A of International Trade Centre and MDG Achievement Fund, January 2013
- 1.7 Proposal for Extension and Additional Funding of the Joint Programme 'Green Production and Trade', 2013
- 1.8 Monitoring Report of the JP "Green Production and Trade" for July-December 2010 (prior to MTR)
- 1.9 Monitoring Report of the Joint Programme 'Green Production and Trade', July 2012 – December 2012
- 1.10 Presentation of the Joint Programme 'Green Production and Trade', by Koen Oosterom, March 2013
- 1.11 Memo "No-cost Extension Request: MDGF-2065 – 'Green production and trade'" from the Director of MDG Achievement Fund Secretariat to UN Resident Coordinator Vietnam, 27 August 2012
- 1.12 Memo "Approval of supplementary funding for the Joint Programme of Vietnam 'Green Production and Trade'" from Deputy Assistant Administrator, BERA, UNDP to UN Resident Coordinator Vietnam, 24 August 2012
- 1.13 Draft Report "Mid-term Review of the Joint Programme 'Green Production and Trade to increase income and employment opportunities for the rural poor'" by Vincent Lefebvre and Tuan Phan Phan, January 2012

2. Received from STA on 10 April 2013

- 2.1 Decision of the People Committee of Nghe An Province on "Planning the Activities to develop the Bamboo/Rattan products and Sericulture branch for Nghe An Province from 2013 to 2015 with a consideration of a development until 2020", March 2013 (Vietnamese Version)
- 2.2 Decision of the People Committee of Thanh Hoa Province on "establishing an advisory committee at provincial level to implement the national programme on development of bamboo products and economic activities in Thanh Hoa province", 9 April 2013 (Vietnamese Version)
- 2.3 "Business case: Crafting out of Poverty – CBI, 2012-2014", written by Koos Van Eyk, December 2011
- 2.4 Project Document "Improving Livelihoods of Ethnic Minority Women through Sustainable Development of the Ethnic Textile Value Chain" by VIETCRAFT (Vietnam Handicraft Exporters Association), Swiss Government and VIRI (Vietnam Rural Industries Research and Development Institute), January 2013
- 2.5 Outline survey on handicraft household 2009-2012

3. Reports received from STA on 10 April 2013

3.1 FAO

3.1.1 NOMAFSI (*Northern Mountainous Agriculture and Forestry Science Institute*)

- 3.1.1.1 Final Report on the promotion of lung bamboo and lacquer production in Phu Tho and Nghe An provinces, 30 December 2011
- 3.1.1.2 Final Report on the promotion of lung bamboo and lacquer production in Phu Tho and Nghe An provinces, 30 December 2012

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- 3.1.1.3 Final Report on the promotion of Rattan production in Phu Tho and Nghe An provinces, 30 December 2011
 - 3.1.1.4 Final Report on the promotion of Rattan production in Phu Tho and Nghe An provinces, 30 December 2012
 - 3.1.1.5 Final Report on the promotion of Sericulture in Phu Tho and Nghe An provinces, 30 December 2011
 - 3.1.1.6 Final Report on the promotion of Sericulture in Phu Tho and Nghe An provinces, 30 December 2012
 - 3.1.2 RUDEC (*Rural Development Centre*)**
 - 3.1.2.1 Support Proposal for Material Growers, March 2011 (Vietnamese version)
 - 3.1.2.2 Support Proposal for Material Growers, March 2011
 - 3.1.2.3 Report “Results of baseline survey on raw material growers and collectors in project provinces of Hoa Binh, Phu Tho, Thanh Hoa and Nghe An”, implemented by: Hoang Vu Quang, Tran Nhat Lenh, Bui Van Quang and Pham Van Dung, December 2010
 - 3.1.2.4 Report “Results of baseline survey on raw material growers and collectors in project provinces of Hoa Binh, Phu Tho, Thanh Hoa and Nghe An”, implemented by: Hoang Vu Quang, Tran Nhat Lenh, Bui Van Quang and Pham Van Dung, December 2010 (Vietnamese Version)
 - 3.1.3 VIRI (*Vietnam Rural Industries Research and Development Institute*)**
 - 3.1.3.1 Report on the visit to Laos, prepared by VIRI and HRPC (Vietnam Handicraft Research and Promotion Centre), 25 December 2010 (Vietnamese Version)
 - 3.1.3.2 Baseline Value Chain Survey for Handicraft Producers and SMEs, prepared by VIRI and HRPC (Vietnam Handicraft Research and Promotion Centre), 2010
 - 3.1.3.3 Result Report on development promotion on Mulberry and Silkworm in Thanh Hoa province 2011, December 2011 (Vietnamese Version)
 - 3.1.3.4 Result Report on development promotion on Mulberry and Silkworm in Thanh Hoa province 2012, December 2012
 - 3.1.3.5 Result Report on development promotion on Mulberry and Silkworm in Thanh Hoa province 2012, December 2012 (Vietnamese Version)
 - 3.1.3.6 Result Report on development promotion on material for handmade paper in Hop Hoa commune, Luong Son District, Hoa Binh province 2011, November 2011 (Vietnamese Version)
 - 3.1.3.7 Result Report on development promotion on Rattan raw material in Thanh Hoa and Hoa Binh province 2011, December 2011 (Vietnamese Version)
 - 3.1.3.8 Result Report on development promotion on Rattan raw material in Thanh Hoa and Hoa Binh province 2012, January 2013 (Vietnamese Version)
 - 3.1.3.9 Result Report on development promotion on Rattan material in 2012, January 2013
 - 3.1.3.10 Result Report on development promotion on Rattan material in Thanh Hoa and Hoa Binh province 2011, prepared by VRN (Vietnam Rattan Network), December 2011 (Vietnamese Version)
 - 3.2 ILO**
 - 3.2.1 Strategy for Implementing LED Processes in 2011 Vietnam, February 2011 by Christian Schoen, revised version in March 2011
 - 3.2.2 Report on Basic Compass Exercise: “Hoa Binh Province, October 5, 2012 local economic development monitoring & evaluation using the compass of local competitiveness”, prepared by Thanh Nguyen, iLumtics, edited by Christian Schoen, mesopartner, 2012
 - 3.2.3 Report on Basic Compass Exercise: “Local economic development monitoring & evaluation using the compass of local competitiveness, Nghe An Province, September 19, 2012”, prepared by Thanh Nguyen, iLumtics, edited by Christian Schoen, mesopartner, 2012
 - 3.2.4 Report on Basic Compass Exercise: “Local economic development monitoring & evaluation using the compass of local competitiveness, Phu Tho Province, October 4, 2012”, prepared by Thanh Nguyen, iLumtics, edited by Christian Schoen, mesopartner, 2012
 - 3.2.5 Report on Basic Compass Exercise: “Local economic development monitoring & evaluation using the compass of local competitiveness, Thanh Hoa Province, September 21, 2012”, prepared by Thanh Nguyen, iLumtics, edited by Christian Schoen, mesopartner, 2012
 - 3.2.6 Mid-term review report on “Consultancy for Capacity Strengthening for the Producer groups in the Bamboo and Brocade Value Chains in Nghe An Province”, prepared by Trang Hieu Tuong and Nguyen Huu Phuc, iLumtics, September 2012
 - 3.2.7 Report on LED Dialogue Forum in Hoa Binh Province, prepared by Trang Tuong Hieu, reviewed by Christian Schoen, May 2011

- 3.2.8 Report on LED Dialogue Forum in Nghe An Province, prepared by Trang Tuong Hieu, reviewed by Christian Schoen, May 2011
- 3.2.9 Report on LED Dialogue Forum in Phu Tho Province, prepared by Thanh Nguyen, reviewed by Christian Schoen, May 2011
- 3.2.10 Report on LED Dialogue Forum in Thanh Hoa Province, prepared by Thanh Nguyen, reviewed by Christian Schoen, May 2011
- 3.2.11 Document "Labour Standards in 5 handicraft value chains in Northern provinces of Vietnam", by David Tajgman
- 3.2.12 Mission Report "Capacity building on improving occupational safety and health among workers and producers in the sea grass, lacquer, sericulture, handmade paper and rattan/bamboo value chains", by Ton That Khai, OSH Specialist, January 2011
- 3.2.13 Mission Report "Capacity building on improving occupational safety and health among workers and producers in the sea grass, lacquer, sericulture, handmade paper and rattan/bamboo value chains", by Ton That Khai, OSH Specialist, January 2011 (Vietnamese Version)
- 3.2.14 Final Report "Brief Summary Report on LED Dialogue Forums Vietnam, May 2011", by Christian Schoen, June 2011

3.3 ITC

- 3.3.1 Activity Report on Nam Dinh Craft and Agriculture Fair 25-30 September 2012, ITC, 2012
- 3.3.2 Activity Report on Sericulture Value Chain Study Tour in Laos, 17-21 December 2012, ITC, 2012
- 3.3.3 Document "Assessment and Strategy for the Development of Brocade Production in Hoa Tien Cooperative, Nghe An Province", prepared by Vietnam Handicraft Research and Promotion Center
- 3.3.4 Document "Assessment and Strategies for Handmade Paper Group, Hoa Binh Province", prepared by Vietnam Handicraft Research and Promotion Center
- 3.3.5 Document "Assessment and Strategy for the Development of Brocade Production in Na Phon Cooperative, Hoa Binh Province", prepared by Vietnam Handicraft Research and Promotion Center
- 3.3.6 Document "Assessment and Strategy for the Development of Brocade Production at Pa Co Cooperative", prepared by Vietnam Handicraft Research and Promotion Center
- 3.3.7 Document "Assessment and Strategy for the Development of Brocade Production at Vong Ngan Cooperative, Hoa Binh Province", prepared by Vietnam Handicraft Research and Promotion Center
- 3.3.8 Vietnam Handicraft Research And Promotion Centre (Hrpc) Catalogue 2011
- 3.3.9 Handmade Paper Catalogue, Hop Hoa Commune, Luong Son District, Hoa Binh Province 2011, implemented by Vietnam Handicraft Research and Promotion Center with ITC support
- 3.3.10 Catalogue "Thai Weaving Patterns, Hoa Tien Brocade Cooperative, Nghe An Province, September 2011", implemented by Vietnam Handicraft Research and Promotion Center with ITC support
- 3.3.11 Catalogue "Thai Weaving Patterns, Brocade Production Group, Na Phon Commune, Mai Chau District, Hoa Binh Province, September 2011", implemented by Vietnam Handicraft Research and Promotion Center with ITC support
- 3.3.12 Catalogue "H'Mong Weaving Patterns, Paco Cooperative, Mai Chau District, Hoa Binh Province, September 2011", implemented by Vietnam Handicraft Research and Promotion Center with ITC support
- 3.3.13 Catalogue "Muong Weaving Patterns, Vong Ngan Brocade Cooperative, Man Duc Commune, Tan Lac District, Hoa Binh Province, September 2011", implemented by Vietnam Handicraft Research and Promotion Center with ITC support
- 3.3.14 Report "Craft and Design in Vietnam 2011"
- 3.3.15 Report "Craft and Design in Vietnam 2012"
- 3.3.16 Document "Export Marketing Guidelines: A Practical Guide for Companies in The Home Decoration Sector", prepared by Reinhard Werner, March 2013
- 3.3.17 Final report on the Implementation of MOU between ITC and Vietcraft, prepared by Vietnam Handicraft Exporters Association, November 2011
- 3.3.18 Report "Value Chain Study for Handmade Paper in Hoa Binh Province of Vietnam", prepared by Thanh Nguyen and Alfons Eiligmann, November 2010
- 3.3.19 Report "Value Chain Study for Lacquer Ware in Tam Nong District, Phu Tho Province of Vietnam", prepared by Nguyen Anh Phong and Alfons Eiligmann, November 2010
- 3.3.20 Report "Value Chain Study for Bamboo and Rattan in Phu Tho, Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa and Nghe An Provinces of Vietnam", prepared by Tuong Trang Hieu and Alfons Eiligmann, November 2010

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- 3.3.21 Report "Value Chain Study for Sea Grass in Nga Son District, Thanh Hoa Province of Vietnam", prepared by Nguyen Anh Phong and Alfons Eiligmann, November 2010
 - 3.3.22 Report "Value Chain Study for Sericulture in Phu Tho, Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa and Nghe An Provinces of Vietnam", prepared by Thanh Nguyen and Alfons Eiligmann, November 2010
 - 3.3.23 Vietcraft Report on exporting companies to US market, September 2011
 - 3.4 **Programme as a whole**
 - 3.4.1 Outline Endline Survey 2009-1012
 - 3.4.2 4 provinces overview 22 January 2013
 - 3.4.3 A case study from Hoa Tien Village, Vietnam, prepared by Aya Matsuura and edited by Koen Oosterom, October 2012
 - 3.4.5 Endline Survey Funding Outline
 - 3.4.6 Final Report on Delivering as One (DaO) Initiative in Vietnam January-March 2011, by Tim Dyce and Nguyen Van Phuc, July 2011
 - 3.4.7 JP Improvement Plan
 - 3.4.8 Job Description for Team Leader End-line survey / Impact Assessment, January 2013
 - 3.4.9 List of JP Beneficiaries updated April 2013
 - 3.4.10 Project Document of the JP "Green Production and Trade"
 - 3.4.11 Project Document "Proposal for Extension and Additional Funding"
 - 3.4.12 Monitoring Report July-December 2012
 - 3.4.13 Meeting Minutes at MPI (Ministry of Planning and Investment) 6 September 2012
 - 3.4.14 Support for Companies 6 June 2012
 - 3.4.15 Memo Vietnam no cost extension memo 6 June 2012
 - 3.4.16 Memo Vietnam PSD Supplementary Funding Approval
 - 3.4.17 Midterm report of the JP by Vincent Lefebvre and Tuan Phan Phan, January 2012
 - 3.5 **UNCTAD**
 - 3.5.1 Post training Assessment Report July-August 2010, by Nguyen Thi Minh Thuy, January 2011
 - 3.5.2 Post training Assessment Report November-December 2010, by Nguyen Thi Minh Thuy, March 2011
 - 3.5.3 Post training Assessment Report September-October 2010, by Nguyen Thi Minh Thuy, March 2011
 - 3.6 **UNIDO**
 - 3.6.1 Presentation on the JP: Cleaner Production Component- UNIDO, Support businesses and households toward sustainable development
 - 3.6.2 Unsustainable factors in exploiting and processing Lung Bamboo (Vietnamese version)
 - 3.6.3 Unsustainable factors in exploiting and processing Lacquer ware (Vietnamese version)
 - 3.6.4 Sharing experiences about the techniques and tools to exploit Rattan (Vietnamese version)
 - 3.6.5 Report on evaluation of cleaner production and design of sustainable products for value chain of Bamboo and Rattan, Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, March 2011 (Vietnamese version)
 - 3.6.6 Report on evaluation of cleaner production and design of sustainable products for value chain of Handmade Paper, Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, March 2011 (Vietnamese version)
 - 3.6.7 Report on evaluation of cleaner production and design of sustainable products for value chain of Lacquer ware Phu Tho, Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, March 2011 (Vietnamese version)
 - 3.6.8 Report on evaluation of cleaner production and design of sustainable products for value chain of Sea grass, Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, March 2011 (Vietnamese version)
 - 3.6.9 Report on evaluation of cleaner production and design of sustainable products for value chain of sericulture, Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, March 2011 (Vietnamese version)
 - 3.6.10 Methodology to evaluate cleaner production, Training Course for experts, April 2011 (Vietnamese version)
 - 3.6.11 Techniques for Creativeness, presented by Nguyen Hong Long, Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre (Vietnamese version)
 - 3.6.12 Method D4S, presented by Nguyen Hong Long, Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre (Vietnamese version)
 - 3.6.13 Progress Update as of 12 March 2013, by Pham Huyen Kieu in consultation with Rebecca Reubens, March 2013
 - 3.6.14 Report Assessment of Cleaner Production and Design for Sustainability, Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, August 2011

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- 3.6.15 Report Cleaner Production and Design for Sustainability Assessment in Lacquer ware Value Chain, Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, June 2011
 - 3.6.16 Report Cleaner Production and Design for Sustainability Assessment in Rattan Value Chain, Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, June 2011
 - 3.6.17 Report Cleaner Production and Design for Sustainability Assessment in Handmade Paper Value Chain, Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, June 2011
 - 3.6.18 Final Report on Bamboo and Rattan Sector with CP (Cleaner Production) and D4S (Design for Sustainability) by Rebecca Reubens, April 2011
 - 3.6.19 Report on Cleaner Production Assessment and Sustainable Design of Sea Grass Value Chain, Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, June 2011
 - 3.6.20 Report on Cleaner Production Assessment and Sustainable Design of Sericulture Value Chain, Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, June 2011
 - 3.6.21 UNIDO list of SMEs to be supported
 - 3.6.22 UNIDO Report on Status of Silk and Hemp Handicraft Sector in North Vietnam, by Hale Bahar Öztürk and Thomas Bechtold, March 2011
 - 3.6.23 Report "Skill training Program for Handicraft Producers in Vietnam", by Vietnam Handicraft Research and Promotion Centre (HRPC), September 2012
- 4. Provided by CTA on 15 April 2013**
- 4.1 Presentation "The United Nations and Agricultural Value Chain Development Lessons and challenges from Vietnam"
 - 4.2 Questionnaire "Lessons Learned and Good Practices in MDG-F Development and Private Sector"
- 5. Material received from UNIDO/VNCPC on 16 April 2013 (partially duplicated)**
- a. Final Report on Cleaner Production and Design for Sustainability Assessment for Five-Value Chains in Project Area, by Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, June 2011
 - b. Equipment list as per 31 March 2013 (partially not complete)
 - c. Presentation "Mid-year UNIDO Project Meeting", 21 September 2011
 - d. Report Assessment of Cleaner Production and Design for Sustainability (in Companies), by Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, August 2011
 - e. Report on Cleaner Production and Design for Sustainability Assessment in Lacquer Ware Value Chain, by Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, June 2011
 - f. Report on Cleaner Production and Design for Sustainability Assessment in Rattan Value Chain, by Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, June 2011
 - g. Report on Cleaner Production and Design for Sustainability Assessment in Handmade Paper Value Chain, by Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, June 2011
 - h. Report on Cleaner Production and Design for Sustainability Assessment in Sea Grass Value Chain, by Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, June 2011
 - i. Report on Cleaner Production and Design for Sustainability Assessment in Sericulture Value Chain, by Vietnam Cleaner Production Centre, June 2011
 - j. Final report on Rattan and Bamboo Product Development, UNIDO, 21 April 2011
- 6. Self-Assessment of programme results**
- 6.1 Figures on poverty reduction
 - 6.2 Outcomes at farmer level (draft)
 - 6.3 Outcomes and enterprise level

ANNEX B: LIST OF PERSONS MET

Nr.	Organizations	Name	Position
1	VIETRADE		
		Mr. Do Kim Lang	Deputy Director General- JP Director
		Mrs. Nguyen Thi Minh Thuy	Deputy Director- External Communication and Relations Dept.
2	PMU		
		Mr. Koen Oosterom	Senior Technical Advisor
		Mrs. Truong Thi Bich Huong	National Programme Coordinator
		Mr. Alfons Eiligmann	ITC Expert
3	The Office of UN Resident Coordinator (RC)		
		Ms. Pratibha Mehta	UN Resident Coordinator
		Ms. Nguyen Thi Nhu Nguyet	UN Coordination Officer
4	FAO		
		Mrs. Nguyen Thi Huong	National Programme Officer
5	UNIDO		
		Mr. Patrick J. Gilabert	UNIDO Representative
		Mrs. Hoang Mai Van Anh	Programme Officer
		Mr. Rene Van Berkel	Chief, Cleaner Production Unit, UNIDO, Vienna
6	HRPC/VIRI		
		Mrs. Nguyen Bao Thoa	Director
7	VNCPC		
		Mr. Le Xuan Thinh	Head of Division of Enterprise advisory
8	ILO		
		Mrs. Sandra Yu	Local Strategy for Decent Work Specialist
		Mrs. Hoang Thi Phuong	National Project Coordinator
9	Hoa Binh Province		
9.1	Branch of the Office of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development		
		Mr. Chuyen	Deputy Director of Department of Rural Development
		Mr. Thuy	Provincial Coordinator
9.2	Vong Ngan Cooperative, Man Duc Commune- Tan Lac District		
		Mrs. Bui Thi Lan Phuong	Vice-President of Vong Ngan Cooperative
		Mr. Dinh Cong San	President of Vong Ngan Cooperative
		Mrs. Bui Thi Mai	Vice-Chairman of Technical Section

Nr.	Organizations	Name	Position
9.3	Na Phon People's Committee - Mai Chau District		
		Mr. Ha Van Ao	Vice-President of Na Phon People's Committee
		Mrs. Ha Thi Xuyen	Vice-President of Women Union- Na Phon CPC/ Head of Brocade Group)
		Mr. Ha Cong Nhuan	Secretary of Party Committee
9.4	Brocade Group		
		Mrs. Ha Thi Xuyen	Head of Brocade Group
9.5	Hop Hoa People's Committee- Luong Son District		
		Mr. Hoang Anh Dien	President of Hop Hoa People's Committee
9.6	Handmade paper production group		
		Mr. Nguyen Van Chuc	Head of handmade paper production group
9.7	Lien Son CPC- Luong Son District		
		Mr. Nguyen Van Lan	Vice- President of Lien Son CPC
		Mr. Bach Van Hong	President of Farmer Union of Lien Son
9.8	Bamboo/rattan craft group in Lien Son Commune		
		Mrs. Ngo Thi Thang	Head of Craft Group
10	Phu Tho Province		
10.1	Department of Rural Development		
		Mr. Nguyen Hai Minh	Director of Department of Rural Development/ Provincial Coordinator
		Mr. Nguyen Anh Truong	PC member
10.2	Phu Tho Lacquerware Cooperative		
		Mr. Vi Xuan Minh	Head of Cooperative
10.3	Can Lieu Cooperative		
		Mrs. Nguyen Thi Lieu	Head of Cooperative
10.4	Tinh Cuong People's Committee- Cam Khe District		
		Mr. Tran Huu Khanh	President of CPC
		Mr. Nguyen Van Hoa	Monitor of Agriculture Extension/ Head of Cooperative
10.5	Di Nau CPC- Tam Nong District (farming lacquer trees)		
		Mr. Nguyen Kim Minh	Vice- Chairman of Di Nau People's Committee
11	Vietnam Lifestyle Fair- HCM City		
11.1		Mr. Le Ba Ngoc	Deputy Director of JP- VIETCRAFT
11.2		Mr. Alain Chevalier	Senior Trade Advisor
11.3		Mr. Le Duy Toan	Manager of Lacquer World
11.4		Mrs. Nguyen Thanh Giang	Kana Company

Nr.	Organizations	Name	Position
11.5		Mr. Eko Prabowo	Creative Director CEO/ Indonesia- CBI
11.6		Mr. Thai Dai Phong	Director of Duc Phong Company
11.7		Ms. Bettina Maushake	Tamarind Treasures (Swiss buyer)
11.8.		Mr. Franck Caussin	Project Coordinator, Swiss-funded Trade Cluster Project in Lao PDR (involving ILO, ITC, UNIDO, UNCTAD)
12	Thanh Hoa Province		
12.1	Provincial Coordination Board		
		Mr. Nguyen Van Hung	Provincial Coordinator
		Mr. Nguyen Van Nam	Senior Officer of Rural Industry Division
		Mr. Do Gia Vinh	Coordination member
12.2	Nga Tan People's Committee - Nga Son District		
		Mr. Dao Trong Tuyen	Vice Chairman of Nga Tan CPC
		Mr. Bui Trong Linh	President of Farmer Union
		Mr. Truong Van Quyen	Head of Village 2
12.3	Quoc Dai Company- Hoang Hoa District (Bamboo and rattan production for export)		
		Mr. Bui Khac Nam	Deputy Director of Quoc Dai Company
12.4	Thanh Duc Company (silk production) - Thieu Hoa District		
		Mr. Hoang Viet Duc	Director of Thanh Duc Company
12.5	Thieu Do People's Committee - Thieu Hoa District		
		Mr. Hoang Binh Thuy	Head of Agriculture Service Cooperative
12.6	Provincial Cooperative Alliance		
		Mr. Do Xuan Thanh	Cooperative Alliance
		Mr. Le Hong Hai	Head of Planning and Promotion Division
12.7	Tan Tho People's Committee - Nong Cong District (Bamboo and Rattan)		
		Mrs. Nguyen Thi Tham	Head of Tan Tho Cooperative
		Mrs. Nguyen Thi Binh	President of Women Union- Tan Tho CPC
13	Nghe An Province		
13.1	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development		
		Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Chau	Vice chairman o Planning and Finance Division
		Mrs. Nguyen Kieu Anh	Provincial Police
		Mr. Nguyen Anh Hung	Senior/ Trainer
		Mr. Tran Van Ngoc	Provincial Coordinator/ Trainer
13.2	Duc Phong Company - Vinh City (Bamboo and Rattan)		
		Mr. Thai Dai Phong	Director of Duc Phong Company
		Mr. Thai Ba Phuong	Assistant of Duc Phong Company

Nr.	Organizations	Name	Position
13.3	Quynh Thach CPC - Quynh Luu District		
		Mr. Dau Duc Lan	President of Quynh Thach CPC
		Mr. Phan Thanh Dien	Vice President of Farmer Union
		Mrs. Nguyen Thi Xuan	Household
		Mrs. Nguyen Thi Binh	District Police
		Mrs. Phan Thi Nghi	Household
13.4	Dien Kim CPC- Dien Chau District (sericulture)		
		Mr. Phan Xuan Bang	Vice President of CPC
		Mr. Nguyen Van Truong	President of Farmer Union
		Mrs. Nguyen Thi Do	Household
		Mr. Ngo Tri Vong	Household
13.5	Chau Thang CPC- Quy Chau District		
		Mr. Sam Van Thai	Head of Agriculture Extension Division
		Mr. Sam Van Hung	Vice President of Chau Thang CPC
		Mr. Vang Anh Tuan	Cadastral of Agriculture
13.6	Hoa Tien Brocade Cooperative - Chau Tien Commune- Quy Chau District		
		Mr. Lo Van Giap	Vice President of Farmer Union
		Mr. Lo Van Nhi	Vice President of Chau Tien CPC
		Mrs. Sam Thi Bich	Head of Hoa Tien Cooperative
		Mrs. Lo Thi Nga	Vice chairman of Hoa Tien Cooperative
14	Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI)		
		Mrs. Le Thi Thu Thuy	Vice- Director of SME Promotion Center
		Mrs. Nguyen Thi Phuong Lan	SME Promotion Facilitator
15	Conference calls with MDF Development Fund and non-resident participating agencies		
15.1		Mrs. Paula Pelaez	Programme Advisor, MDG Achievement Fund Secretariat
15.2		Mr. Govind Venuprasad	Senior Trade Promotion Officer, International Trade Center (ITC)
15.3		Ms. Fulvia Farinelli	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
16	Interview with Swiss-funded projects implemented through VIETCRAFT/VIETRADE		
		Mr. Alain Chevalier	Former Senior Technical Adviser, former ITC Representative in Vietnam