

SECTOR BRIEF

BAMBOO SHOOT

About GREAT

The Gender Responsive Equitable Agriculture and Tourism (GREAT) program is building the social and economic resilience of ethnic minority women in Northwest Vietnam. GREAT partners with the private sector, government agencies and civil society to unlock opportunities for women's economic empowerment in the agriculture and tourism sectors. Funded by the Australian Government, GREAT is delivered in partnership with the Provincial People's Committees of Son La and Lao Cai provinces. GREAT began in 2017 and is a 10-year program with an investment of AUD 67.4 million.



BAMBOO SHOOT

A versatile forest product with strong market appeal

Vietnam is the world's third-largest exporter of bamboo and the nation's bamboo processing sector is increasingly well-developed. Over the next five years, domestic consumption is expected to double and the global bamboo market is forecast to grow to USD 12.2 billion by 2029. Global demand and trade agreements such as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and the European Union - Vietnam Free Trade Agreement can be expected to drive yet further market growth.

Bamboo shoots have long been harvested in Vietnam's forests, including in the northwest, but typically on a small scale. In the more remote areas of Son La and Lao Cai provinces, where there is a high proportion of poorer households, many of ethnic minority origin, bamboo shoots represent an important source of income for households living in the buffer zones of protected forests. Bamboo shoot production and processing build on well-established traditional skills, and the sector has significant potential for enhancing the participation of ethnic minority producers and ethnic minority women in particular.

In recent years, bamboo shoot processors have recognised the potential for sourcing bamboo shoots from Lao Cai and Son La, as they look to secure supply for both domestic and international markets. Securing

those supplies at the quantity and quality needed requires better and more sustainable production and harvesting techniques. Critical to the long term resilience of the sector, and the incomes of those who depend on it, is ensuring that the expansion of production comes with appropriate measures and practices to protect the local environment.

The bamboo shoot sector offers significant local employment opportunities. GREAT estimates that enhanced processing facilities can provide up to six permanent jobs per hectare of bamboo shoot production. Some bamboo shoot varieties can be harvested just two years from planting, for three to five months per year, and last up to 20 years. This makes it an appealing crop for local producers.

GREAT AND THE BAMBOO SHOOTS SECTOR

Work to date

Between 2017 and 2022, GREAT partnered with the Centre for Rural Economy Development (CRED) and the Forest Protection Department of Van Ban district, Lao Cai province, to support ethnic minority women engaged in bamboo shoot production by establishing links with lead companies.

The investment generated positive impacts on women's economic empowerment, including:



Reducing the work burden for women, for example through the introduction of energy-saving boiling equipment.



Supporting women to take leadership positions in cooperative and collective groups.



Gender equality campaigns that led to men sharing more household tasks.

Moving forward

Building on its understanding of the bamboo shoot market system, GREAT is continuing to work with the Lao Cai and Son La provincial authorities and private sector partners, to support the inclusive development of the sector. Work is focusing on the following three intervention areas:



Building scale in sustainable bamboo shoot cultivation and production to attract private sector investment

To build a sustainable sector and the critical mass to attract private sector investment, there needs to be a sufficient and concentrated scale of bamboo shoot production geared toward consumer needs and preferences. This intervention aims to improve incomes and jobs for local people, particularly ethnic minority women, as well as contributing to the government's reforestation goals. Underpinning the approach is building strong linkages between producer groups and lead companies.



Improving seedling supply to support the rapid expansion of production areas

GREAT is working with lead businesses such as Kim Boi and Yen Thanh to improve the local supply of affordable and quality seedlings by:

- Identifying women producer groups and cooperatives that can develop local nurseries or support the expansion of existing nurseries in pilot districts.
- Mobilising investment and knowledge from lead businesses for setting up and transferring nursery skills to women producer groups or cooperatives.
- Business management capacity building and mentoring for local nursery managers.



Strengthening women-led producer groups and businesses and connecting to high-end markets

To better structure the sector and connect ethnic minority women producers with lead companies, emerging women-led producer groups are being supported and their capacity strengthened so that they can better engage in and benefit from value-addition to their products. GREAT is working with partners to establish new producer groups and deliver ongoing technical training in sustainable bamboo shoot planting, harvesting and semi-processing skills. This includes District Forest Control Divisions strengthening their provision of training on sustainable bamboo shoot harvesting from natural forests.



PARTNERS

GREAT is working with the CRED Tourism and Agriculture Solution Consulting Company (CRED TAC), government agencies such as Van Ban Forest Control Division in Lao Cai and Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in Son La and businesses to build and strengthen the bamboo shoot sector. As the lead technical co-facilitator, the role of CRED TAC is to:

-  Support sector planning for expanding production and processing areas.
-  Facilitate seedling supply market development.
-  Strengthen producer groups, cooperatives and local sourcing capacity and business linkages.
-  Facilitate local stakeholder engagement in by-product development.
-  Lead overall project management and reporting.





KEY EXPECTED RESULTS

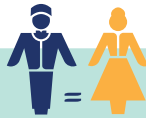


5,000

hectares of bamboo shoot are developed

15%

increase in the number of women participating in household expense decision-making



5,040

households have increased income



80%

of women participating in production or services provision have confidence in their technical capacity

7,200

farmer households are trained to improve technical capacity in production and service provision



Environment and climate change

Bamboo is important to many tropical environments and its development offers potential to support environmental outcomes whilst also providing local communities with income and jobs. Bamboo plays a unique role in preserving ecosystems, is a potential catalyst for strengthening the circular economy, and represents a vehicle for both green growth and sustainable development. Importantly for Northwest Vietnam, bamboo can grow on degraded and sloping land, supporting soil conservation and allowing farmers to diversify crop portfolios without over-stressing fragile agricultural land.



Contact information

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