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You are here: [Home](#) > [Creating Shared Value](#) > [Case studies](#) > [All Case Studies](#) > More Coffee with Less Water, Vietnam

More Coffee with Less Water, Vietnam

Country : Vietnam

Impact Area

- Nutrition
- Water
- Rural Development
- Environmental sustainability
- Compliance
- Community engagement

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Background

<p>More Coffee with Less Water, Vietnam</p>

Vietnam is the world's leading coffee producer and the largest global supplier of Robusta coffee for Nestlé. Nestlé Vietnam's Farmer Connect Programme currently supports over 12,000 coffee farmers, providing them technical assistance and training increasing productivity.

Groundwater, the main source of coffee irrigation during the dry months in Vietnam, is declining rapidly due to overuse, and could potentially affect coffee productivity in the long term. In order to develop sustainable water use practices, Nestlé partnered with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Western Highlands Agriculture and Forestry Science Institute (WASI), [International Water Management Institute](#) (IWMI) and Embden, Drishaus and Epping Consulting (EDE) to conduct a study on the irrigation practices in coffee farming in the Dak Lak Province.

Programme description

The 3 year study, which began in 2010, was developed with the aim of measuring consumptive use of water at the farm level, developing best practices and disseminating recommendations to improve water use. It was based on climatic data and interviews with over 300 coffee farmers. Through different scenarios of combinations between groundwater and rainfall used for irrigation, the study developed recommendations resulting in even more than 50% water savings versus conventional practices.

Value to Society

Nestlé will implement the recommended best practices within its Farmer Connect network of 12'000 farmers and will work with other key local stakeholders for wider dissemination and scale up. Adoption of best practices will allow more sustainable use of water resources, higher income for farmers through cost reduction linked to labour and energy and even higher yields compared to the current average.

Value to Nestlé

Water is currently recognised as the most critical issue for sustainable coffee growing in Vietnam and Nestlé purchases roughly 20% of total Robusta coffee produced in Vietnam for its global activities. Adoption of efficient water practices will help ensure a sustainable and secure supply chain.

Next Steps

Findings from the study were presented on October 10th 2013 at a national conference at Buon Ma Thuot, Vietnam which was attended key stakeholders from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), the Department of Crop Production (DoCP), the National Agriculture Extension Centre (NAEC) and other government bodies along with leading research organisations, coffee trader associations and coffee farmers. The outcome of the conference has been a full recognition of the study findings and also a call for immediate action to formalise government approval and broad introduction of the research findings. A multi-sectoral effort for grass root implementation has been initiated to enable sustainable water management and higher income while increasing coffee production.

UN Millenium Development Goal

- 1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- 2 Achieve universal primary education
- 3 Promote gender equality and empower women
- 4 Reduce child mortality
- 5 Improve maternal health
- 6 Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- 7 Ensure environmental sustainability
- 8 Develop global partnerships