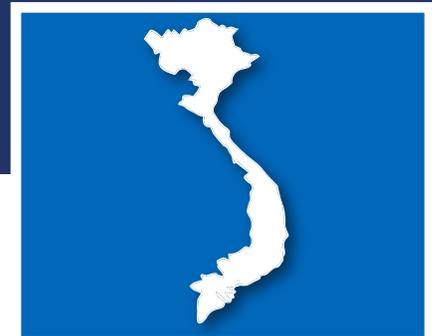




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CLEAN CITIES, BLUE OCEAN VIETNAM

KEY FACTS

4th largest global contributor to ocean plastic pollution

More than **39** million pounds of plastic waste generated each day

In some areas, only **40-60%** of waste is secured in landfills

THE CHALLENGE

Vietnam is the fourth-largest source of ocean plastics pollution. Its growing urban populations, demand for consumer goods, and dependencies on single-use plastics continue to outpace its waste system capacities, leading to environmental leakage. With rapid urbanization, especially in the last decade, Vietnam's urban population is expected to surpass its rural population by 2050. Despite relatively high waste collection rates in urban centers, it is estimated that roughly 27% of urban residents live in low-income and densely populated areas where collection can be challenging to deliver consistently.

Vietnam has a coastline of over 2,100 miles and a seat on the Mekong and Red Rivers, where plastics are picked up from communities along their paths and ultimately flow through to the ocean. Strengthening waste management in Vietnam and reducing its impact is critical as areas like the Mekong Delta are major sources of the ocean's plastics. To address the already crisis levels of plastics in marine and other natural environments and prepare for continued urban growth, Vietnam must shift to a more robust waste collection, recycling, and disposal system with **enhanced infrastructure, more sustainable production and consumption habits, and strengthened or alternative markets for recycled and reusable products.**

OUR APPROACH

To address these challenges, USAID's Clean Cities, Blue Ocean (CCBO) program offers **technical assistance, capacity building support, and implements locally-led solutions through its grants program.** CCBO seeks

to develop, test, and implement new models that promote the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle) and enhance solid waste management (SWM); facilitate partnerships and investment around key needs, such as infrastructure; and strengthen local systems to build Vietnam's resiliency and self-reliance. Where possible, CCBO seeks to learn from and expand on the success of proven initiatives by local government, non-governmental organizations, and USAID's Municipal Waste and Recycling Program.

CCBO's engagement in Vietnam comes at a pivotal time for progress on plastic pollution. Over the past few years, plastic pollution has become one of the top priorities for governmental and grassroots efforts. In late 2019, Vietnam issued its *National Action Plan on Marine Plastic Debris Management until 2030*, which CCBO will aim to support—including its efforts to scale good practices in plastic waste collection, separation, transportation, and treatment in coastal and marine areas; facilitate the development of suitable solid waste storage facilities and collection sites to ensure safety as well as environmental protection; mobilize international and private sector partnerships to produce alternative products, increase recycling, and shift to a more circular economy; and research, develop, apply, and transfer technologies and techniques to treat and minimize ocean plastics.

CCBO's four, guiding objectives are to:

- **Promote 3R practices and strengthen local and regional markets** for recycled plastics;
- **Build social and behavior change** for 3R's and sustainable SWM;
- **Increase capacity and effective governance** for SWM and recycling systems; and
- **Facilitate public-private partnerships** and multi-stakeholder alliances to bolster the program's impact, scalability, and sustainability.

Informal waste collectors (IWCs), of which a large portion are women, play a significant role in SWM in Vietnam. Through waste collection and sorting, they divert waste away from landfills and contribute to communities' local economies, public health and safety, and environments. Despite their critical roles, they are commonly

underrepresented, face poor working conditions and social stigmas, and women working in the sector earn far less than their male counterparts. Across its approach and activities, CCBO works to support and enhance the livelihoods of IWCs, as well as advance women's economic empowerment as part of the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative by improving social and economic conditions that impede women's ability to work successfully in SWM and recycling jobs.



Informal waste collectors play a significant role in SWM in Vietnam. Credit: MWRP/ Nguyen Minh Duc

ENGAGEMENT SITES

In Vietnam, CCBO is piloting solutions to stop the flow of plastic pollution to the waters within and surrounding the country, including the Red River, South China Sea, the Gulf of Thailand, through work in:

- **Phú Quốc** - Vietnam's largest island, with a population of just over one hundred thousand and a burgeoning tourist sector.
- **Da Nang** - A coastal city with a number of ongoing local government and industry initiatives to become a greener, more sustainable city, aiming to reduce the over 1,000 tons of waste it generates each day.
- **Bien Hoa** - Located twenty miles northeast of Ho Chi Minh City, near the Mekong River Delta, Bien Hoa is an important and rapidly growing industrial and commercial area.

- **Hue City** - One of Vietnam's larger urban areas, located on the Central Coast of Vietnam. Hue carries historical significance and is a popular area for tourism.

ACTIVITIES

In Vietnam, CCBO will design and implement holistic strategies that address each step in the waste value chain—from production to its end use—prioritizing the most inclusive, economically viable, and environmentally sustainable solutions. In the first year of the project, CCBO will:

- Conduct critical **site-level research** to understand engagement sites' specific challenges in SWM and enforcement, behavior change, and barriers to private sector investment;
- **Award grants** to local partners to begin implementing effective, locally-led solutions to achieve program objectives; and
- Provide **additional technical assistance and capacity building support** using international and local program staff.

ABOUT CLEAN CITIES, BLUE OCEAN

USAID's Clean Cities, Blue Ocean is a five-year global program (2019-2024) to combat ocean plastic pollution. CCBO is the Agency's flagship program on ocean plastic pollution, working at the global level and in specific, rapidly urbanizing focal countries to target ocean plastics directly at their source. The program is implemented by Tetra Tech, in partnership with a consortium of organizations that include the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), The Manoff Group, and Ocean Conservancy. Other partners include national and local government, members of the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and local women's and youth organizations.

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