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SCHOOLS STEM THE TIDE OF PLASTIC POLLUTION, SPARK WASTE REDUCTION

In the coastal city of Hue, Vietnam, plastic consumption and unsound solid waste management practices were leading to an unmanageable pollution problem. Hue produced nearly 20 tons of plastic waste every day.¹ Local schools, for example, consumed large volumes of single-use plastics, did not recycle plastic waste, and had difficulty managing large amounts of trash. With USAID support through the Municipal Waste Recycling Program (MWRP), students, teachers, and school administrators took steps to mitigate this pollution crisis, now and for the future. Participating schools had demonstrated interest in championing behavior change in waste management and plastic recycling.

SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS FIND SOLUTIONS

With funding from MWRP, the Centre for Social Research and Development (CSRD) trained 15,600 students, teachers, and school administrators in nine elementary, middle, and high schools in Hue on plastic waste recycling. The schools began recycling their canteens' plastic waste and formed environment clubs. Youth groups and teachers organized training and outreach activities in their schools and communities, such as poster competitions, fashion shows using recycled materials, urban sculptures, and beach cleanups, to heighten awareness of the plastic pollution problem and of appropriate steps to reduce waste.

SCHOOLS ADOPT CURRICULA ON PLASTIC WASTE

With support from the Hue Department of Education and Training, CSRD designed tailored curricula for schools on the impact of plastic pollution on Hue's rivers and nearby ocean. Baseline and follow-up studies revealed that, thanks to the students' increased understanding of plastic waste and the importance of recycling, their families began separating waste at home. CSRD's high-visibility public events attracted coverage online and via newspaper, television, and radio. The media attention attracted strong interest from other schools and the provincial government (i.e., Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee) in Hue. As a result, in 2020, the city's educational system, which encompasses more than 35 schools, will replicate CSRD's curricula on plastic waste challenges and recycling's importance.

¹ CSRD (2020). *Municipal Waste Recycling Program to Reduce Plastic Pollution*. <https://www.csr.vn/projects/municipal-waste-recycling-program-to-reduce-plastics-pollution-of-the-oceans>

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Trained 15,600 students, teachers, and school administrators** on plastic waste recycling.
- **Reduced single-use plastic consumption** in canteens of the nine schools by mandating eat-in lunches, introducing reusable cups and plates, adding drinking stations, and more.
- **More than 10 tons of recycled waste collected** from nine schools in Hue.

PROJECT: No Plastics: City to River to Coast | **DURATION:** March 31, 2018 – July 31, 2019 | **IMPLEMENTER:** Centre for Social Research and Development (CSRD) | **LOCATION:** Hue City, Vietnam | **BUDGET:** \$72,780