



USAID WILDLIFE ASIA

CAMPAIGN REPORT: NO TO IVORY SOUVENIRS AND GIFTS

October 2021

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Cover Photo Caption: Image from No to Ivory Souvenirs and Gifts campaign video. Photo Credit: USAID Wildlife Asia

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BCC	Behavior Change Communication
CWT	Combating Wildlife Trafficking
DNP	Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation
INEB	International Network of Engaged Buddhists
SBCC	Social and Behavior Change Communication
UWA	USAID Wildlife Asia

SUMMARY

Campaign Name:

No to Ivory Souvenirs and Gifts

Key Message:

Bringing ivory in and out of Thailand is illegal.

Geographic Scope:

Thailand

Target Audience:

Foreign Travelers (focusing on Chinese tourists) in Thailand staying in Anantara, Avani and Sukosol Hotels

Start-End Date:

September 2019 to present

Media Channel:

In-room TV channels of Anantara, Avani and Sukosol Hotels

Funds Leveraged:

\$5,800 (cost-share from Minor Group of Hotels)

Impact:

No study to date

INTRODUCTION

USAID WILDLIFE ASIA

The USAID Wildlife Asia Activity aims to end wildlife crime in Asia by employing a comprehensive approach through improved regional cooperation. The value of illegal wildlife crime globally is estimated to be between \$5 billion and \$23 billion annually. This organized wildlife crime destroys wildlife populations and wildlife-based livelihoods, creating social and political instability.

The Activity's desired outcomes include reduction in consumer demand for wildlife parts and products; improved enforcement of existing laws, policies and agreements related to wildlife crime; passing and implementation of new laws, policies or reforms; improved cooperation and collaboration among regional, international, and inter-institutional law enforcement; and increased collaboration and coordination between development partners and USG agencies involved in combating wildlife trafficking (CWT).

The project applies a social and behavior change communication (SBCC) approach to plan, implement and evaluate demand reduction campaigns. The SBCC framework uses a consumer research-based planning process and a socio-ecological model of change to identify the tipping points for behavior change. It operates through three strategies – advocacy, social mobilization and behavior change communication (BCC) – to achieve its behavior change objectives.

For consumer demand reduction activities, USAID Wildlife Asia focus countries are China, Thailand and Vietnam. In China, the project is focusing on reduction of demand for parts and products from four focal species – elephant ivory, pangolin, rhino and tiger. In Thailand, the focus is on reducing demand for elephant ivory and tiger products. In Vietnam, the focus is on rhino.

WHY APPLY SBCC TO REDUCE DEMAND?

Activities addressing the illegal wildlife trade have largely focused on supply and regulations of products but have not addressed the root of consumer demand (Drury, 2009), leading to continuing high demand for wildlife products. Meanwhile communication campaigns have primarily targeted the general population, resulting in high levels of awareness, but often failing to target buyers/consumers or address the factors that drive their demand for these products (USAID Wildlife Asia Situation Analysis 2017). Therefore, USAID Wildlife Asia sought to apply SBCC principles and approaches to effectively target consumers and potential consumers, understand the motivations underlying purchase and use behaviors, and move from raising awareness to reducing desire and demand for wildlife parts and products.

CAMPAIGN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The *No to Ivory Souvenirs and Gifts* campaign was produced as part of a collaboration with the Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation (GTAEF)¹ of the Minor Group, owners of Anantara and Avani Hotels in Thailand and other countries, with technical support and cost-share from USAID Wildlife Asia. The campaign targeted tourists, focusing on Chinese tourists, visiting Thailand to:

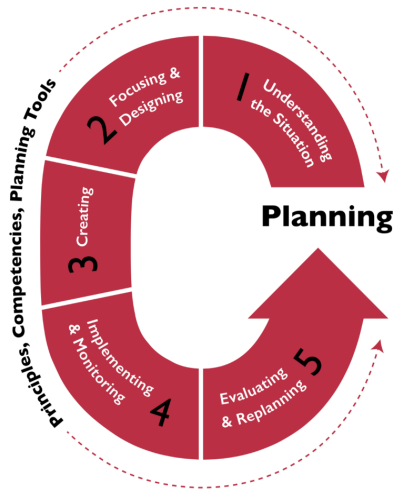
- Raise awareness that bringing ivory products to and from Thailand is against the law
- Inform target audiences that buying of protected wildlife (i.e., tiger, rhino, pangolin) and their products is a crime punishable under Thai laws
- Discourage them from buying ivory and other wildlife product souvenirs or gifts

¹ GTAEF is the corporate foundation of the Thailand-based Minor Group, which owns and manages a portfolio of 161 hotels globally, with large hotel chains in Thailand

CAMPAIGN PROCESS

SBCC is a planned process. USAID Wildlife Asia SBCC campaigns were designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated following the 5-step SBCC planning process outlined in the SBCC Demand Reduction Guidebook (USAID Wildlife Asia, 2020) and shown in Figure 1 below.

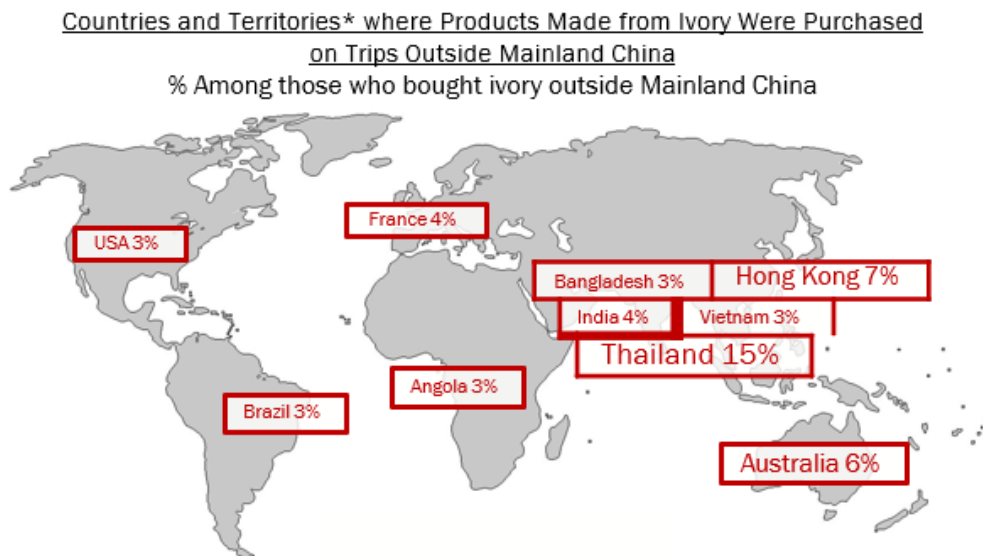
Figure 1. SBCC Planning Process



STEP I. UNDERSTANDING THE SITUATION

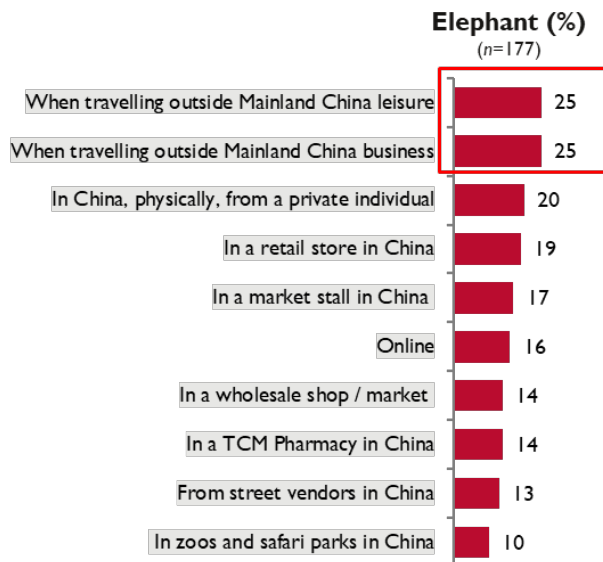
China imposed a domestic ban on the ivory trade at the end of 2017 and an updated Wildlife Protection Law in 2017 imposed stricter penalties on consumption of illegal wildlife in China. As a result, Thailand has become a top location for accessing elephant ivory products among Chinese consumers (Figure 2) according to a September 2018 report by TRAFFIC and WWF. Based on data from the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), between January and July 2018, Thailand received 6.8 million visitors from China, a 21% increase from the same period in 2017.

Figure 2. Map showing countries where ivory products were purchased by Chinese tourists, according to data from a TRAFFIC and WWF report, “Demand Under the Ban - China Ivory Consumption Research Post-Ban 2018”



Based on USAID Wildlife Asia’s 2018 Research Study on Consumer Demand for Elephant, Pangolin, Rhino and Tiger Parts and Products in China, 25% of respondents purchased ivory during travels outside China for leisure, and the same proportion purchased ivory during travel for business (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Self-reported locations for purchase of elephant ivory by Chinese consumers



STEP 2. FOCUSING AND DESIGNING

Given that Chinese consumers were frequently purchasing ivory products when traveling outside Mainland China and that Thailand was the most common location for making these purchases, the project identified Thai hotels as effective channels through which to reach the target audience. Specifically, the project partnered with Thailand-based Minor Group, which owns and manages a portfolio of 161 hotels globally, with large hotel chains – Anantara and Avani – in Thailand for this campaign. This partnership aligned with the mission of the Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation (GTAEF), the Minor Group’s corporate foundation. The GTAEF is a Thai registered not-for-profit foundation, set up in 2005 in cooperation with Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp and Resort, that assists captive elephants, improving their lives and welfare, while also taking part in conservation and wild elephant programs to ensure the survival of the wild herd.

STEP 3. CREATING

Through the collaboration with GTAEF, the No Ivory Souvenirs and Gifts campaign was designed to reach targeted tourists with demand reduction messaging in a friendly, non-confrontational way. The GTAEF team noted that since will be shown in hotel channels, the tone should be friendly, appealing and understandable to tourists from various countries, not only China. This was achieved through creation of a 60-second animated video to be aired through the in-house TV channel of the Minor Group hotels. The video features an egret, named Sandee, telling the story of his elephant friend Kacha who faces danger of extinction due to ivory use. Sandee also reminds viewers that bringing ivory in or out of Thailand is illegal. The video can be accessed at this link; <https://www.usaidwildlifeasia.org/campaigns/no-to-ivory-souvenirs-and-gifts/no-to-ivory-souvenirs-and-gifts>

USAID Wildlife Asia followed a collaborative creative process for the video, with the draft storyboard presented to the Director of the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP), Somkiat Soontornpitakkool, on April 24, 2019, following which approval to place the DNP logo on the video was granted. USAID also provided feedback on the storyboard,

with requested revisions made prior to pretest of the video. The pretest was conducted by USAID Wildlife Asia in May 2019 among a small number of Chinese tourists in Bangkok to determine understandability and appeal of the video. USAID approved the final version of the video in June 2019.

STEP 4. IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING

The No Ivory Souvenirs and Gifts campaign video was introduced to the public and the press on September 20, 2019 as part of the launch of the larger Beautiful Without Ivory campaign. The video was aired on the in-house TV channels of Anantara Hotels in Thailand

On November 29, 2019, during a meeting with USAID Wildlife Asia, Ms. Marisa Sukosol Nunbhakdi, Executive Vice President of Sukosol Hotels agreed to air the video in Sukosol Hotels in Thailand – specifically in two Sukosol hotels in Bangkok and three hotels in Pattaya. On January 13, 2020 Sukosol Hotels started placement of the video in these hotels which have a total of 1,040 rooms. Sukosol added a last slide to the video, stating “Supported by Sukosol”.

Figure 4. Final still of the adapted video showing “Supported by Sukosol” accompanied by the logos of the hotels managed by the hospitality group



Altogether, the campaign video has been aired in a total of 25 hotels with 5,050 rooms throughout Thailand for a period of .

STEP 5. EVALUATING AND REPLANNING

The No to Ivory Souvenirs and Gifts effectively leveraged the support of private sector partners in delivery of the campaign’s message. The project leveraged US \$4,900 from the GTAEF which developed and produced the video. Airing of the video in the Anantara and Sukosol hotels were partner counterpart costs.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic which started in early 2020 resulted in domestic and international travel restrictions in Thailand that led to a significant reduction in hotel occupancy and temporary closure of hotels. Plans to expand dissemination of the video through tour operators, travel associations, airlines, and department stores also had to be suspended due to the impact of COVID-19. As of September 2021, the travel and tourism sector has not recovered and Chinese and other tourists are still not fully allowed into Thailand.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Reducing demand for ivory and other wildlife products among tourists in Thailand and Southeast Asia remains an important goal to counter wildlife trafficking. With easing of travel restriction, travelers are expected to start visiting Thailand and neighboring countries. Engaging and leveraging support from the hotel and resorts sector is important and cost-effective. This sector can readily target tourists and travelers from abroad who stay in their properties. Hotels have available channels to communicate messages to this captive audience of tourists. They can show short videos in their in-room TV channels or public areas like elevators, lobbies and restaurants. They can place attractive print materials in guest rooms and other public areas within their properties. Engaging this sector will sustain activities to discourage purchase of ivory and other souvenirs and gifts derived from wildlife.

ANNEX: RESOURCES

USAID Wildlife Asia. [Social and Behavior Change Communication \(SBCC\) Demand Reduction Guidebook](#). 2020.