

# BITI'S

## Modular and Circular Footwear Innovation

With the rise of fast fashion, Biti's, a well known Vietnamese footwear brand faces the challenge to keep up with the rising demands for constantly new designs as well as sustainability. After having joined a CIRCO track in 2024, Biti's has developed two new circular product concepts and engaged in a partnership with the fellow CIRCO alumni Reshare to collect used footwear at selected stores.

As Biti's was looking to keep up with customer preferences and deepen its sustainability efforts, they joined a CIRCO track in 2024.

Founded in 1982 and known for its enduring slogan, “*Nâng niu bàn chân Việt*” (Embracing Vietnamese feet), Biti's has accompanied generations of consumers. While Biti's products had long been valued for quality and durability, their traditional development process often taking up to 223 days and nearly 300 steps was increasingly misaligned with fast-changing consumer expectations. Customers frequently discarded entire pairs if a single part was damaged or didn't suit the occasion, and lengthy repair times often pushed them to buy new shoes instead. These trends reinforced Biti's belief that modularity, repairability, and customer empowerment are essential to the future of footwear.



Ms. Nguyen Minh Giang, Sustainability Director, Biti's



Decorative shoe charms made from rice-based modeling clay

*“The CIRCO training helped me understand and explain the difference between linear and circular business models. We were guided through a step-by-step method to map our challenges and co-create viable solutions. The first thing we did after the training was bring the model back to guide our internal teams. We realised we needed to engage the wider team to make the solution more practical and tailored to our business reality.” - Ms. Nguyen Minh Giang, Sustainability Director, Biti's.*

During the program, Biti's developed two new circular product concepts: a collection of recyclable decorative shoe charms designed to enhance user engagement, and a modular *Ethylene Vinyl Acetate (EVA)* shoe featuring a removable, sock-like inner layer for flexible use and customization. Both concepts are currently in the research and development phase, with their launch planned for October 2026.

The line of decorative shoe charms is made from rice-based modeling clay. They are safe, biodegradable, and durable, and are being positioned as limited-edition collectibles tied to special messages or themes. Biti's has focused on raising product visibility, exploring more sustainable materials, and developing targeted marketing for eco-conscious consumers.

*Image credit: Yunus Environment Hub Vietnam & Biti's*

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The boldest idea to emerge from the CIRCO training is a modular footwear concept made with environmentally friendly materials, where each component such as the sole, upper, lace, or lining can be replaced, upgraded, or customized. Embraced by the design team as a practical application of the Products that Last strategy, the concept is being developed into a new type of shoe consisting of two main parts: a molded recycled Ethylene Vinyl Acetate (EVA) outer shell and a soft, sock-like inner layer. Users will be able to wear the shell on its own or pair it with the inner layer, allowing for flexible use and creative mix-and-match color options.



Modular sample fitting R&D

In addition, Biti's is strengthening post-use recovery systems through its collaboration with **REshare**, a second-hand textile collection initiative focused on giving used items a second life. The partnership was formed after both Biti's and REshare participated in the CIRCO track, where they identified opportunities to work together.

As of mid-2025, after 6 months of implementation, the program has collected more than **24.7 tons** of all fashion wastes including used clothing, footwear and textile waste through **10 green collection points** in Ho Chi Minh City across Biti's retail network. Once gathered, items are sorted by REshare for reuse, resale, donation, or recycling, depending on their condition. In the next phase, Biti's and ReShare will extend the collection network with additional points across Ho Chi Minh City.



Used goods collection station in collaboration with Reshare on Biti's store system

CIRCO Hub Viet Nam was established as part of the global programme "Go Circular" which is commissioned by German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. Its objective is to support the transition to a Circular economy at global level and in the three partner countries: Colombia, Ghana, and Viet Nam. Go Circular works in three priority areas: i) Promoting innovation, ii) Scaling up solutions and iii) Action in global alliances. In Viet Nam Go Circular works closely with the Ministry of Finance (formerly Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) as the key political partner to disrupt the linear economy with circular business models.



Image credit: Yunus Environment Hub Vietnam & Biti's