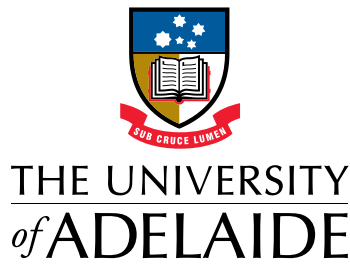




PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH FOR VEGETABLE QUALITY GUARANTEE AND SMALLHOLDER INCOME IMPROVEMENT

Author: Tho Thi Hanh Pham
Supervisors: Assoc. Prof. Katja Mikhailovich, Prof. John Spriggs, Dr. Suzie Newman



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To explore:

1. Difficulties of top-down standard - VietGAP
2. How alternative approaches to VietGAP can improve smallholders in applying, accessing high-end markets and creating better income

METHODOLOGY

Two phases of PAR process are conducted in a combination with value chain analysis (VCA) to test its appropriation as an alternative effective approach to VietGAP. See Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1: PAR cycle

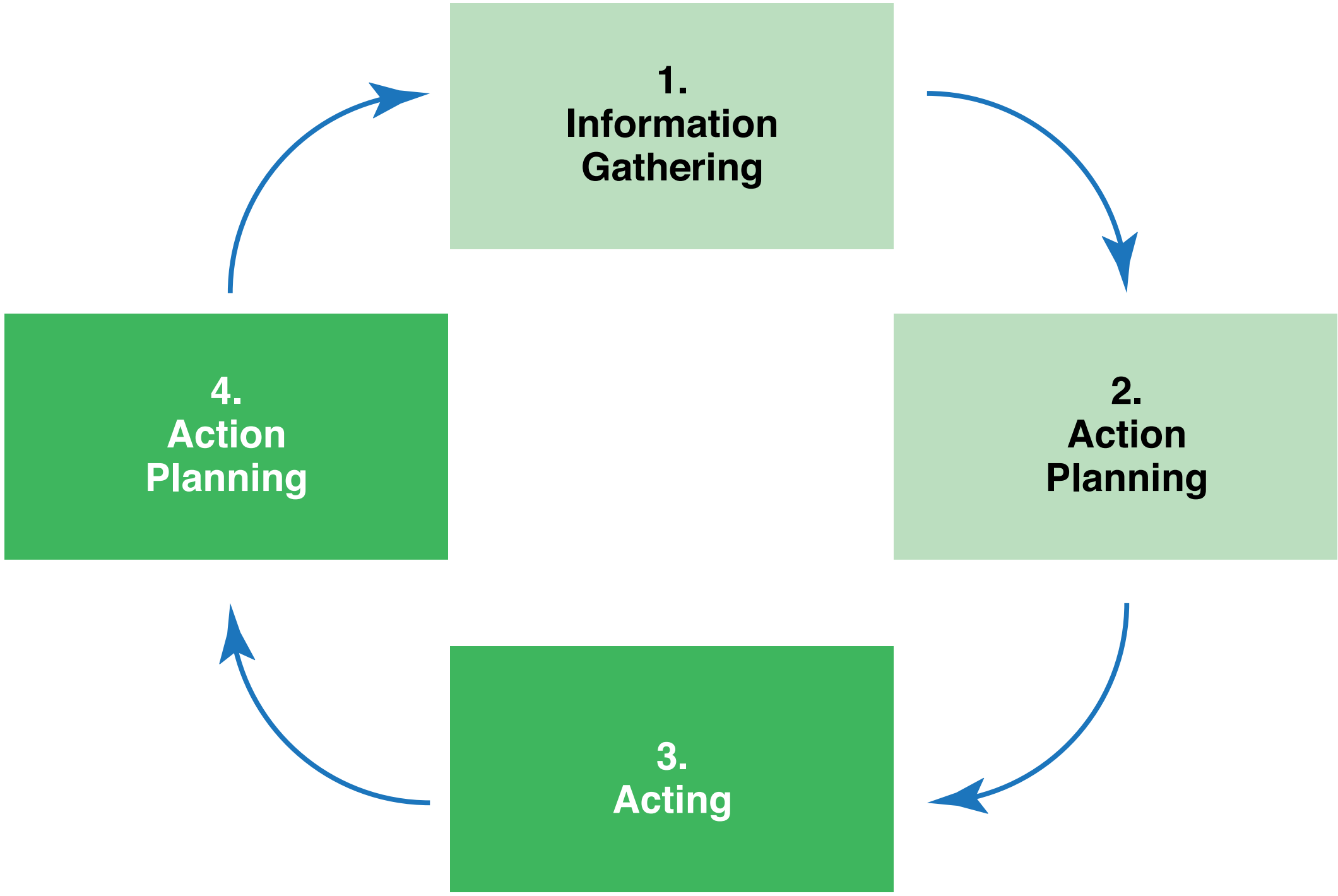
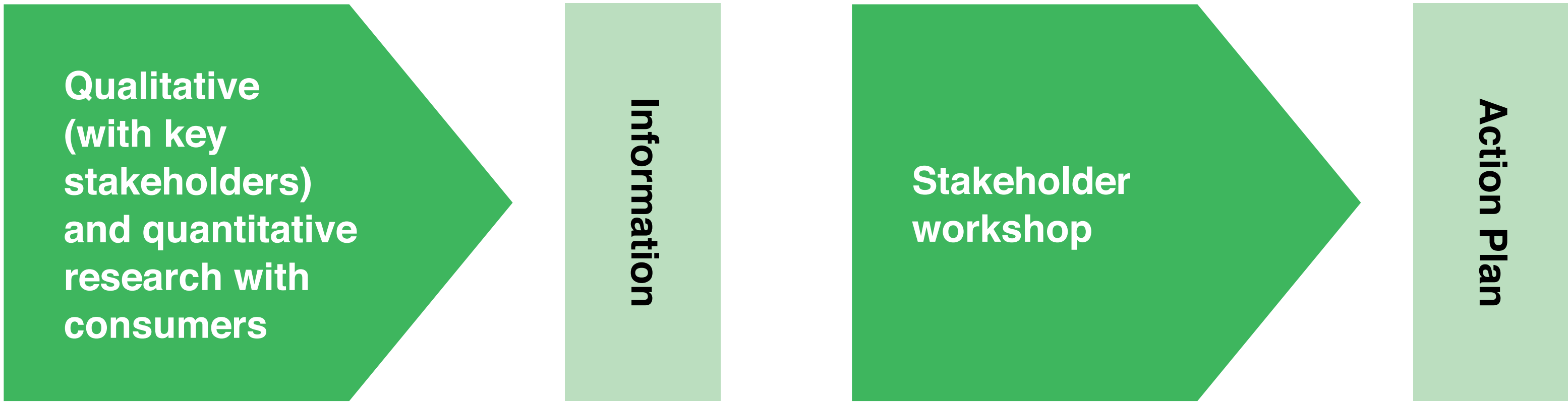


Figure 2: Research process



KEY FINDINGS

Difficulties of VietGAP to smallholders:

- Costly
- Complicated
- More facilities required
- Small proportion of products are sold in high-end market due to:
 - Not meeting retailers other requirements such as volume and consistency
 - No linkages made before producing
 - No trust of retailers on the products and the certification transparency.
 - Wet market is still popular compared to high-end market

Current alternative standards (basic GAP, safe, organic) suitable for smallholders in terms of cost and more simplified process but they also have challenges.

External factors influencing low adoption of VietGAP and also alternatives:

- A weak control system of production input, conventional production practices, and marketing practices.

- Unstrict sanction mechanism
- Adverse selection by consumers

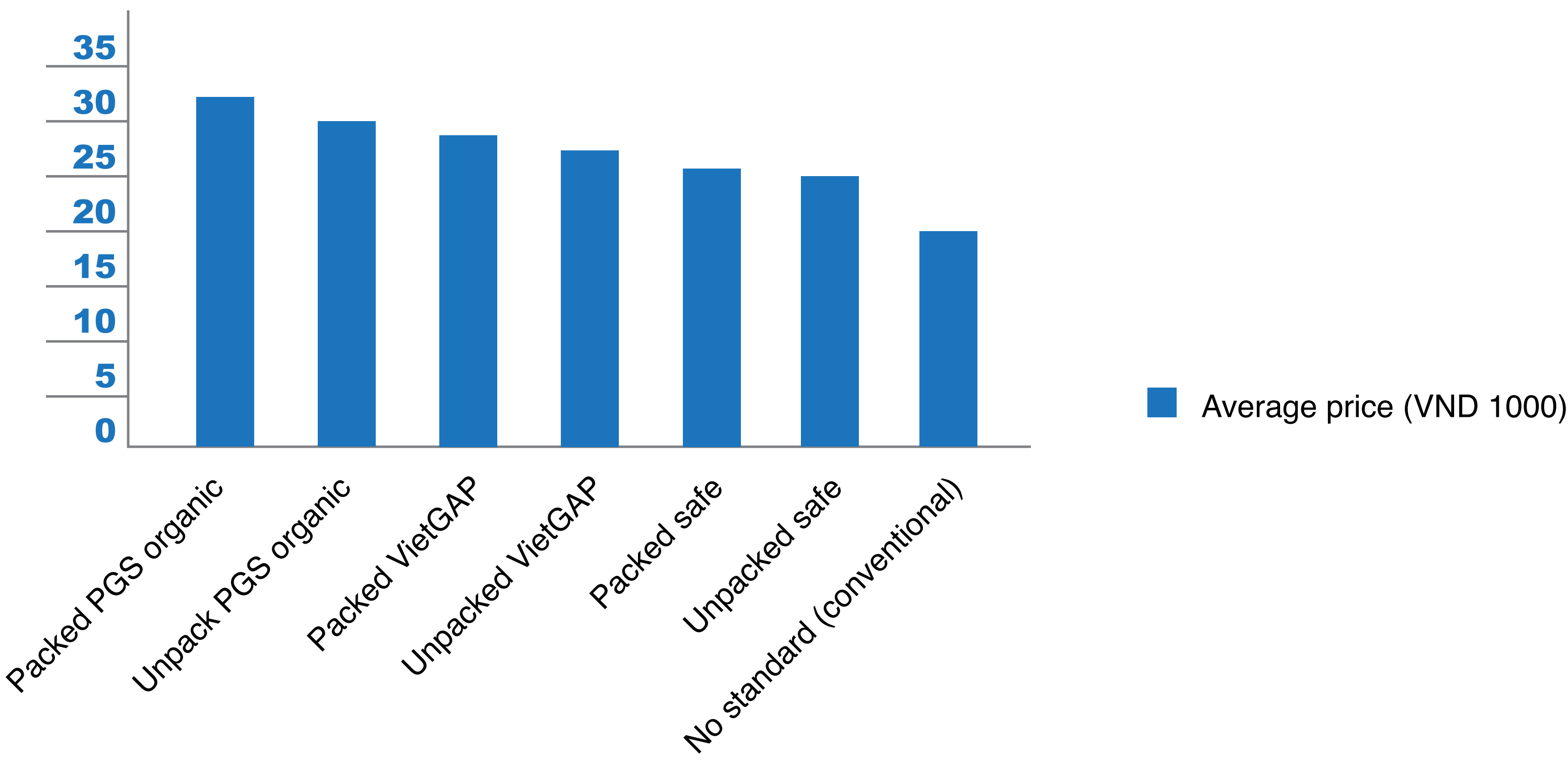
Opportunities to smallholders from consumer's perspectives:

- High-end market is considered a solution of consumers
- Shoppers in specialist shops have a loyalty
- Willing to pay if trust is built

Top 5 criteria for quality guarantee by consumers - a reference for action plan

1. Residue (most important)
2. Soil and water condition
3. Certificate
4. Government control
5. Production process record

Average price willing to pay for 1 kg of "Cai mo" (VND 1000)



PAR PROCESS IMPLICATION

- PAR and VCA are essential for a sustainable vegetable quality guarantee which should be done by a process to get interested stakeholders involved to make decision not by a development program.
- Promoting any designed standards as a campaign or political tasks might be failed to maintain its sustainability.
- Capacity building for smallholders and their group is required to implement chosen standard and negotiate with buyers
- In this case, PAR approach helps to build trust and share benefits of the chain stakeholders.

