

Quarterly Briefing Note

GMS TRIANGLE Project: Viet Nam



International
Labour
Organization

Duration:	June 2010 – June 2015
Key Partners:	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL), Viet Nam Association of Manpower Supply (VAMAS), Departments of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (DOLISA)
Target Sites:	Quang Ngai, Thanh Hoa, Ha Tinh, Bac Ninh and Phu Tho Provinces
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Background Information

With an estimated 1.1 – 1.5 million people entering the labour market each year, the Government of Viet Nam has a policy to promote labour migration as both an employment and poverty reduction strategy. The number of contract-based overseas workers increased from 300,000 in 2005 to 500,000 in 2011. About 200,000 of these migrants are employed in East Asia, with an additional 40,000 in the Middle East and North Africa. Specific targets have been set for the number and skill level of migrant workers deployed over the next ten years.

The developmental impact of migration in Viet Nam is significant. According to the World Bank, Viet Nam is the 9th highest recipient of remittances in the world, receiving US\$11 billion in 2013.¹ Nine provinces with a concentration of designated 'poor districts' are eligible to apply for subsidies to facilitate overseas migration. These incentives include loans and financial assistance for language training, supplementary vocational skills training, health checks, and other services.

Although this has led to an increase in the number of workers heading abroad, a number of gaps in the system remain. In particular, potential migrants and intending migrants should be better informed about the costs and benefits of migration, and how they can better protect themselves throughout the migration cycle. There are considerable differences in the levels of knowledge and awareness between areas that have a tradition of migration and the 'poor districts' in which migration is being newly promoted.

Population: 86.9 million

Labour Force: 47.4 million

Estimated total migrant workers abroad:
500,000

Departures of migrant workers Jan-May 2014:
45,458 (16,568 women)

Major destinations in Asia:

Taiwan, China: 28,265

Japan: 6,659 (including trainees and skilled workers)

Malaysia: 2,679

Republic of Korea: 2,595

Source: Department for Overseas Labour, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, May 2014

There are increasing irregular migration flows to China, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Cambodia, Thailand and beyond. In addition, there are concerns about the number of Vietnamese workers who are overstaying as undocumented migrant workers (in Republic of Korea and Taiwan, China). The irregular status of these migrants increases their vulnerability to exploitation and limits the channels available to them to seek assistance.

¹ <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1288990760745/MigrationandDevelopmentBrief21.pdf>

Key Achievements in the Previous Quarter (April – June 2014)

- In collaboration with United Nations Action for Cooperation against Trafficking in Persons (UNACT), World Vision and ILO Forced Labour Action in the Asian Region (FLARE) project, the ILO GMS TRIANGLE project supported DOLAB to conduct training for recruitment agencies, local authorities and social partners on forced labour and combatting human trafficking on 17-18 April 2014 in Hue. 33 participants (16 women; 17 men) attended the training. The participants were able to identify problems in the work orders and contracts that could lead to situations of forced labour or other rights abuses. Recruitment agencies identified a number of actions to take in order to prevent trafficking and forced labour, including developing a standard contract; promoting greater solidarity among recruitment agencies to prevent cost reductions at the expense of rights protection; informing migrants of their rights and encouraging them to keep contact with the recruitment agency once in the destination country; and delivery of training on the Code of Conduct.
- Results-based Monitoring and Evaluation Training was held for the Employment Service Centres (ESCs) and DOLISAs of Bac Ninh (5 May), Thanh Hoa (8 May), Ha Tinh (10 May), Quang Ngai (12 May) and Phu Tho (14 May) with 78 attendees in total (32 women; 46 men). The MRC staff were introduced to practical tools including migrant workers' complaints and beneficiaries' tracing forms to collect and analyse data using participatory methods to assess the impact of services provided at the MRCs.
- From 12-27 May, a field study on actual functions of complaint mechanisms in settling complaints and responding to grievances of workers was conducted in Quang Ngai, Thanh Hoa and Ha Tinh by the Viet Nam Association Judicial Support for the Poor and related departments of MOLISA (Legal Department, Inspectorate and DOLAB). A report on the current legislation and policies relating to complaint mechanisms to address grievances on the recruitment of migrant workers is being drafted by the Legal Department and will inform future policy development. Both activities are supported by the GMS TRIANGLE project.
- A study visit on the movement of irregular migrant workers to China, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Thailand was conducted by a consultant and the NPC in Thanh Hoa and Ha Tinh from 7-10 May. This will supplement data on irregular migration collected from the two provinces.
- The draft MOU between VGCL and Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC) was completed from the Vietnamese side and is ready for bilateral negotiation and final agreement.

Main Activities in the Next Quarter (July – September 2014)

- A workshop to verify the research findings in the report on complaint mechanisms to be held in Hanoi in July, and submitted to tripartite stakeholders for consideration in policy formulation.
- The exchange visit of MTUC and VGCL to negotiate and sign the bilateral MOU to provide support for migrant workers is scheduled for the next quarter.
- The MRC Operations Manual will be printed for roll out in September.
- The Pre-Departure Training Curricula for Malaysia and Taiwan, China will be printed and the first Training-of-Trainers for recruitment agency trainers held in August-September.
- A workshop to launch and publicize the ranking of 50 recruitment agencies according to compliance with the COC will be held in Hanoi in August.
- Ongoing support will be provided for DOLAB to review five areas of the law on Contract-based Overseas Workers through research and consultations with tripartite stakeholders and relevant national and international organizations.
- Training on forced labour and trafficking for Project Advisory Committee members and key staff of MOLISA and the provinces is scheduled for July.