



International
Labour
Organization

Quarterly Briefing Note

GMS TRIANGLE Project: Viet Nam

Duration:	June 2010 – June 2015
Key Partners:	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), Vietnam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL), Vietnam 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. Each year, approximately US\$1.6 billion is sent in remittances. 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.

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

Population:	86.9 million
Labour Force:	47.4 million

- **Estimate of migrant workers abroad:**
500,000
- **Departures of migrant workers in the first 8 months of 2014:**
73,727
- **Major destinations of departures in Asia in the first 8 months 2014:**
 - Taiwan (China): 44,535
 - Japan: 12,606 (including trainees and skilled workers)
 - Republic of Korea: 4,615
 - Malaysia: 3,833
 - Saudi Arabia: 2,407

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

Main Activities (July-September 2014)

- On 10 July, the validation workshop on the preliminary report on the current situation of complaint mechanisms was held by the Legal Department of MOLISA and the Viet Nam Association for Judicial Support for the Poor. 34 participants (19 men and 15 women) from Government and civil society attended, including migrant workers. Based on the findings of the report, participants discussed the draft Prime Minister's decree on complaint mechanisms on labour issues, vocational training and sending workers abroad. The ILO has provided inputs into the draft decree, which is expected to be adopted in October.
- A two-day 'Media Workshop on Safe Labour Migration' was organized with the Viet Nam Journalists' Association in Quang Binh on 4-5 August. 37 journalists (21 women and 16 men) shared knowledge and skills on reporting on migration issues. The rights of migrant workers under international law and the complaint mechanisms were presented. Major issues that were discussed included social insurance for cross-border migrant workers, exploitation and discrimination against migrant workers, and the use of correct terminology when discussing migrant worker populations.
- A workshop to publicize the rating (evaluation) of 47 recruitment agencies' compliance with the VAMAS's Code of Conduct (CoC) was conducted on 11 September in Hanoi. The rating system is an important part of informing potential migrant workers, service providers and employers on the reliability of the recruitment agencies and promotes ethical recruitment practices. The Vice Minister of MOLISA, the Australian Ambassador, the ILO Country Director attended the event, along with 119 other participants (80 men and 39 women) from international organizations, embassies, ministries, the National Assembly, Government Office, provincial authorities, social partners, research institutes, recruitment agencies, as well as more than 20 journalists. The outcome of the ratings was widely covered by mass media, noting that the rating system now covers around 50 per cent of outbound migrant workers.
- In cooperation with World Vision Viet Nam, 20,000 copies of 'Travel Smart, Work Smart' for Vietnamese migrant workers travelling to Malaysia were printed. The booklets will be distributed to migrant workers and their families to provide information on the rights of migrant workers, responsibilities of employers, guidance on how to work and live in Malaysia, and how to deal with difficulties abroad.

Main Activities in the Next Quarter (October-December 2014)

- The Pre-Departure Training Curriculum (PDTC) for Malaysia will be printed and the first Training-of-Trainers for recruitment agency trainers held in October in Hai Phong.
- Support 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 will continue.
- Support will be provided to VGCL to develop a position paper on the revision of the Law on Vietnamese contract-based overseas workers and its sub-laws.
- Training for Project Advisory Committee members and key staff of MOLISA and the provinces on forced labour, anti-human trafficking and ethical recruitment is scheduled for November.
- Training for 24 new recruitment agencies on CoC-VN monitoring and evaluation will take place in November.
- On 18 December, an event to celebrate International Migrant Worker's Day will be held, launching the PDTC training materials and Vietnamese version of the MRC Operations Manual.