



**Monterey Bay
Aquarium**

Warmwater shrimp social risk profile

Forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous
child labor risks

Vietnam, Aquaculture and Processing

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SEAFOOD SOCIAL RISK TOOL V2

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The Seafood Social Risk Tool has been prepared for information purposes only, and is not intended to constitute business, legal, market, financial or investment advice. The Seafood Social Risk Tool is designed to serve as an informational resource and does not override legislation or internal policies or procedures. It is recommended that all users of the Seafood Social Risk Tool seek independent legal advice. The Monterey Bay Aquarium Foundation shall not be responsible to any party related to its use or interpretation of the information contained in the Seafood Social Risk Tool.

Contents

About the Seafood Social Risk Tool.....	3
Overview.....	4
Base risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the country in general.....	4
Adjusted risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the country’s seafood supply chain.....	6
Summary of evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the seafood supply chain.....	8
Summary of factors that affect the likelihood of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the seafood supply chain	10
Aquaculture.....	13
Processing and Trade.....	14
Due Diligence for warmwater shrimp in Vietnam.....	16
Vietnam: Country-level indicators	19
Vietnam: Seafood industry-level indicators	45
Vietnam: Aquaculture Indicators.....	58
Vietnam: Processing indicators	71
References.....	82

About the Seafood Social Risk Tool

The Seafood Social Risk Tool (SSRT) is a risk assessment tool that assesses the risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor associated with a seafood product and producing country. The tool includes more than 80 risk indicators that assess evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in seafood supply chains and the underlying drivers of risk associated with these abuses. This information is used to create risk profiles to help businesses and other interested stakeholders to better understand the risk of human rights abuses in seafood supply chains and to focus businesses' due diligence efforts to improve conditions for seafood workers.

To learn more about the SSRT and access the full list of available risk profiles, visit <https://www.seafoodwatch.org/our-projects/seafood-social-risk-tool>.

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Overview

Vietnam is a globally important seafood exporting country with its seafood exports valued at USD 8.36 billion during the first three-quarters of 2025.ⁱ The country's most important aquaculture export products are shrimp and pangasius. The main species produced are whiteleg shrimp (*Litopenaeus vannamei*), giant tiger shrimp (*Peneaus monodon*), and pangasius (*Pangasianodon hypophthalmus*). Shrimp exports were valued at over USD 3.4 billion and pangasius exports were valued at USD 1.6 billion from January to September 2025.^{ii,iii} The United States, Japan, the EU (including Switzerland), China, and South Korea are the main buyers of Vietnamese shrimp, accounting for around 80% of the export volume and value in 2021.^{iv,v} The seafood industry, including both fishery and aquaculture production, contributed 3.4% to Vietnam's GDP in 2020.^{vi} Farmed shrimp was responsible for around 2% of GDP in 2017.^{vii} Aquaculture employs around 1.6 million people, predominantly women, and provides a livelihood for over 200 thousand small-holder family farmers.^{viii}

Base risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the country in general

Vietnam is making progress in addressing gaps in anti-trafficking and child labor legislation through ongoing revisions that strengthen its legal framework, but the base risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the country are driven up by poor enforcement and alleged official complicity in such crimes, and a restrictive operating environment for civil society.

Vietnam is in the 'high human development' category of the Human Development Index.^{ix} The country has a relatively low poverty rate, high education rates, and has maintained positive economic growth despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.^x This good socio-economic performance, combined with the mostly outward migration of migrant workers, may help to lower risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor occurring in Vietnam.

Traffickers exploit domestic and foreign victims in Vietnam, as well as Vietnamese victims abroad, in multiple industries.^{xi} There are reports of child labor and forced labor in the informal sector and rural areas of Vietnam, in industries such as garments, agriculture, and brick making, as well as street hawking and begging.^{xii,xiii,xiv} There are also concerns about North Korean workers and Cuban medical professionals employed in Vietnam who are allegedly subjected to forced labor or indicators of forced labor by the North Korean and Cuban governments who profit from overseas workers.^{xv} Overall, the rate of child labor and hazardous child labor in Vietnam has declined significantly in the past decade or so. The Government of Vietnam's National Child Labour Survey 2018 showed a substantial decrease in the number of children involved in hazardous work from 1.3 million to 0.5 million compared to its 2012 survey.^{xvi,xvii} A more up to date National Child Labour

Survey is not available. But information on working children and child labor was collected through Vietnam's 2023 Labour Force Survey, which shows that the number of children engaged in hazardous work has decreased further to nearly 94.3 thousand.^{xxviii} The 2023 survey findings show that the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries sector remains the biggest employer of working children by number, but the rate of children engaged in child labor and hazardous work is highest in the Industry and Construction sector.^{xix,xx} A higher proportion of boys and children residing in rural areas are engaged in child labor than girls and children in urban areas, with child labor most prevalent in the Mekong Delta region.^{xxi} But the risk of children in child labor engaging in hazardous work is higher in urban areas than in rural areas.^{xxii} Other factors that have been linked to a higher risk of children engaging in child labor or hazardous child labor include lower household wealth, households where the household head has lower or no education, and those from ethnic minority groups.^{xxiii,xxiv}

Gaps have been identified in Vietnam's anti-trafficking and child labor legislation, which does not prohibit all of the worst forms of child labor, specifically all forms of child sex trafficking.^{xxv,xxvi} But the government is now taking steps to address this gap through a 2024 revision of the anti-trafficking law and a pending revision in 2025 of the penal code that will criminalize all forms of child trafficking for sexual exploitation.^{xxvii} Enforcement of labor legislation more generally has not been effective to date and is hindered by an insufficient number of labor inspectors.^{xxviii} In particular, enforcement is limited in the informal sector, which is estimated to employ a majority of the country's workforce.^{xxix} The general business environment suffers from a high risk of corruption among Vietnamese authorities, including in the judicial system and police, and in past years there have been allegations of complicit Vietnamese officials facilitating human trafficking by accepting bribes from traffickers.^{xxx,xxxi} In addition, concerns have been raised by research and advocacy organization Project88 about the sincerity of Vietnam's efforts to eliminate human trafficking, including claims about the failure of the government to hold officials complicit in human trafficking accountable.^{xxxii} Other factors that may increase the risk of exploitation for workers are potential difficulties for internal migrants in accessing social services such as housing, welfare, and health services due to issues like lack of work contracts and a restrictive household registration system, although changes have been made since 2020 to mitigate issues with the registration system by introducing a new electronic system and identity card.^{xxxiii,xxxiv,xxxv}

While Vietnamese workers have the right to organize, this is strictly regulated and unions are vulnerable to government and management interference.^{xxxvi,xxxvii} According to the US Department of State's 2024 country report for Vietnam, there are no local, registered NGOs involved in the organizing of workers, though some unregistered labor NGOs engage in awareness raising efforts.^{xxxviii} Overall, civil society's role in Vietnam is hampered by a hostile environment that includes a ban on the formation and operation of independent, local human rights organizations.^{xxxix,xl} In 2024, Project88 published a report claiming to have obtained a national directive known as Directive 24 that the contents of which, though not verified as authentic, raise

concerns about restrictions on freedom of assembly, freedom of association, speech, the media, and movement.^{xli} In addition, international NGOs Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International report that there is systemic suppression of basic civil and political rights, including infringements on freedom of expression, movement, association and religion, as well as access to information and media among others.^{xlii,xliii}

Nevertheless, Vietnam has increased its efforts to eliminate human trafficking, promote transparency in workers participation, and domesticate relevant international labor standards such as Conventions No. 98 on the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining and No. 105 on the Abolition of Forced Labour. In addition, the government is actively involved in improving labor conditions and has introduced legislation and programs, such as Vietnam's National Assembly amended Labor Code 2019, effective January 2021, and Decree 145/2020/ND-CP aiding its implementation.^{xliv} The amended code and decree applies to all sectors and address topics such as labor contracts, termination, discrimination, unions, and overtime, sexual harassment, labor supervision and provision for women workers respectively.^{xlv,xlvi} The country's efforts were recognized by the United Nations Human Rights Committee in its consideration of the fourth periodic report of Vietnam in July 2025,^{xlvii} and resulted in Vietnam being upgraded to Tier 2 of the US Department of State's 2024 Trafficking in Persons Report after being downgraded to Tier 3 in 2022.^{xlviii} Vietnam remained on Tier 2 in 2025.^{xlix} Vietnam is also a Path Finder Country in the Alliance 8.7 global partnership, which aims to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal on ending forced labor, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labor, further and faster through accelerating efforts, new approaches, and collaboration.^l In March 2023, Vietnam's Decent Work Country Programme for the 2022 - 2026 period was announced with the cooperation of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the government of Vietnam, and workers' and employers' organizations.^{li} The new Decent Work Country Programme prioritizes addressing work challenges especially for those at risk of being left behind, including in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector.^{lii}

Adjusted risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the country's seafood supply chain

Vietnam's seafood industry has been linked to child labor, hazardous child labor, and potential forced labor, though evidence for this is limited to a few key sources. No evidence was found directly linking the country's shrimp aquaculture and processing industries to these abuses, but there are some indications of risk. Risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the production of aquaculture feed used in Vietnam's shrimp farming industry are outside the scope of this SSRT profile.

Fish is identified as a good produced by child labor by the US Department of Labor's 2024 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor, which references the Government of Vietnam's National Child Labor Survey.^{liii} Child labor and hazardous child labor in the seafood industry is reported in the findings of the Government of Vietnam's National Child Labour Survey, carried out in 2012 and 2018. The most recent data on working children and child labor collected through the 2023 National Labour Force Survey does not provide a detailed breakdown of work by sectors, grouping fisheries with agriculture and forestry work. The 2018 National Child Labour Survey identifies child labor and hazardous child labor in fishing and fish farming, and child labor in fish processing. Of the children involved in hazardous work, more than 12,000 children worked in fishing and nearly 15,000 children worked in aquaculture.^{liv} While the 2012 Child Labour Survey does not provide figures for hazardous child labor by sector, comparing the 2018 and 2012 surveys shows an overall decrease of children involved in hazardous labor of about 60%.^{lv, lvi} The number of children in child labor in fishing and aquaculture (code 31 and 32) decreased by 68% and 18%, respectively, but the number of child laborers involved in processing (code 102) showed an increase of 8%.^{lvii, lviii} In addition, a 2018-2019 survey by Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) of crew from 41 Vietnamese fishing vessels detained in Thai waters between late 2017 and early 2019 identified 12 crew members under 18 years with the youngest aged only 11 years. The children were often relatives of the vessel captain or a crew member but were still expected to work and many of the children that EJF spoke to said that they no longer attended school to support their families.^{lix} The same EJF study also identified signs of debt bondage among fishers employed on Vietnamese fishing vessels.^{lx}

No direct links to human trafficking, hazardous child labor, or forced labor in shrimp farming and processing in Vietnam were found, although there have been reports of situations which could account for possible increased risk. While the occurrence of child labor and hazardous child labor in Vietnam's wider aquaculture and seafood processing industries cannot be used to infer that hazardous child labor occurs in the shrimp supply chain, the reported presence of children engaged in paid and unpaid work as family laborers on small-scale, family-run shrimp farms and in processing plants warrants caution, although one source states that this only affects domestic supply chains and markets.^{lxi, lxii} Other areas of concern include adherence of service providers such as third-party labor providers to workers' rights^{lxiii, lxiv}, risk to farmers of bankruptcy and debt though not debt-bondage^{lxv, lxvi}, and occupational safety and health issues in shrimp processing plants.^{lxvii, lxviii} Rising input costs and lower earnings since the COVID-19 pandemic have been linked to a decline in quality of working conditions in Vietnam's shrimp supply chain including a reduction in income for shrimp workers.^{lxix}

The warmwater shrimp aquaculture sector developed in Vietnam from the 1980's onwards, backed by government policies to increase production and exports and improve the living standards of rural communities.^{lxx} While the policies, which consisted mainly of financial benefits, did improve living conditions, they also resulted in issues such as reduced access to natural

resources and resource conflict, as well as upheaval in social structures and risk of indebtedness due to unsuccessful harvests. Tensions surrounded land loss and marginalization of rice farmers, unequal land allocation and disputes, and intentional salinization through dike destructions.^{lxxi} No information was found on whether these issues exist now, and shrimp farming has more recently been linked to positive socio-economic contributions such as poverty alleviation and employment generation.^{lxxii}

The complexity of Vietnam's shrimp supply chain adds to the adjusted risks of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor. Around 35% of shrimp production is accounted for by commercial players, with the remainder of production generated by small-scale farmers.^{lxxiii} Intermediaries, also known as middlemen, play a large role in the supply chain and are involved in 70% of the in-country shrimp trade.^{lxxiv} The possibility of multiple changes of product ownership has implications for product traceability, with concerns about a lack of traceability of shrimp product back to farms.^{lxxv,lxxvi} Vietnam also processes imported shrimp from India and Ecuador, making implementation of traceability measures more difficult and introducing risks to the supply chain from those countries (See SSRT warmwater shrimp profiles for India and Ecuador).^{lxxvii,lxxviii}

There has been some uptake of voluntary certification schemes that incorporate social requirements by the farmed shrimp supply chain in Vietnam, and there is evidence of other efforts to improve social and economic conditions for people involved in shrimp production and in Vietnam's wider seafood industry. Private initiatives have been established in the shrimp industry like the Multi-Company Collective Bargaining Agreement (MCCBA). Under this collective agreement, which was signed by five seafood producers and exporters in October 2022, the goal is to ensure that their workers have better benefits than required by existing regulations and to improve working conditions with the underlying intention to attract new employees and consolidate the existing work force.^{lxxix} Other initiatives include Monterey Bay Aquarium's Community Development Fund, which has been recently implemented in Vietnam. The fund intends to benefit aquaculture and fishing communities and provides businesses with the opportunity to contribute to improvements for seafood communities.^{lxxx,lxxxi}

Summary of evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the seafood supply chain

Country-level indicators

- Human traffickers exploit Vietnamese and foreign workers in multiple sectors within Vietnam. According to the US Department of State's 2025 Trafficking in Persons Report, Vietnamese adults and children are exploited in trafficking for sexual exploitation, and

experience forced labor in street hawking and begging, and domestic work. Forced labor in the garment sector is also a risk for adults. In addition, North Korean nationals and Cuban medical professionals working in Vietnam are at risk of forced labor by the North Korean and Cuban governments who profit from overseas workers.

- Hazardous child labor is reported in all three of Vietnam’s main economic sectors: agriculture, industry, and services by the 2018 National Child Labour Survey.
- Forced labor and child labor are used in the production of garments, and child labor is linked to the production of numerous other goods including bricks, textiles, tobacco and several other agricultural commodities, among other goods, according to the US Department of Labor’s 2024 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor.
- Child labor was reported in several sectors, including agriculture, brickmaking, construction, and garments and textiles, among others according to the US Department of State’s 2024 Country Report on Human Rights Practices for Vietnam.

Seafood industry-level Indicators

- There is evidence linking Vietnam’s seafood industry directly to child labor and hazardous child labor, and to indicators of forced labor.
- According to the 2018 National Child Labour Survey, 55.4% and 51.9% of working children in fishing and aquaculture, respectively, are involved in hazardous work. The survey also identifies child labor in fish processing. More recent data on hazardous child labor in the seafood industry is not available.
- Fish is identified as a good produced by child labor by the US Department of Labor’s 2024 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced.
- Interviews with crewmembers of Vietnamese fishing vessels by Environmental Justice Foundation in 2018 revealed instances of potential debt bondage, and abusive living and working conditions that may indicate forced labor risk.

Aquaculture indicators

- No evidence was found linking Vietnam’s shrimp farming industry directly to human trafficking, forced labor, and hazardous child labor or to indicators of forced labor.
- However, there are concerns about young workers engaging in potentially hazardous work or work that could interfere with their education. A 2023 FAO technical paper describes children assisting in feeding and keeping shrimp in small-scale shrimp farming in Vietnam. While the paper states that most children worked for no more than four hours, it mentions reports of some boys aged 14 to 17 staying up late at night to guard the facilities and feed the shrimp alongside their parents. This only affects domestic supply chains and markets.
- In addition, a Human Rights Impact Assessment of five Vietnamese shrimp farms identified several concerns including the potential misuse of biosecurity measures to restrict workers’ movement, but the findings are not sufficient to conclude forced

labor risk. Other concerns identified by supply chain assessments include a lack of written contracts, low wages and underpayment of wages.

Processing indicators

- No evidence was found linking Vietnam’s shrimp processing industry directly to human trafficking, forced labor, and hazardous child labor or to indicators of forced labor.
- There is evidence of difficult working conditions and concerning practices around freedom of movement and payment of wages in shrimp processing, but the evidence is not sufficient to conclude forced labor risk.
- The 2023 FAO technical paper highlights reports of children being employed in shrimp peeling without being given personal protective equipment, which may indicate hazardous child labor, though the paper states that children’s involvement is limited to the domestic supply chain.

Summary of factors that affect the likelihood of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the seafood supply chain

Factors that increase the likelihood

Country-level indicators

- Vietnam has not ratified Protocol 29 to the Forced Labour Convention or the ILO Work in Fishing Convention 188.
- Lack of transparency and independence of Vietnam’s Judicial System; linkage between judicial systems and government officials.
- Implementation and enforcement of labor laws is hindered by a lack of adequate resources and capacity, and a need for further training of officials.
- Enforcement of child labor laws is adversely affected by the difficult to reach nature of child labor, which predominantly occurs in informal sectors and rural areas.

Seafood industry-level indicators

- The Global Slavery Index 2018 identifies high risk factors for forced labor in fishing in Vietnam relating to the country’s “Wealth and Institutional Capacity” (GDP per capita, value landed per fisher, and unreported landings).
- Implementation and enforcement of fishing industry regulations appear to be limited.

- There are no apparent legal impediments for seafood workers to access workers' unions. However, access to trade unions is restricted generally and unions have historically been at risk of government interference.

Aquaculture indicators

- High involvement of intermediaries, known as middlemen, in the shrimp supply chain that are reported to provide finance to farmers, which could lead to debt cycles.
- Limited shrimp farm registration due to poor communication on the registration procedures.
- Shrimp aquaculture involves thousands of mainly small-scale family operated businesses, making oversight of labor conditions challenging.
- There is a risk that poor farmers may ignore safety measures at farms to reduce costs or increase production yields through unsustainable and unsafe practices. Rising costs in shrimp production since the COVID-19 pandemic have impacted on working conditions including wages and the provision of protective equipment for workers.

Processing indicators

- A high proportion of the shrimp processing workforce are women, who are more vulnerable to workplace discrimination and labor exploitation.
- Reported occupational health issues arising from working in shrimp processing plants, which involve monotonous tasks performed while standing for long periods.
- Based on the 2012 and 2018 National Child Labor surveys, the number of child laborers involved in 'Processing and preservation of seafood and aquatic products' increased, although no children were reported to be engaged in hazardous work in the latest 2018 survey.

Factors that decrease the likelihood

Country-level indicators

- Vietnam has a 'High' Human Development Index value.
- Vietnam's status as mainly a sending country for migrants rather than a receiving country, and a relatively good acceptance of migrants among the population.
- Vietnam's recent ratification of ILO C98 relating to collective bargaining and the ratification of other relevant ILO Conventions on forced labor and child labor.
- Vietnam is an Alliance 8.7 Pathfinder Country, taking deliberate measures to end child labor and forced labor in the country.

- Vietnam was upgraded to Tier 2 of the US Department of State’s 2024 Trafficking in Persons Report from the Tier 2 Watch List in 2023 for increasing its efforts to eliminate trafficking and remained on Tier 2 in 2025.
- The ILO’s Decent Work Country Programme Viet Nam 2022 – 2026 address decent work challenges, especially for those at risk of being left behind.

Seafood industry-level indicators

- Changes to Vietnam’s Labor Code 2019, effective January 2021, are expected to improve access to trade unions for all Vietnamese citizens. Decree 145/2020/ND-CP also sets out rules for labor contracts, termination, discrimination, unions, and overtime, sexual harassment, labor supervision and provision for women workers.
- Based on the 2018 and 2012 National Child Labor surveys, the number of children in child labor involved in fishing and aquaculture decreased during this period by around 68% and 18%, respectively.
- Third-party certification schemes for farmed seafood are implemented in Vietnam, with a lot of uptake of schemes, Best Aquaculture Practices, Aquaculture Stewardship Council and GlobalG.A.P. with its GRASP module that include requirements on forced labor, hazardous child labor and human trafficking. Certification of seafood facilities to Fair Trade USA, a scheme that focusses on ensuring human rights, empowerment of workers and the improvement of the social and natural environment, is also growing.
- Establishment of NGO initiatives such as the Monterey Bay Aquarium’s Community Development fund, which provides financial support to Vietnam’s aquaculture communities.

Aquaculture indicators

- There are efforts to increase levels of farm registration to ensure product traceability.
- The small-scale nature of a large share of shrimp aquaculture operations reduces the risk of issues such as forced labor, as most farmers do not employ workers but depend on family members.

Processing indicators

- Establishment of a voluntary Multi-Company Collective Bargaining Agreement (MCCBA) between some of the large industry players, developed to improve workers’ conditions in collaboration with local organizations.
- Shrimp is predominantly produced for export, offering a point of leverage for government and buyers to drive improvement efforts.

Aquaculture

The geographic condition of Vietnam makes it an ideal place for aquaculture, which is practiced throughout the northern, central, and southern regions. A multitude of species, including pangasius, shrimp, and tilapia, are produced in a variety of land-based production systems. In addition, there has been an increase in the culture of bivalves and marine fishes such as cobia, seabass, and grouper in marine-based systems in coastal waters.^{lxxxii} According to FAO statistics, Vietnam's aquaculture production reached around 4.7 million metric tons (Mt) in 2021, with 56% from freshwater systems, 36% from brackish water systems, and 8% from marine systems.^{lxxxiii}

Shrimp aquaculture predominantly takes place in brackish water systems. The main species produced by Vietnam are whiteleg shrimp (*Litopenaeus vannamei*) and giant tiger shrimp (*Penaeus monodon*). Production for each species reached 666 thousand Mt and 266 thousand Mt, respectively in 2021.^{lxxxiv} According to Vietnam's Statistical Yearbook 2021, shrimp are produced over an estimated 1,128 thousand hectares (Ha) across the country, with the largest region being the Mekong River delta that accounts for around 70% of the production area and 85% of the estimated total shrimp production volume of 996 Mt tons.^{lxxxv} Within the Mekong Delta, the provinces Cà Mau, Bạc Liêu, Sóc Trăng, Kiên Giang, Bến Tre are responsible for the majority of production, accounting for 89% of the production area and more than 85% of the production volume.^{lxxxvi}

Shrimp are grown in different production systems, ranging from extensive systems such as integrated mangroves and traditional rice-shrimp systems to (semi-)intensive and even hi-tech super intensive systems. Giant tiger shrimp are predominantly grown in more extensive systems, while whiteleg shrimp are mainly grown in more intensified systems. Extensive systems take up more land area while producing proportionally less shrimp compared to intensified systems. A recent article estimates that the production of 655 thousand tons of whiteleg shrimp takes an area of around 121 thousand Ha, while 265 thousand tons of giant tiger shrimp takes an area of 626 thousand ha.^{lxxxvii} Extensive systems use low inputs of feed and seed and require a low level of labor. The different production systems can be found across multiple provinces, although integrated mangrove shrimp systems are mostly found in Cà Mau,^{lxxxviii} which also has a reported 40,000 Ha of land dedicated to shrimp-rice models.^{lxxxix} Rice-shrimp systems depend on the rainy season to lower salinity levels needed for rice production and can further be found in provinces like Sóc Trăng, Kiên Giang, Bến Tre and Trà Vinh.^{xc} Intensive and hi-tech super intensive systems are concentrated in Sóc Trăng, Bến Tre.^{xc}

Shrimp aquaculture is an important sector because of the land area used, the production volumes produced, and as a source of employment. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has started implementing a project named 'The Sustainable Aquaculture Development Plan in the Mekong Delta to 2030' to support sustainable aquaculture development in the Mekong Delta

region.^{xcii} One of its goals is to have brackish shrimp water production reach over 1.2 million Mt by 2030.^{xciii}

The sector employs around an estimated 1.6 million people and provides livelihoods to over 200 thousand small-scale family farms.^{xciv} Intermediaries are involved throughout the farmed shrimp supply chain and act as facilitators between farms, hatcheries, feed mills and processors, and provide loans or financing. Shrimp harvested from extensive and more intensive systems are usually sold to middleman,^{xcv} who handle as much as 70% of all farmed shrimp that is produced, but due to their informal role are hardly regulated.^{xcvi} Intermediaries collect shrimp from farms and sell them on to local markets, collectors, or processing plants. While extensive farms can sell directly to processing plants, they would need to cover transport and cold storage costs and would have to wait for payment after sorting and grading.^{xcvii} Instead, intermediaries grade on the spot, take all sizes and additional species (in case of polyculture or multiple species grown), take care of transport and cold chain and provide direct payment.^{xcviii} It has been estimated that 80% of intermediaries work independently, while the remainder are associated to a particular processing company.^{xcix}

Processing and Trade

Vertical integration of the shrimp supply chain in Vietnam is varied. While there are fully vertically integrated companies, these are very few. There are also some partially integrated players, which are engaged in more than one segment but are not fully integrated across the supply chain.^c

Processing plants that are also active in farming cannot produce enough shrimp from their own farms alone and depend on external farms for supply.^{ci} To secure enough raw material, processors tend to use intermediaries. In a 2020 study, some processors reported to buy from as many as 50 intermediaries.^{cii} The involvement of intermediaries between the farm and processors and the possibility of shrimp ownership changing several times, combined with intermediaries being subjected to little oversight, means that product safety and traceability is challenging.^{ciii, civ} In addition, Vietnam imports shrimp from other countries, such as Ecuador and India, for further processing and re-export, which poses an additional challenge to product traceability.^{cv}

Shrimp exports from Vietnam account for more than 45% of the country's total seafood export value.^{cvi, cvii} In 2021, Vietnam exported 277 thousand Mt of shrimp products with a value of USD 2.4 billion according to the UN Comtrade database. Its main shrimp export markets are the United States, Japan, the EU (plus Switzerland), China, and South Korea,^{cviii} which accounted for around 80% of the export volume and value in 2021.^{cix, cx} The majority of produced shrimp is intended for export, although domestic consumption of shrimp is reported to be around 300 to 400 thousand tons,^{cx} and the Statistical Yearbook Viet Nam, 2021, reports an average monthly consumption of around 1.5 kg per capita of shrimp and fish.^{cxii}

The EU Information Management System for Official Controls lists 684 processing plants with EU export approval in May 2023,^{cxiii} though these do not just represent shrimp processing facilities but other seafood processing facilities as well. Most shrimp processing plants are based in the Mekong delta region and Ho Chi Minh.^{cxiv} Saigon port is therefore an important junction and export location.^{cxv} Depending on the export market, shrimp product is sold in a variety of product forms, from fresh or frozen head-on shell-on (HOSO) products to deep processing (value-added). Vietnam has heavily invested into processing value-added products over the last decade to compete on the global market and is now reported to be one of the countries with the highest capacity for value-added shrimp processing in the world.^{cxvi,cxvii}

Due Diligence for warmwater shrimp in Vietnam

Important Country-Specific Considerations

- Vietnam has a relatively low poverty rate, high education rates, and has maintained positive economic growth despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with mostly outward migration of migrant workers.
- However, enforcement of labor legislation is limited, particularly for the informal sector, being affected by limited resources and capacity, and alleged official complicity.
- Workers' ability to organize in Vietnam is strictly regulated and vulnerable to interference by the government authorities and employers.
- Information on working conditions in Vietnam's shrimp farming and processing industries is limited.

Suggested Due Diligence Priorities & Questions

Processing Activities (traceability and oversight of raw material supply)

The shrimp farming industry in Vietnam is heavily reliant on intermediaries (middlemen) to link producers with processors, which hinders supply chain transparency and traceability.

1. Is there traceability back to the shrimp farm, including data elements such as the name, location, and size of the farm?
2. Does the processing company know what working conditions and arrangements are like on the farm?
3. How do processing companies monitor working conditions in suppliers' operations?
4. Do processing companies have established relationships or contracts with certain intermediaries that operate on behalf of the company?
5. Do processing companies have conditions / agreements with intermediaries and direct raw material suppliers on areas such as:
 - a. only sourcing raw material from registered aquaculture operations?
 - b. any considerations for raw material purchases that relate to social conditions?
6. In the case of supply contracts and/or sponsorship arrangements between farms/cooperatives and processors, what are the terms and conditions for

supply? Is an established or mutually agreed pricing mechanism in place, and if so, what is it?

7. Do processing companies or their contracted intermediaries provide other services to shrimp farmers (input material like seed, feed, or financing)? If so, what are the conditions of this service and what safeguards are there against debt bonding and debt cycles?
8. How does the processing company verify that intermediaries meet their contract conditions or raw material supply conditions?

Worker demographics

While women comprise most of the workforce in shrimp processing in Vietnam, other information about workforce characteristics in shrimp farming and processing is limited, making it difficult to assess the vulnerability of workers to exploitation.

1. What is the proportion of temporary and contract workers to permanent workers?
2. What proportion of shrimp processing employees are local versus internal migrant workers?
3. What is the proportion of young workers (15-18 years old) in the workforce? What protocols are in place to protect young workers from workplace hazards?

Recruitment

There is limited basic information on recruitment processes in shrimp farming and processing in Vietnam. Evidence from one supply chain impact assessment highlights the use of subcontracted labor and potential concerns around associated recruitment practices by third-party labor providers.

1. Are workers hired directly and/or through recruitment agents?
2. If recruitment is outsourced, are there monitoring and accountability processes to verify that recruitment agents meet ethical performance requirements?

3. Do you know how recruitment agents comply with the 'Employer Pays Principle', including whether they have a procedure for verifying that workers are not charged fees and a mechanism for workers to report violations of this?

Contracts and Compensation

Information on employment contracts and compensation practices in shrimp farming and processing in Vietnam is limited. A lack of written contracts, low wages, unpaid overtime, and limited transparency regarding wages have been identified as concerns in the farmed shrimp supply chain.

1. Are workers employed using a formal written contract?
2. What payment structure is used to compensate workers (e.g., piece rate or fixed salary)?
3. Are workers paid at least the minimum wage according to state or sector requirements?
4. Do workers receive a pay slip and are they aware of wage-setting mechanisms? Is there a mechanism to enable workers to sign off on the hours they have worked or to dispute incorrect payments?
5. Is overtime voluntary and compensated?

Vietnam: Country-level indicators

Indicator	Description	Sources
Poverty levels in a country	<p>Human Development Index</p> <p>HDI Value (2023): 0.766</p> <p>HDI Rank (2023): 93</p> <p>Vietnam’s HDI value for 2023 is 0.766 places it in the ‘high human development’ category and positions it 93rd out of 193 countries and territories.</p> <p>Vietnam shows progress against each of the HDI indicators for income, health, and education from 1990 to 2023. Although life expectancy dropped slightly in 2021, it increased again in 2023. Between 1990 and 2023, Viet Nam’s HDI value increased from 0.483 to 0.766. However, when Vietnam’ HDI value is discounted for inequality, it falls to 0.641, a loss of 16.3% due to inequality in the distribution of the HDI dimension indices. The average loss due to inequality for high HDI countries is 17.8% and for East Asia and the Pacific it is 16.4%.</p>	<p>UNDP Human Development Index (HDI)</p> <p>UNDP Global Human Development Indicators Country Profile: Vietnam</p>
	<p>Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty line (% of population): 4.3% (2022), showing improvement over the last decade from 17.2% (2012).</p> <p>The poverty headcount ratio is Vietnam’s poverty headcount ratio is lower than that of its neighboring countries, except for China.</p> <p>Neighboring countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China: 0% (2020) • Laos: 18.3% (2018) • Cambodia: 17.7% (2012) • Malaysia: 6.2% (2021) • Philippines: 15.5% (2023) 	<p>World Bank Databank figures on poverty headcount ratio</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Global Hunger Index (2025): 11.1</p> <p>Vietnam ranks 60th out of 123 qualifying countries. With a score of 11.1 out of 100, Vietnam suffers from a level of hunger that is ‘Moderate’.</p> <p>Vietnam performs better than neighboring countries Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, but performs worse than neighboring country China.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China: <5 • Laos: 10–19.9* • Cambodia: 14.9 • Malaysia: 13.6 • Philippines: 13.4 <p>* For this county, the individual score could not be calculated nor rank determined owing to lack of data.</p> <p>Note: GHI is scored on a 100-point GHI Severity Scale, where 0 is the best score (no hunger) and 100 is the worst (where ≥ 50 is ‘extremely alarming’).</p>	<p>Global Hunger Index (GHI)</p>
<p>Country’s position in the regional economic power system</p>	<p>Comparing HDI ranking to other countries in the region</p> <p>Vietnam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HDI Value (2023): 0.766 • HDI rank (2022): 93 <p>Vietnam’s HDI is lower than neighboring countries China and Malaysia, but higher than Laos, the Philippines and Cambodia.</p> <p>Neighboring Countries:</p> <p>China</p> <p>HDI Value (2023): 0.797 HDI rank (2023): 78</p>	<p>UNDP Human Development Index (HDI)</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Laos HDI Value (2023): 0.617 HDI rank (2023): 147</p> <p>Cambodia HDI Value (2023): 0.606 HDI rank (2023): 151</p> <p>Malaysia HDI Value (2023): 0.819 HDI rank (2023): 67</p> <p>The Philippines HDI Value (2023): 0.720 HDI rank (2023): 117</p>	
	<p>Comparing its recent economic growth to the general economic growth rates in the region</p> <p>Vietnam’s GDP growth rate is higher than all neighboring countries.</p> <p>Vietnam GDP Growth (annual %): 7.1 (2024)</p> <p>Neighboring countries:</p> <p>China GDP Growth (annual %): 5.0 (2024)</p> <p>Laos GDP Growth (annual %): 4.3 (2024)</p> <p>Cambodia GDP Growth (annual %): 6.0 (2024)</p> <p>Malaysia GDP Growth (annual %): 5.1 (2024)</p>	<p>World Bank Databank figures on annual economic growth</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>The Philippines GDP Growth (annual %): 5.7 (2024)</p>	
	<p>Migration data</p> <p>The net migration rate (immigrants minus emigrants per 1,000 population) for Vietnam is -0.8 (2023).</p>	<p>IOM Migration Data Portal.</p>
	<p>Regional migration trends and patterns</p> <p>Economic reforms and the opening of Vietnam in 1986 led to an increase in internal and international migration. Since then, Vietnam has predominantly been a sending country for migrants emigrating in search of work or education. In 2014, an estimated four million Vietnamese people lived overseas, mostly in the United States. Migration Policy Institute, 29 April 2015</p> <p>In 2019, over 152,000 migrant workers from Vietnam were deployed overseas, mainly to Japan, Taiwan, and the Republic of Korea. Many migrant workers are driven to migrate by a lack of employment opportunities and low salaries in Vietnam. IOM, 2020</p> <p>Internal migration exceeds international migration, with internal migrants mainly flowing from rural to urban areas. UNESCO, February 2018</p> <p>Interprovincial migration increased from 1.3 million in 1989 to 3.4 million in 2009. Centre for ASEAN Studies, April 2012</p> <p>To a lesser extent, Vietnam is also a receiving country for foreign labor migrants, mostly from other Asian countries. Migration Policy Institute, 29 April 2015</p> <p>The top five countries of origin of migrant stock are (Report from 2013; no more recent data was found):</p>	<p>Migration Policy Institute, 29 April 2015, 'From Humanitarian to Economic: The Changing Face of Vietnamese Migration'</p> <p>International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2020, Vulnerabilities and risks of exploitation encountered by Vietnamese migrant workers—A qualitative study of returnees' experience, Ho Chi Minh</p> <p>UNESCO, February 2018, Overview of Internal Migration in Vietnam, Country Brief No. 10</p> <p>Centre for ASEAN Studies (CAS), April</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (11,278) • Myanmar (9,783) • China (8,639) • Indonesia (7,671) • Laos (4,284) 	<p>2012, Push and pull forces and migration in Vietnam, CAS Discussion paper No 80</p> <p>UNICEF Migration profile – Viet Nam</p>
	<p>Known human trafficking routes</p> <p>Evidence found relating to human trafficking routes focuses on trafficking of Vietnamese migrants to different destination countries, including via long and dangerous overland or maritime routes.</p> <p>Among other destinations, Vietnamese people are trafficked to countries in East Asia and South-East Asia, and to a lesser extent, parts of Europe including the UK for forced labor. Beadle And Davison, 2019</p> <p>The Freedom Collaborative Victim Journeys Map identifies migration routes from Vietnam to China, and to a lesser extent to Thailand, Malaysia, Myanmar, France, Cambodia, and Singapore. Internal migration is also identified. Freedom Collaborative, No date</p> <p>According to the US Department of State’s 2025 Trafficking in Persons Report, Vietnamese nationals are exploited by traffickers in Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, Laos, Japan, and parts of the Middle East and Europe, being forced into labor in sectors including construction, agriculture, mining, maritime industries, logging, and manufacturing. Vietnamese women and children are exploited in sex trafficking on the borders of China, Cambodia and Laos, and other areas of Asia, West Africa and Europe. And</p>	<p>Beadle, D. And Davison, L., 2019, Precarious Journeys, Mapping vulnerabilities of victims of trafficking from Vietnam to Europe</p> <p>Freedom Collaborative, No date, Global Data Dashboard</p> <p>US Department of State, 2025, 2025 Trafficking in Persons Report</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Vietnamese fishermen are trafficked to Indonesian and Taiwanese fishing vessels and fishing fleets operated by other countries in East Asia and Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. US Department of State, 2025</p>	
<p>Governance practices and systems in a country (measured through indexes)</p>	<p>WGI (2023) Percentile Rank:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice and Accountability: 15.20 • Political Stability and Absence of Violence: 45.02 • Government Effectiveness: 56.13 • Regulatory Quality: 38.21 • Rule of Law: 50.47 • Control of Corruption: 38.68 <p>Vietnam ranks closely to the regional average for East Asia and the Pacific except for the indicator Voice and Accountability, where it ranks extremely low in comparison. Vietnam ranks among the bottom half to lowest quarter for all indicators except Government Effectiveness and ranks especially low on Voice and Accountability.</p> <p>Note: Percentile rank among all countries ranges from 0 (lowest) to 100 (highest) rank, where the higher the score, the better the governance.</p>	<p>World Governance Indicators (WGI)</p>
	<p>Corruption Perception Index (2024):</p> <p>Score: 40/100</p> <p>Rank: 88/180 countries</p> <p>More than two-thirds of countries score below 50 on this year's CPI, with an average score of just 43. Vietnam's score of 41 places it below the average and positions it 88th out of 180 countries and territories. Vietnam scores higher than neighboring countries, Cambodia, Laos, and the Philippines, but lower than</p>	<p>Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI)</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>neighboring countries China and Malaysia. Vietnam scores less than the regional average for Asia and the Pacific.</p> <p>Neighboring countries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cambodia: 21/100 • Laos: 33/100 • Philippines: 33/100 • China: 43/100 • Malaysia: 50/100 <p>Average score for Asia Pacific region: 45/100</p> <p>Note: Based on 0 = Highly Corrupt, 100 = Very Clean.</p>	
	<p>Basel Anti-Money Laundering Index (2024):</p> <p>Rank: 15/203 countries</p> <p>Overall score: 6.90/10</p> <p>Vietnam scores lower than neighboring country Laos, but scores higher than neighboring countries Cambodia, China, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Laos was not assessed in 2022.</p> <p>Neighboring countries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China: 7.27 • Malaysia: 5.50 • Philippines: 5.84 • Laos: 7.53 • Cambodia: 6.75 <p>Note: Ranking is out of 141 countries; top possible score is 0 (low risk,), lowest score is 10 (high risk).</p>	<p>Basel Anti-Money Laundering (AML) Index</p>
	<p>Global Rights Index (2025):</p> <p>Rating: 4 (Systematic violations of rights)</p>	<p>International Trade Union Conference</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Vietnam’s rating of 4 in the ITUC Global Rights Index is slightly better than the regional average ranking for the Asia-Pacific region of 4.08.</p> <p>Neighboring countries Malaysia, Cambodia, China, and Laos, and the Philippines are all rated 5 (No guarantee of rights). Additionally, the Philippines is listed as one of the “World’s ten worst countries for workers” in 2025.</p> <p>Neighboring countries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malaysia: 5 • Cambodia: 5 • China: 5 • Laos: 5 • Philippines: 5 <p>Note: Countries are ranked from 1 to 5+, where five plus corresponds to “no guarantee of rights due to the breakdown of the law” and 1 corresponds to “sporadic violations of rights”.</p>	<p>(ITUC) Global Rights Index (GRI)</p>
<p>Education and general literacy levels in a country</p>	<p>Adult literacy rates, among the population aged 15 years and older (2022): 96%</p> <p>Adult female literacy rate (2022): 95%</p> <p>Adult male literacy rate (2022): 97%</p> <p>Comparison to neighboring countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China (2020) 97% • Laos (2022) 88% • Cambodia (2022) 84% • Malaysia (2022) 96% • Philippines (2020) 98% 	<p>World Bank Open Data</p>
	<p>Primary school completion rates, total (% of relevant age group) (2022): 116%</p>	<p>World Bank Open Data</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Primary completion rates, female (% of relevant age group) (2022): 118%</p> <p>Primary completion rates, male (% of relevant age group) (2022): 114%</p> <p>Comparison to neighboring countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China (2010) 105% • Laos (2023) 90% • Cambodia (2023) 90% • Malaysia (2023) 99% • Philippines (2023) 81% <p>Note: “There are many reasons why the primary completion rate can exceed 100 percent. The numerator may include late entrants and overage children who have repeated one or more grades of primary education as well as children who entered school early, while the denominator is the number of children at the entrance age for the last grade of primary education.”</p>	
	<p>Lower secondary education completion rates, total (% of relevant age group) (2023): 100.5%</p> <p>Lower secondary completion rates, female (% of relevant age group) (2023): 102.6%</p> <p>Lower secondary completion rates, male (% of relevant age group) (2023): 98.6%</p> <p>Comparison to neighboring countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China (2012) 104.9% • Laos (2023) 54.6% • Cambodia (2023) 61.8% • Malaysia (2023) 87.5% • The Philippines (2023) 93.2% <p>Note: “There are many reasons why the rate can exceed 100 percent. The numerator may include late</p>	<p>World Bank Open Data</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>entrants and overage children who have repeated one or more grades of lower secondary education as well as children who entered school early, while the denominator is the number of children at the entrance age for the last grade of lower secondary education.”</p>	
	<p>School enrolment, tertiary (2022): 42% gross</p> <p>School enrolment, tertiary, female (2022): 44% gross</p> <p>School enrolment, tertiary, male (2022): 41% gross</p> <p>Comparison to neighboring countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China (2023) 75% • Laos (2023) 15% • Cambodia (2023) 18% • Malaysia (2023) 41% • Philippines (2023) 45% <p>Note: “There are many reasons why the rate can exceed 100 percent. The numerator may include late entrants and overage children who have repeated one or more grades of lower secondary education as well as children who entered school early, while the denominator is the number of children at the entrance age for the last grade of lower secondary education.”</p>	<p>World Bank Open Data</p>
<p>Attitudes towards migrant workers in a country’s population</p>	<p>Migrant Acceptance Index score: 6.08/9</p> <p>Vietnam’s score of 6.08 out of 9 indicates that people in Vietnam are more accepting of migrants than on average for all countries assessed. The Migrant Acceptance Index score for the world is 5.29/9</p> <p>Note: Based on 138 countries surveyed in 2016; U.S. surveyed in 2017; top possible score is 9.0. The Index was updated in 2020. However, the publicly</p>	<p>Gallup Migrant Acceptance Index</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	accessible 2020 data do not include updates to Vietnam’s score.	
Legislation and regulation to protect migrant workers	<p>Coverage of legal provisions under the labor laws</p> <p>Vietnam has not ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. UN Treaty Body Database</p> <p>Previously, internal migrants were affected by restrictions in the country’s residential registration system, which only allowed Vietnamese citizens to register one place of permanent residence. Citizens could only change their permanent residence status to a new district under a strict set of circumstances such as marrying into a family in the area. This inability to change their residence status meant that some internal migrants were not afforded the same rights as formal residents and had limited legal protections. The Diplomat, 2017</p> <p>Recognizing the inequalities caused by the residential registration system, the government moved to abolish the registration booklet system, with identity cards to be implemented from 2020. This change reduces the administrative steps involved when relocating and could mitigate the problems highlighted above. IOM, 2020</p> <p>The law relating to residency and identify cards was revised again in 2024 with the new Law on Identity in force from July 1, replacing the 2014 Law on Citizen Identification (revised in 2020). Vietnam Law & Legal Forum, 10 May 2024</p> <p>Protections for foreign migrants do not clearly align with those for nationals. Article 48 of the Constitution states “Foreigners residing in Vietnam</p>	<p>UN Treaty Body Database</p> <p>The Diplomat, 08 April 2017, ‘Vietnam’s Left-Behind Urban Migrants’</p> <p>International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2020, Situation Analysis of Migrant Health in Viet Nam</p> <p>Vietnam Law & Legal Forum, 10 May 2024, ‘Law on Identify’</p> <p>Viet Nam 1992 (rev. 2013), Constitution [English translation], Constitute Project</p> <p>The Labor Code 2019 – English version</p> <p>Trinh, K.L, 2016, Work Related Rights of Foreign Migrant Workers in Viet Nam. Journal of</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>must obey the Constitution and law of Vietnam; they shall receive State protection with regard to their lives, possessions and legitimate interests in accordance with the provisions of Vietnamese law.” [English translation] Viet Nam 1992 (rev. 2013), Constitution</p> <p>Regulations restrict the use of foreign migrant workers in Vietnam. The Labor Code restricts recruitment and the positions that foreign workers may hold. Furthermore, the hiring of foreign migrant workers needs to be authorized by government authorities, and those without a permit may be deported.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 152 of the Labor Code states, “1. Enterprises, organizations, individuals and contractors shall only employ foreigners to hold positions of managers, executive directors, specialists and technical workers the professional requirements for which cannot be met by Vietnamese workers.” • ”2. Recruitment of foreign employees in Vietnam shall be explained and subject to written approval by competent authorities.” <p>Article 153 states, “2. Any foreign employee working in Vietnam without a work permit shall be deported or forced to leave Vietnam in accordance with immigration laws.” The Labor Code 2019 – English version</p> <p>It is difficult for foreign migrant workers to be granted permanent residence. Foreign migrant workers are granted temporary resident cards for the duration of the work permit. Permanent residence</p>	<p>Asian Development, Vol 2, No 2.</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>status may only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Trinh, 2016</p>	
	<p>Access to social protection, health, and education</p> <p>Previously, internal migrants were affected by restrictions in the country's residential registration system, which only allowed Vietnamese citizens to register one place of permanent residence. This meant that internal migrants who were unable to move their permanent residence status to a new district lacked proper access to social benefits, healthcare, and education. The Diplomat, 08 April 2017</p> <p>A study of migrant health in Vietnam conducted in 2019 identified 22 barriers for cross-border migrants and 16 for internal migrants, grouped into four key categories: structural, financial, cognitive and social support. Among the identified barriers to accessing healthcare, issues included complex administration, insufficient resources for provision of migrant-friendly healthcare, and issues with affordability for low-income migrants even with health insurance. In particular, internal migrants that are not registered in their new location and lack knowledge of their rights to health insurance must pay for access to health care. The introduction of electronic management of residency and new ID cards in 2020 are expected to mitigate these issues and improve access to social protection and healthcare. IOM, 2020</p> <p>Despite improvements in the percentage of the population covered by social protections since 2005, permanent residents remain the most privileged, while few migrants can afford services like health insurance. Lin and Nguyen, 2021</p>	<p>The Diplomat, 08 April 2017, 'Vietnam's Left-Behind Urban Migrants'</p> <p>International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2020, Situation Analysis of Migrant Health in Viet Nam</p> <p>Lin, J., and Nguyen, M.T.N., 2021, The cycle of commodification: migrant labour, welfare, and the market in global China and Vietnam, <i>Global Public Policy and Governance</i></p> <p>Viet Nam Social Security, 2025. 'Social security for migrant workers be protected'</p> <p>Trinh, K.L, 2016, Work Related Rights of Foreign Migrant Workers in Viet Nam. <i>Journal of</i></p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Workers who migrate from rural to urban areas in Vietnam are entitled to social protections, including health insurance, unemployment insurance, and retirement benefits. Under the Social Insurance Law, employers must register workers for social insurance and make contributions. Challenges noted by Viet Nam Social Security include informal employment that excludes workers from social security protections and limited awareness among workers of their rights. Viet Nam Social Security, 2025</p> <p>Although foreign migrant workers are now entitled to social protections relating to health, sickness, and injury, they are not entitled to join the unemployment scheme, leaving them vulnerable to financial difficulties if they lose their jobs. Trinh, 2016</p> <p>Foreign workers in Vietnam with labor contracts that exceed one year must contribute to social insurance. Associated benefits include maternity leave, health insurance, and pension schemes. Viet Nam Social Security, 2025</p>	<p>Asian Development, Vol 2, No 2.</p>
	<p>Bilateral MOUs or other agreements specifically designed to protect migrant workers</p> <p>According to the International Organization for Migration, the Vietnamese government has signed several bilateral labor migration agreements to improve protection for Vietnamese migrant workers. IOM, 2020</p> <p>A 2015 report by the International Labour Organization states that since 1992 Vietnam has signed over 20 bilateral MOUs and agreements with</p>	<p>International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2020, Vulnerabilities and risks of exploitation encountered by Vietnamese migrant workers—A qualitative study of returnees' experience, Ho Chi Minh</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	other countries to facilitate labor migration. ILO, 2015	International Labour Organization (ILO), 2015, Complaint mechanisms for Vietnamese migrant workers: an overview of law and practice, ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
Ratification of relevant international conventions and domestication of conventions into a national legal framework (Forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor)	Convention No. 29 – In Force	Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)
	Convention No. 105 – In Force	Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
	Convention No. 138 – In Force	Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
	Convention No. 182 – In Force	Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

Indicator	Description	Sources
	Protocol 29 – Not Ratified	Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (P29)
	Palermo Protocol - Ratified	Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (the ‘Palermo Protocol’)
	Convention No. 188 – Not Ratified	ILO Convention 188 on Work in Fishing;
	PSMA – Party to the PSMA	The FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA)
	<p>Domestication into national legislation</p> <p>Forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor are prohibited in Vietnam. However, the law does not prohibit all the worst forms of child labor and lacks a law proscribing slavery. The minimum age for light work is 13 years, rising to 18 years for hazardous work. Penalties for child labor violations are not commensurate with the seriousness of the crimes. US Department of State, 2025</p> <p>Vietnam’s labor code regulates child labor and the employment of young workers. It assigns</p>	<p>US Department of State, 2025, 2024 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Vietnam</p> <p>FAO, 2023, Child labour in small-scale agriculture in Viet Nam – Technical paper. Ha Noi.</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>responsibility to the employer to take care of young workers' work, health, and education, including by arranging work to not affect study hours and to obtain a health certificate. FAO, 2023 , The Labor Code 2019 - English version</p> <p>Vietnam's labor code regulates work minor employees (children under 18 years) can do and prohibits certain types of tasks that may be hazardous for minor workers in Article 147. For example, the labor code prohibits employees aged 15 to under 18 from working in offshore fishing, diving and work underwater. The Labor Code 2019 - English version</p> <p>Article 150 of the penal code criminalizes labor trafficking and sex trafficking of adults and prescribes penalties of five to 10 years' imprisonment and fines of 20 million to 100 million VND (USD785 to USD3,925). Article 151 criminalizes labor trafficking and sex trafficking of children under 16 years and prescribes penalties of seven to 12 years' imprisonment and fines of 50 million to 200 million VND (USD1,962 to USD7,849). US Department of State, 2025b</p> <p>Article 170 of Vietnam's 2019 Labor Code incorporates the rights of employees to establish, join and participate in activities of trade union as well as the right of freedom of association. The Labor Code 2019 - English version</p> <p>Vietnam is working to domesticate the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) and address the issue of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.</p>	<p>The Labor Code 2019 – English version</p> <p>US Department of State, 2025b, 2025 Trafficking in Persons Report: Vietnam</p> <p>FAO, 2023b, FAOLEX Database - Viet Nam, National plan of action to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing up to 2025</p> <p>IUU - NHA TRANG UNIVERSITY, 03 September 2025, 'Vietnam issued PSMA procedures'</p> <p>Vietnam Law & Legal Forum, 22 October 2025, 'Vietnam launches action plan for peak month against illegal fishing'</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Vietnam has established a National plan of action to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing up to 2025. FAO, 2023b</p> <p>In July 2025, Vietnam’s Ministry of Agriculture and Environment issued a PSMA procedure: Decision No.2828/QD-BNNMT on issuing procedures on control foreign vessels fishing, transporting, transshipping fishery products from wild-caught to landing, temporary import, re-export, transit through Vietnam territory. IUU - NHA TRANG UNIVERSITY, 03 September 2025</p> <p>In October 2025, the Prime Minister of Vietnam, Pham Minh Chinh, signed a decision to issue an action plan to combat IUU fishing and promote sustainable fisheries development. Measures include strengthening monitoring and enforcement and enhancing traceability of catches. Under the PSMA, Vietnam will allocate resources for inspections at ports and processing plants. Vietnam Law & Legal Forum, 22 October 2025</p>	
Regulation of recruitment	<p>Country’s government-sanctioned oversight mechanisms (regulations, accreditation schemes, inspection, etc.) of recruitment agents</p> <p>The Vietnamese government approved Decree No. 119 on 1 February 2015 (the most recent one concerning migrant workers). “The Decree is intended to regulate the handling of complaints and denunciations on a range of issues, including the dispatch of Vietnamese workers for overseas employment by recruitment agencies”. ILO, 2016</p> <p>Vietnam’s revised Law on Contract-Based Vietnamese Overseas Workers (Law 69) came into effect in January 2022. The law regulates recruitment fees payable by Vietnamese migrant workers,</p>	<p>International Labour Organization (ILO), 2016, Complaint mechanisms for Vietnamese migrant workers: An overview of law and practice</p> <p>US Department of State, 2023, 2023 Trafficking in Persons Report: Vietnam</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>including removing brokerage commissions payable to recruitment agents and service charges. In addition, the law helps to regulate the risk of forced labor by allowing overseas workers to unilaterally terminate a contract. If found to be using deceptive means to recruit workers into exploitative labor, recruitment agencies may have their licenses revoked. Observers report that the cost of worker-paid recruitment fees has been reduced under the revised law, but government officials lacked training to support implementation of the law, and the government lacked a formal system for workers to voice complaints. Labor regulations in some destination countries conflicted with Law 69. US Department of State, 2023 , US Department of State, 2025</p> <p>Other examples of regulation on recruitment:</p> <p>According to Article 1 of the 2006 Law on Guest Workers, this law regulates “activities of sending workers abroad under contract” as well as the rights and obligations of guest workers under contract; enterprises and non-business organizations sending workers abroad under contract; and organizations and individuals. 2006 Law on Guest Workers</p> <p>Vietnam has regulation on recruitment of foreign workers and its labor code requires foreign workers to have a work permit to hold employment in Vietnam. In addition, Article 152 requires employers to obtain written approval from the authorities before recruiting foreign workers. The Labor Code 2019 - English version</p> <p>Regulation under Decree No. 34/2008 applies to recruitment and management of foreign workers in Vietnam and to enterprises and organizations in Vietnam that employ foreign workers. It covers work</p>	<p>US Department of State, 2025, 2025 Trafficking in Persons Report: Vietnam</p> <p>2006 Law on Guest Workers</p> <p>The Labor Code 2019 – English version</p> <p>Decree No. 34/2008/ND-CP on employment and administration of foreigners working in Viet Nam</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>permits and the responsibilities of employers, foreign workers, and State bodies. Article 4 specifically covers recruitment. Decree No. 34/2008/ND-CP on employment and administration of foreigners working in Viet Nam</p>	
<p>Enforcement of legislation for forced labor, human trafficking, hazardous child labor, migrant worker protections, recruitment and working conditions</p>	<p>TIP Report</p> <p>Evidence indicates that Vietnam is making some efforts to enforce anti-trafficking, forced labor, and child labor laws but enforcement is still inadequate. While there have been some indications of progress in recent years, concerns continue to be highlighted by observing authorities about Vietnam’s performance.</p> <p>The US Department of States’ 2024 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report upgraded Vietnam to Tier 2 from the Tier 2 Watchlist in 2023. The 2024 report states “The Government of Vietnam does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated overall increasing efforts compared with the previous reporting period; therefore Vietnam was upgraded to Tier 2.”</p> <p>Key achievements included starting more trafficking investigations including criminal proceedings against alleged criminal officials, prosecuting and convicting more traffickers, increased cooperation with international law enforcement and assisting victims and protecting oversea workers. US Department of State, 2024</p> <p>The US Department of States’ 2025 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report maintains Vietnam’s Tier 2 status noting overall increasing efforts to meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. Efforts included the adoption of revisions to the anti-trafficking law governing protection to criminalize all</p>	<p>US Department of State, 2024, 2024 Trafficking in Persons Report: Vietnam</p> <p>US Department of State, 2025, 2025 Trafficking in Persons Report: Vietnam</p> <p>Alliance 8.7: Vietnam</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>forms of child sex trafficking; an increase in trafficking prosecutions and convictions; the first-time release of investigation case data disaggregated by sex trafficking and labor trafficking; identification of more trafficking victims; and the screening of potential trafficking victims returned from online scam operations.</p> <p>In 2024, the government investigated 237 suspected human traffickers across 91 cases, involving nine cases of sex trafficking, 29 cases of labor trafficking, and 53 cases with unspecified forms of exploitation. The government prosecuted 291 alleged traffickers in 2024, compared to 198 in 2023, and courts convicted 246 traffickers in 2024, compared to 198 in 2023. Disaggregated data by sex trafficking and labor trafficking was not provided for prosecutions and convictions.</p> <p>Areas where shortfalls occurred include inadequate victim screening processes, failing to prevent the penalization of potential victims for unlawful acts, and the provision of services to fewer trafficking victims. Screening efforts are sometimes hindered by a lack of staffing capacity and other resources. Inadequate training among the relevant authorities further hinders implementation and enforcement. US Department of State, 2025</p> <p>Vietnam become a Pathfinder Country in the global Alliance 8.7, putting in place a national roadmap to eliminate forced labor, human trafficking, and child labor by 2030 and committing to accelerated action. Alliance 8.7: Vietnam</p>	
	<p>Child labor laws</p> <p>The enforcement of child labor laws is hindered by the difficult to reach nature of child labor, which</p>	<p>ILO and the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of Viet Nam,</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>mainly occurs in informal sectors and rural areas according to the Vietnam National Child Labour Survey 2018. ILO and the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of Viet Nam, 2020</p> <p>According to the US Department of State’s 2024 Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Vietnam, labor laws generally are not effectively enforced in Vietnam and the government did not effectively enforce child labor laws. Penalties for child labor law violations are not sufficiently stringent. US Department of State, 2025</p>	<p>2020, Viet Nam National Child Labour Survey 2018: Key findings</p> <p>US Department of State, 2025, 2024 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Vietnam</p>
	<p>Global Slavery Index (2023):</p> <p>The 2023 GSI methodology states the Government Response Rating is “based on data collected on 141 indicators that are relevant to understanding how each government is tracking towards achieving 42 activities organized into five milestones. Each milestone represents an aspect of a strong government response to modern slavery; for example, supporting survivors to exit and remain out of modern slavery”.</p> <p>Est. no. of people living in modern slavery: 396,000</p> <p>Prevalence Index Rank: 4.1 per 1,000 people</p> <p>Vulnerability to Modern Slavery: 44/100</p> <p>Government Response Rating: 47/100</p> <p>Note: The GSI government responses to modern slavery is presented as a percentage. Higher percentage reflects more action being taken and a higher percentage on the GSI is assumed to mean lower risk by the SSRT.</p>	<p>Global Slavery Index’s overall ratings</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Documentation from national labor inspection and other law enforcement agencies</p> <p>Domestic and foreign workers are exploited by traffickers in multiple sectors in Vietnam, and Vietnamese workers are exploited overseas. The Vietnam National Child Labour Survey 2018 found hazardous child labor in all three of Vietnam’s main economic sectors: agriculture (forestry and fisheries), industry (construction), and services. The report states that child labor in the informal sector is difficult to reach and address via law enforcement and other interventions. ILO and MoLISA, 2020</p> <p>The Labor Inspection Convention No. 81 of 1947 is currently in force in Vietnam. This convention requires country members to maintain a system of labor inspection in industrial workplaces.</p> <p>Article 6 of ILO Convention No. 81 states the following: “The inspection staff shall be composed of public officials whose status and conditions of service are such that they are assured of stability of employment and are independent of changes of government and of improper external influences.” This article guarantees independence and impartiality of officers conducting the inspections. Labor Inspection Convention No. 81 of 1947</p> <p>Updated version of the Vietnamese Labor Code: “Chapter XVI</p> <p>LABOR INSPECTION, HANDLING OF VIOLATIONS OF THE LABOR LAW” includes provisions on labor inspections. Articles 214-217.</p> <p>Article 216 on Rights of labor inspectorates states: “Labor inspectorates may inspect and investigate places subject to inspection and falling within the</p>	<p>ILO and the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of Viet Nam (MoLISA), 2020, Viet Nam National Child Labour Survey 2018: Key findings</p> <p>Labor Inspection Convention No. 81 of 1947</p> <p>The Labor Code 2019 – English version</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>scope of inspection as assigned to them under inspection decisions. For unscheduled inspection under decisions of competent persons in cases of emergency that pose threats to safety, life, health, honor or dignity of employees in the workplace, no advance notice is required. The Labor Code 2019 – English version</p>	
	<p>ILO</p> <p>Comments from the ILO’s Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) include a request from the Committee to the Vietnamese Government to provide information on the implementation of the Penal Code about sanctions for forced labor, noting that the Government had not reported on any cases since 2016.</p>	<p>Comments of the Committee of Experts (CEACR), Direct Request - adopted 2020, published 109th ILC session (2021)</p>
<p>Evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor in the country</p>	<p>General evidence from other sectors</p> <p>Domestic and foreign citizens are exploited by human traffickers in Vietnam. Workers in the informal sector are especially vulnerable to human trafficking. Work linked to forced labor or the risk of forced labor includes street hawking and begging, the garment industry, and domestic service. Additionally, previous reports have connected forced labor of prisoners to agriculture, manufacturing, and cashew processing. Sex trafficking of women and girls, including from ethnic minority communities, is connected to massage parlors, karaoke bars, and hotels. North Korean nationals working in Vietnam experience multiple indicators of forced labor and there are concerns about Cuban medical professionals being forced to work by the Cuban regime. US Department of State, 2025</p>	<p>US Department of State, 2025, 2025 Trafficking in Persons Report: Vietnam</p> <p>US Department of Labor, 2024, 2024 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor Report</p> <p>International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of Viet Nam (MoLISA),</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Based largely on the Vietnam National Child Labor Survey 2012, the US Department identifies numerous goods produced with forced labor and child in Vietnam. According to the US Department of Labor’s 2024 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor Report, forced labor and child labor are used in the production of garments, and child labor is linked to bricks, fish, textiles, tobacco and several other agricultural commodities, among other goods. US Department of Labor, 2024</p> <p>Child labor is prevalent in the informal sector and largely occurs in rural areas of Vietnam, making it difficult for authorities to enforce child labor laws. The Vietnam National Child Labour Survey 2018 estimates that in 2018 around 520,000 children were engaged in hazardous child labor in all three of Vietnam’s main economic sectors: agriculture (forestry and fisheries), industry (construction), and services. ILO and MoLISA, 2020</p> <p>Nonetheless, the percentage of children in child labor in Vietnam (5.4%) is marginally lower than the International Labour Organization (ILO)’s 2021 regional estimate for the Asia-Pacific (5.6%) and significantly lower than the estimate for Eastern and Southeastern Asia (6.2%). ILO and UNICEF, 2021</p> <p>A 2020-2021 survey conducted by UNICEF among 14,000 households throughout the country found that 6.9% of children aged between 5-17 years were engaged in child labor, with a higher proportion of girls and children in rural areas engaged in child labor than boys and children in urban areas, and more than a quarter not attending school. The total percentage of children aged 5-17 years working under hazardous conditions was 3.9%. Children in poorer households, those with mothers who have lower or no education, and those from ethnic minority groups were more</p>	<p>2020, Viet Nam National Child Labour Survey 2018: Key findings</p> <p>ILO and Unicef 2021: Child Labour. Global estimates. Trends and the road forward</p> <p>General Statistics Office and UNICEF, 2021a, Survey measuring Viet Nam Sustainable Development Goal indicators on</p> <p>Children and Women 2020-2021, Survey Findings Report. Ha Noi, Viet Nam: General Statistics Office</p> <p>General Statistics Office and UNICEF, 2021b, Viet Nam SDGCW Survey 2020-2021 – Child Labour</p> <p>ILO, MoLISA, and General Statistics Office of Viet Nam, 2025, Key findings on the situation of working children</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>likely to engage in child labor or hazardous child labor. General Statistics Office and UNICEF, 2021a , General Statistics Office and UNICEF, 2021b</p> <p>A more recent National Child Labour Survey is not available but information on working children and child labor was collected through Vietnam’s 2023 Labour Force Survey, which shows that that the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries sector remains the highest employer of working children by number, but the rate of children engaged in child labor and hazardous work is highest in the Industry and Construction sector. ILO, MoLISA, and General Statistics Office of Viet Nam, 2025 , General Statistics Office and International Labor Organization, 2025</p> <p>Unauthorized child labor was reported in labor-intensive sectors including brickmaking, agriculture, construction, fishing, forestry, and the manufacture of footwear, furniture, garments, textiles, and leather. Children were also reported by local media to be working as beggars in gangs, with gang leaders abusing the children and taking the majority of their income. Children start working as early as five years age, and almost half of child workers did not attend school. During the year there were reports of the worst forms of child labor. US Department of State, 2025</p>	<p>and child labour in Viet Nam in 2023</p> <p>General Statistics Office and International Labor Organization, 2025, <i>Kết quả chủ yếu về thực trạng Trẻ em tham gia lao động và Lao động trẻ em của Việt Nam năm 2023</i> [Working children and children in child labour in Viet Nam 2023]</p> <p>US Department of State, 2025, 2024 <i>Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Vietnam</i></p>

Table 1: Vietnam - Country-level indicators

Vietnam: Seafood industry-level indicators

Indicator	Description	Sources
<p>Direct evidence of Forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor</p>	<p>Evidence was found linking Vietnam’s seafood industry to child labor and hazardous child labor.</p> <p>“Fish” is listed among the products produced by child labor in Vietnam in the US Department of Labor’s 2024 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor Report. According to the report, evidence indicates that children aged 5 to 17 years are engaged in fishing and fish processing in Vietnam. This listing is based upon the Government of Vietnam’s National Child Labor Survey 2012, the results of which were published in 2014, which states that an estimated 49,390 child laborers work in fishing in Vietnam. Of these, over 19,000 children worked in fishing for more than 42 hours a week and nearly 39,000 children working in fishing were involved in potentially hazardous work. In addition, the survey indicates that an estimated 15,720 child laborers are involved in the production, processing, and preservation of fish and fish products. Of these, over 11,000 children worked for more than 42 hours a week and over 13,000 were involved in potentially hazardous work. US Department of Labor, 2024</p> <p>Vietnam conducted its second National Child Labour Survey in 2018. Working children aged 5-17 years (including those not engaged in child labor) were identified by the survey in all three of Vietnam’s main economic sectors: 60% in agriculture (forestry and fisheries), 15.6% in industry (construction), and nearly 23% in services. The survey findings indicate that over 21,700 children work in fishing, over 28,000 children work in aquaculture, and over 20,600 children work in fish processing. In all three types of work, the children were primarily male, aged 15-17 years. The survey found that a higher proportion of female children</p>	<p>US Department of Labor, 2024, 2024 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor Report</p> <p>ILO and the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of Viet Nam (MoLISA), 2020, Viet Nam National Child Labour Survey 2018: Key findings</p> <p>ILO, MoLISA, and General Statistics Office of Viet Nam, 2025, Key findings on the situation of working children and child labour in Viet Nam in 2023</p> <p>General Statistics Office and International Labor Organization, 2025, Kết quả chủ yếu về thực trạng Trẻ em tham gia lao động và Lao động trẻ em của Việt Nam năm 2023 [Working children and children in child</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>work in fish processing compared to fishing and aquaculture.</p> <p>Of the total number of children in child labor, more than 50% (more than 500,000 children) worked in the agriculture sector. According to the updated survey, an estimated 16,154 child laborers work in fishing, 17,563 work in aquaculture, and 17,129 in fish processing.</p> <p>Thirty-five percent of children involved in hazardous work were engaged in agriculture (forestry and fisheries). Of the children involved in hazardous work, more than 12,000 children worked in fishing and nearly 15,000 children worked in aquaculture. Nearly 29,000 children were reported working in unsafe work environments such as ‘working under water (ponds, lakes, ...) diving and offshore fishing’. Hazardous work in fish processing is not reported.</p> <p>ILO and MoLISA, 2020</p> <p>A more recent National Child Labour Survey is not available but information on working children and child labor was collected through Vietnam’s 2023 Labour Force Survey, which shows that that the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries sector remains the highest employer of working children by number. It does not provide a detailed breakdown of work in fisheries and aquaculture. ILO, MoLISA, and General Statistics Office of Viet Nam, 2025 , General Statistics Office and International Labor Organization, 2025</p> <p>In a 2018-2019 survey of crew from 41 Vietnamese fishing vessels detained in Thai waters between late 2017 and early 2019, the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) found that 17% of vessels had at least one child working on board, with a total of 12</p>	<p>labour in Viet Nam 2023]</p> <p>EJF, 2019, Caught in the net Illegal fishing and child labor in Vietnam’s fishing fleet</p> <p>FAO, 2023, Child labour in small-scale agriculture in Viet Nam – Technical paper. Ha Noi.</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>crew members under 18 years identified. The youngest child found on board was only 11 years. Although the children were often relatives of the vessel captain or a crew member, they were still expected to work. Many of the children that EJF spoke to said that they no longer attended school to support their families. EJF, 2019</p> <p>According to a 2023 FAO technical paper on child labor in small-scale agriculture in Vietnam, household surveys and focus group discussions carried out in 2020 in the Soc Trang and Tra Vinh provinces of the Mekong River Delta Region identified evidence of potentially hazardous child labor in fishing and aquaculture and related tasks. The paper identified reports of 17-year-old boys being hired to work on fishing boats in the Soc Trang Province, though survey informants emphasized that offshore work is considered too demanding for children. Children may engage in fishing-related tasks as hired labor or to assist their families. Work tasks performed include fixing nets, preparing food for crew members, organizing fuel and ice-water, loading buoys on and off the vessels, bringing fish ashore, and cleaning machinery and ships, where girls and elderly women are usually tasked with fixing nets and food preparation, and boys and men with the other tasks. In some cases, children may carry heavier loads than is allowed. These tasks are usually limited to 2-3 hours work every 2 weeks.</p> <p>In aquaculture, the survey found that children are often involved in tasks, such as feeding fish, cleaning ponds, and harvesting fish. These activities can include exposure to hazardous chemicals such as pesticides and antibiotics. Children’s involvement as hired labor was deemed rare and limited to shrimp guarding and feeding by survey informants. According</p>	

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>to the report, children’s involvement in seafood production and processing is limited to the domestic supply chain and market. FAO, 2023</p>	
<p>ILO indicators of forced labor and ILO R190 definition of hazardous child labor</p>	<p>Evidence of potential debt bondage and abusive living and working conditions on Vietnamese fishing vessels and in seafood processing is indicative of forced labor risk in the seafood industry.</p> <p>In the 2019 EJF report, ‘Blood and Water’, fishers on Vietnamese vessels detained in Thai waters “described long working hours on board, restricted access to food and water, and only receiving payment if the catch was good. During the monsoon months, boats would not be able to leave port at all, meaning that workers received nothing. Many of the individuals EJF spoke to also reported owing mounting debts to vessel owners or captains, a common indicator of debt bondage and forced labor.” (Pg. 14) EJF, 2019a</p> <p>EJF’s 2019 report “Caught in the net. Illegal fishing and child labor in Vietnam’s fishing fleet” asserts that the “Vietnamese Labor Code states that workers must receive agreed salaries and work set hours with established rest periods, however, as stated by 48 survey respondents they only receive payment ‘depending on the quantity of catch’. This could result in workers not being paid for several trips due to inclement weather, poor catches, or other complications.” Several of the fishing vessels observed by EJF were reportedly in poor condition, had “squalid” living conditions, and carried low-quality or expired food and water. EJF, 2019b</p> <p>The 2019 Labor code however does stipulate in Article 21. Contents of employment contracts point 3: “Where a worker works in the agriculture, forestry,</p>	<p>EJF, 2019a, Blood and Water: Human rights abuse in the global seafood industry</p> <p>EJF, 2019b, Caught in the Net Illegal fishing and child labor in Vietnam’s fishing fleet</p> <p>Ministry of Labour, War Invalids, and Social Affairs, The Viet Nam Labour Code 2019.</p> <p>IDH, No date, Working Conditions in Seafood Processing in Vietnam</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>fishery, or salt production sectors, depending on the type of work, the two parties may exclude some contents of the employment contract and agree on supplementary contents on settling cases where the execution of the contract is affected by natural disaster, fire or weather.” Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs, 2019</p> <p>IDH reports that an assessment of seafood processing plants in two provinces in Vietnam found that workers, lacked formal contracts, did not receive sufficient payments for social insurance, and were subject to “harmful working conditions”. IDH, No date</p>	
<p>Fishing, aquaculture and processing regulations and policies</p>	<p>Labor-related fishing legislation</p> <p>Four pieces of legislation specific to fishers are identified in the ILO NATLEX database:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation on the fishing ship registry and the fishing ships and crew registration (Decisions No. 494/2001/QD-BTS). • Joint Circular No. 6000/1999/TTLT/BGTVT-BTS guiding the implementation of Government Decree No. 72/1998/ND-CP on ensuring safety for fishermen and fishing means operating on the sea. • Decree No. 72/1998/ND-CP ensuring safety for fishermen and fishery means on the sea. • Directive No. 39-TTg of the Prime Minister on ensuring safety for fishermen and fishing facilities on the sea. <p>ILO NATLEX database</p> <p>The 2018 Global Slavery Index (GSI) for fishing – Vietnam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Fisheries Policy (catch outside EEZ, distant water fishing, and subsidies) 	<p>ILO NATLEX Database – Vietnam fishing</p> <p>Global Slavery Index (GSI), 2018, Fishing</p> <p>FAOLEX DATABASE</p> <p>The Labor Code 2019 – English version</p> <p>FAO, 2023, FAOLEX Database - Viet Nam, National plan of action to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing up to 2025</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Medium Risk. ● Wealth and Institutional Capacity (GDP per capita, value landed per fisher, and unreported landings) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High Risk. <p>Global Slavery Index (GSI), 2018</p> <p>Other regulations and policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The fisheries sector strategies up to 2020 and visions to 2030 were adopted by the Primary Minister at the Decision No. 1690/QD-TTg dated 16/9/2010. ● Decree No. 59/2005/ND-CP dated 04/5/2005 05 of the Government on production conditions and trading of some marine capture and trading fisheries and Decree No. 14/2009/ND-CP regarding the revision and supplement of some articles of Decree 59/2005/ND-CP. This regulates conditions and procedures for entering the capture fisheries. ● Decree No. 32/2010/ND-CP dated 30/3/20120 on the management of fishery activities of foreign fishing vessels in all marine areas of Vietnam. This provides conditions and procedures for foreign fishing vessels fishing in Vietnamese waters. ● Decree No. 33/2010/ND-CP dated 31/3/2010 on management of fishing activities of organizations and individuals in all marine areas of Vietnam. This provides obligations and procedures for operating fishing in sea zones in Vietnamese EEZ. ● Decree No. 52/2010/ND-CP dated 21/6/2010 on the import of fishing vessels. This provides conditions and procedures to import fishing vessels from other countries into Vietnam. 	

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decree No. 31/2010/ND-CP dated 29/3/2010 on administrative violations in the fisheries sector, providing penalty and fines for illegal fishing practices. Decree No. 107/2005/ND-CP dated 17/8/2005 regarding to organization and mechanism of the fisheries inspection force. Decree No. 26/2019/ND-CP of the Government regulating articles and measures to implement the Fisheries Law. <p>FAOLEX DATABASE</p> <p>Article 147g. of the Vietnamese Labor Code prohibits work places for minor employees as follows: “An employer must not employ a minor employee to undertake the following work: (...) offshore fishing”.</p> <p>The Labor Code 2019 – English version</p> <p>Vietnam has established a National plan of action to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing up to 2025. FAO, 2023</p> <p>Labor-related aquaculture and processing legislation</p> <p>Limited information on specific labor-related regulations specific to aquaculture production or processing was found.</p>	
<p>Enforcement and implementation of industry-specific regulations and policies</p>	<p>Enforcement of fishing-specific regulations and policies</p> <p>The fishing industry is made up of mostly small fishing vessels that “escape regulation”. Seafish, 2020</p> <p>In a survey by EJF of Vietnamese vessels detained in Thai waters between December 2017 and July 2019, none of the 41 vessels surveyed carried copies of official vessel documentation such as the vessel</p>	<p>Seafish, 2020, Seafood social profile Vietnam</p> <p>EJF, 2019, Caught in the Net Illegal fishing and child labor in Vietnam’s fishing fleet</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>fishing license, crew list or logbook, despite being required to do so by the revised Law on Fisheries 2017. Among vessels observed being detained, none indicated that they used catch documentation, making it difficult for authorities to verify catch or for downstream supply chain actors to verify the origin of the fish. Vietnam has been linked to illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing by Vietnamese vessels operating in the Asia-Pacific. Meanwhile, evidence reported of child labor on board Vietnamese fishing vessels indicates that the Vietnamese Labor Code is not being successfully enforced. The use of implementation and enforcement measures like portside inspections is said to be “very limited” and portside checks are considered deficient. EJF, 2019</p> <p>In October 2017, the European Commission issued Vietnam a “yellow card” for failing to adequately address IUU fishing. Although Vietnam has taken several steps to implement the European Commission’s recommendations and address the issue of IUU fishing, there are two key issues remaining - IUU fishing in other countries’ waters and product traceability – which mean the yellow card has yet to be lifted. These problems persist in part due to the lack of an effective surveillance system and inadequate enforcement, including weak deterrents, and a fragmented fishery supply chain. Nguyen, 8 March 2024</p> <p>Nevertheless, Vietnam has established a National plan of action to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing up to 2025. Among the main tasks outlined in the plan for the period 2021-2025 are efforts to enhance law enforcement capacity of border guards, Coast Guard, Fisheries resources surveillance, and specialized</p>	<p>Nguyen, K.G., 8 March 2024, Assessing Vietnam’s Challenges in Fighting IUU Fishing, Singapore: ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute, 2024 (No. 18)</p> <p>FAO, 2023, FAOLEX Database - Viet Nam, National plan of action to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing up to 2025</p> <p>Nong Nghiep, 23 April 2024, "A look into the Government's Action Program against IUU fishing"</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>inspectories at sea, fishing ports, fish-landing sites and fish markets; to strengthen the capacity for inspections of fishing vessels; and upgrade the vessel monitoring system at sea. FAO, 2023</p> <p>Additionally, in April 2024 the government issued Directive No. 32-CT/TW on enhancing the Party's leadership in combatting IUU fishing and promoting sustainable development of the fisheries sector, followed by Resolution No. 52/NQ-CP detailing the Action Program and Plan for implementing the Directive. Nong Nghiep, 23 April 2024</p> <p><u>Enforcement of aquaculture and processing-specific regulations and policies</u></p> <p>As mentioned above under 'Fishing, aquaculture and processing regulations and policies', limited information on specific labor-related regulation in aquaculture production or seafood processing was found. No information was found on enforcing industry-specific regulations and policies.</p>	
<p>Access to workplaces for third-party monitors (trade union representatives, on-board observers, etc.)</p>	<p>Unknown.</p> <p>While there are efforts to improve fisheries management through initiatives like Fisheries Improvements Projects, there is no evidence of third-party monitoring to combat forced labor, child labor, human trafficking, or hazardous child labor.</p> <p>According to 2025 data from Certification and Ratings Collaboration's Environmental Data Tool less than 10% of Vietnamese aquaculture production volume is certified. Certification and Ratings Collaboration, 2025</p>	<p>Certification and Ratings Collaboration, 2025 Environmental Data Tool, 2025</p>
<p>Worker access to a functional</p>	<p>Unknown.</p>	

Indicator	Description	Sources
grievance mechanism		
Access to join a trade union	<p>There are restrictions around worker access to trade unions in Vietnam though the situation improved in 2021.</p> <p>The ability to form and join trade unions is only open to Vietnamese workers. Furthermore, trade unions have shown a lack of independence from the government. Since the new labor code came into force, workers can form or join trade unions independent of the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor (VGCL). However, trade unions do not have full autonomy in administering their affairs, as they must follow the organizational and operational guidelines prescribed by the Communist Party of Vietnam and law. US Department of State, 2022</p> <p>In July 2019, Vietnam took an historic step toward improving freedom of association and collective bargaining by ratifying the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), which requires Member States to protect worker organizations from anti-union discrimination and interference. These provisions were incorporated to Vietnam’s Labor Code in 2019. ILO, 26 July 2019</p> <p>The Labor Code 2019, effective January 2021, gave workers the right to join or form a representative organization of their choosing, independent of the VGCL; to promote and improve the effectiveness of representation; and to protect their rights and interests in accordance with ILO conventions and other international commitments. The Labor Code 2019 – English version</p>	<p>US Department of State, 2022, Vietnam 2020 Human Rights Report</p> <p>ILO, 26 July 2019, ‘Vietnam ratifies the Collective Bargaining Convention’</p> <p>The Labor Code 2019 – English version</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
<p>Participation in voluntary schemes and implementation of comprehensive corporate policies and strategies to combat forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor</p>	<p>Evidence on this indicator in relation to fishing is scarce. Even though fishery improvement projects are active in Vietnam, including for mixed species, swordfish, and tuna, these initiatives have focused on environmental improvements. FisheryProgress, 2024</p> <p>There is some evidence of potential positive social impacts on Vietnam’s tuna fisheries - in February 2020, the Vietnam Tuna Association (VinaTuna) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) met to discuss improvements regarding social responsibility issues in tuna the supply chain in Vietnam. As a result of the meetings, “VINATUNA and ILO agreed that there would be technical/ professional support in the process of implementing the social responsibility status assessment in the skipjack tuna chain and implementing capacity building programs on social responsibility”. VinaTuna, No date</p> <p>In relation to aquaculture and seafood processing, there is some uptake of voluntary certification schemes including Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP), Fair Trade USA, and GlobalG.A.P.</p> <p>In total, there are 132 ASC certificates in Vietnam, including 83 ASC Shrimp Standard certificates certified to the ASC Shrimp Standard as of December 3rd, 2025. The ASC Standard includes requirements relating to the minimum age of work, use of contract agreements, freedom to leave the workplace and to terminate employment, among others. ASC, 2025a</p> <p>According to ASC’s Impact Dashboard, Vietnam has the most ASC shrimp certified sites, followed by India and Ecuador, but is the second largest shrimp producer by volume with significantly less ASC shrimp certified volume than Ecuador. which is the</p>	<p>FisheryProgress, 2024, FIP Directory – Viet Nam</p> <p>Vietnam Tuna Association (VinaTuna), No date, 'Improving Social Responsibility in Vietnam Tuna Industry'</p> <p>Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), 2025a, 'Find a Farm'</p> <p>ASC, 2025b, ASC Impact Tracker</p> <p>Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP), 2025, 'Find BAP-Certified Producers'</p> <p>GLOBALG.A.P., 2025, GLOBALG.A.P. Database</p> <p>Fairtrade, 2025, Partner Directory</p> <p>IDH, 2023, Vietnam seafood sector signs agreement for improved worker</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>largest ASC certified shrimp producing country. ASC, 2025b</p> <p>In addition, there are 428 BAP certified farm facilities in Vietnam, including 381 shrimp farms as of December 3rd, 2025. The BAP Standard includes requirements relating to social accountability and more specifically child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking. BAP, 2025</p> <p>The GlobalG.A.P. certification scheme is also active in Vietnam, with 10 certified whiteleg shrimp producers and two certified giant tiger shrimp producers as of December 2025. GLOBALG.A.P., 2025</p> <p>Fair Trade USA has a distinct focus on ensuring human rights, empowerment of workers and the improvement of the social and natural environment. As of December 2025, three seafood producers are certified in Vietnam. Fairtrade, 2025</p> <p>Additionally, a voluntary ‘Multi Company Collective Bargaining Agreement’ (MCCBA) between five of the major seafood companies in Ca Mau province was signed in October 2022. This agreement aims to improve worker conditions and compensation and help stabilize the companies’ workforce, invest in worker capabilities and improve production planning. The agreement resulted from collaboration between the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL), Provincial Trade Unions, Vietnam Sustainable Shrimp Alliance (VSSA), the industry and CNV International, and was convened through IDH. IDH, 2023</p> <p>Other initiatives include Monterey Bay Aquarium’s Community Development Fund. The fund intends to benefit aquaculture and fishing communities by addressing social equity issues that impede</p>	<p>conditions and compensation</p> <p>United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs – Sustainable Development, Seafood Watch: Incorporating a Social Equity/Human Rights Based Approach to Seafood Sustainability</p> <p>Monterey Bay Aquarium, 01 September 2024, Monterey Bay Aquarium Community Development Fund</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>sustainable fishing and farming practices. Uses of community funds are determined by the local community to improve their quality of life. In Vietnam, the fund was used to support the construction of a new bridge in a shrimp-farming region to enable residents to safely get to work, school, hospital, and the community centre. The bridge was identified as a priority for the community through engagement between local partners, Cà Mau Former Oversea Student Network and the People's Committee of Tam Giang Dong Commune and local community members. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, No date , Monterey Bay Aquarium, 01 September 2024</p>	

Table 2: Vietnam - Seafood industry-level indicators

Vietnam: Aquaculture Indicators

Indicator	Description	Sources
Direct evidence of Forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor	No direct evidence was found linking Vietnamese warmwater shrimp aquaculture with forced labor, human trafficking, or hazardous child labor.	
ILO indicators of forced labor and ILO R190 definition of hazardous child labor	<p><u>Forced labor</u></p> <p>There are concerns around shrimp farmers' vulnerability to indebtedness and security practices that restrict shrimp workers' movement, but the evidence relating to these is not sufficient to conclude forced labor risk.</p> <p>The Boston Consulting Group 2019 report indicates because of high risk of harvest losses, small farmers can easily go bankrupt in combination with intermediaries operating as financiers to shrimp farmers. Boston Consulting Group, 2019. Though not mentioned in the report, this could make small farmers vulnerable to indebtedness and exploitation.</p> <p>This risk of debt or indebtedness is somewhat supported by studies done by the ILO and FAO. The ILO research on "the impact of intermediaries on environmental and social outcomes and worker vulnerability found that the financing system in Vietnam does not allow small-scale farmers to buy inputs in bulk. This results in higher input costs and significantly reducing profitability and farmers may make losses which can lead to debt cycles. However, the report specifically states that the debt cycles do not lead to outright debt bondage and suggests that based on the Conservation International FIP social risk tool, the risk for debt bondage in shrimp supply</p>	<p>Boston Consulting Group, 2019, A Strategic Approach to Sustainable Shrimp Production in Vietnam</p> <p>ILO and Monterey Bay Aquarium, 2020, Research paper: Study of the impact of intermediaries on environmental and social outcomes and worker vulnerability in small-scale fishing and aquaculture in Indonesia and Viet Nam</p> <p>Pongthanapanich, T., Nguyen, K.A.T. and Jolly, C.M., 2019, Risk management practices of small intensive shrimp farmers in the</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>chains in Vietnam seems to be low to medium. ILO and Monterey Bay Aquarium, 2020</p> <p>An FAO circular presenting the outcomes of a survey on whiteleg shrimp farms conducted in Bac Lieu, Ben Tre and Ca Mau provinces from September 2017 to February 2018 found that while shrimp farming contributed substantially to poverty alleviation it also highlighted the risk of relying on shrimp farming as the only source of income. Pongthanapanich et al., 2019</p> <p>A 2024 study carried out with shrimp workers in Vietnam in 2023 to 2024 highlights concerns relating to production costs pushing down the quality of working conditions in the shrimp supply chain. Shrimp farmers state that input costs have increased since the COVID-19 pandemic and income has decreased, with less money available to hire workers and provide bonuses. According to the farmers interviewed, shrimp processing plants now require the farmers to sell shrimp to intermediaries from whom they receive lower prices, instead of selling directly to the processing plants. Sustainability Incubator, August 2024</p> <p>Concerns relating to working conditions have also been highlighted:</p> <p>Poor farmers may ignore safety measures at farms to reduce costs or increase production yields through unsustainable and unsafe practices. ILO and Monterey Bay Aquarium, 2020</p> <p>A Human Rights Impact Assessment (HRIA) study conducted by Impactt on behalf of UK retailers Co-op and Sainsbury’s, and supplier Lyons found among the five farms investigated, that there were overly restrictive biosecurity practices in place that could</p>	<p>Mekong Delta of Viet Nam. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular No. 1194. Rome, FAO</p> <p>Sustainability Incubator, August 2024, Laboring for less so supermarkets profit more: How Western supermarkets are shortchanging consumers and farmers – and driving shrimp workers into poverty</p> <p>Impactt, 2022, Human Rights Impact Assessment Vietnam Prawn Supply Chain</p> <p>ILO, 2020, Viet Nam National Child Labour Survey 2018: Key findings</p> <p>FAO, 2023, Child labour in small-scale agriculture in Viet Nam – Technical paper. Ha Noi.</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>impact the workers’ ability to leave the site, although there was no intention by management to make workers feel like they could not leave. Other concerns included the lack of written contracts for some workers while some other workers did not receive a copy of their contract, payslips, or social insurance contributions. A lack of health and safety training was also identified at three out of the five farms Impactt, 2022</p> <p>A 2024 study carried out with shrimp workers in Vietnam in 2023 to 2024 found that many workers lacked written contracts and were not paid for overtime. Testimony from one farm worker and from shrimp harvesters stated that they buy their own protective equipment and health insurances. Sustainability Incubator, August 2024</p> <p><u>Hazardous child labor</u></p> <p>There is some evidence of children engaging in shrimp aquaculture tasks, with one source highlighting concerns about young workers engaging in potentially hazardous work or work that could interfere with children’s education.</p> <p>The Vietnam’s 2018 National Child Labour Survey identified child labor in the aquaculture industry, with 2% of the surveyed children active in child labor and 3.5% in hazardous child labor. However, it is not clear from the survey results to what extent, if at all, this occurs in shrimp aquaculture production. ILO, 2020</p> <p>A 2023 FAO technical paper on child labor in small-scale agriculture in Vietnam discusses the findings of household surveys and focus group discussions carried out in 2020 in the Soc Trang and Tra Vinh provinces of the Mekong River Delta Region, where shrimp is the main species farmed. The survey found</p>	

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>no cases of children working in intensive shrimp farming, which requires minimal labor. In areas of extensive, small-scale production, children may be employed in feeding after school, or in transporting shrimp, feed mixture, or ice. Older children aged 15-17 years also reported participating in pond preparation. Most children involved in aquaculture activities engaged in feeding and keeping shrimp (pond maintenance and guarding). Shrimp feeding can be carried out within 2 hours and can be done outside of school hours. Most children worked for no more than 4 hours per day. But there are some concerns about potentially hazardous work or work that could interfere with children’s education. According to the technical paper, some boys aged 14 to 17 stay up late at night to guard the facilities and feed the shrimp alongside their parents. Children aged 15 to 17 are sometimes hired for shrimp harvesting. These children are often employed informally without a written contract and are paid daily. According to the report, children’s involvement in seafood production and processing is limited to the domestic supply chain and market. While the report also mentions children engaging in hazardous activities such as operating heavy machinery and spraying chemicals, it does not directly link these activities to shrimp farming. FAO, 2023</p>	
Labor supply in the domestic market	<p>Vietnam’s total labor force was 55,951,059 in 2022, comprising people aged 15 years and above who supply labor for the production of goods and services. World Bank, 2023</p> <p>It is estimated by the Boston Consulting Group that in 2017 around 1.6 million people were employed in the aquaculture sector. Boston Consulting Group, 2019</p>	<p>World Bank, 2023, Labor force, total – Vietnam</p> <p>Boston Consulting Group, 2019, A Strategic Approach to Sustainable</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Although it is not clear whether this consists of on solely aquaculture or also processing activities.</p> <p>There are no clear sources of information on the status of labor supply in the aquaculture sector. A research paper from 2020 indicates that of the farmers interviewed for their project, small-scale farmers did not employ additional labor on their own farms. ILO and Monterey Bay Aquarium, 2020</p> <p>A 2023 FAO technical paper indicated that intensive shrimp production needs minimal labor, due to the industry’s characteristics and technology in place, with typically 2-3 workers for black tiger shrimp and 4-5 for white leg shrimp production. In intensive productions systems, both adult family members and hired workers are employed. The paper notes that children’s involvement in production is limited to local or domestic supply chains and markets. FAO, 2023</p> <p>Another study by the FAO on 50 small intensive shrimp farms found that shrimp farming created self-employment for the members of the farm household and that household labor was used extensively. Pongthanapanich et al., 2019</p> <p>An older presentation slide deck from 2014 on Gender in Rice-Shrimp Value Chain in Vietnam, which was part of the wider project “Thematic Studies on Gender in Aquaculture in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam” indicated that in their case study in Vietnam, women were active throughout the rice-shrimp value chain, but mainly have a supporting role during grow-out production such as being in charge of saving and financial management. In the slide deck a reference is made to a World Bank study from 2009 that women played an equal important</p>	<p>Shrimp Production in Vietnam</p> <p>ILO and Monterey Bay Aquarium, 2020, Research paper: Study of the impact of intermediaries on environmental and social outcomes and worker vulnerability in small-scale fishing and aquaculture in Indonesia and Viet Nam</p> <p>FAO, 2023, Child labour in small-scale agriculture in Viet Nam – Technical paper. Ha Noi.</p> <p>Pongthanapanich, T., Nguyen, K.A.T. and Jolly, C.M., 2019, Risk management practices of small intensive shrimp farmers in the Mekong Delta of Viet Nam. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular No. 1194. Rome, FAO.</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>role in marketing and trading product, and an essential role in collection. NACA/USAID, 2014</p> <p>According to a news article in 2022, Vietnamese companies are facing a labor shortage, although this is mainly referring to processing workers. Seafood Source, 30 June 2022</p>	<p>NACA/USAID, 2014, Gender in Rice-Shrimp Value Chain: A Case Study of Grow-Out Farm in Soc Trang Province, Vietnam. Presented at the 5th Global Symposium on Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries (GAF5)</p> <p>Seafood Source, 30 June 2022, Facing higher costs and labor shortages, Minh Phu CEO predicts pain for Vietnam’s shrimp sector</p>
Aquaculture Characteristics	<p>Isolation of the site</p> <p>Aquaculture is mainly concentrated in the Mekong Delta in the southern region of Vietnam. The location and associated environmental characteristics determine the type of shrimp farming practices, as integrated rice shrimp farming requires desalination of the land during rainy season and tends to be more land inwards while mangrove-shrimp systems are found more along the coast. ACIAR, 2022</p> <p>Although there is little information in relation to the isolation of the sites, the more intensive production systems would be heavily reliant on a stable supply of feed and seed, and infrastructure to transport shrimp harvests. Low or no-input production systems such as</p>	<p>Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), 2022, Agricultural research on integrated rice-shrimp and mangrove-shrimp farming systems in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam</p> <p>ILO and Monterey Bay Aquarium, 2020, Research</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>extensive mangrove shrimp can be more isolated and difficult to reach.</p> <p>The 2020 research paper indicates that transportation can be a significant challenge for small scale farmers, specifically when situated in remote areas. ILO and Monterey Bay Aquarium, 2020</p> <p>In one supply chain example, Impact Buying’s 2023 impact assessment of shrimp supply chains in Vietnam looked at two Vietnamese suppliers of shrimp. Both companies operated shrimp farms close to nearby communities and do not need to provide transport or accommodation for workers. Impact Buying, 2023</p> <p>In terms of farm registration, under Fisheries Law Decree No26/2019/NĐ-CP, aquaculture production facilities need to be registered. This follows the increased traceability requirements of export markets like EU, US, and China. While there have been efforts to get shrimp farms registered, the level of registration has remained limited, and the registration process has been slow due to poor communication on the registration procedures. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development - Directorate of Fisheries, 2020 , Vietfish Magazine, 2020</p>	<p>paper: Study of the impact of intermediaries on environmental and social outcomes and worker vulnerability in small-scale fishing and aquaculture in Indonesia and Viet Nam</p> <p>Impact Buying, 2023, Impact Assessment on the Jumbo Supply Chain of Shrimps from Vietnam with Comparative Study on Shrimps from Ecuador</p> <p>Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development - Directorate of Fisheries, 2020, Stepping up registration of aquaculture areas</p> <p>Vietfish Magazine, 2020, The Mekong Delta need ramp up aquaculture registration</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Child-adult ratio in aquaculture communities</p> <p>Unknown.</p> <p>No specific information was found on the child-adult ratio in aquaculture communities. The average fecundity in Vietnam has reduced from 4.9 in the 1980's to average of around 1.9 to 2 from the 2000's onwards. Worldbank, 2023</p> <p>An FAO technical paper found that in areas with extensive small-scale agriculture, it was reported that children from the age of 14 onwards may work as hired laborers after school, including in small-scale shrimp production. However, the paper notes that local government and farmers reported that this was rare, that no cases of children working in intensive shrimp farming were identified in their survey, and that children's involvement in shrimp production is limited to local or domestic supply chains and markets. Boys were reportedly more involved in aquaculture and would start at a younger age. Tasks for children included feeding and keeping/guarding shrimp. Whilst feeding typically takes less than 2 hours per day and allows children to support their parents without it impacting school attendance, it may involve staying up late at night to guard or feed the shrimp. Children sometimes also get employed to transport shrimp, feed, or ice. The study further stated that some 15–17-year-olds were reported to be engaged in pond preparation and hired for harvesting, but that this was often without a written contract, lower payment compared to adults, and payment only upon completion of the work. FAO, 2023</p>	<p>World Bank, 2023, Fertility Rate – Vietnam</p> <p>FAO, 2023, Child labour in small-scale agriculture in Viet Nam – Technical paper. Ha Noi.</p>
Workforce Characteristics	The proportion of low-skilled migrant workers	Pongthanapanich, T., Nguyen, K.A.T.

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>Unknown.</p> <p>Intensive aquaculture generates employment for both skilled and unskilled labor. Pongthanapanich et al., 2019</p> <p>In one supply chain example, Impact Buying’s 2023 impact assessment of shrimp supply chains in Vietnam looked at two Vietnamese suppliers of shrimp. Both companies typically hired farm workers from nearby communities with workers not needing to be provided with accommodation. Impact Buying, 2023</p> <p>In contrast, another impact assessment conducted by Impactt in 2022 which included five shrimp farms describes workers staying in onsite accommodation on farms, although this may be attributed to the need for 24-hour monitoring rather than the presence of migrant workers which is not mentioned. Impactt, 2022</p>	<p>and Jolly, C.M., 2019, Risk management practices of small intensive shrimp farmers in the Mekong Delta of Viet Nam. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular No. 1194. Rome, FAO.</p> <p>Impact Buying, 2023, Impact Assessment on the Jumbo Supply Chain of Shrimps from Vietnam with Comparative Study on Shrimps from Ecuador</p> <p>Impactt, 2022, Human Rights Impact Assessment Vietnam Prawn Supply Chain</p>
	<p>Legal presence/regularity of migrant workers</p> <p>There is no information on the presence of external migrant workers in the shrimp aquaculture industry.</p> <p>On a country level, a UNESCO country brief states that 13.6% of the Vietnamese population are internal migrants and that at 29.3%, Vietnam’s southeast region has the greatest proportion of migrants.</p>	<p>UNESCO, 2018, Overview of Internal Migration in Viet Nam</p> <p>United Nations, 2010, Internal Migration Opportunities and challenges for</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>International migrants amount to only 2.9% of the population. UNESCO, 2018</p> <p>The Constitution of Vietnam guarantees freedom of movement and residence, the right to access health services, the right to work, the right to own lawful domicile and property, and the right to access socio-economic services in an equal manner, among other things. Implementation and safeguarding of these rights on a governance and administrative level, however, is diffused across various government ministries, laws and policy documents making it unclear. United Nations, 2010</p> <p>Previously, internal migrants were affected by restrictions in the country’s residential registration system, which only allowed Vietnamese citizens to register one place of permanent residence. As a result, some internal migrants were not afforded the same rights as formal residents and had limited legal protections. The Diplomat, 08 April 2017</p> <p>The need to register in a new area of residence places additional burden on internal migrants that can create barriers to accessing services such as healthcare. This is also affected by a lack of awareness regarding the transfer of registration status. The introduction in 2020 of a new electronic system and identify card are expected to mitigate issues with the residence registration system for internal migrants. IOM, 2020</p>	<p>socio-economic development in Viet Nam</p> <p>The Diplomat, 08 April 2017, Vietnam’s Left-Behind Urban Migrants</p> <p>International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2020, Situation Analysis of Migrant Health in Viet Nam</p>
Recruitment and Contracts	<p>Use of recruitment agents</p> <p>The 2022 HRIA study conducted by Impactt on behalf of UK retailers Co-op and Sainsbury’s, and supplier Lyons indicated that some of their five surveyed farms used subcontractors for harvesting and pond / soil servicing functions, but that they did not conduct</p>	<p>Impactt, 2022, Human Rights Impact Assessment</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>due diligence on the service subcontractors to ensure that they complied with basic human rights. Impactt, 2022</p> <p>This is supported by the 2021 HRIA conducted for UK retailer Tesco, that also found several sites used subcontracted labor and exercised weak control and monitoring on areas such as fair hiring practices free from deception, no retention of identity documents and not using recruitment fees. However, the report does not clarify whether this occurred at the shrimp farms, but only notes that these findings were relatively evenly distributed through each tier of the supply chain assessed, which included two aqua farms, one hatchery, one fishmeal plant, one feed mill and two processors, but that these findings were "in higher concentration at the two aqua farms". Impactt, 2021</p>	<p>Vietnam Prawn Supply Chain</p> <p>Impactt, 2021, Human Rights Impact Assessment of Tesco's shrimp supply chain in Vietnam</p>
	<p>Contract-and compensation- related regulations and practices</p> <p>The 2022 HRIA conducted by Impactt on behalf of Co-op, Sainsbury's, and Lyons, reports that subcontractor service contracts did not detail information such as pay, working hours, or access to social security.</p> <p>The 2021 Tesco HRIA found subcontractors lacking formal contracts and incidences of continuous short-term contracts for subcontracted workers, depriving them of employment rights or protection of unfair dismissal. However, it should be noted (as with the Recruitment Indicator) that the Tesco report does not clarify whether this occurred on shrimp farms or in other tiers of the supply chain investigated.</p> <p>In addition, both HRIAs found among their surveyed farms that although income obtained by shrimp farm</p>	<p>Impactt, 2022, Human Rights Impact Assessment Vietnam Prawn Supply Chain</p> <p>Impactt, 2021, Human Rights Impact Assessment of Tesco's shrimp supply chain in Vietnam</p> <p>Impact Buying, 2023, Impact Assessment on the Jumbo Supply Chain of Shrimps from Vietnam with</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>workers met minimum wage levels, it did not meet a basic needs wage or living wage. Impactt, 2022, Impactt 2021</p> <p>Insufficient income was also identified as a risk by Impact Buying’s 2023 impact assessment of shrimp supply chains in Vietnam, which looked at two Vietnamese suppliers of shrimp. The assessment found that workers received at least minimum wage plus benefits such as childcare and transport allowances. However, workers reported during interviews that more than one family member needed to work to sustain the family, with one income not providing a sufficient income to cover the rising costs of housing and education. Impact Buying, 2023</p> <p>The above findings support Fairfood International’s earlier 2015 report based on research done by other NGO’s that it is most likely that workers’ wages are not high enough in any of these countries to support a decent standard of living and that in Vietnam wages are about 70% of living wage. Fair Food International, 2015. Whether this applies to both farming and processing is unclear.</p> <p>In addition, among the five farms assessed in the 2022 HRIA study by Impactt, the following incidents were found: lack of written contracts for temporary workers who belonged to an ethnic minority, at one site some workers not keeping a copy of their contract impacting their ability to point out any labor right abuse, workers not receiving pay slips and social insurance coverage. Impactt, 2022</p> <p>The Tesco 2021 HRIA also found underpayment of wages and benefits at multiple sites. At two sites there were isolated incidences of illegal wage deductions and failure to pay minimum wage.</p>	<p>Comparative Study on Shrimps from Ecuador</p> <p>Fair Food International, 2015, Caught in a trap</p> <p>Sustainability Incubator, August 2024, Laboring for less so supermarkets profit more: How Western supermarkets are shortchanging consumers and farmers – and driving shrimp workers into poverty</p>

Indicator	Description	Sources
	<p>However, it should be noted that it is not further clarified whether this occurred at the assessed shrimp farms or at the other facilities assessed in the supply chain. Impactt, 2021</p> <p>A 2024 survey carried out for Sustainability Incubator with shrimp workers in Vietnam in 2023 to 2024 found that workers' incomes have declined since the COVID-19 pandemic, with wages averaging USD222/month in 2023/24 compared to USD277/month in 2019. Farm workers' wages varied, with female workers earning less than men and receiving the lowest monthly earnings in the shrimp supply chain (less than USD150/month). Out of the workers interviewed, 97% said that their wages are based on yield and market prices. In addition, 91% of shrimp workers are not paid for overtime. Many workers also said that their employer does not disclose their salary in advance or how it is calculated. In addition, 72% of jobs did not provide a written contract. Sustainability Incubator, August 2024</p>	

Table 3: Vietnam - Aquaculture Indicators

Vietnam: Processing indicators

Indicator	Description	Sources
Direct evidence of forced labor, human trafficking, and hazardous child labor	No direct evidence was found linking the Vietnamese shrimp processing industry with forced labor, human trafficking, or hazardous child labor.	
ILO indicators of forced labor and ILO R190 definition of hazardous child labor	<p><u>Forced labor</u></p> <p>There is evidence of difficult working conditions and concerning practices around freedom of movement and payment of wages in shrimp processing, but the evidence is not sufficient to conclude forced labor risk.</p> <p>A study on prevalence of Musculoskeletal Disorder Symptoms (MDS) of female workers in seafood processing plants of mainly shrimp in Vietnam, revealed that 77% experienced musculoskeletal disorders after work. Working conditions such as cold and humid working environments, chemical and vibration exposure, and repetitive tasks appeared to increase MDS prevalence, which could indicate an unhealthy working environment. Tran et al., 2016</p> <p>The 2023 impact assessment by Impact Buying conducted on behalf of Jumbo looked at two Vietnamese suppliers of shrimp. The assessment found that while the general working conditions in the two processing plants are good, processing plant workers carry out monotonous work activities (typically specializing in one task) and spend up to 8 hours standing, which can cause fatigue, physical discomfort and joint pains. Impact Buying, 2023</p> <p>The 2022 Human Rights Impact Assessment (HRIA) conducted on behalf of Co-op, Sainsbury's, and Lyons at three processing sites found overly restrictive</p>	<p>Tran, TTT., Phan, CTT., Pham TC, Nguyen, QT., 2016, After-shift musculoskeletal disorder symptoms in female workers and work-related factors: a cross-sectional study in a seafood processing factory in Vietnam. AIMS public health, 3 (4): 733-749</p> <p>Impact Buying, 2023, Impact Assessment on the Jumbo Supply Chain of Shrimps from Vietnam with Comparative Study on Shrimps from Ecuador</p> <p>Impacttt, 2022, Human Rights Impact Assessment</p>

	<p>security practices that could impact an employee’s ability to leave the site, although there was no intention by management to make workers feel like they could not leave. Impactt, 2022</p> <p>The 2021 HRIA conducted for Tesco found under-payment of wages and benefits at multiple sites in Tesco’s shrimp supply chain in Vietnam. At two sites there were isolated incidents of illegal wage deduction and failure to pay minimum wage, but it is not clear whether this occurred at the assessed processing plants or at the other facilities assessed in the supply chain. Impactt, 2021</p> <p>The 2024 study carried out by Sustainability Incubator with shrimp workers in Vietnam in 2023 to 2024 found that shrimp peelers have limited days off, perform monotonous and hazardous work, are paid based on yield and market prices and do not always earn minimum wage, and purchase their own protective equipment. Sustainability Incubator, August 2024</p> <p><u>Hazardous child labor</u></p> <p>There is some evidence of children working in shrimp processing, including peeling shrimp without adequate protective equipment, which is potentially hazardous work that could cause injury or illness.</p> <p>A 2023 FAO technical paper on child labor in small-scale agriculture in Vietnam notes that children sometime work in shrimp and fish sorting and selection for the market, though this appears to be in relation to fishing activities. The paper also identifies reports that children are employed in shrimp processing facilities to peel shrimp, working without a written contract for VND 100,000 (USD 4) per day and are not provided with protective equipment or labor insurance. The children are often employed without written permission from their parents, but</p>	<p>Vietnam Prawn Supply Chain</p> <p>Impactt, 2021, Human Rights Impact Assessment of Tesco’s shrimp supply chain in Vietnam</p> <p>FAO, 2023, Child labour in small-scale agriculture in Viet Nam – Technical paper. Ha Noi.</p> <p>International Labour Organization (ILO), 2020, Viet Nam National Child Labour Survey 2018: Key findings</p>
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	<p>there are difficulties implementing sanctions as parents and employers claim that these are apprenticeship programs. The paper notes however that children’s involvement in aquaculture production and processing is limited to local or domestic supply chains and markets. FAO, 2023</p> <p>Vietnam’s 2018 National Child Labour Survey did identify 1.9% of children engaged in child labor in seafood processing, but none were reported in hazardous child labor. It is not clear to what extent this relates to the shrimp processing industry, if at all. ILO, 2020</p>	
Processing Characteristics	<p>Processing stage</p> <p>Products are graded and sorted either at farm gate by an intermediary or at the processing plant, after being sold directly by a farm or indirectly through an intermediary and/or collector. ILO and Monterey Bay Aquarium, 2020</p> <p>Vietnam has heavily invested into processing value-added products over last 10 years, to compete on the global market and is now reported to be one of countries with the highest capacity for value added shrimp processing in the world. NÔNG NGHIỆP Viet Nam, 2022</p>	<p>ILO and Monterey Bay Aquarium, 2020, Research paper: Study of the impact of intermediaries on environmental and social outcomes and worker vulnerability in small-scale fishing and aquaculture in Indonesia and Viet Nam</p> <p>NÔNG NGHIỆP Viet Nam, 2022, Vietnamese shrimps compete with processing capacity</p>
	<p>Consolidation and vertical integration</p> <p>Consolidation and vertical integration of the Vietnamese shrimp sector is varied. While there are fully vertically integrated companies, these are rare.</p>	<p>Boston Consulting Group, 2019, A Strategic Approach to Sustainable</p>

	<p>There are also some partially integrated players, which are engaged in more than one segment but are not fully integrated across the supply chain. Intermediaries known as middlemen play a crucial role in the supply chain, linking farmers with processors and are reported to handle as much 70% of all shrimp produced. The involvement of intermediaries hinders transparency and traceability within the supply chain. Boston Consulting Group, 2019</p> <p>In one supply chain example, Impact Buying’s 2023 impact assessment of shrimp supply chains in Vietnam looked at two Vietnamese suppliers of shrimp. Both companies had partially vertically integrated supply chains, sourcing some shrimp from their own farms and some from external producers. Impact Buying, 2023</p>	<p>Shrimp Production in Vietnam</p> <p>Impact Buying, 2023, Impact Assessment on the Jumbo Supply Chain of Shrimps from Vietnam with Comparative Study on Shrimps from Ecuador</p>
	<p>Domestic versus export</p> <p>The Boston Consulting Group estimates that in Vietnam around 70% of processed shrimp is exported. This includes domestic production but also raw material imports from India and Ecuador for re-export. Boston Consulting Group, 2019</p> <p>Average monthly consumption of shrimp and fish is 1.5 kg / capita. General Statistic Office, 2022</p> <p>An article from 2021 estimated that between 300 to 400 thousand tons of shrimp was consumed domestically. NÔNG NGHIỆP Viet Nam, 2022</p>	<p>Boston Consulting Group, 2019, A Strategic Approach to Sustainable Shrimp Production in Vietnam</p> <p>General Statistic Office, 2022, Statistical Yearbook Viet Nam, 2021</p> <p>NÔNG NGHIỆP Viet Nam, 2022, Vietnam's shrimp production can reach 1 million tons this year</p>
<p>Workforce Characteristics</p>	<p>Skilled versus low-skilled</p>	<p>Fair Food International, 2015, Caught in a trap</p>

	<p>Shrimp processing in Vietnam is considered low-skilled work. Fair Food International, 2015</p>	
	<p>The proportion of women in the workforce</p> <p>According to several sources, the proportion of women in shrimp processing is high.</p> <p>Work in the shrimp processing industry is low-skilled work and is typically done by women who come from poor socio-economic backgrounds. Fair Food International, 2015</p> <p>Workers in processing factories and collectors are mainly women. Oxfam, 2016</p> <p>According to an Impact Sheet on Sustainable and Equitable Shrimp Production and Value Chain Development in Vietnam, their target was 25,000 staff of 30 shrimp processing plants, of which 70% were women. EU SWITCH-Asia, No date</p> <p>In the case of two processing plants assessed in Impact Buying’s 2023 impact assessment of shrimp supply chains in Vietnam, workers are mostly women, who are often hired from rural areas. Impact Buying, 2023</p> <p>The ILO states that an estimated 75% of shrimp processing workers are women. ILO, 2023</p> <p>A presentation slide deck on Gender in Rice-Shrimp Value Chain: A Case Study of Grow-Out Farm in Soc Trang Province, Vietnam demonstrates that in this case study, women were mainly involved in office work and as processing laborers. NACA/USAID, 2014</p> <p>The 2021 HRIA conducted for retailer Tesco found that few women were employed in management positions, with none in supervisory roles. Impactt, 2021</p>	<p>Fair Food International, 2015, Caught in a trap</p> <p>Oxfam, 2016, Identifying Gender Inequalities and Possibilities for Change in Shrimp Value Chains in Indonesia and Vietnam</p> <p>EU SWITCH Asia, No date, Impact Sheet on Sustainable and Equitable Shrimp Production and Value Chain Development in Vietnam (SusV)</p> <p>Impact Buying, 2023, Impact Assessment on the Jumbo Supply Chain of Shrimps from Vietnam with Comparative Study on Shrimps from Ecuador</p> <p>ILO, 2023, Responsible business conduct in</p>

	<p>In comparison, the 2022 Co-op, Sainsbury’s, and Lyons HRIA indicates that at the processing sites that were sampled, women workers were given opportunities to advance professionally, with a high number of workers in management positions, and that there was a demonstrated commitment on equal opportunity and non-discrimination. Impactt, 2022</p>	<p>the Vietnamese aquaculture sector</p> <p>NACA/USAID, 2014, Gender in Rice-Shrimp Value Chain: A Case Study of Grow-Out Farm in Soc Trang Province, Vietnam</p> <p>Impactt, 2021, Human Rights Impact Assessment of Tesco’s shrimp supply chain in Vietnam</p> <p>Impactt, 2022, Human Rights Impact Assessment Vietnam Prawn Supply Chain</p>
	<p>The proportion of migrant versus local workers</p> <p>Unknown.</p> <p>An ILO report on aquaculture in Vietnam states that “The seafood processing sector employs mostly migrant workers from rural areas.” (pg. 4) ILO, 2023</p> <p>This suggests that internal migrants may be employed.</p>	<p>ILO, 2023, Responsible business conduct in the Vietnamese aquaculture sector</p>
	<p>The proportion of minority or indigenous workers</p> <p>Unknown.</p>	
	<p>The proportion of temporary and contract versus permanent workers</p> <p>Unknown.</p>	<p>Seafood Source, 30 June 2022, Facing higher costs and labor shortages,</p>

	<p>SeafoodSource reported in June 2022, that processing companies have been experiencing a labor shortage. SeafoodSource, 30 June 2022</p> <p>In the case of two processing plants assessed in Impact Buying’s 2023 impact assessment of shrimp supply chains in Vietnam, workers are given single year contracts for two consecutive years before being given an indefinite labor contract. Impact Buying, 2023</p>	<p>Minh Phu CEO predicts pain for Vietnam’s shrimp sector</p> <p>Impact Buying, 2023, Impact Assessment on the Jumbo Supply Chain of Shrimps from Vietnam with Comparative Study on Shrimps from Ecuador</p>
	<p>Workers’ origins</p> <p>Unknown.</p> <p>There is no indication of international migrant workers.</p>	
	<p>Migrant worker language (vs. dominant language in the industry)</p> <p>There is no indication of international migrants. Internal migrants, if any, would speak Vietnamese.</p>	
	<p>GDP per capita of processing country and main worker source country</p> <p>Unknown.</p> <p>The level of international migrants in Vietnam is low and it is unclear whether there are any foreign migrant workers in shrimp processing.</p>	
	<p>Legal presence (regularity) of migrant workers</p> <p>Unknown.</p>	

	<p>There is no information or indication of foreign migrants working in the shrimp processing sector. There is some internal migration, but it is not clear if, and to what extent, it is related to shrimp processing.</p>	
	<p>The ability of migrant workers to change jobs</p> <p>Unknown.</p>	
Recruitment and Contracts	<p>Use of contractors and recruitment agents</p> <p>The 2021 HRIA conducted for retailer Tesco found that several of the sites they investigated in Tesco’s shrimp supply chain used subcontracted labor services and were applying weak control and monitoring of these service providers on areas such as fair hiring practices free from deception, no retention of identity documents and not using recruitment fees. However, the report does not clarify whether this occurred at processing sites, only noting that these findings were relatively evenly distributed through each tier of the supply chain, which included two aqua farms, one hatchery, one fishmeal plant, one feed mill and two processors, and that these were "in higher concentration at the two aqua farms". Impactt, 2021</p>	<p>Impactt, 2021, Human Rights Impact Assessment of Tesco’s shrimp supply chain in Vietnam</p>
	<p>Compensation method</p> <p>The Fairfood International 2015 report based on research done by other NGO’s indicates that workers’ wages are most likely not high enough in any of the countries discussed to support a decent standard of living, and that in Vietnam, wages are about 70% of living wage. Fair Food International, 2015</p> <p>In terms of compensation method, the Global Living Wage Coalition describes a more general situation for the seafood processing sectors in countries like Vietnam, Thailand, and Indonesia for workers to be paid through piece-rate systems, making it difficult to determine whether payments make a living wage. The</p>	<p>Fair Food International, 2015, Caught in a trap</p> <p>Global Living Wage Coalition, No Date, Industry Seafood Processing</p> <p>Global Living Wage Coalition, 2023, Living Wage for</p>

	<p>Global Living Wage Coalition 2020 estimate a ‘Living Wage’ in Economic Zone 4 (rural Vietnam) is ₫4,618,167 Vietnamese dong or USD199 per month. Global Living Wage Coalition, No Date</p> <p>This is supported by the study on prevalence of Musculoskeletal Disorder Symptoms (MDS) of female workers in seafood processing plants of mainly shrimp in Vietnam, that the factory sampled applied a productivity-based wage, which likely is a piece-rate system. Tran et al., 2016</p> <p>And is further supported by a 2024 report on Vietnam’s shrimp sector, which cites testimony from a shrimp peeler working at a peeling facility in Soc Trang district, interviewed between October 2023 and April 2024, who reported that wages are calculated based on the number of kilograms of shrimp peeled. The shrimp worker also noted that their employer was not transparent about the price used to calculate wages. Sustainability Incubator, August 2024</p> <p>Impact Buying’s 2023 impact assessment of shrimp supply chains in Vietnam looked at two Vietnamese suppliers of shrimp. Workers at the two processing plants work up to 60 hours per week across 6 days a week. Overtime is paid at 150% of normal wage and holidays are paid at 300% of normal wages according to Vietnam law. The assessment found that processing workers were typically paid a piece rate and received at least minimum wage plus benefits such as childcare and transport allowances. However, workers reported during interviews that more than one family member needed to work to sustain the family, with one income not providing a sufficient income, resulting in workers wanting to work overtime. Impact Buying, 2023</p> <p>Whether there are any workers paid through a different system is unknown.</p>	<p>Economic Zone 4, Vietnam</p> <p>Tran, TTT., Phan, CTT., Pham TC, Nguyen, QT., 2016, After-shift musculoskeletal disorder symptoms in female workers and work-related factors: a cross-sectional study in a seafood processing factory in Vietnam. AIMS public health, 3 (4): 733-749</p> <p>Sustainability Incubator, August 2024, Laboring for less so supermarkets profit more: How Western supermarkets are shortchanging consumers and farmers – and driving shrimp workers into poverty</p> <p>Impact Buying, 2023, Impact Assessment on the Jumbo Supply Chain of Shrimps from Vietnam with Comparative Study</p>
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	<p>The 2022 HRIA for Co-op, Sainsbury’s, and Lyons found at one of the processing sites investigated that 8% of the workers did not have an employment contract, that one of the processing sites applied monetary deductions from 13th month bonuses and use of a notice for humiliation of workers, and that workers were responsible for paying for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) if degraded within 6 months. Impact, 2022</p> <p>The 2021 Tesco HRIA found no sites paying a living wage, as well as under-payment of wages and benefits at multiple sites. At two sites there were isolated incidents of illegal wage deduction and failure to pay minimum wage, but it is not clear whether this occurred at the assessed processing plants or at the other facilities assessed in the supply chain. Impact, 2021</p> <p>A 2023 FAO technical paper describes that there are reports of children employed to peel shrimp, mainly being girls, and receiving VND100,000 / USD4 a day and that wages are based on the type and volume of work, such as the weight of shrimp peeled. These child laborers are reported to work without a written contract, PPE, or labor insurance. The paper notes however that children’s involvement in processing are limited to local or domestic supply chains and markets. FAO, 2023</p> <p>The 2024 study carried out with shrimp workers in Vietnam in 2023 to 2024 found that workers’ incomes have declined since the COVID-19 pandemic, with wages averaging USD222/month in 2023/24 compared to USD277/month in 2019. The findings show that shrimp peelers earn less than USD200/month. Out of the workers interviewed, 97% said that their wages are based on yield and market prices. Many workers also said that their employer does not disclose their salary in advance or how it is</p>	<p>on Shrimps from Ecuador</p> <p>Impactt, 2022, Human Rights Impact Assessment Vietnam Prawn Supply Chain</p> <p>Impactt, 2021, Human Rights Impact Assessment of Tesco’s shrimp supply chain in Vietnam</p> <p>FAO, 2023, Child labour in small-scale agriculture in Viet Nam – Technical paper. Ha Noi.</p> <p>IDH, 2023, Vietnam seafood sector signs agreement for improved worker conditions and compensation</p>
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	<p>calculated. Shrimp peelers reported that they earn around USD0.10/kg of shrimp peeled or USD9/day. Shrimp peelers are not provided overtime. Bonuses are offered for working over 20 days per month or every day of the month. Out of 20 shrimp peelers interviewed, all had the option to have a written contract but 16 said they preferred not to so they would have more flexibility for days off. One shrimp peeler said they did not have control over their work hours during the high season. Sustainability Incubator, August 2024</p> <p>In October 2022, a Multi-Company Collective Bargaining Agreement (MCCBA) sector was signed by five local seafood producers and exporters in Ca Mau province, covering more than 8,000 employees. The agreement was achieved through collaboration between the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL), Provincial Trade Unions, Vietnam Sustainable Shrimp Alliance (VSSA), the industry and CNV international (first pilot phase) and convened by IDH. It outlines benefits, rights, and responsibilities of employers, employees and the trade unions. Points addressed include a commitment to paying employees more than the minimum wage. IDH, 2023</p>	
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Table 4: Vietnam - Processing indicators

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