



Working Conditions in the Natural Rubber in Vietnam: A Mapping of the Sporting Goods Industry

May 2019 – April 2020



PROJECT SUMMARY

The Fair Labor Association (FLA) is partnering with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and companies - adidas, New Balance, and Puma, sourcing shoes and sporting goods from Vietnam, to map the natural rubber supply chain and understand the working conditions at the various tiers of the rubber supply chain, including rubber plantations.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the mapping exercise are to; (1) understand the various tiers of the rubber supply chain from final assembly unit to the large rubber plantations and small-holder farms, with processing units and other intermediaries involved, (2) assess the working conditions in high risk tiers including at the rubber plantations and small-holder farms, (3) map and engage with existing regional and global initiatives and stakeholders that are active in the rubber sector, and (4) make recommendations to the FLA affiliates on approaching their upstream rubber supply chain.

An overarching project goal is to respond to companies' need to explore hidden parts of their supply chain and understand the conditions and possible risk-mitigation strategies. The project intends to prepare them for any immediate or future upstream supply chain discourse.

PROJECT LOCATION

The mapping exercise will take place in Vietnam, starting from a select group of final assembly units based in Vietnam supplying to the three companies, to rubber component providers and rubber processing units. Vietnam based natural rubber plantations and small holder farmers will be visited.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- 1) **Supply Chain Mapping** to get insights in the various tiers of the natural rubber value chain, processing, and supply chain actors. This will be done through a participatory approach with companies taking lead in reaching out to their supply chain partners (final assembly and component suppliers) and request them to fill a Self-Assessment. FLA will then organize in-person meetings.
- 2) **Task and Risk Mapping** to chart the production cycle, seasonal calendar, activities, hazardous work, risks and groups involved in rubber production and processing. This will be done by conducting visits to the rubber plantations and small-holder farms.
- 3) **Labor Supply Chain Mapping, Worker Demographic Profiling and Community Profiling** to understand recruitment process, working conditions, workers' lives and repatriation. It will further the understanding about social norms, available grievance mechanisms and community level services.
- 4) **Stakeholder Mapping** will be a key feature to identify and engage with external actors who have leverage in the rubber supply chain, existing governmental and non-governmental social services for rubber workers.
- 5) **Recommendations Development** for FLA affiliates and the sector.

CONTACTS

Puong Do, Regional Manager, South-East Asia, FLA
pdothilan@fairlabor.org

