

Findings from workstream A: Documenting improvements through SMETA audits on processor level

This overview summarizes findings from five suppliers from participating companies in the project *Building Capacity towards Sustainable Development for the Cashew Nut Supply Chain in Vietnam* that have participated in the Labour Standard training and Human Right Due Diligence and Social Dialogue training.

Through this workstream, participating companies have analysed SMETA audit reports collected over time from five different suppliers, focusing on trends in non-conformities and overall compliance with social and environmental standards. The aim is to understand and document possible improvements made by Vietnamese cashew suppliers participating in the project.

The overview supports the broader goal of promoting responsible business conduct and achieve improvements in the cashew nut supply chain through the project.

The analysis shows that:

Overall audit performance is showing steady improvement; however, direct year-to-year comparison remains difficult due to variations in audit frequency, methodology, and scheme updates.

Health and hygienic working conditions, wages, and working hours remain the most persistent areas of non-conformity.

Additional recurring gaps include regular employment, harsh and inhuman treatment and systematic corrective action follow-up.

There has been a noticeable reduction in non-conformities relating to health and safety, wages, and grievance mechanisms. Documentation and record-keeping practices also appear to have generally improved.

International buyers can further strengthen the due diligence work and supplier performance by including smaller processors, supporting initial audit costs, systematically follow up on non-conformities, actively use audit reports in supplier dialogue, and complementing audit reports with stakeholder engagement.