

Call for quotes

Study Design and Data Collection on School Meal Program Implementation and Policies in Viet Nam

Implementation duration: 30 October 2026 – 15 January 2027

Background

School meal provision in Viet Nam dates back to 1977 in kindergartens [1] and was extended to primary schools in 1980. Its objectives have since evolved from simply providing food to promoting children's health, nutritional status, and nutrition education. Key milestones include a school lunch piloted in disadvantaged areas under the School Education Quality Assurance Program (SEQAP) in 2010 [2], and the School Meal Project launched in 2012 by Ajinomoto Vietnam, the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) and the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), which introduced balanced menu-planning software, nutrition education materials and model school kitchens [3]. The National Nutrition Strategies for 2011–2020 and 2021–2030 progressively strengthened the focus on school nutrition; the current strategy targets 90% of urban and 80% of rural schools providing meals to meet Ministry of Health (MOH) nutritional requirements by 2030.

The regulatory framework has also been reinforced through MOET Decisions No. 4280/QĐ-BGDĐT and No. 2195/QĐ-BGDĐT (2022) on school meals and physical activity, Decision No. 354/QĐ-BGDĐT (2024) on training school health staff, and MOH Decision No. 3958/QĐ-BYT (December 2025) on national school menu guidelines. These developments show Viet Nam's growing commitment to improving school meal quality, while underscoring the need for effective implementation, monitoring, and compliance with national nutritional standards.

Despite this progress, Viet Nam is not yet a member of the School Meals Coalition (SMC). The SMC is a government-led initiative, hosted by the World Food Program (WFP), that aims to ensure every child can receive a healthy, nutritious meal in school by 2030. Launched in October 2021, it now brings together 113 countries, six regional bodies and more than 160 partners. Member States join by signing a Declaration of Commitment aligned with the Coalition's goals.

To complete its membership application, Viet Nam needs to provide:

1. **Updated national data** for the [SMC Global Database on School Meals](#), which compiles indicators on school meal coverage, education, funding, policy frameworks, jobs and complementary activities. Data is submitted through a government self-reporting system hosted on the database, which allows national governments to submit and update information on their own programs.
2. **A school meals case study** prepared in line with the guidelines of the Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition, which produces country case studies under its “Good Examples” Community of Practice. Each case study documents how a program is organised, funded, and monitored, covering the country profile, program design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and lessons learned, good practices, and challenges.

Alive & Thrive (A&T) is an initiative to save lives, prevent illness, and ensure healthy growth and development. From 2009 to 2014, A&T demonstrated that rapid improvements in infant and young child feeding (IYCF) are possible in settings as diverse as Ethiopia, Bangladesh and Viet Nam. In 2014, A&T began working in Burkina Faso, India, Nigeria and throughout the Southeast Asia region, expanding its scope to include maternal and adolescent nutrition, and using agriculture and social protection programs as delivery mechanisms for maternal, infant and young child nutrition (MIYCN). A&T is currently supporting the relevant Vietnamese authorities to prepare the data and case study required for the SMC application and is seeking a qualified vendor to carry out this assignment.

Objectives

The overall objective is to generate the data and case study required for Viet Nam's SMC membership application. Specifically, the vendor will:

1. Compile and validate national-level data on education, nutrition, school meal coverage, financing and policies, aligned with the indicators of the [SMC Global Database on School Meals](#) and SMC Research Consortium guidance, ready for submission by the designated government focal point.
2. Develop a school meals case study at regional or provincial level, documenting the organisation, financing and monitoring of school meals in Viet Nam and highlighting good illustrative practices, in accordance with SMC Research Consortium guidelines. The case study will also identify data gaps and recommend measures to strengthen routine school meal monitoring.

Scope and methodology

The vendor is expected to use a mixed-methods approach, including secondary data review, quantitative surveys, and in-depth interviews (IDIs). The study is descriptive and documentary, not an impact evaluation.

- **Study design and inception:** Review SMC self-reporting indicators and case study guidelines; develop the study protocol, data matrix, sampling strategy, data collection tools, and quality assurance and ethics procedures; and agree the approach with A&T, relevant government focal points, and research partners.
- **Stakeholder engagement and approvals:** Coordinate with relevant national and local authorities, institutions and schools to access data, arrange interviews and fieldwork, and obtain the necessary administrative and ethical approvals, including informed consent and child safeguarding procedures.
- **Secondary data collection:** Collect and review available national and subnational data, policies, regulations and reports on education, nutrition, school meal coverage, delivery models, financing, procurement, food safety and governance; assess data quality and document sources, definitions and data gaps.
- **Primary data collection:** Conduct quantitative surveys and IDIs with relevant policymakers, program managers, school personnel, food suppliers, students, parents and caregivers, and local authorities in selected provinces representing diverse school meal models and contexts. The vendor will propose and justify the sampling strategy, sample size, and data collection methods.

Required qualifications

- A registered firm or research institute with strong experience in research on nutrition, education, and school meals in Viet Nam. Individual consultants are not eligible to apply.
- A team leader with a postgraduate degree (Master's or PhD) in public health, nutrition, education, social sciences or a related field; at least 10 years of experience leading mixed-methods research or policy studies in Viet Nam; and a record of authoring high-quality reports in English for government or international partners.
- Demonstrated experience compiling national administrative and policy data and designing and conducting quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews with government officials, school personnel, children and families.
- Proven working relationships with MOET, MOH and provincial authorities; experience with school meals or school nutrition programs is a strong advantage.
- Familiarity with international data frameworks (e.g., SMC database, GCNF Global Survey of School Meal Programs, UNESCO UIS indicators) is an advantage.
- Excellent written English and Vietnamese; experience in research ethics and child safeguarding.

Proposal contents

- Technical proposal (max. 10 pages)
- Financial proposal (in VND, inclusive of all taxes and fees)
- CVs of key team members, including the team leader; legal registration documents of the firm or institute

Submission

Submit the technical and financial proposals by email to procurementvietnam@fhi360.org with the subject line "A&T-School Meals Data and Case Study Viet Nam" no later than **October 30, 2026**. FHI 360 reserves the right to accept or reject any quotation and to negotiate with shortlisted applicants.

References

1. Duc Son Nguyen Trung Le, 'School Meal Program in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam: Reality and Future Plan', *Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 21, no. 1 (2012): 139–43.
2. World Bank, 'School Feeding Program', n.d., accessed 11 February 2026.
3. Bữa ăn học đường, 'Giới thiệu', accessed 23 February 2026.

All bidders interested in this Request for Proposal (RFP) are required to comply with FHI 360's Safeguarding Policy (details available at <https://www.fhi360.org/ethicssafeguarding/#our-policies-and-supplementalguidance>). FHI 360 reserves the right to terminate any contract immediately with any individual, organization, or entity found to be in violation of this policy.

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