

**Call for Expressions of Interest and Proposal**

**#034: A contracting partner to provide technical support to the WHO Viet Nam Country Office in developing country nutrition profile system and updating sodium level target recommendations for prepackaged food.**

**1. Background**

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) are now the leading cause of death and disability in Viet Nam, accounting for nearly 80% of total mortality and more than two-thirds of the overall disease burden. The prevalence of hypertension increased rapidly from almost 19% in 2015 to over 26% in 2021 among adults, while diabetes rose from 5.6% to 7% during the same period. Viet Nam is also facing a double burden of malnutrition: undernutrition persists, while overweight and obesity are rising sharply among both children and adults.

Behavioral risk factors—including unhealthy diets high in salt, sugar, and saturated fat, low levels of physical activity, tobacco use, and harmful alcohol consumption—are driving the NCD epidemic. Average salt consumption in Viet Nam is 8.1 grams per person per day, about 60% higher than the WHO recommendation of less than 5 grams per day. Fast food consumption among school children aged 13–17 years nearly doubled, from 30.2% in 2015 to 54.1% in 2021. Creating supportive environments that motivate people to adopt healthier diets is therefore a key intervention to reduce NCD risk factors and address this preventable disease burden.

With support from WHO Viet Nam and Resolve to Save Lives (RTSL), the Ministry of Health issued Circular No. 29 in December 2023 on “Guidance on the content and how to write nutritional ingredients and nutritional value on food labels.” This is Viet Nam’s first-ever policy requirement for nutrition labelling. All foods produced, traded, imported, and circulated in Viet Nam must now display nutritional information on their packages. In March 2024, the Ministry of Health’s General Department of Preventive Medicine issued Guidelines No. 249 on “Recommendations for maximum sodium in processed and packaged foods,” covering 11 main food groups and 46 sub-groups commonly available in the Vietnamese market.

To further strengthen supportive environments for healthier diets, it is important to develop a nutrition profiling system. Nutrition profiling classifies foods and beverages according to their nutrient content, serving as the basis for front-of-pack labelling, determining which products can be marketed to children, and guiding industry reformulation to meet health thresholds. For the sodium guidelines, a 2025 survey on nutrition labelling implementation showed the need to update sodium target levels to better reflect the current market situation and salt levels in pre-packaged foods.



# World Health Organization

## Viet Nam

We are therefore seeking collaboration with a relevant academic institution to work with WHO and the Ministry of Health to develop a national nutrition profiling system and to update sodium target recommendations for pre-packaged foods.

### **2. Planned timelines** (subject to confirmation):

Start date: 05/10/2025

End date: 15/12/2025

### **3. Work to be performed**

#### **Method to carry out the activity**

The team will work in close collaboration with WHO CO, WHO HQ, and Resolve to Save Lives to produce the following outputs/deliverables:

Deliverable 1: An inception report (by 20 Oct 2025)

- Detailed work plan with methodology, timeline, and division of tasks.
- Summary of existing nutrient profiling models and global practices for sodium reduction targets.
- Mapping of Viet Nam's current policies and regulations relevant to food labelling and sodium standards.

Deliverable 2: A situation analysis report (by 10 Nov 2025)

- Review of available food composition data and market survey data for pre-packaged foods in Viet Nam.
- Analysis of current nutrition labelling implementation (compliance, gaps, challenges).
- Brief status of sodium levels in commonly consumed pre-packaged food groups

Deliverable 3: Draft Nutrition Profiling Model for Viet Nam (by 15 December 2025)

- Proposal for a country-adapted nutrient profiling system, aligned with WHO models and suitable for application in Viet Nam.
- Justification for criteria/thresholds used (energy, sugar, sodium, fat, etc.).

Deliverable 4: Updated Recommendations on Sodium Targets (by 15 December 2025)



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- Evidence-based revised sodium target levels for key food groups/sub-groups.
- Rationale for adjustments (based on market survey, international benchmarks, and health impact modelling where available)

#### 4. Specific requirements

##### *Experiences:*

The expert team is expected to have the following experiences:

- Minimum 10 years of experience in nutrition policy, food system analysis, or public health nutrition.
- Experiences in conducting a literature review and policy analysis
- Experience with Vietnamese food composition tables, dietary intake surveys, or STEPS/Nutrition Surveillance is an advantage
- Documented experience in developing, adapting, or validating nutrient profiling models in low- and middle-income settings.
- Excellent track record of completion of tasks in a timely manner
- Previous work with international agencies (WHO, UNICEF, FAO, Codex, etc.) or government ministries on nutrition policy.

##### *Technical skills and knowledge:*

- Advanced degree (Master's or PhD) in nutrition, public health, epidemiology, or food policy.
- Proven knowledge of nutrient profiling models (WHO regional models, Codex, Nutri-Score, Health Star Rating, etc.).
- Strong background in dietary assessment, food composition analysis, and nutritional epidemiology.
- Familiarity with nutrition-related NCD prevention policies (marketing restrictions, front-of-pack labeling, school food standards, taxation/subsidy schemes).

##### *Language requirements:*

- Excellent speaking and writing English and Vietnamese

##### *Competencies*

- Effective and credible communication
- Respecting and promoting individual and cultural differences
- Fostering team work in an integrated way.
- Producing results

#### 5. Place of assignment



**World Health  
Organization**

**Viet Nam**

Viet Nam.

**6. Medical clearance**

Medical clearance is not required for this contractual partner.

**7. Travel**

None.

**8. Budget**

Please take note of the following when submitting application:

- The contractor will be responsible for paying taxes, if any.

Those who are interested can submit application letter, proposal and budget indicating post title and vacancy notice # **on or before 1 October 2025** and should be addressed to:

[wpvnmaplicants@who.int](mailto:wpvnmaplicants@who.int)

For further information on this TOR, please contact:

[wpvnmaplicants@who.int](mailto:wpvnmaplicants@who.int)