

Canadian researchers improving child nutrition in Vietnam

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The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and Global Affairs Canada, through the Canadian International Food Security Research Fund (CIFSRF), are contributing \$1.16 million to support

researchers from Vietnam's National Institute of Nutrition and Canada's Ryerson University to implement proven methods to improve children's health. Researchers will work to increase local production and distribution of complementary and therapeutic foods for children that are high in nutrients and energy dense, such as micronutrient-enriched pastes, bars, instant flours, and pablums.

The project will run in three rural regions of northern Vietnam, directly benefiting an estimated 15,000 of the country's most malnourished children. Malnutrition affects an estimated 780,000 children in Vietnam annually.

Crops will be purchased directly from women farmers in rural Vietnam, then processed in local, small-scale facilities into ready-to-use nutritious foods. These foods will be distributed through a supply chain that includes public health providers and [nutrition](#) counselling centres. More than 1,500 mothers annually will receive advice and counselling on child feeding practice at these nutrition centres.

The Vietnam Women's Union will liaise with women farmers, who will receive training through the project on agricultural practices, post-harvest crop handling, food safety, and the formation of producers' associations.

"As part of our commitment to becoming a leader in development innovation and effectiveness, our Government will look for evidence-based solutions to help the world's poorest and most vulnerable," said the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development and La Francophonie. "As such we are proud of the collaboration that will deliver the therapeutic nutrition Vietnam's poorest children need to survive and thrive."

"IDRC is taking an innovative, knowledge-based approach to arrive at

nutrition solutions, so children in Vietnam, and elsewhere, can have healthier lives and brighter futures," said IDRC President Jean Lebel.

In 2014, Vietnam was confirmed as a country of focus for the Government of Canada's international development efforts.

Canada's current development cooperation program in Vietnam responds to the Government of Vietnam's poverty reduction priorities and focuses on improving the enabling environment for investment and to support rural enterprise development and agricultural competitiveness.

Malnutrition affects an estimated 780,000 children in Vietnam annually: 210,000 of them are severely malnourished, 27.5% of [children](#) are stunted, and 16.8% are underweight.

Provided by International Development Research Centre

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