



Fact Sheet

Partnering to Fight Malnutrition: Abbott and AmeriCares in Rural Vietnam

The Need

- Children in Vietnam are afflicted with some of the most severe malnutrition, an unacceptable reality caused by limited access to nourishing food and a lack of nutritional education. According to UNICEF, more than 25 percent of Vietnamese children under five are underweight, compared with 7 percent of children in China, 5 percent of children in Mexico and 2 percent in the United States. More than 10 percent of Vietnamese children suffer from vitamin A deficiency.
- Despite unprecedented economic growth in Vietnam's prospering urban centers, malnutrition rates continue to rise in rural communities. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that children under five years old living in rural areas of the country are more than twice as likely to die as those who live in cities.

Abbott's Efforts

- To help improve the overall nutritional health of children in rural areas of Vietnam, the Abbott Fund is working with AmeriCares to support the Giao Diem Humanitarian Foundation Pediatric Nutrition Program.
- Together, the Abbott Fund and its partners are improving the nutritional status of pre-school and kindergarten-age children in three rural provinces of Vietnam – Quang Tri, Hue and Dong Thap – where childhood malnutrition rates were among the highest in the country.
- The majority of participating children (98 percent) live in the Hue and Quang Tri provinces in Vietnam's Central Highland region, where mountainous terrain and limited arable land result in lower agricultural yields than in the northern and southern regions. This region is also extremely vulnerable to the impact of natural disasters, which has a detrimental effect on livelihoods, health status, food security and infrastructure.
- This successful initiative targets nutritional health early in life. Administered through a network of local schools, the program has three main components:

Nutrition: On a daily basis, children are provided with two cups of soy milk, freshly made and fortified with peanuts; afternoon snacks of fruit, bean rice congee; multivitamins with iron and calcium; and one can of PediaSure during the flooding and raining season (Dec-Feb). Students enrolled in the program also undergo regular health screenings by health professionals.

Training and Education: The program provides on-site training seminars for both parents and teachers, teaching them about proper nutrition needs and care as well as how to use local materials and resources, like soybeans, to provide for children.

Infrastructure improvements: In addition to product donations, Abbott Fund grants are also funding the refurbishment and improvement of school kitchens.





- The Abbott Fund has provided grants totaling more than \$200,000, helping support the program's reach to 65 schools and more than 1,700 children.
- These grants support training, equipment and educational supplies; the Abbott Fund also assisted in coordinating more than \$300,000 in Abbott product donations, including vitamins and Abbott's pediatric nutritional product, PediaSure.

Results

- Already, one district in the Quang Tri province, which has been implementing the nutrition program since 2006, has exceeded the national target, reducing its rate of malnutrition for children under five by a third from 25 percent to 17 percent.
- In addition to improving the health and nutrition outcomes for enrolled children, Abbott's support of the program contributes to Vietnam's national efforts to meet the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.
 - In association with Goal 1 on extreme poverty and hunger, Vietnam aims to reduce the proportion of people living under the food poverty line by 75 percent by 2010.
 - In association with Goal 4 on child mortality, the partnership is helping Vietnam reduce the proportion of children under five who are malnourished to 20 percent by 2010.
- The Giao Diem program serves as a best-in-class, sustainable model for improving pediatric nutrition in rural Vietnam. Recently, neighboring communities have requested assistance in replicating the program, leading to the development and distribution of 'start-up kits' to local NGOs.

