

TERMS OF REFERENCE

PROJECT: “**MENTAL HEALTHCARE IN SCHOOL – SITUATIONAL RESEARCH AND SYSTEM ADVOCACY**”

1. Background

In Vietnam, mental illness remains socially stigmatized and commonly treated behind closed doors, leaving children and young people vulnerable and unsupported. The gap in addressing mental health care for children roots from severe lack of public awareness on child development and mental disorders, ineffective policy and advocacy, along with lack of qualified and appropriate human resources for programme development and implementation.

A research study on student counseling needs conducted by the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Pedagogy in Hanoi found more than 90% of students in the country have experienced problems in learning; relationships with parents, teachers and friends; and making career choices. More than 7 million Vietnamese children exhibit psychological disorders such as depression, anxiety, or oppositional defiant disorder, as reported by the Children Research Center and the Committee of Population, Families and Children in Vietnam. In a conference on mental health problems in Vietnamese children, a report indicates that more than 20% of school-age children experience different types of psychological disorders, with 19.5% of elementary and middle school students experiencing mental health problems. Another study on a sample of 202 Vietnamese children from birth to 18 years of age reveals that 23.8% experienced depression, 20.8% had Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, 10.4% were diagnosed with schizophrenia, 7.4% had speech and language impairments, 4% had autism, 2.5% with anxiety disorders, and 23.7 % with suicidal ideation.

In order to address the problem, the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam issued an official correspondence to all K-12 schools on April 4, 2005 (2564/BGD&ĐT-HSSV) and later on May 28, 2005 (9971/BGD&ĐT-HSSV) to provide guidance on the implementation of vocational and psychological counseling services to both upper and lower high school students (MOET, 2005). On 18th December 2017, the Ministry of Education and Training issued Circular number 31/2017/TT-BGD&ĐT guiding the implementation of psychological counselling for students in general schools.

ActionAid Vietnam (AAV) is a leading international non-governmental organization working in Vietnam with the objective of eradicating poverty by facilitating the process of empowering the poorest and excluded people with special reference to ethnic minorities and women. Over 25 years of operations, AAV has helped large number of children to access to better living standards through its activities’ expertise in child sponsorship, child protecting, and inclusive education caring.

Aid for social protection programme Foundation Vietnam (AFV) is a local non-profit organization supports programs and projects on poverty reduction, job creation, community development, and supporting the poor, people with disabilities and children in difficult. With its experiences, AFV has ensured a decent living standard and education status for children with difficulties.

To guarantee the full spectrum of children’s rights in which “*no child is left behind*”, to mitigate emotional and behavioural problems as well as functional and academic impairments amongst Vietnamese children and adolescents, ActionAid and AFV believe that mental health problems should be addressed early in life through validated research and people-centered platforms. With our expertise and aptness, we aim to partially improve policy availability, professional resources and services for children and adolescents’ mental health needs in selected cities and provinces across Vietnam with this proposal of interventions. ActionAid and AFV will implement a project of mental healthcare varying in different phases, this TOR represents for the phase 1 of the project focusing on conducting situational research and system advocacy.

2. Objectives

- To assess the system and its stakeholders' needs and capacity through providing a situational research to understand the parent and students' needs on school psychological services and teachers' capacities to provide psychological services
To raise awareness of children, teachers, education managers and policy makers on the issues of mental health of children and advocate for rally support for the school-based psychological system.

3. Scope of work, expected results and timeline

No.	Scope of work	Expected result	Timeline
1	Conduct a survey on students, teachers and parents in Hanoi, Hai Phong and Hochiminh city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 report of student's psychological and mental health needs 01 report of parents' knowledge and needs of school psychological services 01 report of teachers' knowledge and skills in providing school psychology services A summary report of main findings and recommendations in Vietnamese and English 	07/09/2021 – 05/11/2021
2	Organize conference with 02 sessions in Hanoi to disseminate the results of the assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 conference will be held in Hanoi 10 news, 02 info articles, 02 video interviews 	10/11/2021
3	Conduct talk show on Facebook to inform public about the needs of psychological services in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 talk show 	15/12/2021

4. Implementation and requirements

AAV and LRPs will work together to mobilize surveyors and arrange logistic for situational research on site.

External consultants or service companies with high qualification will take lead of the situational research and advocacy activities. The selected independent consultants or service companies should have tracked records of expertises and experience in the field of education, mental healthcare children and adolescents in Vietnam. Also, they are expected to engage in current networks of parents and children of mental health. There is a need of an adequate number of team members to fully, timely and effectively conduct and complete the services.

• Lead consultant

- Master's degree in Educational Psychology, School Psychology, Child and Adolescent Clinical Psychology, social science, development studies, or relevant fields;
- At least 15 years of experience in quantitative and qualitative research
- Have experience in school students' life skills
Have experience in children's behaviour management program design and practice
- Excellent analysis and writing skills
- Fluency in Vietnamese and English

• Supporting consultants

- Degree in Educational Psychology, School Psychology, Child and Adolescent Clinical Psychology, social science, development studies, or relevant fields.
- At least 10 years of experience in quantitative and qualitative research
- Fluency in Vietnamese

An independent consultant teams or services companies will submit required documents on package services, consultancy profile, proposal, estimated budget (clearly mentions prices for consultants, working days, the estimated budget will not cover field trip) following the budget from TOR.

- **Proposal from the interested Consultancy or Service Companies**

The interested consultancy or service companies should send their proposal to AAV by 28/5/2021.

The proposal(s) should include the following information:

- Technical proposal based on the scope of work, outputs/expected results, timeline in accordance with the TOR posted by AAV
- Financial proposal along with CV and diploma of consultant team. The financial proposal should include budget details for consultancy quoted in VND including PIT. Details should be provided in AAV's template attached to the TOR. Other costs for the consultants (hotel fee, per-diem, travel) will be paid by AAV as per our cost norm, hence should not be included in the consultant's financial proposal.

5. Expected Schedule

Activity	Expected results	Deadline	PIC
Prepare TOR for consultant advertisement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOR approved and advertisement for consultant posted 	24/04/2021	AAV
Recruit and sign contract with consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultants selected and contract signed 	07/06/2021	AAV
Agree research plan and relevant administrative procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing plan agreed between consultant team and AAV 	14/6/2021	AAV and Consultant team
Research outline agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research outline developed by consultants • Set of research tools produced by consultants • Consultation with Teachers in Hanoi, Haiphong and HCM on methodology and questions • Outline and tools agreed and finalized 	18/06/2021	Consultant team
Research tools and methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All survey questionnaire, tools, focus group discussion and in-depth interview questions tested • Final research tools and methodology agreed 	28/06/2021	Consultant team, AAV
Conduct research in Hanoi, Haiphong, HCM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers trained. • Survey, focus group discussions and interviews conducted 	29/06-13/7/2021	Consultant team, AAV
Write draft report + policy brief + infographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis completed • Report drafted 	20/07/2021	Consultant team, AAV
Revise and approve report + policy brief + infographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final report is revised and approved 	03/08/2021	Consultant team, AAV
Summarize the report findings + policy brief + infographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary report 	09/08/2021	Consultant team, AAV

Activity	Expected results	Deadline	PIC
Organize conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A conference will be organized in Hanoi 100 participants from Government, ActionAid, Schools, Parents and students 	14/08/2021	Consultant team, AAV
01 talk show on Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 panel discussion will be organized in HCM city 	15/09/2021	Consultant team, AAV

6. Risks

<u>Risks Description</u>	<u>How to manage</u>
The school attend the training but then fails their commitments in maintain School Psychological System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only strong committed school who voluntarily conduct self-assessment that they are full aware of the importance of mental health and children's rights Clear roles and responsibilities are mapped out in monitoring process.
The Government are not open for being advocated and unwilling to consider replicating School Psychological System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strategic national advocacy plan will be developed with the support of advisors who have experiences in government influence.
Timeframe is affected due to delay caused by COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project plan will be adjust based on COVID-19 situation and preparations plan to be developed in advance.

Contact person

If you are interested, please submit your proposal as well as required documents before 28/05/2021 to jobs.aav@actionaid.org.