



# Child Sponsorship Programme Annual Report 2016





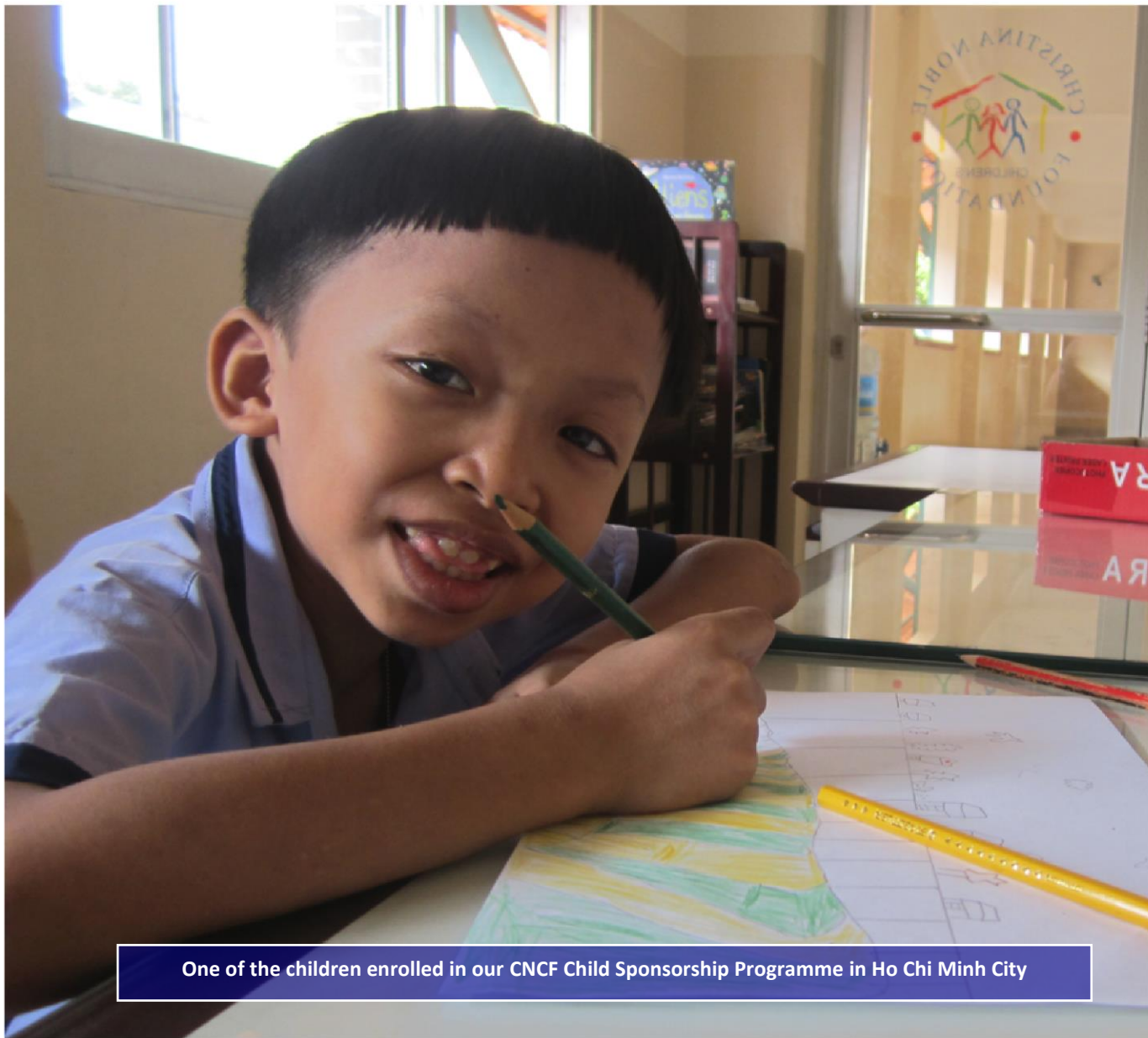


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The mission of the Christina Noble Children's Foundation is to give all children their childhood by providing the necessary protection, care, and education for them to sleep in peace, surrounded by love. Our Foundation is committed to helping alleviate child poverty in Vietnam and Mongolia and giving all children a happy and safe childhood.



One person **CAN** make a difference. **YOU** can make a difference.



One of the children enrolled in our CNCF Child Sponsorship Programme in Ho Chi Minh City

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our Child Sponsorship Programme connects underprivileged children and their families to people from around the world who want to create change in the lives of those most in need.

We would like to express our appreciation to all our sponsors. They have played a crucial role in realising our Founder Christina Noble's mission to give the children within our care an education that will ultimately help them break the cycle of poverty and allow them the opportunity to have a brighter future.

Special thanks to our local government partners who make it possible for us to run our Child Sponsorship Programme successfully.

One person **CAN** make a difference. **YOU** can make a difference.

Thap



## ABBREVIATIONS

BOLISA	Bureau of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
CNCF	Christina Noble Children's Foundation
CSP	Child Sponsorship Programme
DOLISA	Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
USD	US Dollar

*Child Sponsorship Programme – Annual Report 2016*



Journey to school



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## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

<b>Established</b>	1994
<b>Location</b>	The Child Sponsorship Programme operates in the following provinces: Ho Chi Minh City (including Can Gio District), Ca Mau (Ca Mau Orphanage and Ca Mau U Minh), Ben Tre, Dong Nai, and Long An (Chau Thanh and Thanh Hoa Districts). Some children enrolled in the programme also reside in other provinces such as Bac Lieu, Tra Vinh, and Dong Thap provinces in the Mekong Delta, Binh Phuoc, Binh Duong, and Tay Ninh provinces in Southeast Vietnam, and Quang Ngai and Ninh Thuan provinces in Central Vietnam.
<b>Objectives</b>	To create educational opportunities for poor children facing hardships, who are of school age, but are unable to afford school or are at high risk of leaving school; to improve and develop the family's living conditions; to provide access to other services, such as personal counselling, career counselling, and life skills training, so that the children are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to lead fuller lives; and to enhance family and community awareness of the importance of education.
<b>Programme Components</b>	Financial assistance in the form of a monthly sponsorship amount given to families to support education and living conditions of children; counselling; life skills training; and support through other CNCF programmes.
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds, who are either not enrolled in school or at high risk of dropping out of school due to financial difficulties. These children are either orphans or street children living with relatives; children from large families with parents who are disabled; children from low income households (under 100 USD per person per month for HCMC or under 50 USD per person per month in the provinces); children whose primary caregivers are not consistently employed; or children whose families are affected by sudden financial hardship due to parents getting divorced, bankruptcy, or a serious accident or illness affecting the primary income earner. Children currently enrolled in the Child Sponsorship Programme who are over age 16 are considered for further support after high school if they are still experiencing extreme financial difficulty and want to pursue college or university level education or vocational training.
<b>Local Partners</b>	Provincial DOLISA of Dong Nai, Ben Tre and Ca Mau Provinces, BOLISA of Can Gio District (Ho Chi Minh City), PPC of Chau Thanh District (Long An Province), and PPC of Thanh Hoa District (Long An Province)
<b>CNCF Involvement</b>	Fully responsible for funding and programme management, monitoring, and evaluation.
<b>CNCF Staff</b>	<b>Director of Operations:</b> Ms. Son Thu Trinh; <b>Vice Director:</b> Ms. Hoang Tu Uyen; <b>Sponsorship Programme Manager:</b> Ms. Vo Thi Nu Chau; <b>Deputy Manager:</b> Ms. Nguyen Hong Nhung; <b>Sponsorship Officers:</b> Ms. Vo Thi Xuan Huu, Ms. Hoang Bich Ngoc, Ms. Vo Minh Nha, Ms. Tran Thi Khanh Ha, Ms. Van Thi Xuan Quynh, Ms. Phan Thi Que Khanh, and Ms. Nguyen Ngoc Thuy Quynh.
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	Because CNCF is directly responsible for funding and programme management, we conduct regular monitoring and evaluation activities. Regular updates of children's progress in school and home are sent to the sponsors on an annual basis. Based on observations and feedback during monitoring visits, timely support is provided to children and families when necessary. Prior to enrolment and as issues arise, our social workers and programme manager conduct home visits. Weekly internal meetings are conducted for CNCF staff to discuss programme related issues and updates. Project visit reports, monthly reports, and semi-annual reports are sent by CNCF staff to the Board of Management and an annual review of the programme is sent to all stakeholders. In 2016, an evaluation of the Child Sponsorship Programme was also conducted.
<b>2016 Actual Costs</b>	Because this is a supply driven programme, the budgets and number of children in the programme are dependent upon the number of sponsors. A child enrolled in the Sponsorship Programme receives approximately USD \$372 per year. This year, 1002 children were enrolled in the programme.
<b>Future Plans</b>	To continue to provide financial support to help children stay in school; to promote case management improvement; to improve fund disbursement logistics; to provide career counselling and mobilise additional resources for children; to improve sponsor engagement; to develop new partnerships with local partners.
<b>Reporting Period</b>	January–December 2016

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## PROGRAMME BACKGROUND

We launched our Child Sponsorship Programme in 1994 with only five children. By 2016, we had helped over 19,500 disadvantaged children in Southern Vietnam attend school.

We believe education is crucial to the growth and development of every child and is the key to breaking the poverty cycle and building stronger and safer communities. Without education, children have no means to develop beyond the social sphere into which they are born. Education gives children a chance, a sense of worth, hope, and an opportunity for change. Ultimately, education gives children the tools to change their own lives.

Vietnam is a developing country and its workforce must continue to develop knowledge and practical skills in order for the economy to continue on its upward track. Vietnam has made positive changes in its educational system in recent years, and Vietnamese youth now have access to basic education services. However, the government also recently introduced an education policy that increases the share of education costs borne by students and their families. Therefore, children in both urban and rural areas still face considerable challenges and obstacles in accessing education.

Besides tuition fees, families are also required to pay for textbooks and reference materials, transportation fees, and uniforms. For many of Vietnam's families, the cost of sending their children to school is well beyond their means. Many children from poor households simply cannot go to school or complete their education due to economic constraints. In many cases, the family is unaware of the long-term value of education, so the child does not receive adequate support and drops out of school.



Sponsorship child with his long-term sponsor

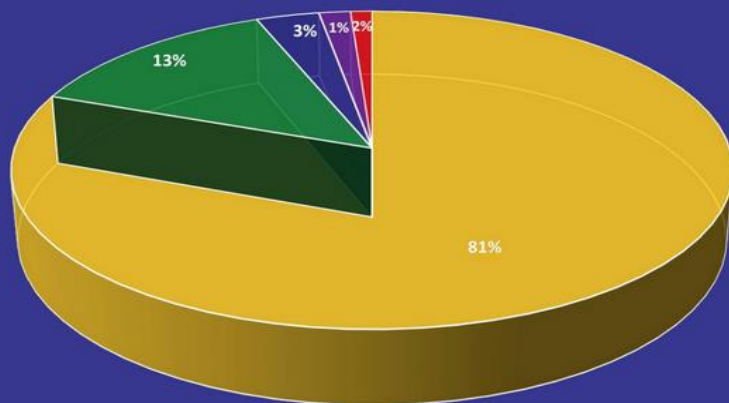
# Sponsor a Child

For **\$1 USD a day**, a sponsor can change a child's whole world by giving them access to basic nutrition, proper healthcare, education and vocational training, not to mention one of the greatest things a person can have – a friend.

Our Child Sponsorship Programme connects children and their families to people from around the world who wish to be part of a rewarding journey to create change in the lives of those most in need.

**\$31 USD / month**

A sponsor parent can make a significant difference to the life of a child living in poverty.



- Educational assistance for the child \$25 USD (81%)
- Administration and management \$4.16 USD (13%)
- Capacity Building Fund \$1 USD (3%)
- Medical and other family assistance for the children and their families \$0.5 USD (2%)
- Monitoring and home visits \$0.34 USD (1%)

The Child Sponsorship Programme was established with the aim of helping children enrol in **and** stay in school. The programme provides essential support to marginalised families, increasing the opportunity for their children to complete their schooling and improve their future prospects.

Our Child Sponsorship Programme connects children and their families to people from around the world who wish to be part of a rewarding journey to create change in the lives of those most in need. Through building a bridge from families living in extreme poverty and hardship to people who want and are in a position to help, the Foundation's sponsorship programme works to facilitate a mutually beneficial and empowering relationship, human being to human being. Our social workers monitor each family closely, supporting them in every way possible.

One of the most beautiful and often life-changing aspects of our programme is the cultural exchange and friendship that evolves over time. Through an initial profile, our sponsors learn about their child and the challenging circumstances they and their family face. This understanding is developed further over the course of sponsorship through exchange of letters, reports, and photos. With the guidance of our social workers, many sponsors are also able to meet the families that they have been supporting; this is always an incredibly memorable and heart-warming experience for not only our children, but also our sponsors.

**\*From 2017, CNCF Sponsorship will increase to \$38 USD to ensure that CNCF continues to deliver the best standards and good practices to our children and sponsors in our programme.**



CNCF Sponsorship Team visit the parents of a CNCF sponsorship child while they are at work







A sponsorship child taking a positive attitude to learning

### Child Sponsorship Programme Admission Criteria..

- Child must be between 3 and 16 years old (children over 16 are considered if they are continuing with further/higher education or are still in extreme financial need)
- Must be enrolled in school (or want to be enrolled in school)
- Must demonstrate a positive attitude toward learning
- Family must be in extreme financial need



### Most children enrolled in the programme are..

- Orphans or street children living with relatives
- Children from large families with parents who are disabled
- Children with physical disabilities whose parents cannot support their education
- Children from low income households (under 100 USD per person per month for HCMC or under 50 USD per person per month in the provinces)
- Children whose families are affected by the sudden loss of finances due to parents getting divorced, bankruptcy, or a serious accident or illness affecting the primary income earner







### Programme cancellation criteria:

Sponsorship may last several years, depending on the financial needs of the child. Below are some reasons why sponsorship would be terminated:

- **Completion of education:** Children who graduate from high school, university, and/or vocational training seek employment and are thus able to be self-sufficient and can support themselves and their family. This is the ideal outcome for ending sponsorship.
- **Improvement of financial condition of the family:** Children whose family reaches a per capita income over the poverty line, which enables them to cover the daily expenses of the family and afford the education cost of all the children in the family.
- **Dropout:** Children who terminate their formal schooling and do not replace this with a vocational course. The child may decide to leave school in order to start earning income. When dealing with such cases, we always try our best to counsel the child about the benefits of remaining in school or, alternatively, to consider a vocational training course. However, if a child decides not to follow our advice, we have no choice but to respect their decision and cease the sponsorship. Should the above situation occur, sponsors are informed immediately and are given an option to transfer their sponsorship to another child.
- **Children and/or their families who continually violate programme regulations or do not co-operate with programme staff following warnings.**
- **Sponsorship terminated by sponsor:** On occasion, a sponsor may wish to terminate their sponsorship. In this instance, should the sponsored child still require financial help, we will identify a new sponsor.



A sponsorship child at home



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## OUR YEAR

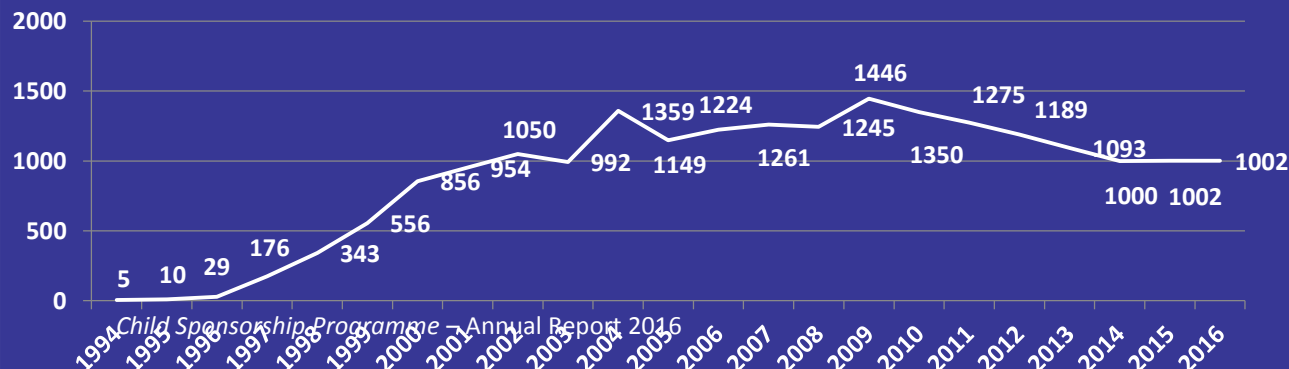
### 2016 Highlights

In 2016, **1002 children** in Ho Chi Minh City and other provinces were enrolled in the Child Sponsorship Programme

- 137 children were newly enrolled in the programme and 134 left the programme in 2016. Of the children who left:
  - 42 children successfully graduated from their high school/college/university/vocational training
  - 92 left the programme for the following reasons:
    - They dropped out of school or the programme, moved out of CNCF project sites, or their family's financial condition improved
- Over 10% of the children enrolled in the programme also received additional support through other CNCF programmes
- Our team conducted 27 project visits and 438 home visits (44%) as part of monitoring and evaluation activities

All sponsors were provided with an annual report to inform them of their sponsored child's progress and updates

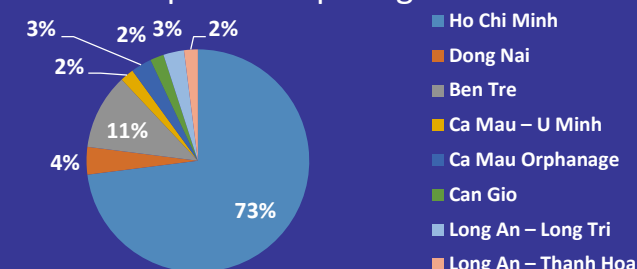
Number of children enrolled in the CSP/Year



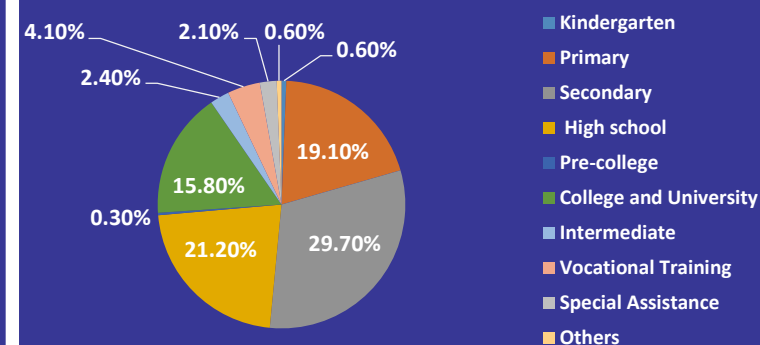
## CHILD SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS 2016



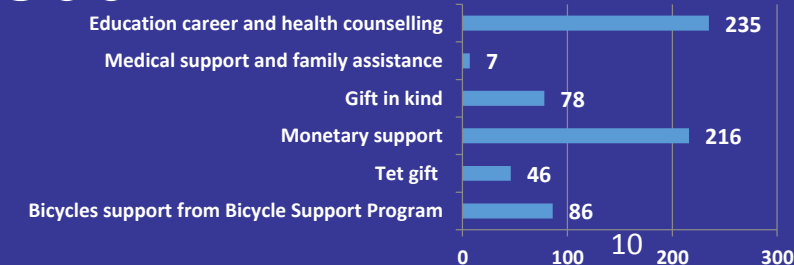
**1002** children are enrolled in Child Sponsorship Programme



Education levels of children enrolled in the Child Sponsorship Programme



**500+** children received additional support





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## PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

### Beneficiaries

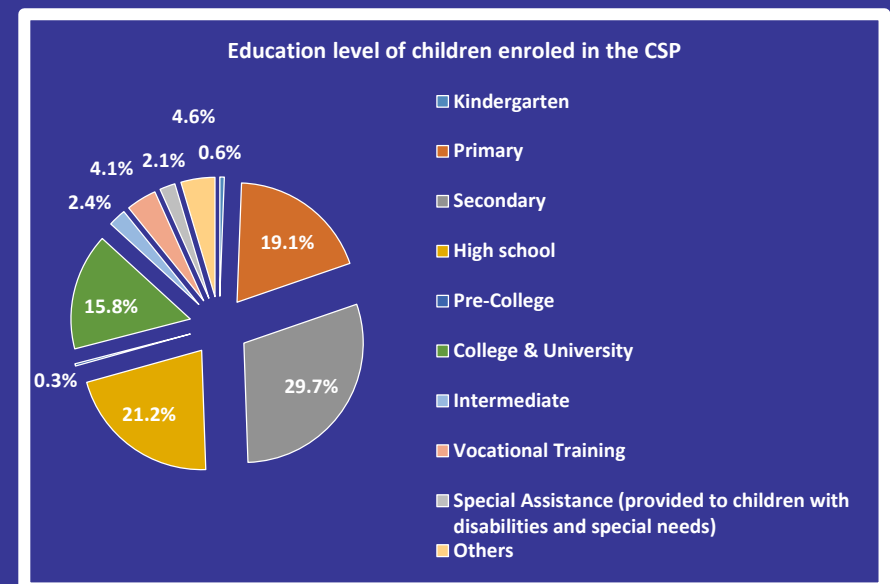
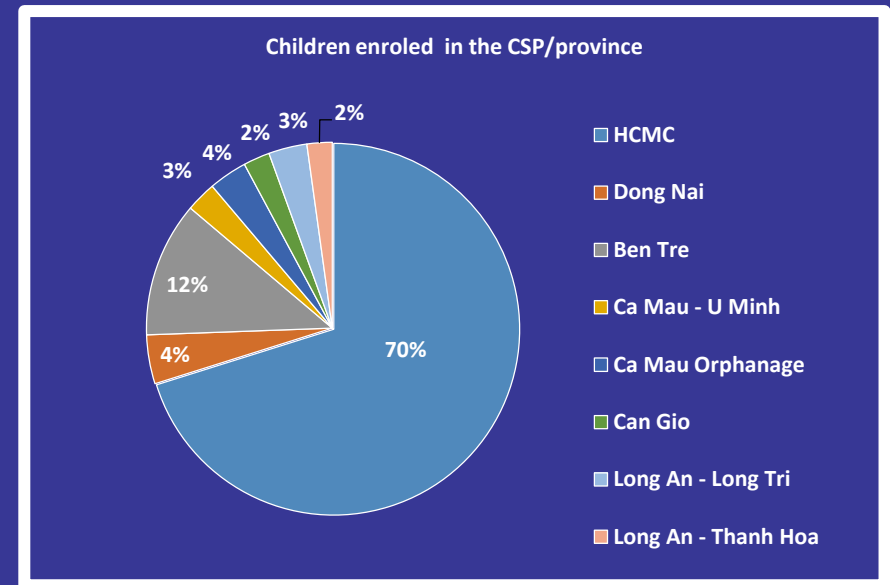
#### *Programme Locations*

At the end of 2016, our Child Sponsorship Programme was providing assistance to 1,002 underprivileged children. This included 137 new cases, 42 completed cases (children who graduated successfully from the programme), and 104 cancelled cases (children who left the programme for various reasons).

The Child Sponsorship Programme operates projects in five locations: HCMC, Ca Mau, Ben Tre, Dong Nai, and Long An Provinces. In addition, the programme serves children living in other provinces including Bac Lieu, Tra Vinh, and Dong Thap Provinces (in the Mekong Delta), Binh Phuoc, Binh Duong, and Tay Ninh Provinces (in Southeast Vietnam), and Quang Ngai and Ninh Thuan Provinces (in Central Vietnam). The programme's subprojects include:

- HCMC Project
- Ben Tre Province Project
- Can Gio District Project
- Long An – Long Tri District Project
- Long An – Thanh Hoa District Project
- Dong Nai Province Project
- Ca Mau Orphanage Project
- Ca Mau – U Minh District Project

Children in the programme who live outside the operating locations are children who have been enrolled in the CSP for several years who moved to other provinces outside our operational footprint. Currently, no new enrolments are accepted from outside the project locations, but the CSP team aims to expand its programme reach in the future.



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### ***Education level of children enrolled in the Child Sponsorship Programme***

Children enrolled in primary, secondary, and high school, as well as those attending university, college, and vocational training, received assistance through the programme.

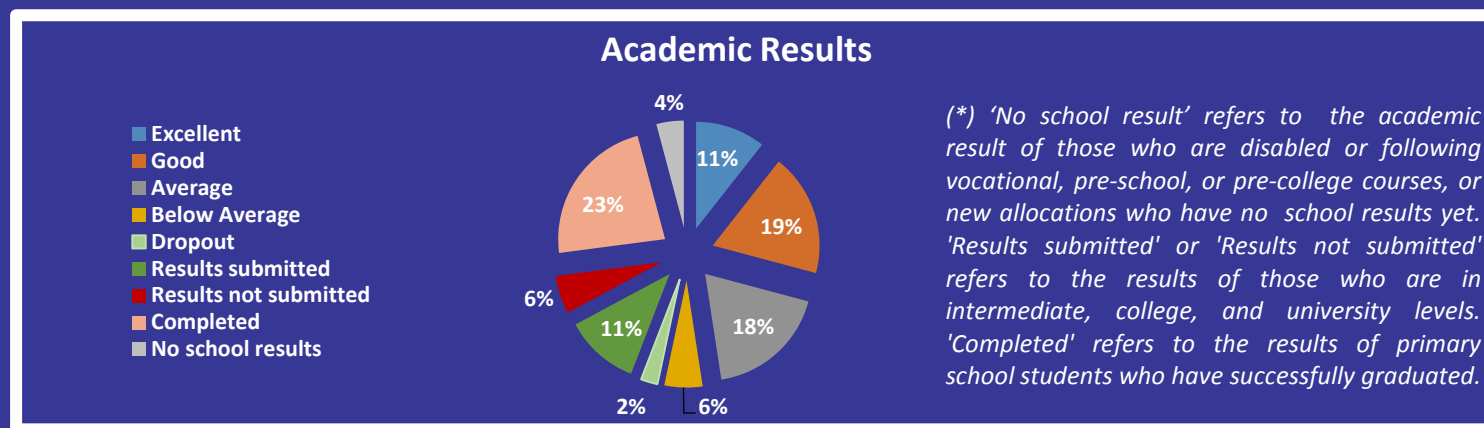
In 2016, all CSP students received a fixed monthly amount to support their education and living expenses.

### ***Academic Results***

Sponsored children are required to attend mainstream schools or a vocational centre. School attendance is carefully monitored and schools provide a confirmation letter at the beginning of the school year and reports at the end of each semester. In addition, our staff work with the local partners, students, and their families to track each student's school performance and monitor his or her family conditions. If a student is not maintaining satisfactory school performance or encounters difficulties in his or her studies, our staff investigate the reasons and offer additional support if possible.

In 2016, most school reports were submitted on time. Last school year, the majority of our sponsorship children (more than 80%) scored excellent, good or average results. These are promising results because these children must overcome many obstacles to their education and often their homes do not provide a conducive learning environment.

An issue we continue to encounter every year is children dropping out of school. Whenever a child is taken out of school, we make every effort to meet and talk to the parents to see if there is any other solution and try to help the families find alternative solutions.





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## Sponsorship Disbursement Days



During the Sponsorship Disbursement Days, parents and guardians come with their children to collect the sponsorship payment.

A unique aspect of our Child Sponsorship Programme is that the sponsorship amount is paid directly to the children. Sponsorship Disbursement Days are held at the Foundation on the first Thursday of every month for sponsored children living in Ho Chi Minh City. Disbursement Days for children living in the provinces are held quarterly. This helps reduce travel costs for sponsored children's families who are required to be present at our local partners office to receive the payment as well as the travel and administrative costs of the Sponsorship team who participate in all disbursement activities together with the officers of our local partners.

Disbursement Days also provide a great opportunity for the sponsorship team to meet with children and their primary caregivers to track and monitor progress and identify any potential issues or concerns. Our sponsorship team can also highlight

any programme updates and provide families with useful information on education. In this way, the Disbursement Days are a great platform for two-way communication between our team and our beneficiary families.

Because of our direct payment system, all our beneficiaries received payments on time this year. In 2016, all the Sponsorship Disbursement Days were conducted successfully.

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## Home Visits

Home visits are an important component of programme monitoring because they allow our sponsorship team to better understand the living conditions and family situations of our beneficiary children. The more we know, the better we can assist them. On the visits, we also provide counselling, which focuses on not only education, but other issues such as hygiene and health. Finally, we collect information for annual progress reports and future follow-ups.

In 2016, 438 home visits were conducted covering 43.7% of the children in the programme. This was lower than the planned 60%. The shortfall was due to (1) increased workload for sponsorship management team (2) changes in senior sponsorship team personnel in 2016 (3) significant increase in administrative costs of visits.

Home visits are one of the most important, yet challenging, parts of the sponsorship team's activities. The children live in widespread and diverse locations, mostly in unsafe neighbourhoods. Our team conducts home visits in pairs to ensure personal safety. Before each home visit, our team members conduct a thorough review of the child's information. A follow-up report is completed after each visit, updating the child's progress and living conditions and noting any changes in family circumstances. Home visits are also compulsory for new applicants to ensure the applicant's family fully meets the selection criteria. After each home visit, our team prepares a social report for evaluation.



For many families, educating their children would be nothing more than a dream if not for the financial support they receive through our Foundation. Pictured here is the home of one of our sponsorship children.

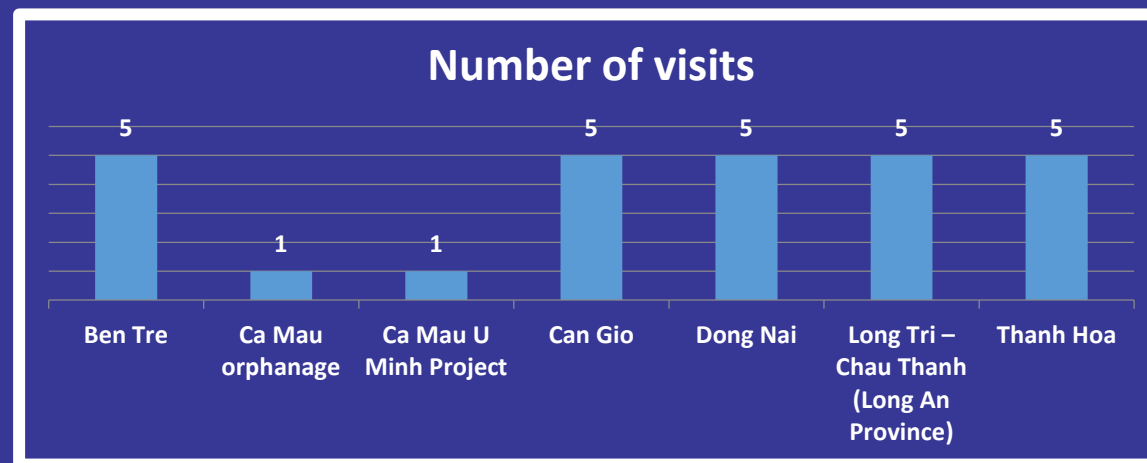
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## Children's Profiles and Progress Reports

One of the most beautiful and often life-changing aspects of our programme is the cultural exchange and friendship that evolves over time. Through an initial profile, our sponsors begin to learn about their child and the challenging circumstances they and their family face. This understanding is developed further over the course of sponsorship through annual progress reports, photos, and letters. In 2016, 137 profiles for new child beneficiaries and 738 annual progress reports were compiled and sent to the children's sponsors. Annual reports record achievements and the impact of the sponsorship on the individual child. They also include academic results, living conditions and family circumstances, and any significant family events. In addition, over the course of the year, our sponsorship team also translated many letters from children to their sponsors and assisted children with reading their sponsor's letters.

## Project Visits

In 2016, 27 project visits were made to project sites where we have collaborative partnerships. These visits were an opportunity for the sponsorship team to work directly with representatives of local partners to identify and resolve any issues that occurred during the year. During these visits, the team also paid out disbursements, conducted home visits, provided counselling to families and children and life-skills training and career orientation, and handed out awards earned for good academic performance in school.





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## Partnership Development



Our sponsorship team works collaboratively with local partners in each of the provinces we cover. Our partners help us remain in constant contact with our sponsored children and their families. They assist with the administration and management of the programme at a provincial and district level, help us to identify and resolve issues, and assist with home visits, especially in remote areas.

Crucially, our local partners identify and introduce us to the neediest and most disadvantaged children. We acknowledge and value our local partner relationships and believe that the success of the programme is a result of good communication and cooperation.

In 2016, we established a new partnership with the People's Committee of Thanh Hoa District, Long An Province. We anticipate that this new project will support more disadvantaged children in more rural and remote areas and give them the opportunity to continue their education and build a brighter future.

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## Counselling and Training

What sets our Child Sponsorship Programme apart from other similar programmes is that we not only focus on enabling our children to get an education, but also provide them with a holistic range of care designed to facilitate their development. We know that the children in our Child Sponsorship Programme come from disadvantaged backgrounds. They are often vulnerable to physical danger or exploitation and are at risk of dropping out of school. Thus, our dedicated staff provides counselling, advice, and training to help children face and solve their problems while continuing their education.



The staff have an in-depth understanding of the family background of each child enrolled in the CSP. Through home visits, the staff also observe the living situation, social environment, and economic conditions in which the children and their families live and are able to assess any risks. These observations offer insights into the lives of the children and provide a basis for determining appropriate intervention and support.

In 2016, our staff provided counselling and advice to 116 children/families. Of these, 78 children required advice on their education and the importance of staying in school and 38 children were counselled on health and hygiene related issues. Our social workers ensure that all the children in need of counselling receive proper support.

During the project visits, our staff members organised one “play-to-learn” session. The session included different activities to improve sponsored children’s soft skills and confidence. These activities help the children enrolled in the programme form closer connections with other children and their sponsors.

In addition, 20 staff members at Ca Mau Orphanage were provided with a two-day training course in “Motivational Interviewing.” According to the participants, the knowledge gained was very practical and applicable to their daily duties. Training for local staff, in fact, is one of the activities CNCF would like to promote because we understand the important role of the officers of our local partners in the success of our provincial projects.



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## Additional Support

### *Bicycles*

Children enrolled in the Child Sponsorship Programme also benefit from other CNCF programmes. In 2016, 86 children who faced difficulties getting to and from school were provided with bicycles through our Bicycle Support Programme. These students have to travel long distances to go to school and previously had to walk or use prohibitively-expensive motorbike-taxis to school. Now, they are able to get to school quickly and safely and devote more time to their education.

### *Monetary and in-kind support*

Because sponsors communicate regularly with their sponsored children, they form close friendships. The children write to their sponsors about their hobbies and interests. Based on these letters, sponsors often send gifts for their children on special occasions. In 2016, 78 children enrolled in the CSP received gifts from their sponsors such as stationery and clothes. Furthermore, 216 children received additional monetary support that helped their families improve their living conditions.

Additional support during the Vietnamese New Year, *Tet*, was given to 46 children facing extreme financial hardship. They received gift hampers with basic ingredients such as rice and cooking oil.

### *Other assistance*

Two percent of the sponsorship amount per month is allocated toward providing families emergency medical or other assistance. In 2016, 3 children received medical assistance and 4 children received other assistance, such as payment toward funeral costs for their family.



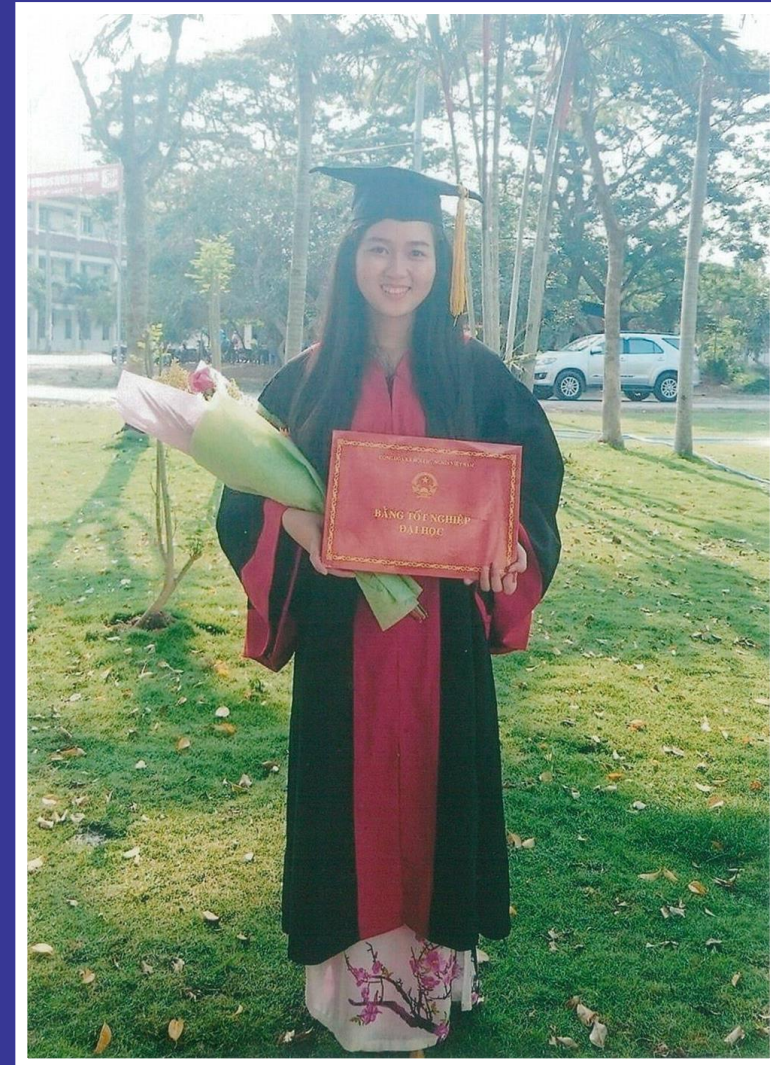
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## OUR STORIES

Living in the most rural area in Ca Mau Province, which is the southern most province in Vietnam, Ngoc's (name changed for protection) parents have struggled to cover their daily expenses and tuition fees for Ngoc and her four sisters who are all school age. Ngoc's parents peddle ice-cream to earn a living. Their combined income was about USD \$2.50/day. However, their income was not stable because it depended on the number of daily customers. Sometimes they did not have enough money to buy rice and food for their children. They often had to buy food on credit or go hungry.

Ngoc started to receive support from the CSP in 2007 when she was in grade 8. When we visited her home, we were filled with admiration for Ngoc and her sisters because we saw first-hand the challenges they faced when they went to school every day. Ngoc and her sisters had to walk through muddy long roads along rice fields and then ask for a lift on 'vo lai' (a type of Vietnamese boat) to go to school. Outside school hours, Ngoc and her sisters did housework and cared for livestock and poultry to earn more money. Despite all the difficulties she faced, Ngoc performed very well at school. The monthly sponsorship money and extra support from her sponsor helped secure her education and the education of all her sisters. Ngoc was an excellent student at the primary, secondary, and high school levels and passed the university entrance examination to the most prestigious university in the Mekong Delta in Vietnam. After four years studying there, she graduated in 2016 from the university with a degree in Environmental Engineering with excellent results. Immediately after her university graduation, because of her excellent performance at the university, Ngoc was able to move to Japan to start work. The professional working environment in an industrialized country, at first, left her overwhelmed, but she quickly got up to speed. Currently, she is able to support herself in Japan and partly support her parents and younger sister who is still in high school.

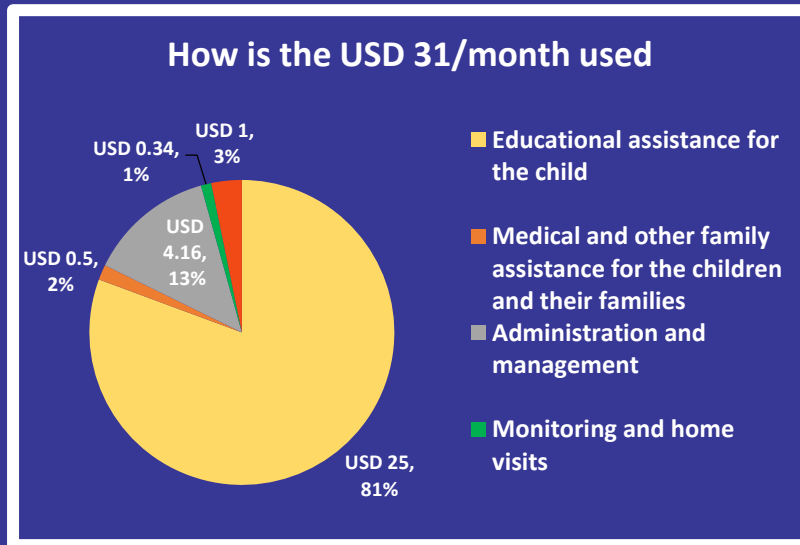
In almost ten years in the CSP, we saw Ngoc grow from a timid girl to a confident young woman. We believe she has a bright future ahead of her.





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## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

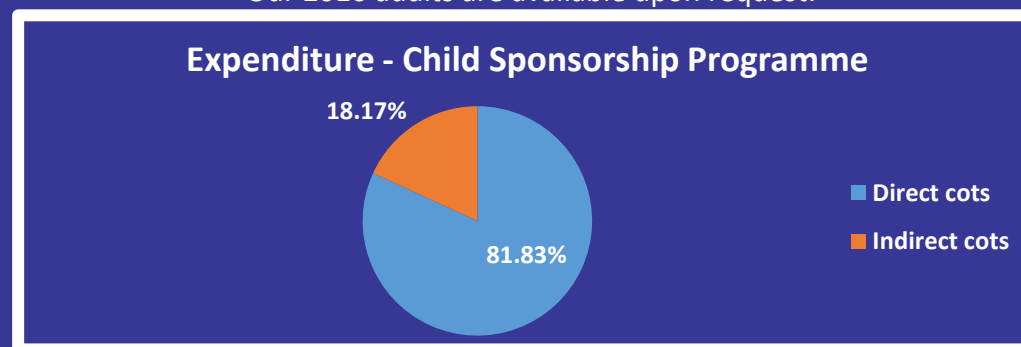


Because the CSP is a supply driven programme, the budgets and number of children enrolled are dependent upon the number of sponsors. In 2016 for approximately USD \$372/year/child, 1,002 children were enrolled.

CSP Vietnam works in cooperation with CNCF group offices in Australia, Hong Kong, Ireland, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States to provide sponsorship to disadvantaged children. At the end of 2016, the proportion of sponsorships managed by CNCF international and CNCF Vietnam is as follows:

- Australia: 19%
- France: 6%
- Ireland: 30%
- Hong Kong: 18%
- UK: 22%
- USA: 1%
- Vietnam: 4%

Our 2016 audits are available upon request.





***“Childhood is the foundation of life. Help us make it a good one” - Christina Noble***

**If you wish to change the life of a child in Vietnam, please get in touch with our team in Vietnam**

**Email: [vietnam@cncf.org](mailto:vietnam@cncf.org)**

**or visit our website: <https://www.cncf.org/sponsor-a-child.html>**

**Or, if you happen to live in a country where CNCF has a local partner office then you can contact them directly through our website**

**Each of us is only one person but by joining all the ones together, we can accomplish greatness.**

**If you and your organisation are interested in supporting us in 2017/2018 please contact our Foundation.**

**It is only through the kind generosity of others that we are able to continue our work with some of the world's most vulnerable children.**