



# **Education Scholarship Programme Annual Report 2016**





## Minority Children in Kien Giang

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

PROGRAMME BACKGROUND

OUR YEAR

*2016 Highlights*

*Programme Activities*

OUR STORIES

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

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.



This little one is happy to receive her scholarship certificate

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to all our supporters we have been able to realise our Founder Christina's mission to provide the children in our care, educational opportunities that will help them break the cycle of poverty and achieve a brighter future.

We would also like to thank our local government partners who make it possible for us to operate our Education Scholarship Programme successfully:

- Thao Dan Social Protection Centre, HCMC
- Tuong Lai Project, HCMC
- Women Union of Cau Ong Lanh Ward, HCMC
- Study Promotion Association of Tan Dinh Ward, HCMC
- Union of Friendship Organization, Long An Province
- People's Committee of Tan Tru District, Long An Province
- Department of Labour, Invalids, and Social Affairs, Kien Giang Province



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## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CNCF</b>	Christina Noble Children's Foundation
<b>ESP</b>	Education Scholarship Programme
<b>HCMC</b>	Ho Chi Minh City
<b>MOLISA</b>	Ministry of Labour Invalids and Social Affairs
<b>USD</b>	US Dollar



Poor people in rural areas use bicycles as their main means of transportation, this enables the children to get to school

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## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

<b>Established</b>	2002
<b>Location</b>	Ho Chi Minh City, Kien Giang, and Long An Provinces
<b>Objectives</b>	To provide scholarships to children whose families are otherwise unable to afford schooling so that children can remain in the educational system; to bring these children into our Foundation's community and provide access to other services like career counselling and life skills training and support through other programmes like our Bicycle Support Programme; to help recipient families break out of the cycle of poverty; and to enhance family and community awareness of the importance of education to the futures of their children.
<b>Programme Components</b>	Financial assistance in the form of scholarships to families to support their children's education; life skills training; counselling; and support through other CNCF programmes.
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Children from disadvantaged backgrounds who are enrolled in school. These children are 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), or children whose families are affected by the acute financial hardships caused by divorce, bankruptcy, or a serious accident or illness to the primary income earner. Many are children in other CNCF Programmes such as the Sunshine School who want to pursue their education, but require support.
<b>Local Partners</b>	<b>HCMC:</b> Thao Dan Social Protection Centre, Tuong Lai Project, Women Union of Cau Ong Lanh Ward, Study Promotion Association of Tan Dinh Ward. <b>Long An:</b> People's Committee of Tan Tru District. <b>Kien Giang:</b> Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs.
<b>CNCF Involvement</b>	Fully responsible for funding, 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 and Education Scholarship Programme Manager:</b> Ms. Vo Thi Nu Chau <b>Education Programme Officer:</b> Ms. Phan Thi Que Khanh
<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 college are collected and timely support is provided when necessary. Prior to enrolment and as issues arise, our social worker and programme manager conduct home visits. Weekly internal meetings are conducted for CNCF staff to discuss programme related issues and updates. 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.
<b>2016 Actual Costs</b>	USD \$58,550.81
<b>Future Plans</b>	To continue to provide financial support for education and complementary support (career counselling, life skills training, bicycle and computer support, etc.) to students in Ho Chi Minh City, Long An Province, and Kien Giang Province; to continue to strengthen partnership with local partners; to enhance active involvement of parents through inclusive activities that help influence their awareness and build their capacity so they can support us in achieving our goal of child development; and to improve our internal database management.
<b>Reporting Period</b>	January-December 2016

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## PROGRAMME BACKGROUND

We believe education is crucial to the growth and development of every child and is a key factor that can help break the poverty cycle. Without education, children cannot transcend the social sphere into which they are born. Education gives children a chance, a sense of worth, hope, and an opportunity for change and, ultimately, the tools to change their own lives. In the short-term, school provides a refuge from danger and poverty; over the long-term, it is the means by which a child can permanently overcome barriers.

Accessing affordable education remains an obstacle for many of Vietnam's poorest families. By law, students are not required to pay tuition fees at the primary school level in public schools; however, other costs, such as transportation, uniforms, and learning materials, and informal fees set by schools or communes at the local level can make even primary education prohibitively expensive.

Many children from poor households cannot go to school or complete their education due to economic constraints. Instead, many must work to help support their families. Often, families are unaware of the long-term value of education, and thus, children do not the support they need to stay in school.



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We established the Child Sponsorship Programme in 1994 to provide children with support to be able to enrol in and stay in school. Recognising that more support was needed to ensure that children continue their education, we established the Education Scholarship Programme (ESP) in 2002 to provide scholarships to children whose families are otherwise unable to afford schooling with the aim of ensuring that children can remain in the educational system. The financial support we provide to our children covers school fees. The ESP offers scholarships to eligible students from Ho Chi Minh City and several rural provinces in the Mekong Delta region. We also provide additional support when appropriate in the form of career counselling, life skills training, and provision of computers, laptops, and bicycles. To date, ESP has provided financial support to more than 3,000 disadvantaged students from Ho Chi Minh City and in Kien Giang, Long An, Tien Giang, and Dong Nai provinces.

In 2016, **314 children** received scholarships through the Education Support Programme.



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## CRITERIA FOR SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Children who are accepted into the programme are required to be enrolled in school and belong to one of the following groups:



- Orphans or street children living with relatives
- Children from families with parents who are disabled
- Children from low-income households (under 100 USD per month or households where parents are not regularly employed)
- Children whose families are affected by sudden financial loss due to death, divorced, bankruptcy, serious accident, illness affecting the primary income earner

Only one child per family can participate in ESP; however this rule is occasionally waived for families in extreme need.

As part of the programme, children receive financial assistance in the form of scholarships to support their education, life skills training, counselling and support through other CNCF programmes.





Teacher crossing the bridge on the way  
to school

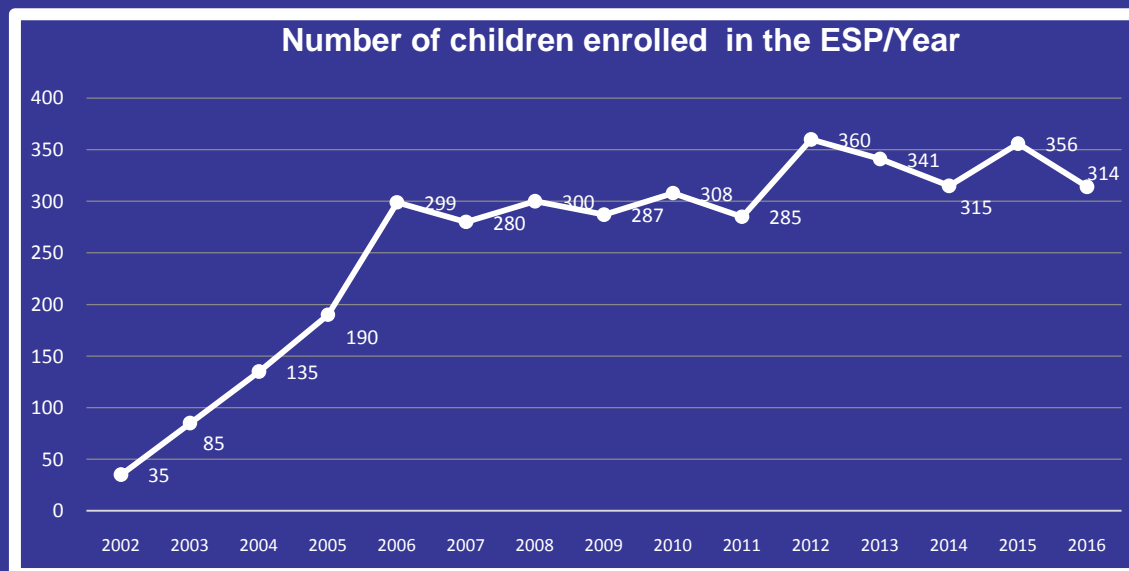


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## OUR YEAR

### 2016 Highlights

- In 2016, **314 children** in Ho Chi Minh City and other provinces in the Mekong Delta received scholarships through the ESP.
- 37 children were admitted into the programme in 2016.
- 39 children left the programme of which 3 children successfully graduated, 23 children dropped out of school or the programme and 13 children left for other reasons, such as improved financial conditions and were transferred to other CNCF projects.
- 35 children received additional support through the Bicycle Support Programme and 17 received other aid in kind, such as gifts during Vietnamese New Year-Tet.
- Our team conducted 35 home visit verification of new applicants.

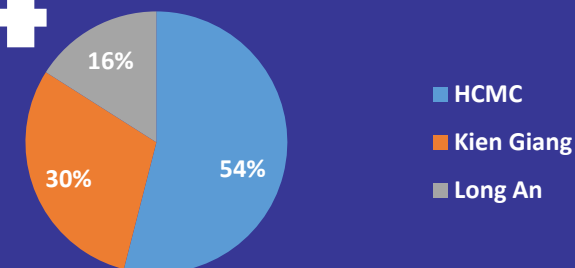


Education Scholarship Programme – Annual Report 2016

## EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS 2016



**314** children received scholarships

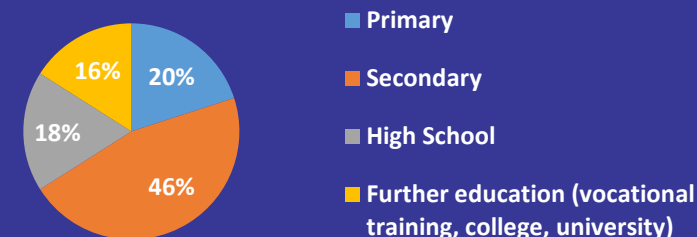


**37** children newly enrolled in ESP

**3** children graduated from the programme

**36** children left the program for other reasons

**Education level of children enrolled in the ESP**



**52** children received additional support

**35** children received bicycles through our ESP

**17** children received other aid in kind such as gifts during Vietnamese New Year

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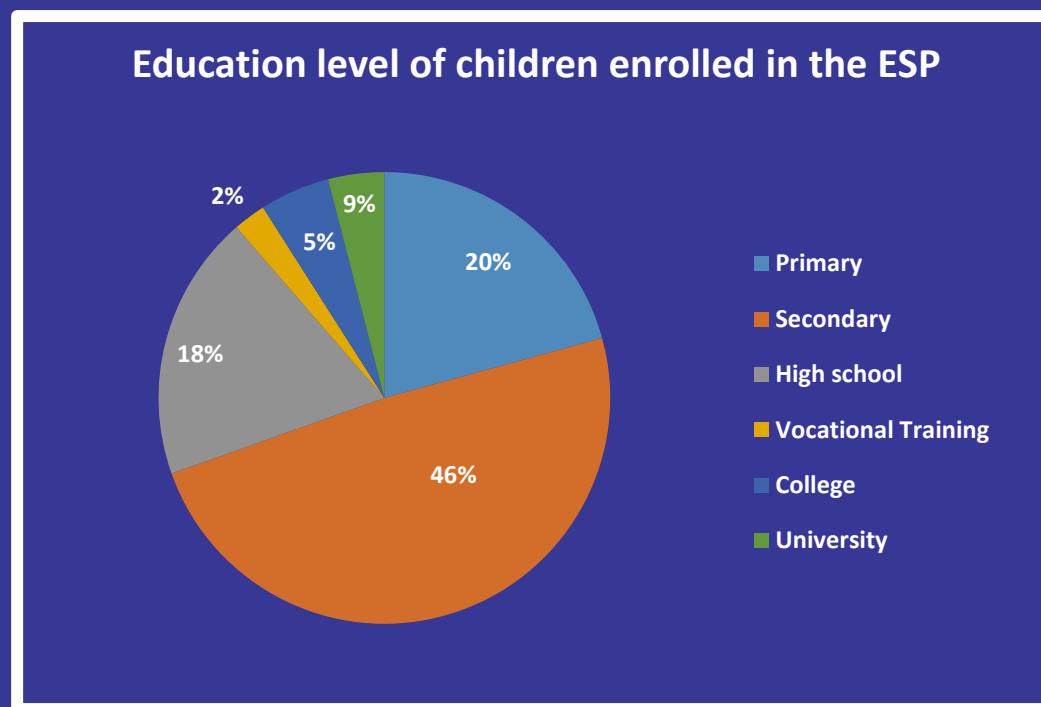
## PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

### Education support

Providing financial assistance for educational support is the main activity of the Education Scholarship Programme.

In 2016, 314 children were enrolled in the Education Scholarship Programme in Ho Chi Minh City and two provinces in the Mekong Delta –Kien Giang and Long An.

Children enrolled in primary, secondary, high school, college, university and vocational training received scholarships.







ESP activities: Scholarship disbursement, counseling, bicycle presentation etc.



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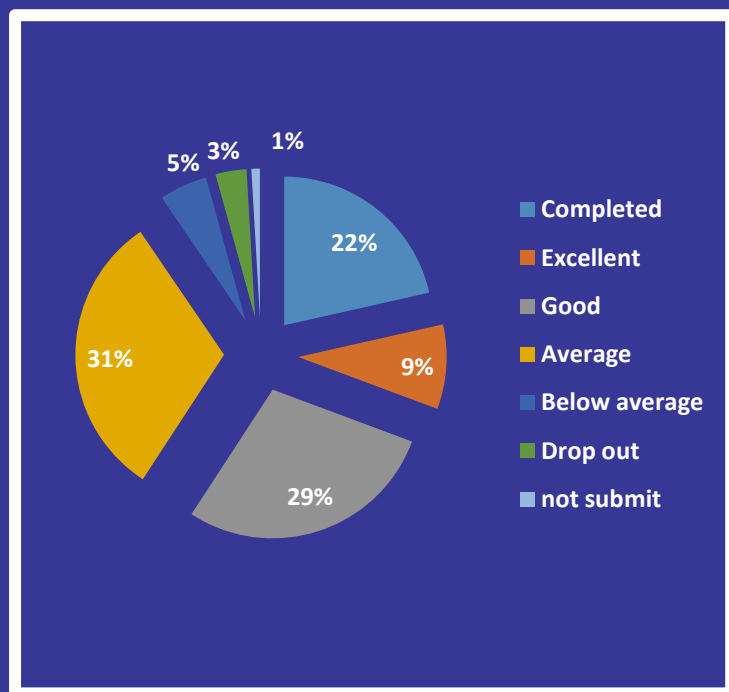
## ***Scholarship Disbursement***

In 2016, all ESP students received fixed scholarships based on the education level of the child and the province in which they attend school.

ESP staff in cooperation with the officers of local partners organised scholarship disbursement ceremonies for all children enrolled in the programme. This gave the team the opportunity to meet the students and their parents/guardians, to talk, to listen, to gain valuable insights into the difficulties the families face, and offer timely help and advice.

Furthermore, various networking and team-building activities were included in the scholarship disbursement ceremonies for students attending college, university, or vocational training with the aim of building a network for these students to enable them to improve their soft skills, especially their communication and team work skills.

## ***Academic Results***



An important aspect of monitoring the programme is regular follow-up with schools and families for updates on how the children enrolled in the programme are performing academically. Our staff work closely with the local partners and the students to collect school reports.

In 2016 our 12<sup>th</sup> grade students excelled. Eleven out of sixteen students continued their education at higher levels, while others decided to go to work after completing high school. Despite the overall good performance from this group, the number of students scoring below average is still quite high (6%).

It is important to note that our children come from homes that do not provide a conducive learning environment. In cases of poor academic performance, our staff attempt to ascertain the reasons and offer additional support where possible.

An issue we continue to encounter every year is children dropping out of school or the programme. Whenever a child is taken out of school, we make every possible effort to meet and talk to the parents/guardians to see if there is any other solution. In most cases, the reason for a child being withdrawn from school is financial. We always try to provide alternative solutions. Unfortunately, however, we are not always successful.



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This year, 11 children (3%) dropped out of school and/or the programme. Of the 11 children who dropped out, 5 were from HCMC and 6 from Kien Giang Province. Upon further investigation, our local partners and staff concluded that the reasons for dropping out were varied:

- Children changed schools because they moved homes or back to their home towns
- Local partners lost contact with the families when they changed address without informing our staff or our partners
- Children stayed home to help their families with farming or housework

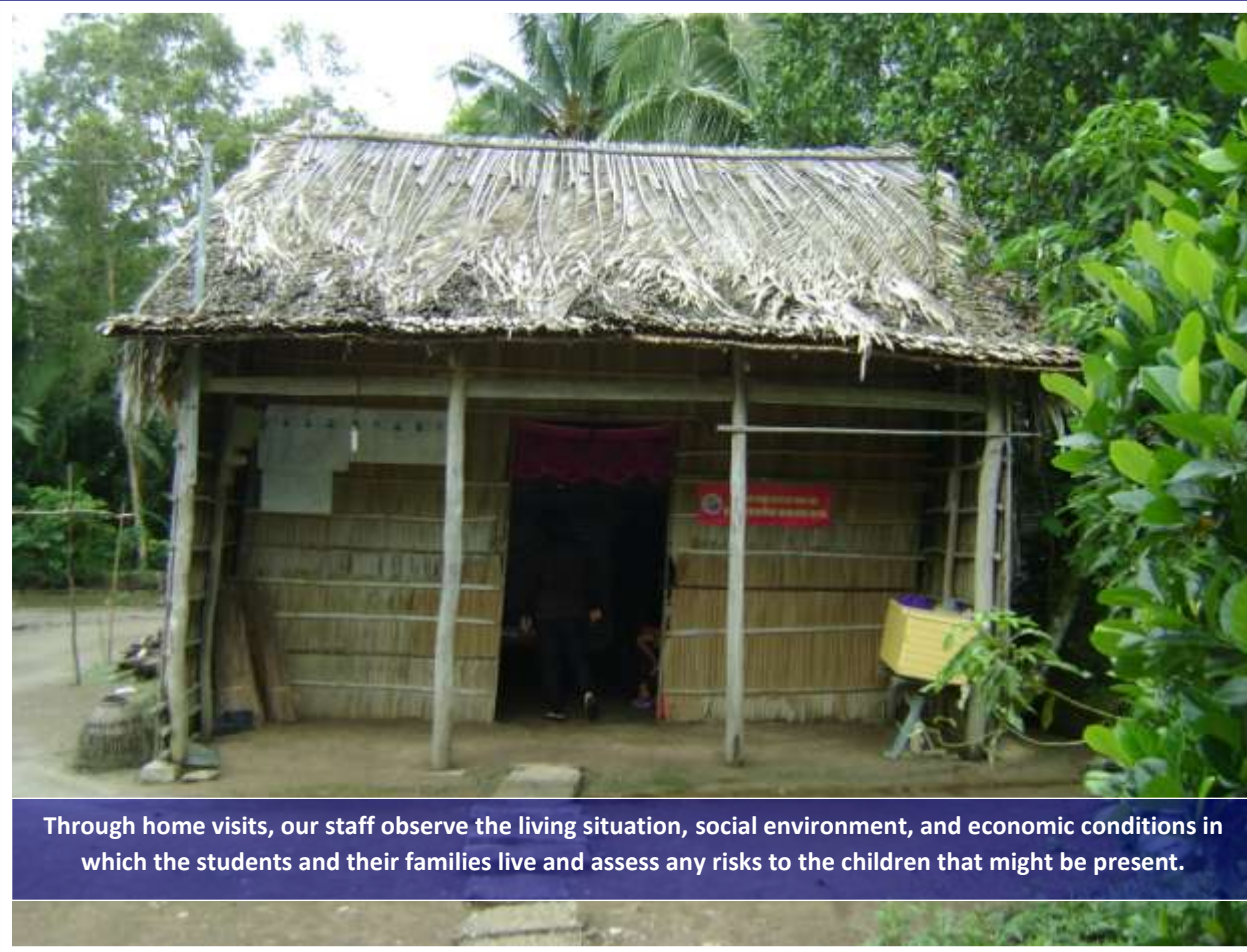


One of our young boys on the programme with his Father.



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## Home visits



Through home visits, our staff observe the living situation, social environment, and economic conditions in which the students and their families live and assess any risks to the children that might be present.

Home visits are an important aspect of programme monitoring. Through home visits, our staff observe the living situation, social environment, and economic conditions in which the students and their families live and assess any risks to the children that might be present. These observations offer insights into the lives of the new enrollees and children currently in the programme. Based on these insights, appropriate interventions and support plans can be put in place. Consulting, counseling, and referral services, aimed at supporting the students to stay in school, are provided in a timely and responsive manner.

In 2016, the ESP team conducted 35 new home visits.

Our goal is to conduct more home visits, but this is not always financially viable due to the large administrative costs involved. However, the team uses other methods such as meetings with local partners and guardians at our office, phone calls to educational centres, and other means of communications to follow-up regularly with all children in the ESP.

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## Additional support

### *Bicycles*

Children enrolled in the ESP also benefit from other CNCF programmes. In 2016, our Bicycle Support Programme provided bicycles to 35 children in the ESP who faced difficulties getting to and from school. These students can travel long distances to school and who previously had to either walk or take expensive (in relation to the family income) motorbike taxis. Now, they are able to get to school quickly and safely and devote more time to their education.

### *Other support*

Additional support during the Vietnamese New Year, *Tet*, was provided to 17 children whose families were facing extreme financial hardship. They were given gift hampers with basic ingredients like rice and cooking oil as well as clothes, stationery, and shoes for the children.



Children receive acknowledgment gifts for their hard study work







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## OUR STORIES

Hoang (name changed for child protection) comes from a poor family with eight children in Vietnam's Central Highland. When Hoang was a small child, her hometown depended on farming for their livelihood. With the income from a small farm, her parents were unable to cover daily expenses of the ten-member family and pay for education for the eight children. Life was hard that some of Hoang's brothers and sisters had to stop their schooling when they were in secondary and high school. Despite struggling to put food on the table, Hoang's parents understood that education was the best way to help their family rise above poverty. That was also the reason why they sent Hoang, the youngest child in this family, to live with her aunt who had moved to Ho Chi Minh City so her son could attend school.

Hoang started her life in Ho Chi Minh City with her aunt in a small ramshackle house when she was only 9 years old. Hoang helped her aunt peddle soft drinks and girdle cakes (a Vietnamese snack) in the city. The income from this job was not enough to cover the education costs of Hoang and her cousin. Thus, Hoang started grade 4 at the CNCF Sunshine School. When she graduated from the Sunshine School, she was referred to the Education Scholarship Program, which provided scholarships so she could continue her studies. From an early age, Hoang's work ethic has been tremendous. After school, she helps her aunt to increase the family income. Despite all the difficulties she has faced, Hoang has always approached her education with a positive attitude. She finished grade 12 with good final results and passed the exam to enter a university in Ho Chi Minh City where she is majoring in Business Administration.

When Hoang came to inform us about the result of the university entrance exam, she was beaming. As the first person in her family to attend university, she is doing her best to perform well with her academic studies. She shared with us that she is looking forward to going to work after earning her degree because she will be able to support her family in her hometown as well as her aunt's family. ESP and CNCF continue to support Hoang during her time at university and we strongly believe that she will keep working hard to achieve a brighter future.



Typical home dwelling of children in our ESP





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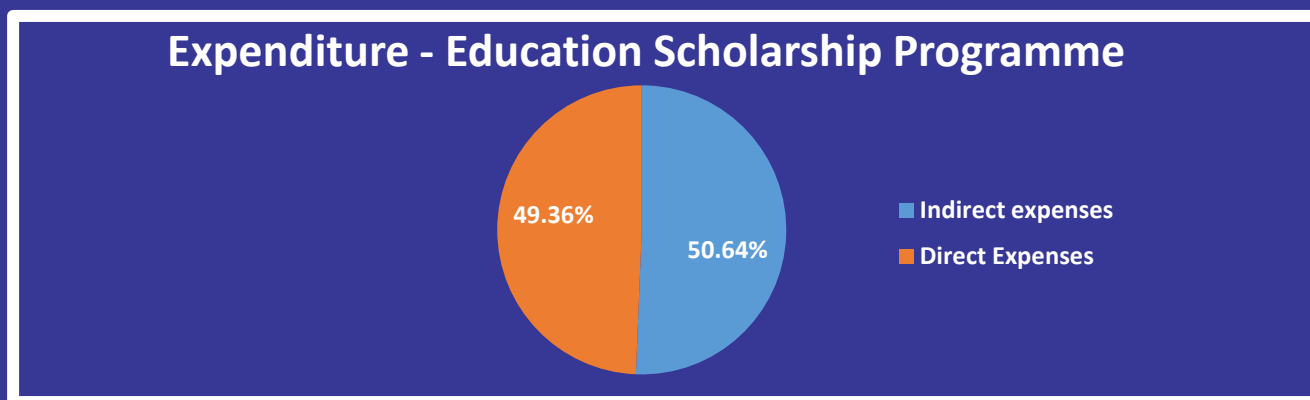
## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The total cost of the Education Scholarship Programme in 2016 was USD \$58,550.81.

The direct costs include the actual costs of scholarships. The indirect costs include salaries of project staff, stationery, communications, transportation for home visits, security fees, and utility costs allocated to the project.

Our 2016 audits are available upon request

Education Scholarship Programme - Actual Expenses 2016		
NO.	ITEM	AMOUNT (USD)
1	School fee to HCMC children	22,276.39
2	School fee to Long An children	2,202.65
3	School fee to Kien Giang children	4,419.98
4	Project staff salary	22,886.13
5	Office's supplies (Stationery, communications)	34.48
6	Transportation (Fuel to project sites)	145.62
7	Management fee	6,585.56
TOTAL		58,550.81



**It is only through the kind generosity of our sponsors that we are able to continue our work with some of Vietnam's most vulnerable children. Thank you for helping us give children back their childhood**





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

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.  
If 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.

**Christina Noble Children's Foundation - Vietnam**  
**website: [www.cncf.org](http://www.cncf.org) | email: [vietnam@cncf.org](mailto:vietnam@cncf.org)**

