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Saigon Children's Charity CIO (saigonchildren™) was founded in UK in 1992 for a specific purpose: to help disadvantaged Vietnamese children to get an education and a fairer start in life. Saigonchildren™ works exclusively in Vietnam and is committed to overcoming barriers to education for children, including poverty, geography, knowledge and disability.

## Our mission

*"Saigonchildren™ enables disadvantaged children and young adults in Vietnam to reach their full potential through receiving a quality education relevant to their needs"*

Our UK Charity Registration No. is: 1157774  
Our Vietnam Project Office No. is: 21/CNV-VPDA

## SAIGONCHILDREN™ PHILOSOPHY

At saigonchildren™, we believe that all children should have the right to fulfill their potential, and that a measured amount of carefully targeted help can make all difference.

We believe that by focusing on the educational needs of disadvantaged children, we are able to achieve positive change for them.

We measure our results through the numbers of children going to school, graduating from school, going to university and those finding decent jobs.

## A WORD FROM THE FOUNDER



Thirty years ago I first visited Vietnam. I came as a tourist to what was then a little visited country. As a boy I grew up with visions of the 'Vietnam War' on the pages of every newspaper. As a university student I saw visions of boat people on the television. So Vietnam represented a country that was far from inviting and, on the face of things, a considerable challenge.

It would be true to say that the Vietnam I first saw in 1987 was a poor country. And yet there was something about the people that was far from poor. The poverty seemed to be a poverty of opportunity rather than a poverty of the spirit. What struck me on this first and subsequent visits (the first not having satisfied my curiosity) was that the Vietnamese were a people who valued education and who saw educated people as people to look up to. As a teacher I thought these were admirable qualities that deserved to be encouraged. It was obvious that the poorest children were being denied an opportunity to go to school and get the education that they craved, and that their parents dreamed of for their children. And it was also obvious that without an education they would remain trapped in poverty.

By the summer of 1992 an idea was dawning in my mind. The idea was that I was in a position where I might be able to achieve something useful. I was teaching at quite a wealthy school and the boys I taught were fascinated about Vietnam and the stories I told them about my visits. So my idea was to find a few worthwhile educational projects in Vietnam that my own pupils could fund. And this is what I did in the summer of 1992. There were love classes that lacked books and furniture. As the children worked all day they could only go to school in the evening and so they needed light to work by. They needed to study somewhere where the roof didn't leak. The great thing about the list of projects that I compiled was the sheer practical nature of them. Books, chairs, desks, light. Everything could be costed and everything was cheap, particularly when translated into UK pounds.

Back in England I spoke to my pupils and received a tremendous reception. The English are by nature quite generous, particularly when they can see how their money will be spent and what will be achieved with it. The boys I taught could see that I could spend their £1 far more effectively than they could to achieve. Inspired by this response I enlisted the support of some colleagues who agreed to become the first Trustees of The Saigon Children's Charity, which was duly registered with the Charity Commission on 2 November 1992.

The money was spent well but progress in the early years was slow. I realised that the only way to speed things up was to take a year off teaching and run the charity in Vietnam full time ... the rest, as they say, is history.

***Paul Cleves, MBE***  
**Founder and Trustee**

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It is 30 years since Paul Cleves, MBE, then a teacher at a high profile school in the UK, first visited Vietnam and was struck by the enthusiasm of children in poverty to get an education. It is exactly 25 years since he established Saigon Children's Charity CIO in the UK in 1992, to help address that problem, to help give children in Vietnam the chance of a fairer start in life, the opportunity to escape from poverty through education.



Throughout those 25 years the Trustees, Directors and staff at Saigon-children™ have worked tirelessly to help children and families overcome the barriers which stop them getting an education. Initially focusing on HCMC, the programmes have moved out to other provinces, around HCMC, in the Mekong, and more recently in the centre of Vietnam and in the north, near to Hanoi.

Our programmes have focused on both hardware and software: building schools and improving infrastructure; providing school and tertiary scholarships alongside counseling and development support; providing vocational and life skills training to youngsters; and helping to build capacity in early intervention and educational management for children with disability. In each of these areas we have seen tremendous progress during the 25 years, as Vietnam has developed economically, and in each of these areas we have consistently worked with local authority partners to achieve success, transferring knowledge as well as helping disadvantaged children directly.

Although still relatively small as an organisation, we at The Saigon Children's Charity CIO are proud of our achievements, our growth, and in particular of the impact we have had on the lives of tens of thousands of children in Vietnam who over this time have had the opportunity to improve their lives, contribute to their community and to the overall development of the country.

I would like to thank Paul Cleves for his vision, energy and focus in setting up and establishing saigonchildren™ so successfully, to the many Trustees who have supported the charity in its development from modest beginnings to a highly stable, reputable, focused and effective INGO, to the many wonderful donors from all over the world, without whose support and funding we could do nothing, to all the highly committed staff over the years, and of course to the government, agencies, and our local partners in each province and district for their encouragement and commitment.

In common with many charities which help children in poverty we look forward to the day when perhaps we are no longer needed, but in the meantime we look forward to doing more, helping more and collaborating further to try and ensure that each child in Vietnam, regardless of family or economic circumstance, has the chance to fulfil their potential.

***Alain Cany***  
**Chair of Trustees**





## WHAT WE HAVE SPENT

With the outstanding support of our donors from all around the world, over the last 25 years we have been able to allocate over

**US \$12,500,000**

to projects helping disadvantaged children in Vietnam.

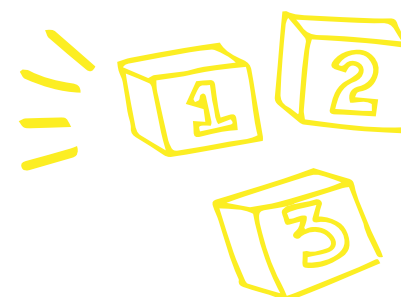




# 25 Years of **IMPACT**



over **35,000**  
scholarships awarded.



over **10,000**  
enrolments on annual courses of English, IT,  
life skills, and short term vocational training.

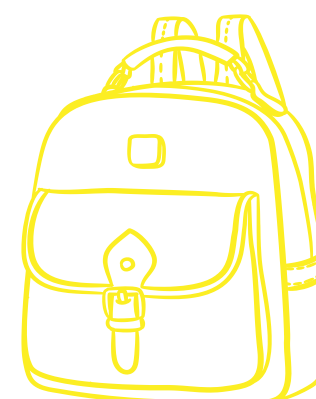
over **6,000**  
beneficiaries of career counselling.



**186** schools

**480**  
classrooms

over **14,000**  
students attending classes in  
rooms and schools we built  
each year.



**55**  
projects supported building capacity build-  
ing in the field of Special Need Education for:

over **1,500**  
teachers, caregivers and parents of

over **10,000**  
children with disabilities.





## One of our successful stories

# Truc Ly's Journey

“In 2002, when I was in Grade 7, my family could not afford school fee. I took the free part-time courses of English and vocational training (photography and IT studies) at Thang Long School, run by saigonchildren™. I was also provided with 50,000 VND/ month as a stipend from Thang Long to support my living.

Nguyen Truc Ly

In 2007, in Grade 12, my mom was involved in a traffic accident and I had to make the difficult decision to study Grade 12 in the evening. I stopped learning at Thang Long School and started to work at HSBC thanks to the recommendation from saigonchildren™.

I was grateful for the opportunity and started as an internal admin intern as I was not yet of working age i.e. 18.

After a year, I got promoted but I continued to study at the University of Economics in the evening. The job required English and communications skills. Thanks again to Thang Long school, I got a scholarship from the British Council for an advanced English course. Three years later I was promoted to senior Bank Teller and 2 years after that I took a Management role. After 10 years working and studying

Simultaneously, I finally graduated and got a degree. Now I have been recruited by another major international company as part of their new team focusing on Vietnam.



“

One **child**  
One **teacher**  
One **book** and  
One **pen** can  
**change the world.**

*Education is the only solution. Education first.*  
- Malala Yousafzai -

”



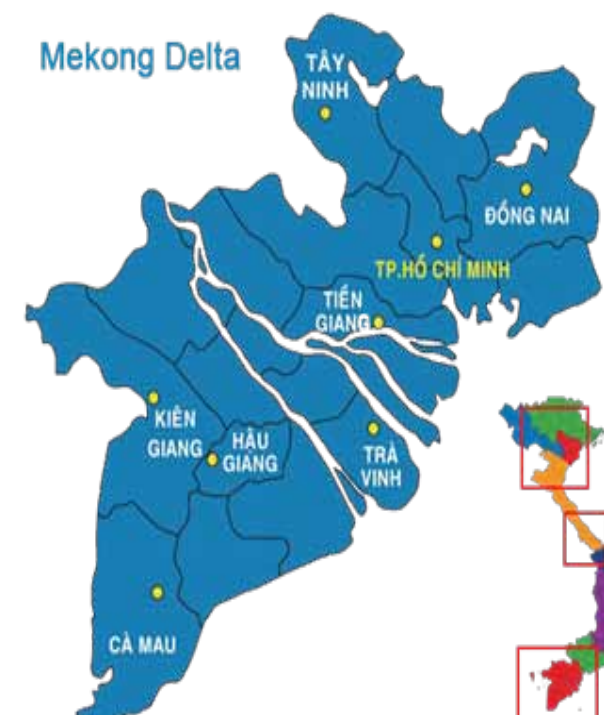
# PROGRAMME OVERVIEW



# WHAT WE DO AND WHERE WE WORK

## Saigonchildren™ core programmes include

- 🌱 **Building Schools & Learning Environments:** building public schools (mainly kindergartens and primary schools) and improving existing ones.
- 🌱 **Getting Ready For Work:** providing training in English, computer skills, art, photography, and hairdressing, as well as hospitality training, and other trade skills.
- 🌱 **Child Development Scholarship Programme:** giving scholarships to disadvantaged children, including school fees or a monthly rice allowance, text books, notebooks, pens and a school uniform; plus access to a range of individualised help and advice.
- 🌱 **Special Needs Education:** helping small, local, front-line organisations working with children with a disability, by providing small grants, equipment, advice and training to build capacity and knowledge.



Project areas: Ca Mau, Kien Giang, Hau Giang, Tra Vinh, Tien Giang, Ho Chi Minh, Dong Nai, Tay Ninh, Quang Tri, Ninh Binh, Phu Tho and Binh Phuoc

*During 25 years, Saigonchildren™ has been working in the following cities and provinces in Vietnam*

1. Ho Chi Minh City
2. Dong Nai
3. Tay Ninh
4. Tien Giang
5. Tra Vinh
6. Kien Giang
7. Hau Giang
8. Quang Tri
9. Phu Tho
10. Ninh Binh

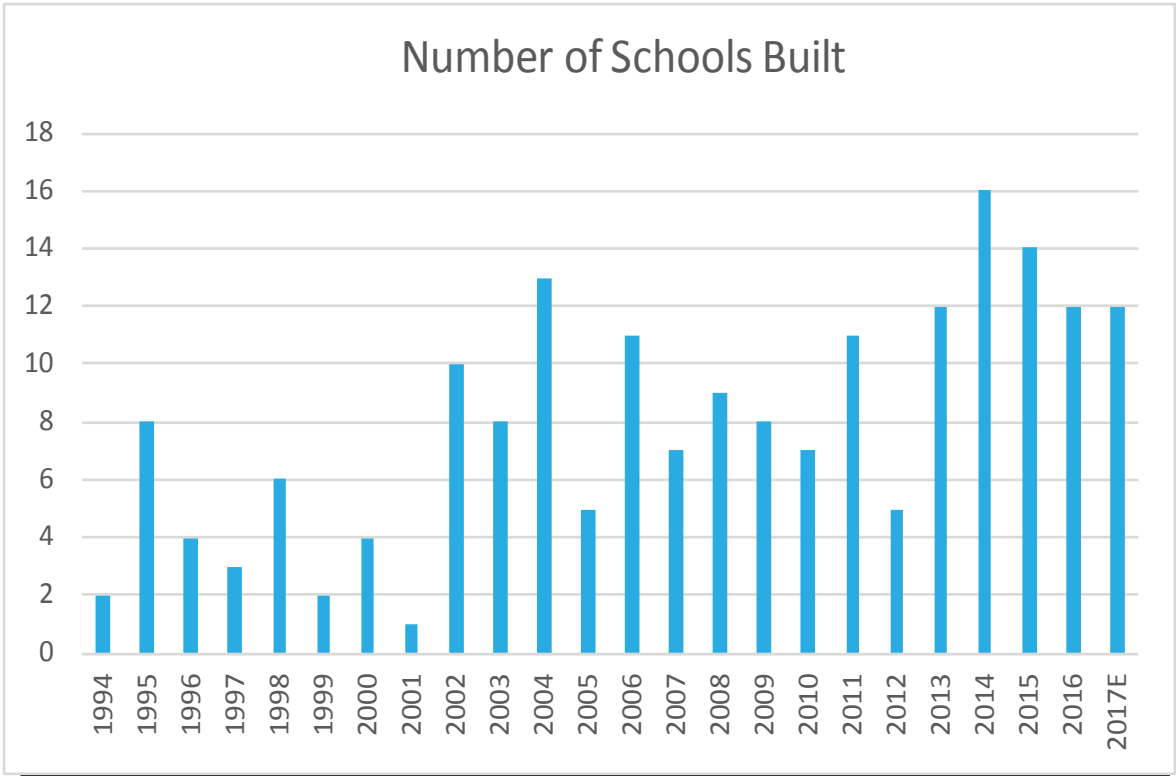


School Building & Learning Environments

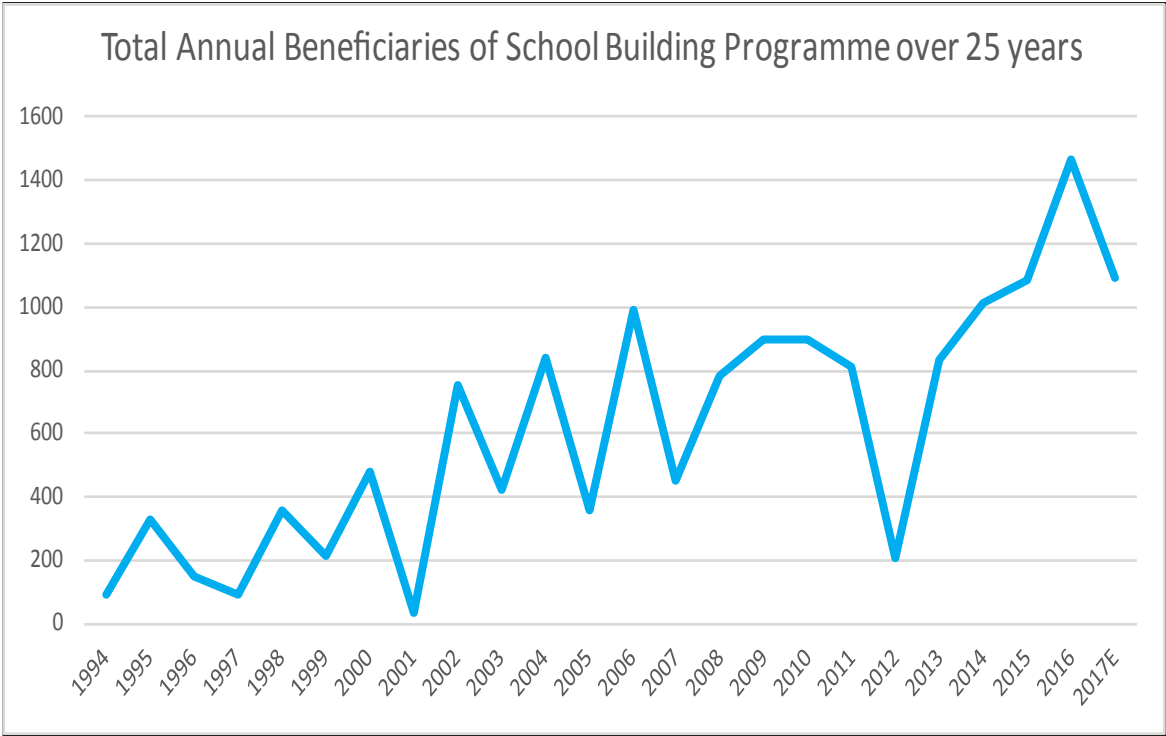
*186 schools* with *480 classrooms*, in remote areas in *12 provinces* across the country over the past 25 years, have been narrowing the gap to educational opportunities and opened doors to brighter futures for over *14,000 disadvantaged children*.

Providing adequate educational facilities and learning facilities for disadvantaged children has been a component of Saigonchildren™ since the organisation's early days. Saigonchildren™ believes that a suitable, safe and friendly learning environment not only helps facilitate learning opportunities and good results in both teaching and learning for teachers and students; it also leaves deep and meaningful marks in childhood memories, especially in those of disadvantaged children, so that they can continue to be motivated and passionate about learning throughout their life.

With that belief, Saigonchildren™ has worked tirelessly to raise more than USD 5,000,000 to spend with local partners to build & renovate schools in remote rural areas. We thank all of our donors for their tremendous support.



Source: Saigonchildren™



Source: Saigonchildren™





# In 1993

The first Saigonchildren™ school was built in Can Gio



BEFORE



AFTER

# In 2006

Phuoc Giang Primary School, Tay Ninh Province



BEFORE



AFTER

# In 2010

Phu Can Kindergarten, Tra Vinh Province



BEFORE



AFTER

# In 2017

Tan Long Kindergarten, Hau Giang Province



Long Thach 3 Primary School,  
Hau Giang Province



Xuan Tay Kindergarten,  
Dong Nai Province

# INSIDE CLASSROOMS



# THE SECOND HOME WE BUILD FOR CHILDREN



*Children in Bung Tau District, Hau Giang Province*

Hau Giang is a province located in the Mekong Delta which is suffering difficult economic conditions. Most people work in farming, and poor households making up 20% of the population. With a dense population and a large number of school-aged children Hau Giang faces real challenges to provide adequate school facilities.

Bung Tau district in Hau Giang, has more than 7,000 inhabitants. There are 554 elementary school children in the district but just one primary school with three satellite sites. Tan Hung satellite is one of the most remote spots in the area, located on the other side of the river with a boat being the main means of transportation.

In January 2014, thanks to the generosity of one of our long-term donors, two new classrooms were built with fully amenities, including a playground and a fence, providing a safe and healthy learning environment for the children and teachers, and reassurance for their families.



*Tan Hung school before*



*Tan Hung school now*



### Child Development Scholarship Programme

Vietnamese people often say "learning is the only way to escape poverty." Saigonchildren™ also holds the belief that education is the most effective and lasting way to help children and their families escape from the poverty vicious cycle. Investment in education means investment in children and also the future of Vietnam. Therefore, in the past 25 years, a combination of relentless efforts by saigonchildren™, the financial support of sponsors, and the cooperation of local partners, has ensured more than USD 4,100,000 to support over 35,000 scholarships for disadvantaged students in seven provinces in the country.

At the same time we ensure that the families continue to take responsibility for supporting their children's education. Our long lasting partnership with disadvantaged children on their educational journey has made saigonchildren™ stand out and special in the eyes of the children, families, local partners and our growing alumni group.





# One of our success stories

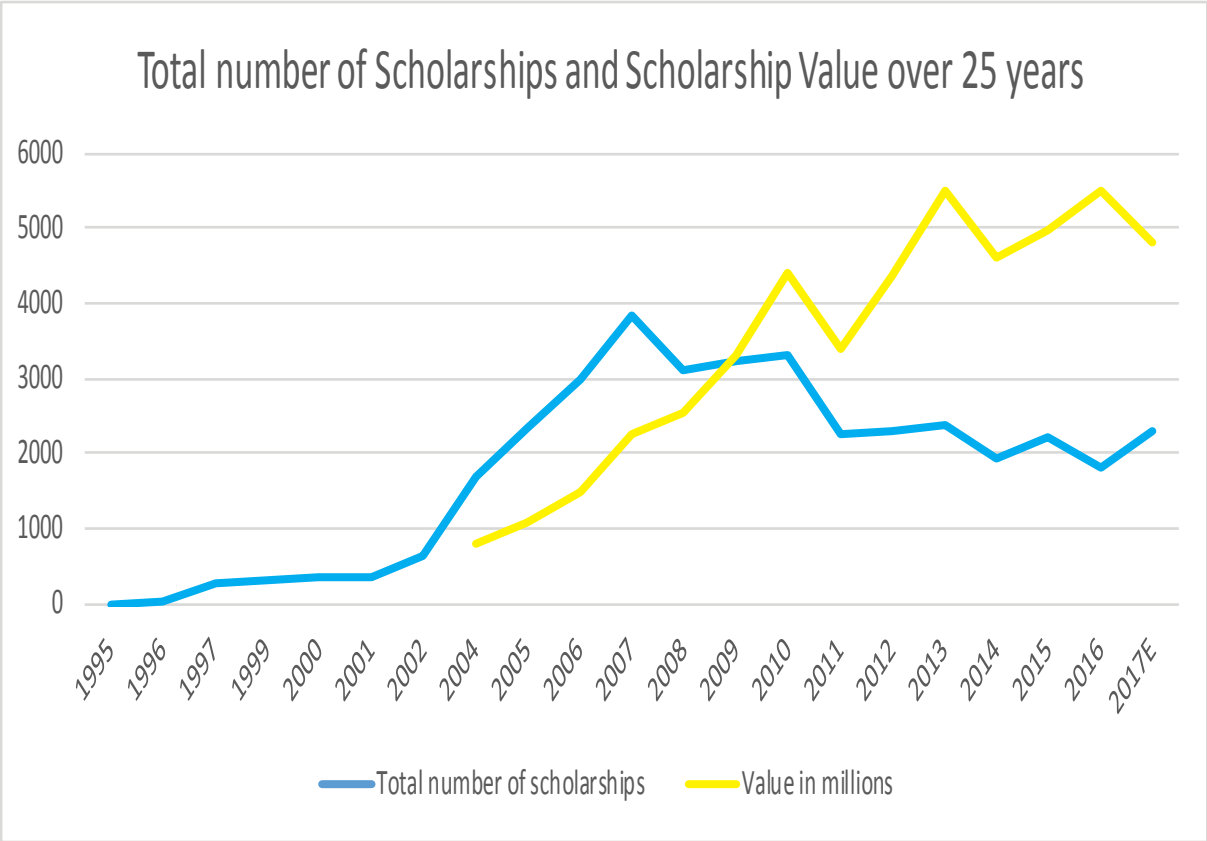
## Nhung's fight against her misfortune



Unfortunately when Nhung was born, she had a tumour on her leg and it had to be removed. Her parents moved from Tien Giang province to Ho Chi Minh City to work as hired labourers to earn whatever money they could to help their daughter. She had to overcome many difficulties to adjust to her new life, which now included an artificial limb. Her friends and teachers kept encouraging Nhung to go to school and, with support, she adopted the attitude of “if other people can do it, so can I.”

From Grade 8 she was enrolled into the saigonchildren™ scholarship programme, receiving financial support for school fees, books and uniform as well as guidance and counseling. Despite her difficulties Nhung's performance at school was always excellent due to the effort she put into her studies. Nhung excelled at literature, winning gold medals in her school's Olympic Literature Contest in 2013 and 2014. A very talented artist she also used her skills to help design seasonal cards for saigonchildren™.

Aside from art, Nhung has another passion, to help other disadvantaged people like her. On leaving high school she applied to HCMC University of Social Sciences and Humanities to study Psychology and is now in her third year, and once she graduates, is looking forward to becoming a teacher.



Total number of Scholarships and Scholarship Value  
(Source: saigonchildren™)



(Source: saigonchildren™)



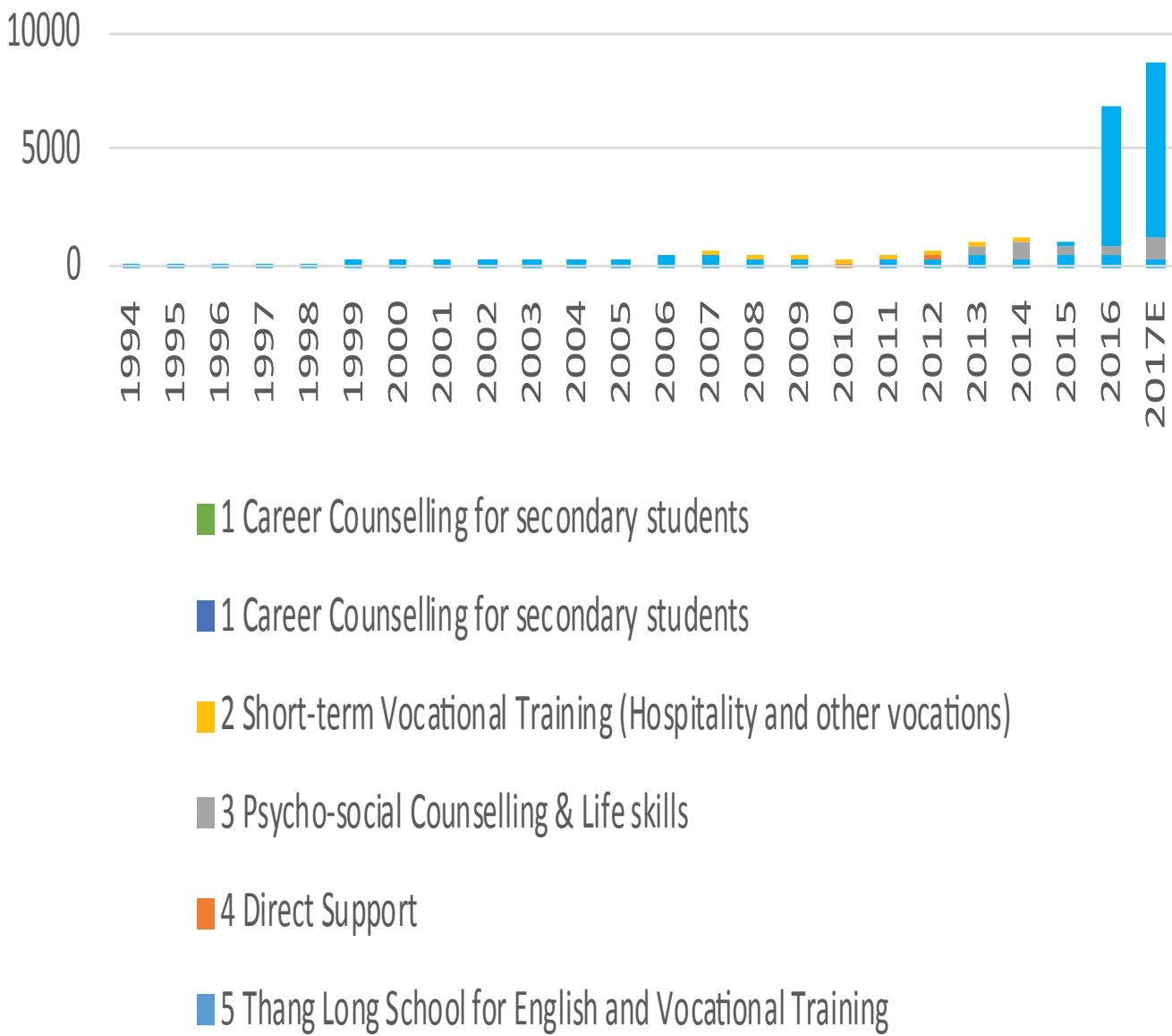
Getting Ready for Work

Saigonchildren™ uses education as a method to help children with disadvantaged backgrounds to escape poverty. However for the disadvantaged young adults who receive support from saigonchildren™, learning is not only for the sake of knowledge. Learning is a means to have a career, to work, to support oneself, to care for one’s family, to contribute to the development of the country. They are the core values on which saigonchildren™ was built. Confirming the importance of vocational education for disadvantaged children and youth, Thang Long English and Vocational School was established in that spirit.



Over the past 25 years, more than USD 2,264,000 has been invested by saigonchildren™, along with the expertise to support over 10,000 disadvantaged youngsters to complete short-term vocational courses, learn English, computer skills and soft skills for better employability. We have also supported more than 6,000 youngsters with career counselling. In addition life skills training and opportunities to participate in social and community activities are important parts of this programme. Saigonchildren™ and our local partners will continue aiming to guide disadvantaged youth to become confident, self-sufficient, skilled and responsible individuals.

Beneficiaries in the Getting Ready for Work Programme



(Source: saigonchildren™)



### Special Needs Education



Among poor children, children with disabilities are the most disadvantaged. Saigonchildren™ believes that children with disabilities have lots of abilities. If appropriate education methods are provided, children with disabilities will be able to develop their full potential.

Saigonchildren™ also believes that if every child with a disability develops his or her ability and is able to look after themselves, at least one person will be released to do other things. With that conviction, over the past 25 years, saigonchildren™ has constantly explored the needs in the area of special education support for children with disabilities.

Over 25 years we have supported 55 projects with a total funding of more than USD 665,000 benefiting more than 10,000 children and more than 1,500 teachers and parents in 10 provinces, who are both direct and indirect beneficiaries. Through these projects, new ideas and appropriate educational approaches are introduced, effective models of education are replicated, and networks of professionals are connected and learn from one another. Bringing the right education for children with special education needs is still an area with considerable scope for development and we see it becoming an area of increasing focus for us. Saigonchildren™ and our local partners will continue to learn and support children with disability to develop their full potential.



Primary school for disabled children, Dong Nai province  
(Source: saigonchildren™)



## Feature

### Kha Lam and his Teacher Thien Thanh



“My name is Tong Tran Thien Thanh and I work at the Center for Rehabilitation and Education for Disabled Children in Khanh Hoa Province. Currently, I am a teacher specializing in educating children with disabilities. Two years ago, I met a boy named Kha Lam. Initially, Lam did not speak, and was unable to respond when addressed by name. Even with my experience, I found myself at a loss for how to best help Lam.

In 2016, I was fortunate to participate in a training session on early intervention for children with autism at the Khanh Hoa Center. This was a project sponsored by saigonchildren™ through its Special Needs Education program. In this training session, experts from the UK taught us early intervention techniques, including how to guide parents during therapy. After this training, I applied my knowledge to sessions with Lam and his mother. I taught her to encourage verbal communication, and gave her exercises to develop Lam’s fine motor skills and language ability

Today, Lam is able to converse and ask questions. I was delighted when his mother commented, “Now Lam drives me crazy with his questions, he ask about anything.” I would like to thank Mr. Dominik, saigonchildren™, and the donor for paying attention to Kha Lam. With their help, I was able to grow as a teacher, and better serve my students.”







Saigonchildren™ is fortunate to have many long-term, international and local donors (private foundations, corporations, and individuals) who help finance our programmes each year. Thousands of donors have supported us over the course of 25 years. Space unfortunately does not allow us to list all of our wonderful donors here, but we would like to thank them all and acknowledge a few of these long-term relationships here, to represent the many, many others we are unable to show:





Saigon Cyclo Challenge



Saigon Summer Ball



Charity Cycle Adventure

<http://www.justgiving.com/teams/ccca2015riders>



## OUR LOCAL PARTNERS

We would like to send our sincere thanks to our local partners who include:

- 🌐 The Vietnam Union of Friendships Organisations, and its subsidiary bodies and agencies,
- 🌐 The People's Committees at provincial and district levels,
- 🌐 The Departments of Education and Training
- 🌐 The Bureaus of Education and Training at district level,
- 🌐 The Bureaus of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs,
- 🌐 The Women's Unions,
- 🌐 The schools, centres and communities with which we work.

All these local partners share the same values as us and have helped us to bring brighter opportunities and better starts in life for disadvantaged children. We thank you for your support, and thank you in turn for your kind recognition over the years, as listed on the following pages.





## OFFICIAL RECOGNITION

### Most Excellent Order of the British Empire

Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) awarded to Paul Cleves in 2004 for his contribution to international charity work.

### Minister of Education Ministry

Certificate of Merit in 2007 from Ministry of Education to Paul Cleves (former saigonchildren™ Executive Director) for contributing to the Education and Training cause.

### Vietnam Union Friendship Organisation

Certificate of Merit in 2017 from Vietnam Union Friendship Organization for positive contributions to Economic and Social development in Vietnam

### Ho Chi Minh City

The Ho Chi Minh City Badge awarded to Paul Finnis (former saigonchildren™ Executive Director) by HCMC People's Committee for positive contributions to the development of the city.

Certificate of Merit from Ho Chi Minh Union Friendship Organisation for positive contributions in the field of Education & Training of the City from 1992 to 2017

Certificate of Merit from People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City for great achievements in Humanitarian projects from 1992 to 2017.

### Ca Mau Province

Certificate of Merit from People's Committee of Ca Mau Province for having had positive support in building schools and learning environment in Ca Mau in 2014.

### Dong Nai Province

Certificate of Merit in 2009 from Learning Encouragement Association of Thong Nhat District (Dong Nai Province) for having had remarkable contribution to the establishment and development of Tich Thien Affectionate School in Bau Ham 2, Thong Nhat District in the period 1992 - 2007.







Saigonchildren™ team celebrating birthdays, April 2017.  
(Source: Saigonchildren™)

# GOVERNANCE AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT

*Saigonchildren™ is managed by a Constitution and is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The organisation is governed by a Board of Trustees.*

The trustees are responsible for the governance as well as the general control and management of the administration of the charity. Our trustees have ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of saigonchildren™, and ensuring that it is compliant with the relevant regulations of both the UK and Vietnam, solvent, well-run, and delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public for which it has been set up. Finally they must also individually and as a board act with integrity, and avoid any personal conflicts of interest or misuse of charity funds or assets.

The ten members of the **Saigonchildren™ Board of Trustees** are :

- 🌀 **Alain Cany**, Chair of Board of Trustees, Group Country Chairman of Jardine Matheson Vietnam, HCMC
- 🌀 **Diana Wells**, retired teacher based in the UK
- 🌀 **Paul Cleves** (saigonchildren™ Founder), Entrepreneur, HCMC
- 🌀 **Mark Fraser**, Managing Partner of Frasers Law Company, HCMC
- 🌀 **Nguyen Thi Thanh Truc**, Chief Financial Officer, HSBC, HCMC
- 🌀 **Jonathan Waugh**, Businessman, HCMC
- 🌀 **Paul McGee**, Vice President of B2C Strategy - PCH International, Hong Kong
- 🌀 **Hoang Tri Mai**, Managing Director, Rolls-Royce Vietnam, Hanoi
- 🌀 **David Appleton**, Partner, xtab xstudios, HCMC
- 🌀 **Jakki Lydall**, Former Executive Director of British Business Group in Vietnam, now in the UK

The Executive Director of saigonchildren™ is **Tim Mullett** .





Tim Mullett and Trustees visit a centre for children with disabilities in Dong Nai  
(Source: Saigonchildren™)



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[info@saigonchildren.com](mailto:info@saigonchildren.com)