

Foundation to celebrate 10 years of empowering disadvantaged children

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Since its establishment, the foundation has directly supported more than 5,000 children and young people from low-income families on their educational path – from upper secondary school to university.



Students of Thăng Mổ Secondary School in Tuyên Quang Province are pictured with their new dormitory supported by LOAN Foundation. — Photo loan-stiftung.de

HÀ NỘI — A foundation supporting children from ethnic minority communities in remote areas of Việt Nam is marking a decade of helping disadvantaged students pursue education and build independent lives.

The LOAN Foundation (LOAN Stiftung) will celebrate its 10th anniversary on May 9 after directly supporting more than 5,000 children and young people from low-income families on their educational journey, from upper secondary school to university.

Since its establishment, the foundation has carried out 48 educational projects across Tuyên Quang, Lào Cai, Sơn La, Điện Biên and Hà Tĩnh provinces. The projects have included the construction of 28 boarding

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LOAN scholarships have also enabled many disadvantaged students to continue their studies in fields including medicine, business administration, law, computer science and education in Hà Nội and other university cities.

Many recipients have gone on to become role models for younger children in their home provinces, demonstrating that education remains within reach despite poverty and difficult family circumstances.

“The scholarship from the LOAN Foundation is a precious gift, not only materially but also spiritually,” said Nông Hùng Cường, a scholarship recipient studying mechanical engineering at Hà Nội University of Science and Technology.

“Thanks to this support, I can cover part of my living expenses, focus more on my studies, and, most importantly, gain more confidence to continue pursuing my dream. I feel warmed knowing that there are good-hearted people out there who are always ready to share and support disadvantaged students who are eager to learn.

“I believe that although the road ahead is still full of challenges, with effort and faith, I will gradually conquer my dreams. This scholarship will always be a great source of encouragement, helping me to keep moving confidently toward the future.”

The LOAN Foundation was established by Vietnamese-German writer Isabelle Muller, author of the bestselling book *Loan – From the Life of a Phoenix*, in memory of her mother, who was of Vietnamese origin, and to fulfil her mother’s wish of creating an educational project in Việt Nam.



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“The LOAN Foundation wants to inspire young people and show them ways to unlock their potential and build resilience in the face of tough challenges so they can achieve their goals in life,” said the 62-year-old writer.

“We want to encourage children to help shape the society of tomorrow and provide them with an initial kick-start for their future in the form of safe buildings, learning materials and scholarships. The rest of the journey they must walk themselves, by working hard, persevering and expanding their knowledge. In doing so, they also learn what it means to take responsibility.”

The foundation has received several notable recognitions for its sustained contributions to education and community development in Việt Nam. In 2018, it was recognised for its charitable work in Hà Giang Province, now part of Tuyên Quang Province, one of the country's most disadvantaged northern regions.

It gained wider recognition in 2023 when it received the Human Act Prize in the Inspiring Project category and the M4D Award in the Marketing Development category, presented by the European Union and Oxfam Vietnam in the same year. Most recently, in 2024, the foundation was awarded the prestigious Vừ A Dính Prize, which honours contributions to the education sector.



Isabelle Muller presents gifts to students in Tuyên Quang Province. — Photo loan-stiftung.de

“The tenth anniversary of the LOAN Foundation is, therefore, less a reason for celebration and more a moment of reflection for me. It reminds me of the immense trust placed in our volunteer team and in me by children, parents and teachers, by local authorities and by our partners, sponsors and donors around the world,” said Muller.

“All of them have helped turn a personal vision into a powerful, living reality. Without this support, the LOAN Foundation could never have

The writer added that the LOAN Foundation would place increasing focus on its scholarship programme and gradually expand it to more regions of Việt Nam.

“In the coming years, I intend for our team to remain active wherever help can most profoundly change the lives of children, particularly affected by poverty in Việt Nam, in remote mountain regions as well as in other parts of the country.

“In parallel, I will continue my path as a writer. I am particularly aware of my roots. As a Eurasian woman, I carry two different cultures within me. I will use this advantage in my literary work to bring elements of Vietnamese history and culture to the Western world and vice versa.”

Trương Mỹ Hoa, former Vice President of Việt Nam and chairwoman of the Vừ A Dính Scholarship Fund, expressed hope that the LOAN Foundation’s “journey from heart to heart” would continue to reach further, deeper and more sustainably in the years ahead.

“I hope LOAN Foundation will become a powerful source of motivation for disadvantaged pupils and students, enabling them to learn, to continue writing their dreams of growing up and of serving their villages and their homeland and to turn these dreams into reality.” — VNS

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