



In 1981, Sukanto Tanoto and Tinah Bingei Tanoto inaugurated Besitang Kindergarten and Elementary School in Sumatera Utara. They both believe that investing in education, including early education, is the key to a better future.

Message from Founders

Dear Friends,

Back when we were young, due to unfavorable economic circumstances and family responsibility, our education was cut short.

Young Sukanto Tanoto had to drop out of high school, and young Tinah Bingei, forgo college education.

We did not give up, but rather pursued self-study outside of the formal education systems. We have vivid memories of how we studied English by reading second-hand English magazines and struggling for comprehension with the help of a worn out dictionary, word by word.

Our relentless self-study has borne fruits that enabled us to start and grow our business. But we also came to believe that education should not be so hard to attain. Every child should have the opportunity to get quality education, and with that, realize his or her full potential. This belief is at the heart of our passion in education.

Our philanthropic work started in 1981 when we established a kindergarten and elementary school in rural Besitang, Sumatera Utara province of Indonesia.

What had started as a straightforward school development program, quickly transformed into a holistic, integrated social development program. The school, which was built to provide education for children, became a place for the parents to get training on how to improve livelihood and for the general community members to learn basic skills to enhance quality of life in the village. This was the birth of Tanoto Foundation.

We believe that effective poverty alleviation requires a holistic approach that comprises education, empowerment, and enhancement of quality of life. Therefore, we align our work with the global efforts of achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals. We want to focus on rural areas, where poverty is most severe, and where education, empowerment, and enhancement of quality of life will bring the most significant changes.

To date, the work of the Foundation has positively impacted the lives of thousands. We remain committed to reach out and help more in the combat against poverty.

Sincerely,

Sukanto Tanoto
Tinah Bingei Tanoto