



From the Editor

After publishing our last issue, we received a positive response from many kind-hearted folks. We want to thank them all on behalf of Bethany Home in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province.

In this issue, we will share with you the current status of a program - which began last year with your help – a program to build water tanks for Luduke village. We are pleased to report that this program has been completed and all the water tanks have been built as planned, so we share with you the joy of the villagers. Another heartwarming story is how a group of peasants have become affluent because of your help.

Lastly, we will draw your attention to the needs of a kindergarten in Dingzhou, Hebei Province, and pray that you will help generously as you always have.

Building Water Storage for Miao Minority Villagers in Yunnan



Water storage tanks are built next to the villagers' houses

Luduke is a village inhabited by the Miao minority in Yunnan Province with 30 families and about 100 people living in the village. The average household income is only about 2,000 RMB a year. Only a few of them worked as migrant workers. The villagers, and their animals, depend on rain for drinking water. Since the village is in a mountainous region, it is difficult even in the best of times to fetch water. The hardship they have endured has been further compounded by severe droughts in recent years!

A local priest noticed this and was sympathetic with their plight. He came up with the idea of building a 4 x 3 square meter water storage tank for each household. The villagers could of course provide the labor, but construction materials would cost 5,050 RMB per storage tank. Together, the villagers and the Church managed to raise 55,000 RMB, but they were still short by 101,000 RMB. The priest then wrote to Caritas-HK for help.

We reported their needs in March 2013 and received your generous response. Soon the required funds were gathered. The villagers' gratitude to their distant benefactors are beyond words.

Ranching and Farming Program in Chongqing Alleviates Peasants from Poverty

Fenshui is a town in the Chongqing Municipality. The peasants who live there used to depend on growing vegetables and raising cattles for their livelihood, but because of price fluctuations due to factors beyond their control, their income level varied and was highly unstable. In 2012, with help from Caritas-HK, the Diocesan Social Services Center of Wanzhou (DSSCW) convinced the peasants to switch to raising cattle for a living. At this same time, they were also introduced to the idea of forming a credit union among themselves. Two years on, they not only have raised their income level and living standard, they now have achieved sustainable growth and a much improved living environment.



New breeding techniques are used to grow plums



Villagers attending a training course

The mountain area has turned into a plum garden

Altogether there are thirty families living in Fenshui, including five who were very poor, participated in this program. Their main source of income used to be from growing plums. Then they began to build barns for cattle, purchased some calves and other necessary implements for the new venture. With help from DSSCW, they successfully formed a credit union, and registered it with the local government. Members of the credit union work collectively to manage the whole business: raising cattle, promoting and selling products. With the credit union now overseeing the whole enterprise, quality assurance can be achieved and the bargaining power is clearly superior to that of the individuals. Adequate training is critical in managing their business effectively, so there is management training every three months for selected members of the credit union. Lessons on techniques for plum tree planting and growing are also conducted every two months.



Selling plums at the market

'Getting rich' was not their only concern. They also had the intent to develop a culture of 'lending a helping hand to those in need'. With that in mind, Caritas-HK helped start a program which involved the selection of 5 families who are known for their knowledge and skill in the trade and are caring for others. Their role was to help the 5 least developed families in the community. With financial and technical assistance from the former, the 5 'poor' families were able to raise their income by as much as 2,000 to 5,000 RMB a year.



A college student explaining new planting techniques to the villagers



Cattle and sheep raising in a family farm



Various organizations contributed to the success of this program. The Wanzhou Agricultural College and the Wanzhou Three Gorges Vocational School provided technical assistance to the villagers. Meanwhile, their students would come to work in the village to gain practical experience. The government also sent husbandry specialists to provide training to the villagers.



There is another positive outcome of this program that is worth noting. Cattle waste can negatively impact the environment. However because the villagers grow plums, the cattle waste is used as fertilizer; the grass that grows around the plum trees serves as animal feed - a perfect food chain!



The cattle barn is washed and disinfected regularly



A cattle barn under construction

A Voice from Afar

Dear Responsible Person of Caritas Hong Kong, greetings!

We are a group of religious sisters in Hebei Province. The Mingxing Kindergarten was established in 2006 to meet the needs of our community. It was at first housed in the home of a local Catholic but with the growth of our student population it ran out of space. In 2009, with the help of overseas Catholics, we purchased and moved to the building we are presently in. We now have a staff of 16, and 227 students assigned to 7 classes.

Our school is well regarded in the community. We are often invited to attend meetings organized by local officials to discuss educational issues. We also do our best to provide our teachers with opportunities to visit model schools each year so they can improve their teaching skills.

It's been a long journey, from not having our own premise to what we are today. We have been able to achieve all these only because of the help we get from many, many caring folks.

Sadly, we still lack resources. Our kindergarten still needs many things. There is only one television set for all seven classes, and we have to move it from classroom to classroom whenever needed. There are only two computers and one printer in the whole school. We are short of teaching material. Noticing that we need help, a clergy recommended we look to your organization for assistance. Attached is our budget estimate for the materials we need for the kindergarten (Editor's note: about HK\$83,400).

Even though our current situation is not ideal, we still have the best interest of the children in our minds. And no matter what decision you make regarding our appeal for help, we thank you kindly for your consideration.

Sr. Wang

29 August 2014

Item no : 4201



Children singing in the classroom

Item	Unit	Price
Strap drum	3	69
Snare drum	10	530
LCD TV set	6	9000
USB drive	7	420
Air-conditioner	2	11,000
HP desktop computer	2	7200
HP notebook computer	2	7398
Toy slide	1	3000
Toy car	1	3900
Toy mushroom house	1	3500
Camera	1	5900
Toy tunnel	6	540
Projector	2	10,398
Sun-earth-moon model set	1	170
Toy rainbow jigsaw	1	700
Loaf shape recorder	4	1,712
Other teaching materials	-	400
Total (RMB)		65,837

We look forward to
your concern ...

If you need further information on the above, please call 35892259, or 35892500, or send a message to mainland@caritas.org.hk. You may show your care by action.

Just send us a crossed cheque made payable to "Caritas-Hong Kong" with the related particulars marked on the back, together with the contact information. Please send it back to : **Mainland Service Desk**, Room 505, Caritas House, 2, Caine Road, Central, Hong Kong.