

Amity Outlook

A Quarterly Bulletin

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**Love in Action:
Amity at Earthquake Relief**



爱德基金会
THE AMITY FOUNDATION

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Dear friends,

At 8:02 am, April 20, Beijing time, a 7.0-magnitude earthquake shook Ya'an in south-western Sichuan Province. Up to 21:00 Beijing time, 157 are reported dead, 5787 injured and 1.52 million people affected. Amity again acted quickly to get engaged in the disaster response. "In comparison with previous disaster relief work, this is probably the most difficult one because of the mountainous roads," commented one of Amity's senior staffer who has been with a number of emergency relief actions in recent years, "We had to get relief materials into the town with trucks and then redistribute the materials to a number of small vans that could travel in the very narrow and bumpy mountainous roads."

In this issue, we have a collection of articles from Amity staff who have involved in the relief work. When these articles bring back our memories on those special days, we would like to extend our great appreciations to the many supporters and volunteers who have helped in different ways. As one of the articles says, the journey and involvement in the relief work are a testimony of courage, trust and love.

She Hongyu
Chief Editor

ON THE COVER:

Mr. Qiu Zhonghui, Vice Board Chair and General Secretary of the Amity Foundation, consoling a quake-affected child in Ya'an





Ya'an

Ya'an Earthquake Relief on the Record

By She Hongyu

The Amity Foundation's Disaster Management Program aims to provide emergency rescue to the disaster-affected people and help them to rebuild their homes. It also assists local people in the project area to develop more effective measures of preventing or reducing disaster-caused losses. Recorded below are Amity's Ya'an Earthquake relief efforts.

April 20, 2013

At 8:02 am, April 20, Beijing time, a 7.0-magnitude earthquake shook Ya'an in Southwestern Sichuan Province. According news on Sina, a popular Chinese website, up to 21:00 Beijing time, 157 are reported dead, 5787 injured and 1.52 million people affected.



Destroyed houses

The epicenter is located in Lu'an County of Ya'an with a population of 120,000. The county borders with We in the north where an devastating earthquake took place in 2008 when more than 80,000 people lost their lives. However, experts are not of the opinion that it is one of the after quakes of Wenchuan earthquake. The Amity Foundation, on learning the situation, has taken immediate actions on the emergency aid. The actions taken include:

A. Staff sent to Sichuan

Two staff members took the earliest flight after the quake from Nanjing to Chengdu, namely Mr. Shu Junsong, coordinator of Amity Disaster Management Program and Mr. Zhang Tao, Publicity Officer. Their tasks to the site include baseline assessment, purchase and distribution of relief goods. Amity has set aside RMB 2 million to help with the work at the initial stage.

B. Fundraising launched

Amity launched on-line fundraising



On-site investigation and assessment

on its own website apart from joint fund raising activities with Tencent, a well known Chinese website among a number of Chinese traditional and new media. Amity's Hong Kong Office is also engaged in submitting proposal to the Hong Kong Special Administration Region (HKSAR) government for their relief grant.

April 24, 2013

By April 24, 2013, four days after the quake hit Lushan in China's Ya'an City, Sichuan Province, the number of death increases to 196, while 21 reported

missing, 11,470 injured and 2.31 million affected. 3731 aftershocks were felt in the quake hit area.

Amity ground staffers increased to five with Mr. He Wen, Associate General Secretary joining the team on the evening of April 23. Another two batches of relief materials have been delivered to Longdong Township, Yongfu Township and Longdong Township of Baoxing County, Ya'an where 80% of the houses were affected by the earthquake. It is



Relief supplies to be transported and distributed

reported that 58 houses collapse entirely, 46 kilometers of the roads damaged and victims are in great need of food and water-proof cloth.

Details of Amity's 2nd and 3rd shipment:
The second shipment: 15 tons of rice, 1000 buckets of cooking oil, 10,000 square meters of water-proof cloth;
The third shipment: 500 bundles of water-proof cloth(6m*50m),750 blankets and 30 packages of rice.

April 30, 2013

Today (April 30), four colleagues are still working in rural villages in Jiang'an Village, Shangli Township and Ziyun Village, Baoxing Township. Being over 70 kms away from the town seat, Ziyun Village is extremely inaccessible with very difficult roads. Victims there are not getting enough of daily supplies. Amity will work more in this particular village.

The protestant Church in Sichuan and Ya'an are very supportive of Amity's work. Relief goods purchased by Amity are stored in the church before being delivered further to the neediest areas. In the days to come, more materials will be delivered to villages through the contacts of Ya'an Church.

May 6, 2013

Early on the morning of May 6, Mr. Qiu Zhonghui, General Secretary of Amity Foundation traveled to Ya'an, Sichuan Province. Upon his arrival in Sichuan, Mr. Qiu had a meeting with leaders of Sichuan People's Political Consultative



Committee (SPPCC) who is Amity's partner on the ground. SPPCC has been a long term partner of Amity in many different programmes, including Wenchuan earthquake in 2008, Amity Summer English Programme, Integrated Rural Development Programme etc. SPPCC has been playing a vital role in helping Amity coordinate with local government departments, running down needed approvals etc.

After arrival in Ya'an, joined by Amity ground staff, Mr. Qiu had a meeting with the Vice Mayor and Secretary General of Ya'an Government who are of positive and

open attitude toward NGO's participation in disaster relief work. They promise to give as much support as they could to enable smooth implementation of Amity's relief work. The two meetings held will make Amity's work easier on the ground.

Traveling with Mr. Qiu, is Ms. Cao Hui, Vice Director of Amity's New Media Department. Ever since the earthquake, Amity's website, micro blog, micro messenger(a Chinese social media platform) have been of tremendous power in relaying Amity's work and gaining supporters in Chinese society.

Other two women colleagues will be setting off to Sichuan later this evening. Ms. Xie Ying, Amity's research coordinator and Ms. Li Juan, coordinator of Amity's Integrated Development programs are ready to join the ground staff tonight. They will be helping with the need assessment of the local village and distribution of more relief materials.

May 8, 2013

Although it's already 18 days after the devastating earthquake shook China in it's southwestern city of Ya'an. A number of civil society organizations, including the Amity Foundation are still on the ground for emergency relief work.

Amity stresses distribution of materials



On-site meeting with local government officials for earthquake relief



Amity's ground staff working overnight

according to the first hand information on the needs through site visits and conversation with the local villagers and leaders. Relief materials are purchased through careful price comparison and negotiation and sometimes even visits to the factories. Distribution of materials is biased on the name list that the village committee provides and signatures of the recipients are required in distribution.

With the joining of Ms. Song Xuefeng, Ms. Zhou Qiaolin and Ms. Li Chengyan from Amity's Project Management Centre and Ms. Wang Yi from Amity's Resource Development Centre yesterday and today,

the number of Amity front line staffers reaches 11.

Earthquake ruins are silent proof of the disaster happened weeks ago. The once famous abundant rainfall in Ya'an now becomes the biggest barrier in the relief work. Blockage of roads from the landslide after rain at any time makes transportation more difficult.

Ms. Yang Benhua, 39, is from Ziyun Village. In 2009, a fire burned away her house as well as those of her neighbors. Since the fire, she has been staying in a prefabricated house set up by government.

"I worked all my life to put up a house, yet the fire brought away everything. Now that I've collected some wood timbers to build a new house, the earthquake destroyed my plan." Nevertheless□ Ms. Yang remains optimistic: "I'm very happy that you brought rice. There are warm hearted people who care about us. Our lives will be better in the future!"

May 10, 2013

Amity's emergency relief work continues in Ya'an.

Ground Staff:

On May 9, Mr. Wu Kui, Domestic Sales Manager of Amity Printing Co., Ltd. and his three colleagues, Mr. Jiang Xiandong, Mr. Li Xiao and Ms. Chen Qihua, arrived in Sichuan Province to join the Amity Foundation's ground staff. Participating in philanthropic initiatives to perform its corporate social responsibility for many years, Amity Printing Co., Ltd. dispatched its relief team for the first time.

The same day, Mr. Anthony Tong, executive director of Amity Hong Kong Office, and his colleague, Ms. Tong Su, left Hong Kong for Sichuan to join Amity's relief efforts in Ya'an. The number of Amity's ground staff members reached 18 so far.

Relief Efforts:

The government of Hong Kong Special Administration Region (HKSAR) has kindly supported HK\$ 5.3 million to support the emergency relief by Amity Foundation.

On the morning of May 9, the first relief supplies in four trucks provided by

HKSAR Government through the Amity Foundation arrived in the earthquake-hit Sijing Township, Tianquan County, Ya'an. The supplies, including rice, cooking oil, electric cookers and quilts, were distributed to villagers in 14 villages of the township the same day. Due to twists and turns in the roads to the villages, the larger trucks carrying the supplies failed to reach the villages. The Amity Foundation's relief team reloaded the relief supplies from larger trucks to smaller ones. The smaller trucks with relief supplies eventually managed to reach the villages. To ensure the smooth arrival of the supplies, relief staff members in red Amity vests could be seen in each vehicle carrying relief supplies. As soon as the vehicles arrived in the villages, the relief supplies were distributed to the villagers.

Today (May 10), twelve larger trucks and nine smaller ones loaded with relief supplies supported by Hong Kong SAR



Mr. Anthony Tong, Director of Amity Hong Kong securing relief supplies on a truck



Trucks with relief supplies from Amity

Government, together with the Amity Relief Team consisting of about 60 members from Amity and local partners, started for the earthquake-hit areas in Baoxing County. The supplies will be distributed to villages in Lingguan Township, Daxi Township and Longdong Township in Baoxing County. The fine weather today is very helpful for safe transportation and distribution of relief supplies.

May 11, 2013

The fine weather yesterday did not become much of a help for distribution of the relief of supplies. To distribute the materials supported by Hong Kong Special Administration Government (HKSAR), volunteers of Sichuan Zhigong Party (one of the democratic

parties in China, and an Amity Partner in Sichuan Province) and Amity staff set off to Baoxing County early yesterday morning. However, half way through to the destination, the road was blocked due to a traffic accident causing three dead at the landslide an hour ago. Coordination did not work out and the team of 60 had to return after four hours burning and waiting in the trucks at a temperature of 29 Celsius.

The team set off at 6:00 am today (May 11) in order to get through the once-blocked area at 7:00am when the block had been said to be lifted. The quake hit area is inhabited by villagers scattered around in mountains. After big trucks get into the township, goods have to be unloaded, divided and reloaded to a number of smaller vehicle, including

three wheel motorcycles for further distribution.

Amity staffers were divided into three teams with the first two distributing folding beds and other relief materials and the last one revisiting the villages which have received relief materials from Amity days ago for assessment and evaluation. 2000 folding beds were distributed in 8 villages in Sijing Township, Tianquan County. Hope the villagers would have a good sleep tonight with the new beds.

May 12, 2013

It is a special day for China today. It's the 5th anniversary of the Wenchuan earthquake which took away the lives of over 80,000 people in 2008. Within 5 years, two major earthquakes have hit the same province and left many wounded memories.

At the front line, Amity staffers set off as early as 6:00 am to get the relief materials into Baoxing County which has been isolated due to the secondary disaster. After 5 hours of drive, 12 trucks full of relief materials supported by friends of Amity and Hong Kong Special Administration Government, finally drove through dangerous Xia Touhe Road in the foggy weather and arrived in Baoxing County safely. Villagers in Lingguan, Daxi and Longdong have received relief

supplies in the afternoon.

At Amity head Office, organized by Amity Research and Development Centre, a special saloon themed on earthquake relief has been held on May 11 with staffers and volunteers telling their first hand experience in the earthquake relief work both in Wenchuan and Ya'an. Their vivid presentations have brought people back to the scene. Nearly a hundred people including university students, social workers and volunteers of Amity participated in the saloon. The stories of Love in Action strongly inspired and moved the audience.



Affected villagers receiving relief supplies



Ya'an

Ms. Tong Su and affected villagers receiving relief supplies

A Testimony of Courage, Trust and Love

By Tong Su

Project Coordinator, Amity Foundation (Hong Kong)

“Is that Tong Su? I am Zhang Chao and in Ya'an now. I will have someone to pick you up when you arrive.” The message blinked at me from the screen of my mobile phone when Anthony, my supervisor, and I were boarding our flight from Hong Kong to Chengdu on the Morning of May 9, 2013. In the message, Zhang Chao said he was a project officer of Amity's NGO Development Center in Nantong. I did not think I met him before, nor did I have any idea that we would abound for a journey of courage and trust in the coming 3 days together.

The Task

6 days ago, the HKSAR government's Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) approved HK\$21.718 million to 5 local relief agencies to help provide relief to earthquake victims of Ya'an City, Sichuan Province. HK\$5.304 million, almost one quarter of the total amount was given to Amity Foundation, Hong Kong.

It was about seven o'clock when Zhang Chao and other Amity colleagues came back from the day's work in Tian Quan County on the 9th. There were more than a dozen of them, including Mr. Qiu Zhonghui, the General Secretary. They all looked tired but excited. I greeted Zhang Chao for the first time. In the meeting after the late dinner, I found more people had joined: 4 from Amity Printing Company, another dozen from Zhigong Party (Amity's long-time partner in Sichuan Province). "It's almost 3 weeks after the earthquake. Let's work closely together and get the Task done as good as we can for the people." Mr. Qiu started. The Task he mentioned was: distributing 300,000kg rice, 6,500 barrels of cooking oil, 6,500 sets of cotton quilts and 6,500 rice cookers to over 20,000 victims in dozens of villages of 4 townships of Tian Quan and Bao Xing County properly by end of 10 May. All these supplies were purchased with the DRF grant. The new arrivers, including me, were briefed

about local situations and work protocols. Names and telephone numbers were shared. The Task was divided and given to 7 teams among all of us. Zhang Chao and I were in the same team. We were going to Long Dong Township, the furthest of all destinations, with our big truck loaded with supplies for people in 9 villages there the next day.

The Road

The Task did not get done as planned on the 10th. Our trucks were stopped by the police when we arrived at Lu Shan (the epic center of the quake) before going further north to our destinations in Bao Xing County. No traffic was allowed that day.

"Walking on roads of Sichuan is even harder than climbing up to the sky", exclaimed an ancient Chinese poet. The roads in the province extend long and narrow like snakes, curl with numerous sharp turns and with huge mountain rocks leaning viciously down towards them in many places. The roads from Lu Shan County to Bao Xing County are no exception. In fact, they excel among all roads in Ya'an, well, if one is to judge how dangerous they are. The many landslides from the road-side mountains after the earthquake and the continuous rainfall, sometimes even snow, caused the total block of these roads, making Bao Xing County an "isolate island" which

relief could not reach in the earlier days of relief. The local government made great efforts to repair roads and limited passage of vehicles was put into enforcement regularly. But accidents still happened once in a while, and took tolls. On the 9th, a huge rock fell and crashed into 3 vehicles passing by, burying 10 people. 3 of them died.

Every one was very disappointed. "Do not loose heart. Relief work is never an easy thing. There is much more to it than just money and passion" Mr. Qiu said this to us that evening.

The Rehearsal

Still no traffic was allowed to Bao Xing County on the 11th. To make good use of the time, Amity colleagues decided to collected receipts and revisit the survivors in Tian Quan County. We were to distribute 2000 foldable beds there too. First of all, we need to get them loaded into trucks.

It is a shocking sight I tell you, when 2000 metal beds, each folded into a one meter square, displayed all in front of me. Like "6000 sets of quilts", "7000 barrels of cooking oil", "8000 bags of rice", they were just plain figures to me when I mentioned them in my proposals and reports before! It finally took 9 trucks to load all the beds that morning.

Many kind people, all strangers to me, helped with the work. “I lived nearby. I do not know if I am going to be paid by any one. I just come after hearing extra hands are needed.” An uncle told me when he was having a brief rest from the work.

There was a coordination center for relief supplies from all of China in the compound where the Amity supplies were being loaded. It was apparently set up by the local government. Representatives from different government departments were working diligently with their shabby-looking facilities under a tent. There were quite a few notice boards, listing their names, duties and even mobile phone numbers. Every thing looked in good order. I saw our 9 truck drivers were taking their turn to get the vehicle plates and quantities of supplies recorded there.

We distributed the beds to people in Tian Quan County that afternoon. Like other counties, villages there were spread everywhere, some in the valleys and some up in the mountains. Amity colleagues must have come here for several times already. Because every one, from the township head to individual villagers, knew exactly what to do when our trucks arrived. The beds were downloaded in the center of the township first, counted, loaded into small vehicles and sent to different villages. They were downloaded again at each village center,

counted, loaded into even smaller vehicles to sent to different village groups. In the end, each individual household of the village group came, signed their names (or put their thumb prints) on the Amity receipts and got their bed with Amity staff at their sides.

“Thank you.” I heard a small voice when I was helping a woman carry a bed to her home in one village group. I saw an 8-year boy with twinkling eyes. It suddenly occurred to me that it was the same boy whom I saw following every one in red Amity vest that afternoon. He must have been saying the same thing to every one of us.

Peace

On the 12th, Mother’s Day, the road to Bao Xing was finally open. And the Task was done.

It was a bit past 5 o’clock when we hit the road again that morning. Temperature was low and the heavy fog rising from the Qingyi River along the road was beautiful, but dangerous (visibility was very low). The long line of vehicles was beginning the turn to take off, one every 5 minutes, from the Lushan Checkpoint when we arrived. All 12 loaded Amity trucks went through finally around noon time, each heading towards its own destination. Zhang Chao and I were

on our own to Long Dong Township, the furthest one.

Telecommunication signal was good thanks to the government’s timely recovery of network in the area after the earthquake. We felt fortunate about it and the 7 teams could keep each other updated of their situations constantly through mobile phone messages.

“Funny smell”, Zhang Chao commented after eating the steamed bun I offered him as lunch. I bought it yesterday morning and found it at the bottom of my backpack. Luckily, our stomachs were fine afterwards.

No. 11, our truck stopped at road side before entering Bao Xing County. It was a flat tire. The driver had a spare one. But he needed a powerful jack to life the truck and do the replacement. A repair vehicle passed by and saw our truck. A jack was lent and the replacement was quickly done. We were back on road.

There was a “sea” of trucks and cars, ready to pour out through the gate of the Bao Xing County. And our truck was stuck. “Let me try and ask the vehicles to make some room for us” Zhang Chao got off the truck and soon became a small red dot (we all wore the red Amity vest) in the “sea”. The “sea” slowly opened up and there was a narrow isle for our truck to pass.

It felt like going under the belly of a giant elephant with thick round steel legs when we passed the many structures the government set up to prevent the heavy impact of falling rocks. Maintenance staff looked like ants next to the pillars. There were many road signs with “Be Aware of Fall Rocks” on the roadside. I soon lost count of them. Zhang Chao and I remembered to put our helmets on.

People were already waiting in Xing Huo Village when we arrived around 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Zhang Chao must have been here before—the village people engaged in the work immediately. Part of our rice, cook oil and quilts were distributed here. Then Qing Jiang, the next village.

I notice this granny with white hair in Qing Jiang Village. She stood besides the road watching as we organized the villagers to download supplies. I smiled at her when our eyes met. And then, she came over and held my hands, saying with a soft voice “Was the road difficult? I knew you should have come 2 days ago. May God bring you peace.” I was stunned. In a place where Christian is of a rare species, something like this was least expected.

We carried on with our work and had all the supplies distributed into hands of the villagers. It was getting late. An old man

borrowed a car and volunteered to drive us out to the gate of Bao Xing County before the road closed again at 7pm. There, the round-faced Huangqun, the driver of a small van, agreed to give us a ride as soon as he saw our red vests (let me know if you need one). He drove us to a factory and his friend, the own of the factory, brought us bread and milk. He then called and had a local driver to pick us up to meet the other Amity colleagues, including Mr. Qiu, who were still distributing supplies in Lin Guan Township.

Night had fallen. Those of us who had finished their work got to leave earlier. The main roads were already closed. We had to use the narrower and much longer side roads. The dangerous rocks, deep valleys and broken bridges were all hidden in the darkness.

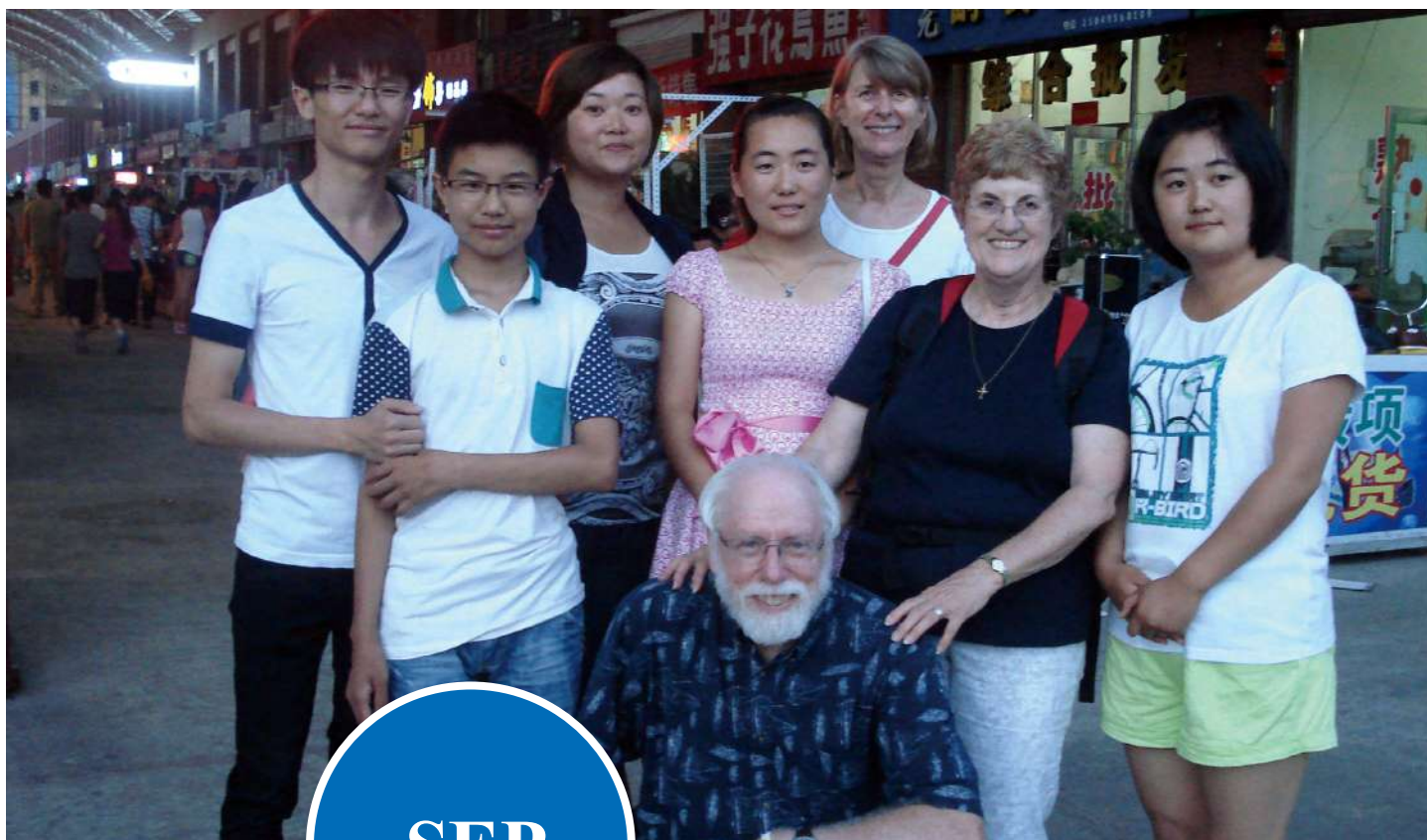
Mr. Qiu sent us a photo via mobile phone when we had our supper. In the photo, we saw our colleagues were still working, by the very weak road light.

It was a long and exhausting day. But my mind refused to rest. I could do nothing but praying:

—May Amity colleagues be safe from all dangers and their moms not worried;
—May soldiers, policemen and other rescue people be safe;
—May the long-distance truck drivers and other drivers on Ya'an roads be safe;
—May the deceased rest in peace and the injured recover soon;
—May the new Ya'an be a beautiful place full of thankful hearts;
—May arguments stop, trust spread and love prevail, for whatever we want the country or the world to be, we need to be it first.



Volunteers from Sichuan Zhigong Party, Amity's local partner



SEP

Harold's SEP Stories

By Harold Durfey

The Amity Summer English Program (SEP) invites English speakers to volunteer in training Chinese teachers of English in less-developed parts of China. In July 2013, twenty eight volunteers from the USA, the UK and Germany came to China to provide a three-week oral English training course to teachers of English from primary and high schools. The volunteers were grouped into teams and placed in different sites in underdeveloped provinces and autonomous regions. The author's team (consisting of Harold Durfey, Cindy Durfey, James Bogert and Grace Bogert) was placed in Arong Qi, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region of China.

A night walk to the city square

Tonight after dark we decided to take a night walk starting at 8:00 p.m. as the sun had already gone down. First we decided to head to the market place where there is much music street vendors and others just walking around. It reminded me of the Hillsdale fair at night with the concession stands.

We met one of our students and her boyfriend, who is also a primary English teacher. They took us to where fried ice cream was being sold. We each bought a bowl except for the last one which the vendors gave us free because they found out we were the foreign English teachers. Apparently the night after the SEP opening celebration on Sunday, they showed the film they took of us on the local TV station Monday night and that is why everyone has been waving and yelling hello at us in this city. When we were buying fried ice cream, we looked around and saw about 20 people right behind us listening to us talk. When I said Nihao to them they smiled broadly, nodded their heads in respect and said something in surprise back at me. They expect me to say hello instead of nihao. I have been surprising my classes every morning by saying Dajiahao to them, and they also smile and say "we are fine" in Chinese.



After the market Sandy headed back to the Motel and us 5 walked on the town square that is like a county fair and has square dancing Chinese style. It was about 5 blocks away. When we got there the dancing had stopped, but they were still sending up "good luck" balloons, the kind that has the little candle under the balloon that causes it to rise slowly. I think they had some in the Tangles movie. It was very peaceful to see them slowly floating up into the sky, much slower than a children's balloon would in our country.

One week done,whew!!!!!!

Sandy just finished her Cowboy lesson next door and still is playing "Colorado

Rocky Mountain High" on her

classroom computer speakers. You can hear it all over the 6th floor of the teacher training center which is the highest building in Arong Qi. We finished up today with me teaching "intonation and stress" in English words. The Chinese teachers had great difficulty with the "TH" sound and





One of orientation sessions in Nanjing

the "v" is not found in their language, so, I have to go back and figure out how they can learn it very slowly. Most Americans take it for granted and do not realize how they learn it, they just learn it and do it and cannot teach others, they just expect others to get it by listening to them, which is an error. I'm glad I had those workshops in Nanjing to help with those sounds. Today I had to go to each student individually and listen to them and watch their tongue in the "th" sound to help them get it right. We will have to work on it again next week to get it correct. We showed a movie "Man from Snowy River" this afternoon to the whole student body and paused it 3 times to ask questions of comprehension to see if they were getting it right. We had typed up a whole page of questions for them to look at while they

looked at the movie. Then we served snacks at intermission, of crackers and candy along with water. It got kind of stuffy in the classroom because we crowded all of them in one classroom to see it. But I think they got it because they were gasping at the exciting parts and commenting at the love scenes and laughing at the comical scenes.

Afterward we worked on lesson plans for next week and then left for the motel, changed clothes and walked to another town square where they were doing line dancing and joined in for a little exercise. The line dances were first in small groups for about 10 minutes and then about 20 minutes for 3 lines of about 100 people in each line doing aerobic stuff together in various movements. We had to drop out after 30 minutes because

Jane (our helper assigned by the school) said we had to head to the restaurant for dinner. There were again, a bunch of Chinese that had to stop by the street and watch these strange Americans mixed in with about 300 Chinese all dressed in Pink polo Shirts doing line dancing. They told Jane to have us come back every day and exercise with them. It is kind of neat to see 300 people wave goodbye to you at the same time. They are so "together" in their habits sometimes. Americans are individualistic and do not think to act together like these people do most of the time. Some of the line dancers that were right in front of me in the line would turn around and do the motions backward as they watched me so that I could see how they moved their arms correctly. They would then correct my movements. Sandy remarked that her arms were sore after we left.

We had dinner of fish, a sweet bread dough, and cooked vegetables, plus drinks of lemon juice, Pepsi, blueberry juice and water, again.

Tomorrow is our free day. Jane and the school officials will take two vans and transport us to "the forest", which I have no idea what it is. But we will be climbing some hills, she said, along with walking through the woods. We will ride for 2 hours in a NW direction before we get there.



We will attend church on Sunday for the first time. James is already working on his speech he has to give at the closing ceremonies two weeks from now. The newscasters will be there again with their big cameras and afterward we will be whisked away to the airport with only time for a few goodbyes. Jane says things happen fast on the last day, but that is still 2 weeks away and we have some solid teaching to do during that time and we are not thinking about that. The Chinese teachers have been very good about not giving us expensive big gifts that we could not bring home in our limited luggage, anyway. James was successful in communicating that to them before we arrived.

Monday I have planned a teaching topic of "Birthdays". We will hold 4 birthday parties, complete with candles, singing Happy Birthday, giving a gift, and pulling a surprise on one of the teachers. We need to buy

candles, 4 cakes, etc (for 4 classes) for the 4 parties. They will be surprised. The cakes will be small, but they will get the idea. During class they will have to discuss what birthday parties are like in China and analyze the best and worst one in their life, and be able to report in English how it was.

Wish you all could spend one day with us. It would be an eye opener for you with all of the things that happen, one right after another. I write 6 pages in my journal every day in detail. We each work with 100 students personally every day, and each of them want to pull us aside and tell us about their home, their teaching at school, and their family. There just isn't

enough time to take it all in. We all fall asleep exhausted at night time. Sandy is asleep already and my head is nodding as I type this email. But is rewarding work that we will never forget.

Sandy, Jim and Grace are giving hints that they would like to return next year because they have not encountered any "tough" situations yet. And once we get into the groove of teaching, it is very rewarding. I never had students so eager to learn, so willing to help, so smiling all the time, everyone in all 4 classes is that way. It is like we are one big family that have known each other for 10 years.





CAMP

An orphan girl beaming with joy after receiving a little-angel soft toy

A Camp of Warmness and Empowerment

By Martin Lachmann

Amity organized a second summer camp for orphans during July 22-27 in Yongshun County, Hunan Province. Its aim was to bring young Hong Kong volunteers together with orphans supported by Amity. Games and activities are expected to enhance the children's confidence, communication skills and spirit of teamwork. In addition, the experience enabled the Hong Kong youth a better understanding of mainland China, increases their own capacity for service and dismantles stereotypes.

The whole issue about orphans in China is very complex. On the background, fast economic development over the last decades led to urbanization and labor migration, while young people leave the countryside to find work in the fast developing cities. Their children are left behind with the elders in the villages. Other societal trends such as separation and divorce, prisoning or drug addiction of the parents have resulted in many abandoned children. Although these left-behind children are not orphans literally, they are in reality existing as such. Most of them never or very rarely see their parents. They often live with their overburdened grandparents or other relatives. They often face hard living conditions and discrimination with limited love and care.

Over the past years, the Chinese authorities paid much more attention to the situation of these children. Various research programs have been launched and intervention measures implemented. Through sponsorships, orphanages and foster care, the more urgent tangible needs of the orphans are met to some degrees. NGOs like Amity are carrying out various programs in line with this development. Especially in poorer areas where regional governments are found of lacking funds, the social welfare work of non-governmental organizations becomes essential.

Because of poverty, discrimination and

the lack of equal opportunities, orphans suffer the hardship of life when they are still very young. They remain as one of the most vulnerable and underprivileged groups in China. Besides material needs, their emotional wellbeing becomes an ever-important focus of work of NGOs. A summer camp can take the children's mind off personal hardship for some time. Amity hopes to encourage them to develop confidence, self-esteem and hereby getting ready to pursue their dreams. The Summer Camp is also an occasion where volunteers, mainly from Hong Kong and the local areas, jointly conduct activities including games and excursions with the orphans. This experience is also beneficiary to the volunteers' development.

After the four-day camp activities, the volunteers accompanied some of the children back to their houses. The volunteers learnt about the living environments and understood the general situation of the orphans in an authentic way. Thereafter Amity organized further site-visits to community development projects of household biogas systems or preservation of local ethnic culture in minorities' villages. With sponsoring a workshop for traditional weaving arts, Amity supports a Tujia community, especially woman to preserve their cultural heritage and to improve their self-sufficiency. Clearly, Amity is not only following a holistic approach of improving the orphans' life directly by relief work and



Volunteers and orphans at Amity Summer Camp experiencing cooperation and reliance in a playful way

their empowerment; but also cares about an overall society's sustainable development, as well as encourages people to get involved in volunteering and social engagement.

Since the reunion of Hong Kong with mainland China, anti-mainland resentments are rising in Hong Kong perceptibly. By engaging many Hong Kong youth as volunteers for the camp, Amity also hopes to reduce prejudices and stereotyping.

In the following interview, Amity's Hong Kong staff member Iris Wong, who organized the Summer Camp, give her observation and viewpoint on the camp.

M (Martin): How and when did the idea for hosting an Amity Summer Camp for rural orphans come up?

I (Iris): Over the past decades, Amity has been able to provide financial support to over 10,000 orphans in China with the help from our donors. Amity arranges educational activities for Amity's friends.

Through those trips, Amity raises awareness of the needs of the orphans, their families and communities. The idea for a Summer Camp was sparked by Hong Kong volunteers' reflection on their earlier visit to orphans in rural areas in mainland China.

The volunteers wanted to visit more children and spend more time with them. The children's homes are far away from each other and the visitors could only spend 30 minutes at most at one's home. Therefore, it is almost impossible to communicate with the individual child, who is too shy to talk to the stranger most of the time. "Why don't we hold a camp as youth groups do in HK? It would be a heart-warming experience for all participants".

Amity has been looking for new approaches in its work to provide psychological support to the orphans. The idea finally became a project in autumn 2011. Nevertheless, to hold a summer camp is no an easy job. We worked out a project framework, raised fund and invited friends and volunteers

to participate. The first Camp was held in summer 2012 in Donghai, Northern Jiangsu.

M: What was the difference in 2013 from the Camp you held the year before?

I: The place, the number of people and the parties that were involved, I'd say.

This year we went to Yongshun County, which lies in an autonomous prefecture of the Tujia and Miao ethnic minorities. It is a seven hours' bus ride from the provincial capital of Hunan, Changsha. Amity is currently providing subsidies to 603 orphans, almost half of the total number of orphans in the county. The Tujia are the biggest ethnic group in the region. Four out of five residents are Tujia. Those who live in the mountainous townships and villages are very poor, with annual income of less than RMB 1500 per capita a year. It is not nearly half of that in Donghai, where we held the camp last year. The infrastructure is also in poor conditions. When we visited



Women from a Tujia ethnic minority community weaving traditional artwork in a workshop supported by Amity

orphans' homes last year, we did not experience bumping, dusty and dangerous country roads into the mountains. With the numbers of 80 orphans and 48 volunteers from Hong Kong, participants almost doubled from that of last year.

M: It sounds the organization of the camp is also an exhausting and complicated undertaking.

I: While the Camp brings life-affirming experiences for people, it also brings all sorts of challenges to the organizers. For instance, we had to refrain from the merit of all participants living under the same roof by putting our participants into different hotels. There is no local hotel big enough to accommodate all the people at the same time. Our local partner this summer is Yongshun Overseas Friendship Association (YOFA). They showed great wisdom and solidarity in helping us make all the arrangements.



Visiting orphans' homes where they live with their over-burdened grandparents or other relatives

M: Which other parties took part in the camp?

I: Besides YOFA, we experienced great support from local authorities and organizations as for example the police, health authority and the media. In contrast to last year, we did not have Hong Kong participants from church congregations. Instead, we invited a youth center, a secondary school and an NGO to recruit participants for the camp. We noticed some of them came from low-income families and were glad that they also had the opportunity to take part. Additionally, we also had a few volunteers from the mainland this year. It is our hope that the Amity Camp could inspire more people to provide support for orphans.

M: It sounds that the camp is also functioning as a role model. Is it a new approach in China running camps for underprivileged people?

I: I think there are more camps organized for needy children in the mainland than we could imagine. I guess we are not the first one. We, as Amity Foundation, are trying to implement this camp in a larger context and an approach regarding sustainable and holistic development. First, the camp is hosted in areas where Amity has other poverty alleviation projects. This development has a positive impact on the orphan's communities

and hence for the orphans. Amity Summer Camp is not a single action but is embedded within a wide scale of engagement. Furthermore, participants of the Camp, like the youth from Hong Kong, can have a better understanding of the different aspects of development issues. Second, Amity Summer Camp has a “user handbook” that contains purposes, guidelines, plans and methods of group activities. This enables easy duplication and further refining and evaluating. As a result, Amity can amplify the camp's impact. After all, there are over 700,000 orphans in the mainland and the number of orphans one individual camp could reach is very limited.

M: What are your anticipations for the Camp next year?

I: We see very positive impacts on both, the orphans themselves and the youth from Hong Kong after the Camp. However, as I mentioned, the number of people one camp can reach is very limited. We want to find ways to amplify the impact of the Camp so that more people's lives can be reached. We have not decided anything firm yet for next year. We have several ideas that still need to be discussed. We could share our knowledge and experience with teachers who are working in schools where the orphans go. We could also engage more mainland or overseas participants in the project. No

matter what we will do next year, I hope the Camp serves as an opportunity for young people to share their dreams and reflect on their lives.

M: Is there a particular story you want to tell of the Camp this summer?

I: There are many moving stories to tell actually. I was especially moved about the orphan's joy about some soft toy presents. It is a lovely small doll in red and white color we gave to the orphans before they left the Camp. A young woman from the Anglican Church of Hong Kong designed it. She participated in tours to Amity development project areas several times and became a regular donor and a friend of Amity in recent years. Even though she could not attend the Camp this year, she wanted to do something for the orphans. She designed a companion doll called “Little Angel” for them. A group of women from her church heard about her wish to contribute something personal and unique to the orphans and helped with the production. All together, they finally sewed 100 “Little Angels”. The orphan carried the dolls back home; each nicely packed in a colorful gift bag with a written card that reads, “Every time when I help others I am growing up a bit”.

(Martin Lachmann is the communication desk officer of Amity Hong Kong)



NGO

NGO Development: Practice and Reflection

By She Hongyu

In the context of social governance, NGO development has attracted more and more attention and support from all levels of government and the third sector. Taking the Amity Foundation's NGO development as an example, this article analyzes the history and mode of Amity's NGO development, proposes a coordination mechanism for further development of NGOs, and makes suggestions policy-wise on NGO development.

I. The history of Amity's NGO development

The year 2009 seems to be a watershed for the Amity Foundation's NGO development efforts. Before 2009, by supporting farmers' self-help organizations through integrated rural development projects in the western areas of China, the Amity Foundation had managed to build farmers' ability of promoting agricultural technologies, expressing their views, and collaborating for marketing. Farmers' self-help organizations have played an active role in supporting farmers to achieve economic development,

participate in public affairs management, and foster an attachment to the community. It is worth mentioning that, as early as in 1993, the Amity Foundation established the first professional team of social workers, Amity Yixing Community-based Rehabilitation Team for People with Disabilities, to provide community-based professional rehabilitation services to people with disabilities in Yixing, Jiangsu Province. Amity Yixing Community-based Rehabilitation Team for People with Disabilities is the first NGO developed by the Amity Foundation. Although the proper noun “NGO development” had not appeared in China in 1993, the practice of NGO development had begun to take shape.

In 2009, Nanjing Amity NGO Development Center was launched in Nanjing as the first NGO development center established by a public foundation. Nanjing Civil Affairs Bureau and the Nanjing Jianye District government had made great efforts for the launch of the NGO Development Center. The newly established Amity NGO Development Center was then promoted in a publication of the central government, where the important role the NGO development center played in social development was clearly elucidated. NGO development

centers were recognized as an important force in developing NGOs and regulating the development of NGOs.

Also in 2009, the Amity Foundation began to develop NGOs focusing on rehabilitation of autism sufferers in Nanjing and Xuzhou of Jiangsu Province and Chengdu of Sichuan Province, providing training on institutional management and professional skills upgrading for four rehabilitation institutions.

In 2010, Jiangsu Provincial Bureau of Civil Affairs issued a document requiring that NGO development centers should be established in each prefecture-level city within Jiangsu Province. As the first one of its like in Jiangsu Province, Amity NGO Development Center was uniquely positioned to assume the responsibility of providing consultancy for the establishment of NGO development agencies around Jiangsu Province. Amity’s practices were unreservedly shared with visitors from different areas of Jiangsu to promote the building of NGO development bases. In December 2010, Nanjing Amity NGO Development Center was awarded China’s First Social Innovation Award for its practice and exploration in NGO development.

By September 2011, the number of NGO development centers in Jiangsu province increased to 37. “Province-wide Establishment of NGO Development Support Bases in Jiangsu” was listed among “10 Major Events of China’s NGO Sector in 2011” jointly selected by the State Administration of NGOs and the NGO Research Institute of Tsinghua University. As the first NGO development center in Jiangsu Province, Nanjing Amity NGO Development Center played an important role in the report.

At the invitation of local authorities of civil affairs, the Amity Foundation established NGO development bases in Nantong and Kunshan. In addition to organizational development work, Kunshan NGO Development Center undertook the venture philanthropy project launched by Kunshan Municipal Bureau of Civil Affairs and assisted the government to operate the venture capital of RMB 4.5 million. It was a pioneering practice in Jiangsu Province and the country that venture capital funds provided by the government were operated by an independent NGO.

In 2012, the Amity Foundation established Social Services Network of Churches to initiate capacity building for social service organizations in the religious community.



The network has forty member institutions now. Inviting experts to give training and guidance from time to time, the network has provided member institutions a platform for information sharing and capacity building.

There had been more than 60 NGO development centers in Jiangsu Province by 2013. In October 2013, Civil Affairs Bureau in Qixia District of Nanjing openly invited tender from the public. In the form of government purchase, the bureau would hire an NGO to operate Qixia District NGO Development Service Center. Standing out of three bidders, the Amity Foundation became the partner of Qixia District Civil Affairs Bureau for operating the center.

From 2009 to 2013, Amity experienced and witnessed the process of birth and growth of NGO development in Jiangsu. The process inspires us a lot of reflections.

II. Reflections on NGO development

(I) Advantages and favorable conditions

1. Diversification of people's demands and outbreak of social conflicts result in increasing demands on NGOs. NGOs' role and function are greatly enhanced.

As China's economy and society change quickly, the social structure and demographic structure have undergone great changes. Interest demands between different groups vary widely. The demands on eldercare, child education, migrant population services, and rehabilitation of

the disabled are growing. The government can neither fully meet the increasing and diversified demands nor provide quality services powered by adequate resources. In such social context, NGOs' role in providing services provision has been greatly highlighted. Expectations on NGOs capable of providing services are increasing.

2. The launch of a series of policies has clarified the status and role of NGOs to facilitate survival and development of NGOs.

In recent years, the party and the government launched a series of policies on supporting NGO development and enabling the vitality of NGOs. Among these policies, some are considered more influential:

In March 2008, the central committee of the party issued the Opinions on Deepening Administrative Reform, required that fundamental changes of government functions should be made by 2020 to create a favorable environment for development, provide quality public services, and safeguard social justice;

In September 2013, General Office of the State Council issued the Guidance

on Government Procurement of Services from Social Forces. According to the Guidance, the government should transfer the provision of some public services from its hands to qualified social forces by making the most of the market mechanism and following certain procedures. The government should pay the social forces according to the quantity and quality of services. Government procurement of services should be public welfare-oriented;

3. Funding arrangements by civil affairs bureaus and financial authorities facilitate survival and development of NGOs

In 2012, the central government allocated

RMB 200 million for supporting NGOs' engagement in social services. Local governments at provincial level allocated varying amounts of funds for venture philanthropy. Outstanding philanthropy projects and organizations won the venture capita. It's a partial solution to the dilemma that some philanthropy organizations own projects but have no funds.

4. NGOs play the role of one of subjects of social governance

The Third Plenary Session of the Eighteenth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China stated that

further efforts should be made to fire NGOs with vigor and facilitate innovation of social governance. According to the statement, NGOs should act as one of subjects of social governance to work with the government to provide public services to the members of society, manage state and public affairs, coordinate social relations, resolve social conflicts, and maintain social stability. In practice, the NGO development institutions may accelerate NGO's wide and deep engagement in social governance when they guide social needs and integrate social resources properly.

(II) Disadvantages and unfavorable conditions

1. NGO development institutions themselves need to be developed

Although the number of NGO development institutions or incubators has been increasing, the functions of NGO development are partially exaggerated. It is worth noting that an NGO development institution should be well equipped with expertise, experiences and social resources when it is positioned to provide training, capacity building, and funding support to grassroots NGOs. In a society where most NGOs are still in their



infancy, the incubators can not meet all the needs of NGOs to be developed. The incubators themselves also need capacity building and incubation for growth. The government and society need to provide space and time for the NGO development institutions to grow.

2. Lack of resources for NGO development

The occurrence of NGO development meets the social needs. However, there has not been a sustained mechanism of financially supporting NGO development. Resources for NGO development are extremely needed. When establishing NGO development bases, local governments should make long-term consideration and funding arrangement. NGO development should be included in the government procurement plan. Different NGO development bases will experience entirely different journeys ahead due to different funding inputs by the governments. Those powered by government purchase of services will survive and grow vigorously.

3. Though enjoying rapid growth, the third sector as a whole is still weak. Few NGOs are available for development.

Unbalanced development of NGOs,

particularly NPOs, prevails in China.

Educational and medical organizations account for half of the NGO sector.

Service-oriented NGOs needed by the government are still insufficient. NGOs in areas with better economic conditions and favorable locations enjoy better growth.

With increasing urbanization, NGOs are in urgent need in rural-urban fringe areas. But due to unfavorable location and traffic inconvenience, cost of introducing fully developed NGOs to work there is relatively high. NGO development is largely dependent on development of their own community and spontaneous occurrence of community opinion leaders. This process often takes a long time.

III. Suggestions on NGO development and policies

(I) A coordination mechanism for NGO development should be established

1. Coordination with the government for NGO development

NGO development should keep pace with policies and guidelines issued by the government. NGOs should share and exchange information with the government. Qualified NGOs should understand the government's intentions, policies and financial priorities and take

over the government's NGO development work according to their abilities and characteristics. The government should regard NGO development as a strong pusher for building NGO development environment and facilitating growth of NGOs. The government should find effective channels for timely release of tender invitation information for purchasing services, develop a fair, transparent and sustainable mechanism of government procurement, and encourage competent NGOs to become potential bidders.

2. Coordination with specialized institutions for NGO development

There are various NGOs. No organization can cater all needs of NGOs in all categories. A combination of NGO development services is needed. NGO development institutions should work with specialized institutions to build personnel equipped with both ideas and skills. NGO development institutions should turn to specialized NGOs for specialized support. A chain of healthy functioning of NGO development should come into being.

3. Coordination with NGO development institutions for NGO development

Though NGO development institutions are new things, few of them are really capable of performing their responsibility. Well-developed NGOs have the responsibility and obligation to help the nascent NGOs to grow faster. One or two site visits or copying documents would not really accelerate growth of NGO development institutions. Some qualified institutions may provide training courses to facilitate the functioning of the nascent NGO development institutions.

(II) Growth of NGO development institutions

1. Growing from development institutions to consultancy institutions

According to the life cycle of an organization, no NGO can reach total maturity within the short development duration. After the end of the duration, the NGOs need ongoing counseling, provision of information, policy and financial support. Currently, institutions providing consultancy to companies can be seen everywhere, but counseling institutions for NGOs are quite rare. In the long run, NGO development institutions/agencies can provide consultancy and companionship services to a growing number of NGOs. Serving as a replenishment station for non-profit organizations, the Taiwan-

based Begonia Foundation maintains regular training courses for nonprofit organizations and provides personal counseling services for 171 NGOs. Advices and solutions are available anytime soon after problems occur. The best practices of Begonia Foundation could be followed by NGO development institutions in mainland China.

2. Growing from specialized NGO development institutions to trade associations

Bridging the government and businesses and linking the producers and merchandisers of products, trade associations occurring in China nowadays provide them with services, consulting, communication, supervision, self-discipline, and coordination. In the third sector, there are few trade associations coming into being spontaneously according to the services they provide. The eldercare category is an exception.



As government purchase of services from NGOs prevails, interest demands on establishing standard procedures and norms as well as communicating with the government will be found in each service category. The occurrence of a leading institution of a service category will greatly reduce the cost of decision-making and communication and between the government and NGOs when it is able to represent the category and make the voice of the category heard.

IV. Conclusion

In the context that China faces severe problems of eldercare, employment of college graduates, rural-urban population structure changes, migrant workers and their new generation, the role of NGOs in our society is bound to be more recognized. The needs and call of the public on NGOs will usher in a new era for NGO development!

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The Amity Foundation is an independent Chinese voluntary organization founded in 1985 on the initiative of Chinese Christians to promote education, social services, health, rural development, environmental protection, disaster relief, and poverty reduction in the underdeveloped areas of China. Amity projects have benefited more than ten million people both at home and abroad.

The Amity Foundation has more than 70 full-time staffers at its Nanjing headquarters. Hundreds of volunteers work with Amity all over China. The Amity Foundation receives funds from partners abroad as well as in Hong Kong and mainland China.