



RESPONDING TO AN AGING POPULATION

- ◆ When you are old...
- ◆ The world with degenerating memory
- ◆ Enjoy the elder care at home
- ◆ Let's start from a free lunch



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Amity Philanthropy Valley (Elderly Care Centre)





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Responding to an aging population: Amity in action

Our world is rapidly aging, with the number and population proportion of the elderly growing in almost every country. According to the World Population Prospects (2019 revision), by 2050, one in every six people in the world will be over 65 years old, and the number of people aged 80 and above is expected to increase to 426 million.

As defined by the United Nations, when the number of elderly people aged 65 or above in a country or region accounts for more than 7% of the total population, the whole country or region qualifies as an "aging society". When the ratio reaches 14%, the country or region qualifies as an "aged society".

According to data released by The State Council Information Office, the number of people aged 65 or above in China

reached 200.56 million by the end of 2021, accounting for 14.2% of China's population, which indicates that the country has qualified as an aged society ahead of schedule.

The contribution made by elderly people such as family care and cultural inheritance cannot be measured in economic terms, and their role and experience in resolving conflicts of families and neighborhoods and in dealing with emergencies can't be ignored. However, they are often vulnerable: they may lack income and social support networks, and may be subject to discrimination and abuse. Elderly women are particularly vulnerable to discrimination, social exclusion and even disinheritance. At the same time, women tend to live longer than men and are therefore likely to experience deeper difficulties as they get older. Creating an elderly-friendly environment is therefore important to

ensure the safety, health and independence of the elderly.

The responsibility of caring for the elderly usually falls on their families. But as birth rates decline and urbanization accelerates, traditional family relationships are changing while supporting networks are expanding. Families caring for the growing elderly population need more support, and the social protection of elderly people is growing ever more important.

There are differences between urban and rural social work: the problem of elderly care is more prominent in the countryside because rural elderly care relies mostly on families. The lack of rural elderly care has become an obstacle in realizing equality of basic public services and common prosperity among farmers and rural areas. The Amity Foundation has long been concerned with the issue

Ling Chunxiang

General Secretary
The Amity Foundation



of elderly care and is committed to providing the elderly with professional physical, mental, social and spiritual services, constantly exploring new modes of service for the elderly. In 2009, Amity established a home-based elderly care service center. In 2012, Amity cooperated with the Civil Affairs Bureau of Qixia District, Nanjing, to carry out institution-based elderly care services while exploring home-based practice surrounding institution service with support from communities. Amity is one of the earliest entities integrating institution-based, community-based and home-based elderly care services in China. In December 2020, Amity Qixia Nursing Home, jointly operated by the Amity Foundation and Qixia Civil Affairs Bureau, won the title of "National Respect for the Elderly".

At present, Amity has a well-established elderly care service system in urban areas. With

government-purchased services and support from social forces, Amity's institution-based and home-based elderly care service centers also provide various services including meal assistance, medical assistance, bath assistance and transportation assistance. In terms of meal service, Amity provides both on-site service and door-to-door service for empty nesters and the elderly living alone in the communities, while helping them establish a wide social support network, so as to facilitate community elderly service.

The "Papa and Mama's Canteen" project is an experimental supplement to this service system. Through this project, the elderly not only receive lunch and professional services, but also enjoy spiritual nourishment from the love and care shown by the volunteers. The heart-warming services make up for children's filial piety to

their parents, mobilize a wide range of social resources and social support to elderly care, and advocate and promote an elderly-friendly social atmosphere. By the end of 2021, "Papa and Mama's Canteen" project won the "Top 10 Charity Projects" by Action League of Ifeng.com.

The biggest changes made by the project for the elderly are the icing on the cake for the urban elderly and the nutrition in time for the rural elderly. For the elderly in urban areas, the project brings extra joy to their lives. For those living in rural areas, the project provides important nourishment in trying times. Today, the Amity Foundation continues to make efforts to explore better services for all elderly people, be it urban empty nesters, elderly living alone in rural areas and for those with disabilities and dementia. To Amity, the elderly today are our future selves.

Focus

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When you are old...



According to data released by the State Council Information Office in January 2022, there were 200.56 million people aged 65 or above in China by the end of 2021, accounting for 14.2% of the country's population. This indicated that China is an aging society ahead of schedule. Furthermore, based on the estimate of the Aging and Health Division of the National Health Commission, by 2035, the population aged 60 and above will be over 0.4 billion, accounting for over 30% of the population. By 2050, the scale and proportion of the elderly population, as well as the elderly dependency and the social dependency, will all reach their peaks.

As early as in 2009, Amity observed that the elderly living alone and those with disabilities and dementia need public attention and care, and thus started its elderly care service in 2009, especially for the elderly in difficult circumstances. For more than 10 years, Amity has been serving the senior citizens in both fruitful and innovative ways.

Amity's efforts in elderly care

In September 2012, Amity signed an agreement with the Civil Affairs Bureau of Qixia District in Nanjing to launch the Amity Philanthropy Valley project.

10 years later, Amity Philanthropy Valley has developed into an organization integrating institution-based, community-based and home-based elderly care with medical and health care functions.

"Amity Philanthropy Valley includes care centers, nursing homes, and home-based elderly service centers," said Li Xiaoxia, the head of Amity Home-based Elderly Service. "There are 3 care centers inside the Amity Philanthropy Valley complex." The Nanjing Qixia Home for the elderly has served 103 senior citizens with the "five guarantees" outlined by the government (i.e. food, clothing, shelter, medical treatment and burial). Nanjing Amity Care Home





currently provides 161 senior citizens with cheap, high quality service. There is also a Nursing Home equipped with professional medical qualification and medical teams. The Nursing Home cooperates with the Jiangsu Provincial Hospital and is covered by medical insurance. Medical professionals visit the home regularly and make tailored healthcare plans. Since 2017, the Nursing Home has provided rehabilitation and treatment for 45,000 people.

Grandpa He, who has lived at the Nursing Home since 2020, has sequela of cerebral infarction. His lower limbs are weak and he cannot take care of himself. After assessment, the Nursing Home offered him gait training at first to enhance the strength of the lower limbs, and then transitioned to walk training with a walker and air pressure treatment. As the result of such long-term training, Grandpa He can now walk without assistance.

By mid-2022, Amity's elderly-care institution houses 538 senior citizens, with a current occupancy rate of 89%.



Due to the limited space inside the institutions, most elderly people choose to receive home-based service. Branded as Amity Jolly Home, Amity home-based elderly care operates more than 20 community centers, which have served 2.1 million people.

Doctors and nurses from Amity Philanthropy Valley provide on-site service to the communities as well as basic services for elderly helpers and community staff. Amity's services target not only the elderly with self-care abilities, but also people with minor or major disabilities.. Amity offers community home-based care services that are either free of charge or low-cost, or subsidised by the government. Amity prioritizes senior citizens who are empty nesters, financially burdened, mentally challenged or disabled. "Public benefit and creativity are our focus and features over a decade of development," said Li Xiaoxia



With the support of Amity's online fundraising platforms, Amity Philanthropy Valley has raised a total of more than RMB 20 million. It launched projects including Papa and Mama's Canteen, Friends of the Alzheimer's, and Academy for the Elderly to integrate social resources to care for the needy elderly. Crowdfunding projects like Guard Their

Dignity for elderly with disabilities have become social advocacies.

Amity Philanthropy Valley team established a "Days of Love" empathy experience site for the youngsters to experience the feeling of aging, which was well received.

"We are supporting other elderly care service providers, too," Li Xiaoxia told us. Over the years, Amity Philanthropy Valley team held six international seminars on this service, gave training sessions for other elderly homes, as well as providing operation, assessments and guidance for the elderly care service association of Qixia District. "We are winning trust from the elderly served and their families, and also from the local government."

Reflecting on her 10 years of service, Li Xiaoxia made three points:

1. The public pays great attention to elderly care but makes little contribution to the sector. There needs to be more advocacy to the public on the importance of their contribution to professional services.
2. Our society has low demand for building an elderly-friendly environment which is urgently needed by the aging generation.
3. The public gives low recognition to the elderly care work. "I think the government should make policies and social security on this accordingly," said Li Xiaoxia. "The level of social security determines the level and professionalism of the service."

Looking forward, she remarked on the focus of Amity's future development. "Professional service for the elderly with dementia, services targeted at empty nesters in the communities and hospice care for those in their twilight years are three directions for us to focus on. These services are needed by our society."

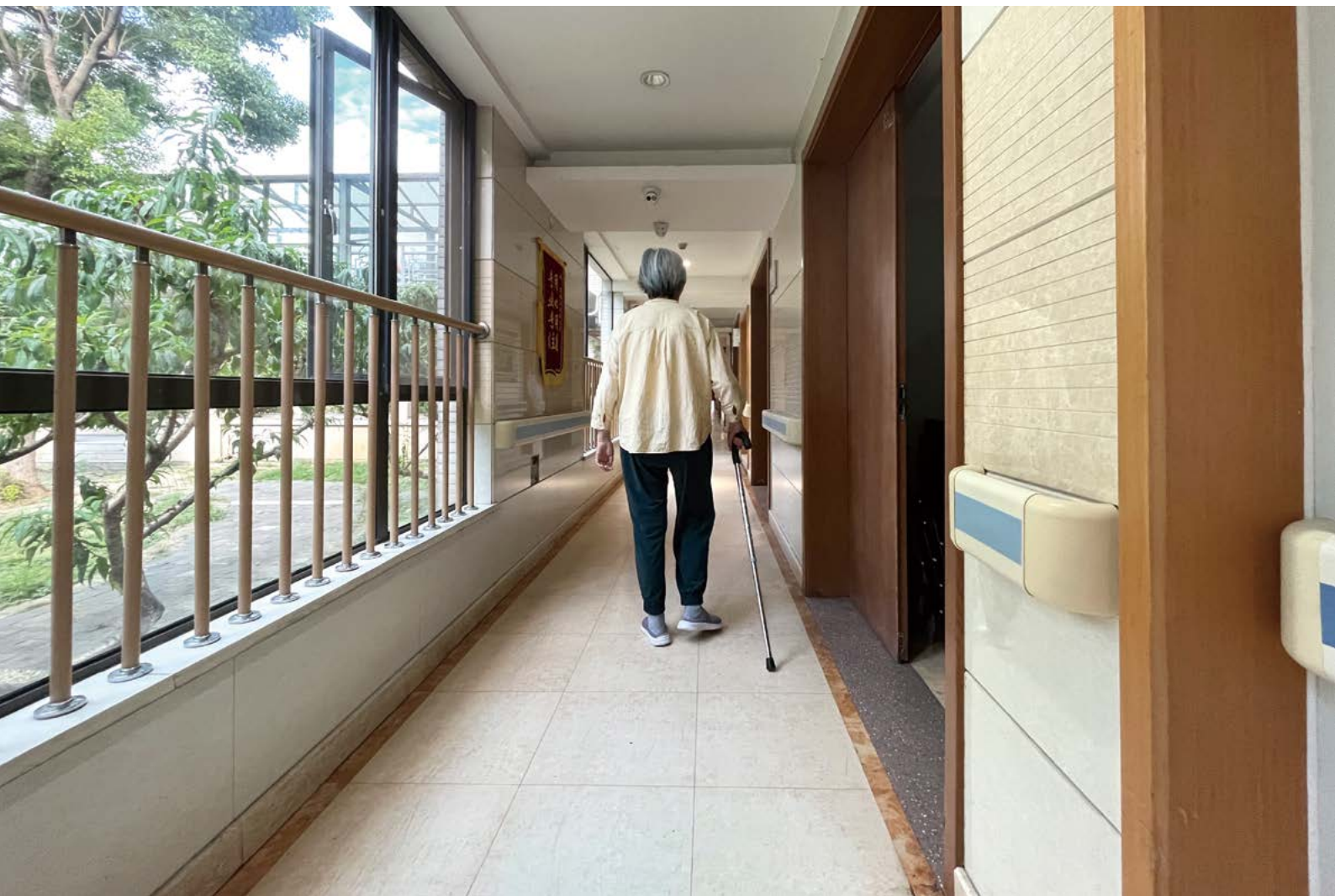
"The Amity Philanthropy Valley team plans to set up a daycare center, taking our existing institutions as the base camp to embed integrated community care services, which means elderly people living alone may visit those living under our care during the day." Said Li Xiaoxia excitedly. "We will build an 'elderly home without walls', so that our teams can provide both on-site and home-based service. I think the integration of day-care and full-time care allows us to pool resources, and improve both institution-based and home-based care services."



The world with degenerating memory

“About four years ago, we noticed that mum had memory loss,” said Mr. Pan as he explained why his mother came to live at the Nursing Home at Amity Philanthropy Valley. “She couldn’t even remember things she said a minute ago. What’s worse, she was experiencing frequent mood swings.”

The elderly lady was then diagnosed with dementia, a decline in brain function caused by neuropathy in the brain, which affects memory and other cognitive functions, as well as the ability to perform daily tasks. Currently there is no cure for this disease, and degeneration can only be delayed through medicinal treatment and rehabilitation training.



Mr. Pan began to follow the instructions of the doctors. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, professional caregivers were not able to provide on-site service, so Mr. Pan and his wife had to take care of his mother themselves. "To be frank, it made us frustrated and I was constantly worried about her."

In addition to incontinence and incapability of self-care, there were many other troubling episodes. "One day at midnight, I was awakened by the creak of the door," said Mr. Pan, recalling a chilling winter night. "I quickly realized what had happened. She must have gone out alone again! After checking the security camera system, I finally found her in the street. She only had her pajamas on and was not aware of the temperature outside..."

Mr. Pan's mother got lost from time to time. He tried to put a GPS tracker on her, but the location provided was not accurate, making it difficult to find her. "Then I chose to lock the door when I left for work, but staying at home all day became a huge pressure on her. She began to have serious cognitive decline and powerful mood swings during that period."

Mr. Pan told us the deterioration

of perception was the most obvious symptom his mother had in recent years. "She was not aware of the temperature and wore the same clothes in summer and winter," said Mr. Pan sadly. "She liked walking, but could only do so very slowly after getting ill. Moreover, she often forgot to take a shower. We couldn't be impatient or raise our voices at her, otherwise she would be depressed."

To find a solution, Mr. Pan visited three nursing homes and finally decided on Amity Nursing Home. The nursing home is ten minutes' drive from their home. "The nursing home combines elderly care and nursing service. Here, caregivers and nurses all take good care of mum, so that I don't have to worry about her medication and safety during work. Visiting her after work is also very convenient."

At first, Mr. Pan feared that his mother would not be able to accept living at Amity Nursing Home, but she adapted well. Taking the advice of the nursing home staff, Mr. Pan did not take her home frequently, so as to avoid anxiety caused by switching back and forth.

Mr. Pan is very satisfied with services provided by Amity

Nursing Home. "They have taken good care of my mother. She used to be very thin but since she came here last May, she has gained 10kg in weight. Life here is stable and the elderly here are provided with good nutrition. Sometimes I would bring her snacks. The only thing that my mother finds hard to adjust to is her bedridden roommate, as she prefers the peace and quiet to herself."

Mr. Pan's mother is now 78 years old. Although she is emotionally stable, sleeps well and is physically flexible, she is prone to forgetfulness, with continuous short-term memory loss and occasional incontinence. Mr. Pan knows that he and Amity must work together to manage the situation before she loses control of her body.

"I used to worry about her losing freedom like when I kept her locked up at home. However, she likes it here because Amity provides entertainment for the elderly. Whenever I am free, I would drive her to the bank of Yangtze River. She experiences every trip as if it were her first time, which fills her with curiosity and excitement. She definitely seems happy. I think I will choose to live here myself when I grow old."

Building a "Healing Space"

At Amity's Nursing Home and Elderly Home under Amity Philanthropy Valley, there are many seniors with dementia just like Mr. Pan's mother.

As elderly people with dementia may lose their way home or leave the stove on, it is often tremendously dangerous leaving them alone without supervision from caregivers or family members.

The emotional and behavioral disorders of elderly people with dementia often bring pressure to caregivers both in care institutions and at home. In 2013, Amity Philanthropy Valley launched the Friends of the Alzheimer's Project, aiming to build a dementia-friendly society in which no one has to face the disease alone.

"The reason why we call this project Friends of the Alzheimer's is because we hope to provide a friendly environment and thoughtful services for elderly people with dementia, such as non-pharmacological intervention and alleviation of emotional and behavioral problems offered by social workers." said

Li Xiaoxia, the head of Amity Home-based Elderly Service. "At the same time, we also raise public awareness of dementia, provide services to caregivers, and provide training on how to identify the emotional and behavioral problems faced by the elderly to help understand how to carry out appropriate responses."

Besides daily care, Amity's elderly home set up a dedicated area for residents with dementia, with great emphasis on maintaining a senior-friendly and humane "healing space" for them to rest and rehabilitate. In addition, social workers provide non-pharmacological intervention including reality-oriented training, sensory stimulation training, gardening therapy, memory training and doll therapy, which are combined into the daily life of the elderly with dementia. Moreover, all kinds of entertainment and social activities are designed to alleviate emotional and behavioral problems, delay the development of dementia and improve the quality of life of the elderly.

So far, Amity Philanthropy Valley Elderly Home has received a total of 279 seniors with dementia, including 53 with mild dementia,

116 with moderate dementia and 110 with severe dementia. Friends of the Alzheimer's has conducted 60 special training sessions on dementia and 18 family support activities, benefiting 4,700 people. Public activities such as the donation of positioning bracelets, short film competitions, large-scale seminars, publication of Instruction Manual of Dementia Caregivers and 4 films and videos educating the public on dementia, have benefitted approximately 300,000 people. "However, public interest in dementia is far from enough. We still have a long way to go to raise awareness of dementia at a societal level," said Li Xiaoxia.

Enjoy the elder care at home

Home makes one feel safe and comfortable, especially for elderly people. In their mind, home consists of familiar living environment, neighbors and friends. They would not leave home unless they have to.

Chen Shitong, 65, lives together with his mother on the third floor of an old residential building in central Nanjing. Although their home is a bit messy, it is full of warm memories.

Zhang Qiquan, Chen's mother, has a gentle face, toned skin and a sharp mind. You would never imagine she is 101 years old. Last October, she accidentally fell at home and broke her thighbone. Chen recalled that his mother couldn't take care of herself because of the fracture, which was overwhelming for him. Thanks to the Amity Jolly Home Project initiated by the Amity Foundation, staff from



Amity home-based elder care centre helped Chen to change diapers for his mother. They also suggested him send his mother to the rehabilitation hospital. After staying in the hospital for six months, the elderly lady recovered well enough to spend time outdoors enjoying the sun.

Chen feels very grateful for the help from Amity Jolly Home Community Home-based elderly care centre since 2018. They provide services like food delivery and cleaning as well as monthly door-to-door medical service. Chen and his mother feel very satisfied with the arrangement of Amity Jolly Home.

Zhang Hong, staff from Amity Jolly Home, told us that Amity Jolly Home team started home-based elderly care service at Yunnan Road Community, where Zhang Qixuan lives, in 2017. Now, the team has over 50 members, providing seniors with diverse services like food support, medical treatment, emergency support, cleaning, nursing, and visiting. Over the past five years, the team has provided more than 100,000 services for over 800 people.

With availability of care services in the community puts Zhang

Qixuan at ease. She often reads the news on her mobile phone or tablet. "I am quite optimistic. I don't worry about anything and don't think too much. I just enjoy life every day."

Her son has two wishes. Firstly, he hopes that a 24/7 live-in caretaker could be arranged to help look after his mother for times when he's not around. Secondly, that Amity Jolly Home could help arrange traditional Chinese medicine doctors visiting her regularly to check her conditions.

Li Xiaoxia, head of Amity Home-based Elderly Service, tells us that although home-based elderly care has become the major way for elderly care, the public still equates elderly care service with housekeeping service and has a certain gap in the understanding of professional nursing. Meanwhile, training for caregivers needs to be improved. Professional nursing knowledge is important for both door-to-door service and family member guidance. Amity's elderly care services, including Amity Jolly Home service, will strive to improve in that direction.



Let's start from a free lunch

Mr. Chen Changwen, 79, lost his wife for years ago. Since they never had children, he now lives alone in Liaotian Village, Yangjiang Town, Gaochun District of Nanjing. He walks with a limp as a result of an old leg injury, making essential daily activities such as cooking difficult to manage on his own.

The Amity Papa and Mama's Canteen Project, launched by the Amity Philanthropy Valley team, reached Liaotian Village this year. Designed to help the elderly who find themselves in Mr. Chen's shoes, the project provides and delivers free meals to seniors living alone in rural areas.

"Now I don't have to worry about my meals. I enjoy my time talking with other villagers in the home-based elderly service center of Liaotian Village, and when I go home, I can enjoy watching TV shows."

Mr. Mei Weixu, a villager of Meijia Village, is 72 years old. Unmarried and childless, he lives with his nephew. During the day, Mr. Wei stays at home alone while his nephew and niece-in-law go to work.

In the three months since the arrival of the Papa and Mama's Canteen, Mr. Mei has enjoyed free food and delivery service. "I've got stomach ulcer so I can't eat much and can't do chores," he said. "The food service has been a blessing. It arrives at half past ten every day. It would be lovely to have this service on Sunday, too."



The Amity Papa and Mama's Canteen Project started in 2013, inspired by a certain company that supported seniors with "loving lunches". Elderly people who are empty-nested, living alone, seriously ill or disabled are the primary targets for the project's services. The project functions as a supplement to the home-based elderly care service. Over the years, supported by caring companies like Jiangsu Broadcast FM937, Alibaba Charity, Alipay Charity and China Welfare Lottery Fund, the project has raised over RMB 21 million.

"We usually provide three dishes and one bowl of soup," said Li Xiaoxia, the head of Amity Home-based Elderly Service. "The meal meets the nutritional needs of the elderly. We will

start to support other social organizations to do the same if more funds could be raised."

The food service that Mr. Chen and Mr. Mei currently enjoy is provided by Liaotian Village Home-based Service Centre. Lunches are distributed from c kitchens in the city centre to Amity canteens in each village. From there, 10 volunteers deliver the food to the elderly every weekday. There are 1,400 elderly people over the age of 60 in Liaotian Village, of which 235 are over the age of 80. In addition to the meal service, the center also provides other elderly services such as bathing, medical treatment, cleaning assistance, conversation assistance, study assistance, and emergency assistance.

The canteens have also become gathering places for the elderly people in rural areas. After the elderly have lunch in the canteen, they often organize entertainment activities amongst themselves to brighten up their day.

Li Xiaoxia told us, "On the Alibaba Charity platform, many people donate money to Amity Papa and Mama's Canteen Project because they feel touched by the name and hope that their parents can enjoy this service when they grow old. The fundraising itself is also a form of promotion."

In 2015, the Amity Papa and Mama's Canteen Project won the "3rd Jiangsu Charity Award - The Most Influential Charity Project". In 2021, it won the "Top



Ten Charity Projects of the Year" award by the Action League.

Inspired by Papa and Mama's Canteen Project, Amity Philanthropy Valley is introducing food service into its community-based elderly care service and hopes to explore integrated community-based elderly care service based on different needs and situation in different regions. For example, in the Amity Jolly Home Home-base Elderly Service Center located in Yunan Road Community of Nanjing, in addition to meal services, the center provides classes on how to use smart phones and introduction of new concepts and words. Ms. Chen, a regular visitor at the center, appreciates these services: "We elderly should

go out more, to see the rapid changes in our society. There are too many new developments and new words today. We need to learn about them, and because our memory isn't as sharp anymore, we need repetition."

Amity Papa and Mama's Canteen Project plans to build more canteens in mid-west regions in China, covering more elderly in difficult circumstance. Amity Board Chair Mr. Qiu Zhonghui, remarked that the biggest obstacles in setting up canteens in rural areas lies in the underdeveloped local supporting facilities, resulting in higher food supply costs. "We still need more support from society in order to expand in rural areas and to explore more possibilities."





► Interview with Mr. Qiu Zhonghui, Board Chair of Amity Foundation (Part Two)

In the final part three of the interview, Mr. Qiu Zhonghui, the Board Chair of Amity Foundation talks about motivations for social work and further prospects of charity in China.

(Part One / Part Two)

The interview was slightly edited for better understanding.

New Mission with “Third Distribution”

The “third distribution” is supposed to align with China’s goal of common prosperity. The concept of “third distribution” was first put forward by economist Li Yining in the 1990s. The document of the Fourth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee formally proposed to “attach importance to the role of the third distribution and the development of charity and other social public welfare undertakings.” In August 2021, the term “third distribution” was brought forward again at the tenth meeting of the Central Committee for Financial and Economic Affairs, arousing even greater public interest. On the one hand, the growth of companies has encountered challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. On the other hand, the CPC Central Committee announced a comprehensive move on poverty eradication and rural revitalisation, promoting common prosperity.

After the meeting of the Central Committee for Financial and Economic Affairs, many people have told me that now is a very good time for the development of public welfare undertakings and the third sector. Also, it’s a critical moment to emphasize the concept of common prosperity.

First of all, I think the third distribution is of great significance in promoting social harmony and narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor. It is also the way to consolidate the fruits of China's reform and opening-up.

As one of the participants in the third distribution, social organizations are unable to do a good job without more resources. The primary distribution is regulated by the market. The second distribution is mandatory through government taxation. The third distribution, as we say, is voluntary.

Through voluntary participation, discussion and communication among members of the society, the third distribution is achieved with social consensus. When talking about the prospect of the third distribution, I am optimistic and believe that we will keep promoting it.

Secondly, all participants in the third distribution must firmly adhere to the premise of meeting the actual needs of the disadvantaged groups in society. This includes more communication and consultation for this purpose among social organizations, with the government, as well as with

various social groups.

In the third distribution, it does not mean that there is a ready amount of money, consisting of 1% of China's GDP, sitting there for the purpose of public welfare. Instead, we have to amass resources through the voluntary donations of individuals, institutions and market players fulfilling their responsibility to society. I believe that this is a great opportunity for the development of social organizations. When social organizations reach out to the grassroots, go into the communities, understand the real needs of different groups, and actively raise funds based on such needs, we can then effectively respond to the needs of the public and realize our target of third distribution. In short, the third distribution must be based on the needs of grassroots groups, which can only be assessed on the field rather than in the office.

The diversity of projects under the third distribution is also very important. Social organizations should not only focus on traditional forms of aid, but also meet the needs of society in cultural, educational and athletic aspects. We should explore and

discover specific needs from different social groups, and aim to increase people's happiness with our work.

In this process, we need to proactively help the Communist Party and the government have a deeper understanding of the work of social organizations. One of the characteristics of social organizations is flexibility. We are able to do some experimental work, discuss and refine methods which could better meet the needs of society, and then carry out social advocacy after success, so that the government can take them as a reference. If such an experiment fails, we can stop and analyze our experience. The lesson we learn can also be used as a reference for the government. As long as the government recognizes the important role of social organizations, many challenging and painful problems in the third distribution will be solved.

One thing to keep in mind here is the rationality of resource allocation. If we have too many resources, we should beware the possibility of waste. Social organizations should raise funds according to the actual needs in the community. When funds exceed our capacity, we need to

put the brakes on to guarantee an effective use of the funds raised. This is part of the self-discipline we need to achieve, which is never easy. We must emphasize self-discipline and integrity, which I think are the basic but key points of the third distribution. To my belief, advocacy in this regard is something that we must never forget. Only by allocating resources more rationally and more transparently, can we really do a good job as a charity organization, and make the third distribution more sustainable.

Charity is a profession but also an ambition

The traditional concept of charity is often understood as giving and extending love and kindness to others. Once, when Mr. Zhu Chuanyi (a well-known scholar advocating philanthropy in China) raised the possibility of charity work increasing employment at a board meeting, some elderly colleagues could not accept it. In their opinion, charity was more like a cause relying on dedication, how could it be related to the job market? However, in the modern concept of charity, contributing to charity work and increasing employment are not contradictory, because public welfare, objectively speaking, is

not only a profession or career, but also an ambition.

What is the meaning of "ambition"? When one considers charity as an ambition, one may carry out their daily work with both the love for charity and ambition for their individual career. You can't ask all the people who join Amity or other social organizations to start their career with dedication, because then it will become a kind of compulsory work, not voluntary service. People first have to deal with their own survival needs, so a profession is what they must have in the first place. Amity has fostered quite a few social organizations in both urban and suburban areas, and all of them have contributed to the increase of employment in our society.

Social work is a cause of inner drive and motivation. We want our employees to be serious and dedicated, and to treat social work as a profession. For example, if an employee is interested in environmental protection and concerned about the work in this area, which is also in line with his/her own philosophy or life value, then it is more likely for him/her to do a good job in environmental protection and public welfare. Nowadays we

always talk about one's "original aspirations", or the love for work. If a person loves environmental protection, then he/she may look for a related organization and engage in environmental protection work. Only in this way, could one have inexhaustible drive to pursue this as a career.

But interest and enthusiasm are not enough for those in the philanthropy sector. Given the sector's great impact on society, I think there are two aspects that are important for a social organization.

One is professionalism. Foundations and social organizations are not simply "fund-providers". People donate money to us because they trust our professionalism. They believe that we can manage the money well and maximize the social and economic benefits of the funds according to the needs of the public. If social organizations are not professional enough, they will not be able to operate and grow in the long term.

Furthermore, when we talk about the third distribution or philanthropy, the most important thing is the impact on social culture and values. As we just mentioned, ideally, philanthropic

donation may reach 1% of our GDP in the future – actually 1% is not a big number but why do we pay so much attention to it? Because on one hand, social work plays an advocacy role for society and the government. On the other hand, its role in creating social culture, ideas and spirit is of paramount importance. In a sense, when people's material life is satisfied, they would start to focus on spiritual needs, which is significant for the stability and prosperity of society in the long term.

I think we should not underestimate the goal of 1% of GDP for charitable donations, although we still have a long way to go. Objectively speaking, we are only a small part of society, so we have to place ourselves in the right position and make full use of our advantages, so that our work can be more meaningful and worthwhile.

The Interactive and Symbiotic Relationship Between Industry and Institutions

Recently, I attended the board meeting of China Foundation Center (CFC) and talked about the sector's transparency work that Mr. Shang Yusheng (one of

the earliest initiators of China's philanthropy sector) has been working on. Transparency was actually the reason why we set up the Center. During that meeting, I suggested that we should not only do well the routine work at CFC, but also do a better job in information transparency.

Furthermore, we need to identify the common problems, difficulties or weaknesses within the sector through analysis of information. Efforts should be made in staff training and capacity building, especially in bringing into play the role of young people in the sector, so that we can ensure management transparency and facilitate a holistic and sustainable development of the sector.

We should regularly summarize common issues in the sector at forums and conferences held every year. At these events, our proposals should be more practical and mindful of the needs in society, and more relevant to the everyday life of our citizens. I have always been very supportive of the work of China Foundation Forum and have high hopes for it.

The Evergreen Library is an important work that China Foundation Forum has been doing for the sector. It is

necessary for us to keep a record of the development of our sector. Although philanthropy in China still has a long way to go, we should make a point of recording our accumulated experiences for our future. The Evergreen Library has just started, and I hope it will record the history of our sector step by step throughout its development. If we do not start the work now, it will be very difficult to do so decades down the line.

Taking Amity as an example, unfortunately, those who attended the first meeting of the board of directors have all passed away. It will be very difficult to piece together the situation back then. This is why I especially appreciate the work of China Foundation Forum, which not only functions as a platform for communication, but also for recording the history of our sector. We are willing to provide support in order to ensure a better future for the sector.

The relationship between an organization and the sector is a dialectical one. When we first established Amity NGO Development Center, many people did not understand, saying that Amity was "fostering its own rivals" when in fact it was

not. Instead, what we intend to cultivate is a bigger cause and industry possibilities. Only when the sector develops and the cause grows, will we have the possibility to develop and grow. We will never achieve that goal without the development of the whole sector.

Innovating for Development

Most foundations in China have only developed in the past 10 years, and a significant portion of them have an administrative background, while another considerable number are non-public or corporate foundations. As far as I know, founders play a very important role in the establishment of many corporate foundations. And a considerable number of them were not clear about the objectives of the foundations when they launched the corporate foundations. It is my hope that China Foundation Forum could do more to promote sector development.

Foundations in China are relatively young, but there are some advantages to that. I always hope that there should be more innovation, but in fact there is still not enough incentives for innovation in our sector. In my opinion, more motivation will

drive us far in this undertaking.

Some of the most basic principles that we have to uphold are our vision, self-discipline, transparency, as well as volunteerism. Meanwhile, the ability to help our industry thrive with innovation is also highly needed. Compared with the market, our drive, innovation and speed of development are far from enough, so we have to learn from the market and society.

Embarking on a New Journey

We are going through a very important change that has never been seen in a century. Faced with this change, everyone needs to think and reflect. Sometimes, transformation comes with pain. However, what we need to face is the new social reality, the new world situation, as well as the new stage of development of our country. Our original aspirations and vision remain unchanged, while the specific work must adapt to the new situation. Therefore, we need to come up with new strategies, tactics and measures. If we are able to integrate our personal fate, as well as the fate of our organization, into the overall development of our motherland,

the development of our future cause will be optimistic.

I believe that social organizations in China, through our development over the years and future efforts, will gradually make our voices heard in the international arena, and be widely recognized by society. We will become part of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, integrating into the development of the whole country, or even the world.

Sometimes I wonder why the older I get, the more motivated I seem to be? The fact is that I hope to do what I can to develop the philanthropic undertakings. The vision of the Amity Foundation is to make life more abundant, society more just, and the world a better place. Such a pursuit should be long-lasting. When I look at the work we have done so far, as well as the achievements we have made in the past, I could truly see the meaning of life. When I meet the partners we have worked with in the past and see how much they have moved on, I feel this is the constant source of motivation and what we call the abundance of life. This is what it really means.



Amity Future Engineers Program boasts the 6th Jiangsu Charity Awards

On September 5, 2022, the ceremony for 6th Jiangsu Charity Awards was held in Nanjing. A total of 30 companies, 20 social organizations, 39 groups and individuals, and 30 charity projects received the awards. The Amity Future Engineers Program won "The Most Influential Project" under the Jiangsu Charity Awards.

The Amity Foundation launched its Future Engineers Program in 2016, which provides financial support and capacity development to vocational school students with financial difficulties. The program aims to help these students complete their studies, inspire their professional spirit, and support them to become outstanding practitioners in future careers. Up to now, Amity Future Engineers Program has offered over RMB 10 million to support 3,190 students from 16 schools across 9 cities in 5 provinces.

"Strive to give everyone a chance" is the mission of the program. Rather than merely financial support, the program tailors systematic services according to the actual situation of the beneficiaries. In addition to student subsidies, Amity also provides an array of workshops to mobilize enthusiasm and improve cognitive and behavioral abilities, in order to facilitate the students' development and career path.

Now, more than 90% beneficiaries under the Amity Future Engineers Program have graduated and found a job. In the future, the Amity Foundation will continue joining hands with all forces of the society to help more "future engineers" realize their dreams and serve the society.







With Every Step, A Drop Saved And A Life Changed

The “Walk for Living Water 2022” virtual walkathon, co-organized by Amity Foundation (Hong Kong) and Hong Kong Water Supplies Department, was successfully held from July 18 to August 21, 2022. More than 200 participants, churches, groups and corporations in Hong Kong, Britain, Canada, and Germany supported and walked more than 3.2 million steps, which is equivalent to 2,500 kilometers, in this event!

This year's Walk was conceived in line with the principles of the "World Water Day" and "Sustainable Development Goals". Although it was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw active participation and warm support from many friends and volunteers, as well as institutions and organizations, including Fujifilm Business Innovation Hong Kong Ltd., Ten Pao Group Holdings Ltd., Tseung Kwan O Desalination Plant, Church of the Good Shepherd, and SKH Tsang Shiu Tim Secondary School.

Thanks to the virtual nature of the event, participants were free to decide the time and place for their own challenges during the event period. In addition to the classic 1-day walk category for individual and team walkers, a new 7-day walk category was added this year for the more adventurous-minded challengers.

The event saw some walkers achieving more than 110,000 steps in the 7-day challenge, with some even achieving 80,000 steps in the 1-day challenge!

To date, Amity's Living Water Campaign has raised a total of HK\$105,000. The raised funds will be used to support education on water conservation and environmental protection, as well as the construction of water and sanitation facilities for areas in need. Water projects funded by last year's Walk have been completed in 2022, benefitting around 6000 students and villagers in Nepal, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka.

Through the Living Water Campaign and the Walk for Living Water, Amity encourages the public to exercise and maintain physical and mental health, while calling on all to cherish and contribute to providing sustainable water resources to people in need.





Tea of Life: Living Water For Sri Lanka

Since 2010, The Amity Foundation's Living Water Campaign has been raising public awareness of the global water crisis and helping to implement water projects all over the world. In 2021, Amity partnered with the Board of Social Responsibility (BSR) and the Church of Ceylon in Sri Lanka, funding the construction of deep wells and water storage tanks in the Badulla district in Sri Lanka. Sivanu Sinnaiah tells the story behind the tea grown in Sri Lanka and how the Living Water Campaign's project has brought hope to his community.

Sivanu Sinnaiah has been with the community for over 35 years on the Dyraaba Tea Estate in the Badulla district of Sri Lanka. Since 1914, it has had a succession of owners and managers, each with their own vision that later shaped the estate. The Estate lies at an altitude between 4,000 and 5,900 feet above sea level, which makes for excellent tea-growing conditions. Today, Dyraaba produces quality Black Ceylon Teas enjoyed around the world.

“Tea has a rich heritage, steeped in history and integral to the economy of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is world-famous for the quality of tea that has been produced through the ages. No two tea leaves share the same aroma and taste. Yet behind each cup of tea lies the story of untold hardship.”

“In the days of colonialism, a community left India for Sri Lanka, hoping for a better income and a brighter future for their children. It was an arduous journey on which they faced various pandemics and diseases that wiped out entire families. When they finally settled they were stripped of their rights and exploited by tea plantations for nearly 200 years. This community is hoping against hope that they could be assigned some land, have water to drink and some means to survive.”

Sivanu Sinnaiah has seen something beyond the tea industry – the lives of the people living in the Dyraaba Tea Estate owned by the leading plantation company in the country. We asked him some questions regarding the water project that was implemented for this community.

● *What was the people's reaction for the water project ?*

- People were confused since not even the company they worked for ever asked the question of water or looked into their personal matters and out of nowhere this group (BSR) was interested in helping. They were happy, overjoyed when they received water. This was a dream come true. They never expected, they never thought that people even knew or cared for their situation. This came in as a total surprise. At a time when their day to day lives are faced with so many hardships, this was a miracle from God. The timing, the plan was perfect.

● *What was the highlight of the project?*

- I have seen various projects, but this was something that met the direct needs of the people. It is water we are talking about. How important is water to these people? They have been blessed. The people were not left out, this project got the families involved, it was a project that they worked among themselves. In fact, they are taking leadership to manage the entire project, they are excited not only have you given them water, you have also instilled belief in them regarding

their own dignity and their own capacity. For once they are people who are capable of not only plucking the two leaves and a bud, but capable of organizing, planning and managing something bigger than life. This will be a brilliant learning curve, even if there are some failures or difficulties the people will be able to sit around and resolve them. This is their water, this is their project and their effort.

● *Has the project made life easier for the people, how has it impacted the community?*

- People only had access to drinking water for some parts of the year, the well-used to dry up during windy seasons and also dry seasons. People had to purely depend on water bowsters that would provide them water in an ad hoc manner whenever it came. They had to collect water of days in these utensils and conserve the little drinking water available not sure when the next supply would reach them. Today they are receiving drinking water continuously. It has taken so many generations but finally they have water. This has additional health and safety benefits especially for the children and women who were the worst affected during acute water shortages.

● *What other sources of water did the community have access?*

- They had to travel around 3-4km to a little water way to wash clothes and for their bathing. I have seen mothers carry their children in one hand and another load of clothes in the other hand or on top of their heads going to the little spring. Most of their day was gone for this, this also seriously impacted the security and protection of young girls and women, was dangerous for little children and had its own perils. People accepted it as part of their lives. The risks and dangers were something that was part of their destiny they thought, and a pattern that continued through their childhood to their adult years.

● *Will the present water project serve the water needs of the community?*

- Yes, not only drinking water they would also have water for other requirements. This is such an important area for young girl and women. Finally, they will have privacy and feel safe. This will also help them during times of sickness, nights and during rainy weather.

● *What is the overall hygiene and sanitation situation?*

- There could be some improvements. Some have toilets while there are others who do not have toilets. Some may now look at the need for toilets as well.

● *What are the challenges apart from the economy /price escalation/inflation and COVID-19?*

- The estates are owned by Private companies and the lands of their line houses that they live are not owned by them. The government administrative system classifies these as private owned properties and would not get involved even when they have funds from various bi-lateral or multi-lateral grants. The worst is when you need to get approvals, there is no provision for owners of land to provide permission for constructions etc and even the management in the estate do not have the power over these matters since they personally do not own the properties but often owned by large public quoted companies. So administratively to obtain approval for work is a nightmare. The work in these estates take a longer duration than others. The people cannot directly approach the estate management and they need to approach through their trade unions that are now extremely political. So therefore any project has to negotiate between the government, the estate management and the trade unions. Each group is also worried about the repercussions they may have to face.

● *What are your final thoughts about the water project to a community in the Dyraaba estate ?*

- I wish all development projects will consider the interest of the people as a priority and meet the needs of the people like it happened in this project. Development work has to meet the needs of the people. Thank God, this project is a huge success and that much I can tell you!



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