



## 助學紀實 災後助學 刻不容緩

### Inside Story – Immediate Action for Disaster Relief

本年，內地發生多宗自然災害，當中以 2012 年 9 月雲南省彝良縣及 2013 年 4 月四川省雅安市地震影響範圍較大及最為大眾關注。苗圃在兩地均有資助學校項目，對災情十分重視。幸而，兩次災害中，苗校都能保持完好，未有倒塌及造成人命傷亡，學校成為了師生的可靠避災地點。

每次災害發生後，苗圃都會盡快與當地苗校聯絡，了解學校、師生及當地情況。情況許可下，學校可以提供照片及文字報告，讓我們更清楚現場情形，以便向捐款人及公眾發佈。

待災情穩定，我們會派出工作組，親身到苗校及災區，視察災情、學校受災情況及需要等，亦會為學校提供災後恢復的建議，讓學生可以盡快回復校園生活，減少對他們的影響。

#### **2012 年 9 月雲南省彝良縣地震**

苗圃在災區共援建了 27 所小學，所有學校完好。工作組在 10 月到災區，為其中 14 所學校進行考察。所有考察學校整體建築安全，結構正常，輕微損毀主要為牆身出現裂縫、批盪脫落及圍牆損毀，工作組向當地部門提供了維修的建議，確保校舍維持在良好狀態。

我們確定資助 2 所苗校的維修加固工程及當地 3 所損毀嚴重的小學重建，資助額合共約人民幣 715 萬元。

#### **2013 年 4 月四川省雅安市地震**

雅安市蘆山、天全及寶興縣，共有 5 所由苗圃資助興建的小學及宿舍樓。我們在災後 10 天派出了工作組到各校視察，所有建築結構完好，僅非主力牆體

This year a number of natural disasters occurred in China. The 2012 Yiliang earthquake and the 2013 Ya'an earthquake caused many fatalities and severe damage to property. There was a considerable outpouring of public sympathy in the aftermath of these terrible events. Sowers Action was particularly concerned as it was in the midst of developing several school projects in the affected areas. It was fortunate that our schools did not collapse. In fact, all of our schools stood in good condition in the aftermath of the quakes, particularly relative to surrounding structures. Most importantly, none of our students or staff were injured.

In the time immediately following a natural disaster, Sowers Action kicks into high gear, first by connecting with local schools to ascertain the condition and whereabouts of students and teachers, and to get the most up-to-date information on the condition of our schools and on the local situation. Whenever possible, Sowers Action does what it can to get photos and reports in order to get a full picture of the situation on the ground and to inform the donor and the public.

Wherever appropriate, Sowers Action takes the added step of dispatching work groups to affected regions to lend whatever aid they can and to gather details on the local situation, including the condition of affected schools. Work groups make recommendations on disaster recovery with a view to getting teachers back to work and students back in the classroom as early as possible, both to ensure the students do not have large breaks in their education and, more importantly, to give people a semblance of normalcy after a traumatic event.

#### **Yiliang Earthquake, September 2012**

In the aftermath of the Yiliang earthquake, the 27 primary schools in Yiliang were all found to be in good condition. In October 2012, Sowers Action sent work groups to inspect 14 schools. They reported all of the schools were structurally sound. Minor structural damage was identified, however, including cracks in walls, peeling paint and broken fencing. Accordingly, the working groups provided maintenance and repair recommendations to the appropriate local authorities. As a final gesture, Sowers Action promised to sponsor



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出現非結構性裂紋，可以修復，學生獲安排在板房教室恢復上課。其中「蘆山縣龍門鄉高占梅助學長征苗圃希望小學」位處震央，在 2005 年興建，按當時七度抗震烈度的設計，能夠抵禦是次九度烈度的地震，做到中震不損，確保師生安全。

當地政府安排為受損學校進行修復工程，預計在 2013 年 9 月內完成。

兩次地震後，本會向公眾發出了捐款呼籲，得到了大眾的支持，加上 2012 年度的助學長征及茶馬古道助學行活動善款，特別撥作支援彝良災後恢復工作，合共籌得逾港幣 410 萬元。所有善款優先用作資助災區與教育相關的救援項目，展開災後修復工作。

苗校在災害中只有輕微損毀，在維修鞏固後可以繼續使用，全賴我們嚴謹的監察機制，遵守「實地考察、直接資助、長期跟進」的工作守則。由確認資助、施工期間至驗收校舍，均由工作組跟進，確保施工質量符合國家規定。在施工期間分期撥款，則可保障善款的運用及工程進度。我們會繼續以謹慎、專業的態度，依照守則，監管每個資助項目，務求讓苗校成為師生安全、合適的學習園地。



reinforcement projects for two schools and the reconstruction of three seriously damaged local primary schools for a total sum of RMB7.15 million.

#### Ya'an Earthquake, April 2013

All told, Sowers Action has five sponsored schools and dormitories located in Lushan, Baoxing, Tianquan of Ya'an city, all areas affected by the Ya'an earthquake. Only ten days after the quake, Sowers Action sent work groups to affected areas to inspect local schools and dormitories. Our teams found the schools were still structurally sound despite the development of cracks on non-core walls, which in any case were easily repairable. Arrangements were made for students to resume their lessons in temporarily classrooms. One of the schools, built in 2005, was located at the epicenter of the earthquake. It was notable for having a Seismic Fortification Intensity of 7 yet still withstanding a quake with a Seismic Fortification Intensity of 9. Students and teachers were safe and the school has since undergone maintenance scheduled for completion in September 2013.

After each of these earthquakes, Sowers Action sent out an appeal to the public to donate generously. People from all walks of life stepped up and lent their support. Two events were organized specifically to raise awareness of the damage caused by the earthquake in Yiliang and also to raise funds. Both turned out to be highly successful. The Sowers Action Long March for Education and the Sowers Action Ancient Tea Horse Route Expedition together raised HK\$4.1 million.

One of the big lessons we learned after the earthquakes was just how effective our strict monitoring mechanism and "On-site Assessment, Direct Subsidy & Long-Term Follow-up" program were for ensuring the durability of our schools. None of our schools were seriously damaged in the earthquakes and all were quickly put back into service after non-critical repairs and maintenance. Starting from the initial decision to sponsor a particular school all the way up to its completion, our work groups conducted detailed follow-up inspections of each project to ensure they complied with national requirements and standards.

Our first priority is always the safety and security of our teachers and students, but we also feel an obligation to our donors to make sure that the money we receive is spent wisely. Towards this end, we stick to a practice of paying by installment directly into the accounts of recipients to reduce the chances of graft. This is in line with one of our founding principles; that being to engage in charitable activities in a highly professional and transparent manner, first and foremost by closely monitoring each project in order to make certain our teachers and students have a safe environment to work in and also to ensure that the donations we receive are used in the most effective way possible.



## 助學紀實

## 多元發展 惠澤弱勢兒童－水富苗圃兒童福利院

# Diversified Development in Aid of Disadvantaged Children — The Shuifu Sowers Children's Home

本年，苗圃行動加速了「多元助學」的步伐，於雲南省營運水富苗圃兒童福利院（孤兒院舍），拓展新的資助領域。

隨著去年周年大會，通過苗圃開設兒童福利院，給予孤兒生活保障外，亦會安排他們接受正規或特殊教育。本年初河南省一所民辦兒童福利院發生火災，造成兒童傷亡，是次慘劇加重了苗圃人對內地孤兒問題的關注。現時內地兒童福利政策仍在發展之中，數以萬計的孤兒仍未得到妥善的照顧，生活堪虞。我們希望利用在內地助學的經驗，運用到幫助孤兒之上，發揮「拾遺補缺」的作用，讓資助覆蓋到更多有需要的層面。

得到內地相關單位的支持，苗圃在雲南省昭通市水富縣已經取得「民辦非企業單位」證書，以「官建民辦」的方式，營運第一所兒童福利院－水富苗圃。我們於7月1日正式接手營運，隨即為房舍進行改善工程及添置傢俱和設備，並引入多種資源，盡力為兒童提供安全合適的成長環境。

現時，水富苗圃共接收了37名孤兒，年齡由2至17歲，當中3人為殘疾兒童。我們除了為兒童提供日常生活照顧外，並會安排適齡學生到附近學校就學，及協助殘疾兒童爭取復康訓練。兒童由院舍的工作人員，日夜輪流當值照顧。除了正副院長，還有專門照顧兒童起居、學習及心理健康等範疇的導師和職員。

This year, Sowers Action stepped up development of the "Multipurpose Educational Aid" program, an initiative of the "Shuifu Sowers Children's Home", an orphanage established and operated in Yunnan Province. Shuifu Sowers' efforts to provide services to orphaned children through Children's Home represent an expansion of Sowers Action's original mandate of simply providing education aid in rural China for underprivileged children.

At last year's Annual General Meeting (AGM), the governing body of Sowers Action approved the project of running orphanage with the aim of providing children without parents who had no place to go a secure living environment as well as formal education or special training. The decision to build an orphanage was timely as earlier this year, a private orphanage in Henan Province burnt to the ground causing several fatalities, including many children. The tragedy brought to light the plight of orphans in mainland China where children's welfare is still a developing area of policy. Tens of thousands of orphans in China live without proper care or shelter and with no access to education. Sowers Action is in a good position to ameliorate this situation given its track record of providing educational services to children in need.

With the support of its mainland government unit, Sowers Action managed to secure "private non-enterprise" certification for Shuifu County located in Zhaotong City in Yunnan Province. The awarding of private non-enterprise status to Sowers Action is a milestone insofar as it represents the first successful government-NGO collaboration to develop and operate an orphanage in mainland China. On 1 July, Sowers Action took over operation of the Shuifu Sowers orphanage beginning by improving the living conditions by purchasing furniture and improving the facilities in order to provide safe and proper living conditions for the children.



## Diversified Development in Aid of Disadvantaged Children — The Shuifu Sowers Children's Home

水富苗圃的營運理念是讓它有家的感覺，除了飯飽衣暖外，孩子們都要參加院舍清潔、幫廚、洗衣等家務，更重要的是我們也強調家庭在德育方面的教育。生活模式貼近當地生活，例如，當地夏天可達 38 度高溫，但因為普通家庭不一定有冷氣，因此我們的房間也沒有冷氣。有一天孩子們年滿 18 歲離開時，不會因為長期過度照顧，連基本生活如煮個方便麵都不會。

水富苗圃由當地民政局及苗圃成立管理委員會共同管理。管理委員會為院舍的管理及發展提出意見，並按條件完善整體規劃及探索孤兒救助的最佳模式。苗圃會承擔營運的開支，預計每年營運費用約人民幣 100 萬元，其中民政局會按國家規定，向水富戶籍的合資格雙孤兒童每月發放 1000 元補助，或向未符資格的兒童發放約 250 元的低保金。水富苗圃貫徹會方財務公開透明的原則，每年進行財務審計，向當地民政局提交報告及向公眾公開賬目。

在短中期發展方面，我們會繼續改善院舍的設施及環境，例如天台防水工程、擴充食堂及加強衛生管理等。另外，工作人員會接受不同的培訓，如急救、心理健康，以便在日常生活中更全面地照顧兒童。水富苗圃運作漸趨穩定，計劃先增收約 20 名孤兒，隨後逐步增收至 90 人，工作人員人數當然亦相應增加。我們冀望充分利用院舍的設備，為更多孤兒提供重回正常生活的機會。

長遠而言，這個嶄新的項目，還肩負著一個重要使命。希望水富苗圃的成功開展，在內地保護兒童法例發展之時，能成為孤兒院舍營辦的藍本，為政策發展帶來裨益。對於營辦一所福利院，沒有容易的事，但我們仍抱持著最大的願望，希望把這個資助模式複製到其他市縣，以我們的心力，在一條陌生和漆暗的路前面，為孤兒們點起照路的燈。

At present, Shuifu Sowers houses a total of thirty-seven orphans, aged from two to seventeen, three of the children are disabled. Overseeing the orphanage is a full-time professional team that includes a principle, a vice principle and tutors. There is always at least one person on duty at all times so the school is staffed twenty-four hours a day. Apart from providing for the children's daily care, arrangements have been made for school-age children to attend schools in the area. Rehabilitation training is also provided for the children with disabilities.

Shuifu Sowers' operational philosophy is to make its orphanages "feel like home". Part of this ethos entails instilling a sense of ownership and pride in the orphanage, treating it more like a home than a temporary living accommodation. Thus, Shuifu Sowers goes beyond simply providing the children food and warm clothing. They are also assigned chores that could include everything from the cleaning of the residence, kitchen help, laundry and other miscellaneous duties.

It should be noted that, at least in the early stages of the development of the school, the aim is to attempt to replicate as closely as possible the typical living standard and environment of the area in which the orphanage is located. So, for example, although the local temperature in summer can sometimes reach 38 degrees, most ordinary families in Yunnan do not have air conditioning. Similarly, there is no air conditioning in Shuifu Sowers.

No less important than providing the children a proper education, Shuifu Sowers believes an integral part of the overall preparation for the children to become responsible citizens is to inculcate them with a strong sense of morality, something that under normal circumstances would be the responsibility of their parents.

By the time the children reach age eighteen, Shuifu Sowers feels the children have developed sufficient self-reliance to make their way in the world so at that age they are required to leave the orphanage to make room for younger and more needy children.

Shuifu Sowers is co-managed by the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Zhaotong City and Sowers Action. The management committee manages the orphanage and provides suggestions for its future development. Sowers Action provides the lion's share of the budget for the orphanage, which comes to approximately RMB1 million per annum. The Civil Affairs Bureau will according to state regulations and granting subsidy to qualified orphan, i.e. Shuifu residence who is qualified as double orphans will be granted RMB1,000 per month as subsidy, or the issuance of children do not meet eligibility guaranteeing subsidy of about RMB250 per month.

In all of its dealings, especially those pertaining to financial matters, Shuifu Sowers strictly adheres to the principal of transparency, including granular financial disclosures. In addition, each year an audit is conducted with the results submitted to the local Civil Affairs Bureau and subsequently to the public.

A priority of Shuifu Sowers' short- and medium-term development of the orphanage is the overall improvement of the facilities and residences, including the waterproofing of the roof, expansion of the student canteen and improvement of the overall hygiene of the premises.

While these measures are being implemented, the staff at the orphanage will be trained in a range of skills designed to provide comprehensive care to the children. Among the courses on offer will be first aid certification and basic mental health training.

Shuifu Sowers is currently in a period of transition. Once the infrastructure of the school has been improved and the school's operations stabilized, the plan is for the orphanage to adopt an extra twenty orphans, and in time reaches 90, with the number of staff increased accordingly.

Described above are the short- and medium-term plans for Shuifu Sowers Children's Home. Provided the orphanage ultimately proves a success, it is hoped that what was accomplished at Shuifu Sowers will come to be used as a blueprint for a nation-wide initiative that would see similar institutions spring up all over mainland China. To the degree Shuifu Sowers is shown to be effective in improving the lives of China's orphans, it will provide a powerful argument to legislate for children's protection in mainland China. This goal is still a long way off and there is much work to be done in the meantime, but the effort to help children who have nowhere else to turn is not a choice but a sacred duty.

