


S H A R E

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FOCUS ~ CHINA MINSITRY

Caring for the Marginalized with Practical Mission

Written by: Tsun Wan Yan

Jesus demanded his disciples to care for the marginalized just as he did on earth. CEDAR responded to His call when we see the needs of the people in Yunnan, China. Partnering with the local churches, we have been diligently working to bring hope to those in need.

Between 2006 and 2007, the Chinese government encouraged faith groups to maximize their positive influence to build a more harmonious society. Christian Council of China of Baoshan City, Yunnan, (CCCBC) where a lot of ethnic groups reside, is one of the Christian bodies that began to engage heavily in social services under this directive.

The Outcast Next Door

Today, China has the means to greatly develop communities and fight poverty compared to a decade ago, but lacks behind in terms of labor force and skills when it comes to social services. CEDAR's experience made it the perfect trainer to support and equip the workers of the churches, where they could become neighbors of the underprivileged.

Baoshan sits in western Yunnan and is close to the Golden Triangle, a national hotbed of drug issues. Believers in CCCBC come across lives ruined by drugs every day, who desperately needs a hand from others. As the Good Samaritan saw a neighbor in the Jew being robbed, brothers and sisters in CCCBC

saw neighbors in the outcasts who are regarded as worthless, hated, and the forsaken by the society.

As a result, "The Rock" Community Services Department of Baoshan Christian Council ("The Rock" CSD) started its Christian drug therapy service soon after its conception. Wang (name obscured) is a drug rehab of the Ruili Reborn Garden Gospel Detox Center by the "The Rock" CSD, who used to be an elite teacher in the schools in the mountains but became addicted to opium due to curiosity. The fall from a respected teacher to a condemned addict had such a great impact on him that he relapsed even after three physically restrained therapies.

Referred by a pastor, Wang joined the Ruili Reborn Garden Gospel Detox Center. The staff and members there walked alongside him with prayers and love, and successfully helped him to drop the addiction by introducing him the Christian faith which rebuilt his life values and interpersonal relationships.

Wang is a great example of the victims robbed by drugs and couldn't escape, who were then healed by experiencing love. Last year he decided to respond with his life to the calling to love one's neighbors, and started to help the newcomers in the establishment.



The Outcast from Far Away

Not only did the CCCBC responded to those who were close by, it also reached out to the mountains in the borders and the Lisu immigrants. Lisu is a forgotten tribe on the freezing highlands of Yunnan, whose people are not classified as citizens of China, hence are barred from education, medical, and social security benefits. The lack of farming lands and techniques resulted in a poor food supply and nutrition for their children, some of which have ulcers developed on their bodies.

The majority of Lisu only speak their own language due to



generations of seclusion, which made it more difficult for foreigners to help them. We are thankful that there are believers who could speak Lisu in the local churches who were able to communicate and befriend those in the mountains. CEDAR and the "The Rock" CSD are constantly observing and evaluating the actual needs of the villagers in order to bring positive and appropriate changes.

We found that their ways to grow crops were not optimal which led to a low germination rate of crops and hence producing less food. "The Rock" CSD started to give seeds to each family and provide them the necessary training to grow them, hoping to strengthen their food resource in the long run. Moreover, the church would send voluntary medical staff to provide free medical services to the villagers, including diagnosis and distributing antipyretics, laxatives, and painkillers to those in need; they would provide one on one education about health and disease prevention; they would also evaluate the nutrition of the children and distribute 4-month nutrition meals to help their body conditions and help them look better.

Recently, teachers started to teach the village kids Mandarin, math, and culture, preparing them to connect with the outside world and translate for their parents through writing and speaking Chinese. It also encouraged great intellectual and behavioral growth in the children so that they would have the skills needed to survive outside the villages once they become independent.



Promoting Integral Mission

CCCBC is active in both the frontline and the back, where it is constantly educating and raising awareness in other Christian bodies about the comprehensiveness of the Gospel, and the need to be the salt and light of the society. CEDAR has been partnering with "The Rock" CSD in hosting HIV/AIDS trainings and Integral Mission trainings since 2015, educating multiple churches within Baoshan about HIV prevention and the integral service under the Great Commission.

Some participants of the training said that they were unfamiliar with HIV/AIDS before and thought normal social interaction would cause infections. The course taught them the transmission and prevention of HIV and enabled them to encourage others to safely interact with people living with HIV without any stereotypes. The course is also where a lot of participants first heard of the Integral Mission, that God demands us to walk with our neighbors who are neglected and oppressed, by rediscovering His commandments and commissions.

Our neighbors are those in whom we could see unfulfilled needs. Brothers and sisters in Yunnan did just that and responded by being good neighbors themselves. Pray that we could be more sensitive to the needs of those who are around us and ready ourselves to respond in faith and action.

STEP INTO THE WORLD



Walk with the Marginalized Communities in China

Support CEDAR and our partners in Yunnan, Sichuan and Guangdong, China to equip and train up local churches and NGOs to serve as a "Good Neighbor", walking with the disadvantaged and marginalized communities.

Our works included:

- > Serve the ex-drug addicts and people living with HIV/AIDS with holistic caring.
- > Support our partner in Baoshan, Yunnan to serve the ex-drug addicts and migrant communities.
- > Work with partners in both China and Myanmar together, to build up and provide supporting network to the migrant workers and families affected by HIV/AIDS in the border area.
- > Support partner the Migrant Children Care Centre in Kunming to help the migrant workers from rural area and their children to adapt to the city life.
- > Support partner in Sichuan to provide post-disaster caring and recovery work.
- > Provide training to the workers from NGOs in Guangdong.

DONATION & PARTNERSHIP

CEDAR would like to appeal to churches and Christians for regular donations so that CEDAR can continue to support ongoing projects.

Direct deposit> HSBC 600-385678-001

Cheque> Payable to 'CEDAR FUND'

Autopay> <http://cedarfundeng.wordpress.com/donations/>

Online donation> <http://bit.ly/cedar-online-donation-eng>

BACK TO THE BIBLE



Take Care of the Wounded and Thou Shalt Receive Eternal Life? (Luke 10:25-37)

These are familiar verses to us where Jesus discussed eternal life with a lawyer, while the story of the Good Samaritan is encouraging all of us to serve our neighbors today. When Jesus told the lawyer “Do this and you will live,” how did you interpret His words?

CEDAR’s China Programme Advisor, Dr. Mok Chiu Yau, often study this exchange between Jesus and the lawyer with the churches in China in hoping that the believers could reflect on the relationships between the Gospel, eternal life, and the commandments of loving God and one another, and further apply it to their daily lives.

Go to our website to read the article “Take Care of the Wounded and Thou Shalt Receive Eternal Life?” in its entirety. Dr. Mok’s interpretation of the verses (consolidated below) could also be used as personal or fellowship Bible study materials. <http://bit.ly/cedar-share220-biblee>



1. What is the “eternal life”?

Jesus said in Luke 10:28, “Do this and you will live,” which could be directly translated into, “Do this while you live on.” It was pertaining to the fact that if we could love God and our neighbors today, we are living a proper and true eternal life - a life that has eternal value.

2. The law taught us to love our neighbors as ourselves. What did the Good Samaritan teach us about loving our neighbors?

According to the Old Testament, “neighbors” are anyone in the body of Israel, who were bound together by their covenant with God and consequently with one another, and therefore were held responsible in loving one another faithfully. This “faithful love” is the same as the “mercy” exhibited by the Good Samaritan.

3. What did Jesus mean by “Do likewise”?

Referring to the Hebrew text of Luke 10:37, when the lawyer replied, “The one who had mercy on him (is his neighbor),” and Jesus said, “Go and do likewise,” His focus was on the fact that one should “Faithfully carry out his responsibilities to his neighbors” and have mercy on them.

4. What is the “Gospel”?

The “eternal life” we receive when we accept the Gospel points to the present where we could love God and one another. Those who turn a blind eye to their neighbors in need is not preaching Jesus’ Gospel in its entirety.

TAKING ACTION



Expanding the Horizon and Serving the Crowd

- An Interview with Rev. Anders Chan of the Mongkok Baptist Church

God’s work is to be seen everywhere if the church would focus on its surroundings and involve in the community. The Mongkok Baptist Church (MBC) started a three-year “Faithful Community Servant” campaign in 2014.

“I’m in full agreement with the Integral Mission promoted by CEDAR—we cannot separate the Gospel from social services, and we have to respond in everything we got,” said Rev. Anders Chan, the Vice Leading Pastor of MBC, “we hoped to expand the visions of our brothers and sisters beyond Hong Kong through CEDAR’s work, where we could cultivate a global caring culture. Then we could serve the local needs with such vision and be prepared for possible callings to far ends of the earth if asked by God.”

Rev. Chan and a bunch of members of the MBC visited Yunnan, China, in 2013. He said, “The most unforgettable moment is when the Lisu sing their hymns without any backing instruments in a small chapel up on the mountains. The perfect unity in their voices and the resonance it caused, brought tears to our eyes... The joy, purity and loyalty before God in the face of tremendous daily hardships were cleansing our spirits.”

On top of being encouraged by how the locals worship, Rev. Chan and the participants were also shown the practical servanthood of the Fu-kang (Rehabilitation) Home ran by Dali Prefecture Christian Council (Social Service) serving drug addicts and people living with HIV.

One of the members asked about the usage of a few beds furnished in the Fu-kang Home out of curiosity during their visit, and did not expect the answer that those were for those people living with HIV in the terminal phase to live their last days in relative comfort. Staff and members of the Fu-kang Home would surround the patients with hymns and walk the last hours with them. “They were practical not only by providing the poor what they needed, but also by being with them physically. Their servanthood really expanded our horizons.” Said Rev. Chan.

Integral Mission and integral servanthood have been the objectives and the lessons of life for CEDAR. They are also embraced by MBC as the guideline to raise their younger generations, “I hope the young members who visited China could apply what they have learned to the caring of the weak and the actualization of Integral Mission in their surroundings here in Hong Kong.” Said Rev. Chan as we long for the same.

JOIN HANDS JOIN HEARTS



Join Hands with Children with a Pure Heart – Bringing Hope to Migrant Children

Development is often a two-sided sword that wields both benefits and issues. “Migrant worker” is no longer a novel term after being featured so much by the media of Hong Kong and China in the stories of developments. Kunming is one of the main destinations in where farmers wish to improve their living conditions and search for new opportunities, often bringing their children along with them. However, harsh truths await them behind the dreams. Without proper household registration, the migrant children could not access education, medical, and social security benefits. Busy parents lack the time to stay with their children, and the majority of the families could not afford private schools. Under such circumstances, migrant children are likely to inherit the poverty status of their families.

CEDAR’s partner, the Migrant Children Care Centre in Kunming, saw the needs in the migrant families and responded with actions to help the migrant children to adapt to the city life. The centre provides services through its library, children’s choir, and interest classes, where children could develop and grow in good hands. Our partner plans their work around the goal to care for the migrant children’s physical, mental, and spiritual needs, and to protect children rights. Migrant children are given leading roles in activities such as drawing safety maps, where they act as young volunteers in promoting road and communication safety while strengthening their confidence and partnership skills. The centre also hosts family events for the parents who lack the time to see their children to give them opportunities to leave beautiful memories.

Churches in Hong Kong volunteered to help the migrant children in Kunming too. The Hong Kong Chinese Church of Christ – Wah Fung (HKCCCWF) has been supporting CEDAR’s work in Yunnan and sharing our work with its members since 2011. This year in July, Rev. Kwong of the church, together with three young members, Fung, Ming, and Ken, went to Kunming and volunteered in the Hope Summer Camp hosted by our partner. The three young men were invited by the pastors of the church to serve with an international team of volunteers in the migrant children summer camp before going to college. They did storytelling, played games, and taught basic English in the Hope Summer Camp, and had a joyous and meaningful vacation with the local children.

The young believers told us that they have learned a lot in the experience. They mentioned the novel experience of holding the children’s hand to use the restrooms, which might seem trivial and might not contribute much in improving their conditions, but it was in such tiny matters where the young men could fully engage and bond with the migrant children while forming great memories.

The Hope Summer Camp only lasted a week, but the three believers were deeply touched by the children’s genuineness and the selflessness of the volunteers from everywhere. They planned to share with their brothers and sisters in church about the trip and mobilize more people to go with them next year, where they could care for the neighbors far away and love the migrant families with the love and grace given to them by God.

OPERATING STATEMENT

		Jul 15 - Jun 16	
Income	Donations	HK\$	13,393,783
	Grants		913,664
	Appeal for Relief		2,610,346
	Other Income		374,162
		HK\$	17,291,955
Expenditure	Projects	Asia	4,972,122
		China	2,623,980
		Africa	1,479,605
	Relief Projects		4,827,285
	Education Ministry		1,720,094
	Administration		1,818,518
		HK\$	17,441,604
Surplus/(Deficit)		HK\$	(149,649)

Budget for New Fiscal Year (Jul 2016 to June 2017) is HKD16,981,027. (Excluded the reserved relief fund HKD1,119,581)

Please remember the needs of CEDAR and partner, through prayers and donation, to ensure all the project to be implemented. 🙏