

Moving Forward

繼續 · 向前走



那些年，幾個年青人懷著一個理想，希望為中國教育略盡綿力，從而草創苗圃行動。助學路上，困難和挑戰一個接一個，全憑一批又一批義工朋友前仆後繼，同心協力，我們才得以將挑戰一一克服。如今回望，世情、人事都翻了不少幾翻；苗圃人的心，卻從來未變。

20年前，國家雖已推行改革一段時間，但教育事業仍然相當落後，急需支援，苗圃因而投入助學工作，透過捐資建校和資助學費，讓更多學生得以在安全的環境下學習，同時減輕其家人的經濟負擔。我們希望做到「人人有書讀，一個都不能少」，「將中國人口包袱轉化成智力資源」。

改革開放令國家經濟起飛，教育改革得以逐步落實。基本教育權利獲得保障的同時，資源的供需也出現大幅度的改變。去年年底，我們展開了大型回訪計劃，透過「實地考察」及「長期跟進」，為過去的資助作評估和總結，並探討內地教育的最新狀況，從而制定今後的發展方向。

多年來，我們堅持「治貧須治本，治本在教育」的理念。如今，我們按社會發展而改變模式，提倡全方位的「多元助學」，將支援重點由建校及設施，擴展至包括師資培訓、學生資助及特殊教育的四大領域。不變的，是我們依舊「拾遺補缺」，積極為學童創造平等的教育機會。

相對於硬件設施，軟件資助來得更加複雜，對人員的要求亦更高，中港兩地通力合作顯得更為關鍵。今年5月，我們與長期合作的雲南省教育廳，簽訂師資培訓項目合作備忘錄，正式成為策略伙伴。於2012年7月起計的3年內，雙方會在學前教育、特殊教育、中小學心理健康教育、中小學英語教育及中小學校長和班主任的通識教育五大領域上，開展全面的合作，力求提升師資培訓的質素。

Back in the early days, several young people wanted to do something for China's education and they ended up establishing Sowers Action. Encountering countless difficulties along the way, we would not have made it if not for the contributions by our friends and volunteers. Looking back now, although so much had been changed, the spirit of Sowers Action remains the same.

Twenty years ago, China had been reforming for a period of time, yet its education system was far from developed and was desperately in need of assistance. We therefore responded by supporting school building and providing fee subsidy, so that more students could learn in a safer environment and their parents could be less burdened financially. We aim at promoting better opportunities for everyone to receive education, and as a result, "transforming China's population burden into intellectual resources".

China's reform policies spurred the economy to faster growth and the education to gradual development. Nowadays, the right to education has been better respected while the allocation of resources has changed dramatically. Following our principles of "On-Site Assessment" and "Long Term Follow-Up", we launched a large-scale return visit at the end of last year to comprehensively review the progress of our assistance so far, with a view to developing a new direction for the coming future.

For years we hold a core belief that "Education is the Best Cure for Poverty", and with the changing needs of the society, we have started to advocate "multipurpose educational aid", extending our focus from hardware facilities to teacher training, student sponsorship and special education as well. Remaining unchanged is our spirit to promote equal opportunities in education for rural students.

Software support is even more difficult and demanding than hardware support, making co-operation between Mainland China and Hong Kong especially crucial. This May, we signed a co-operation memorandum with the Yunnan Province and its Provincial Department of Education to become strategic partners. Starting from July, both side of the parties would co-operate for 3 years in five major areas, including early childhood education, special education, mental health and English education in primary and secondary schools, as well as liberal education for schoolmasters and head teachers, with an aim to upgrading the overall standard of teacher training.



管治方面，有感社會對慈善團體的要求和期望不斷提高，我們在機構監控上下了不少功夫。例如，我們已替義工及職員制定標準行為守則，亦要求接受資助的學校對教職員作同樣要求，並將守則貼於校園當眼位置，確保全校上下均知道自身的權利和義務。為貫徹苗圃一向的高透明度，我們積極完善採購、投標和利益申報程序，讓苗圃的日常運作及財務管理更加理想。我們亦成立了風險管理小組，制定意外應變流程，讓我們舉辦各項活動時，均能有效迅速地應對。

We also recognize the society's growing expectation of charitable organizations; therefore we have taken a lot of measures to strengthen our corporate governance. For instance, we have drafted a code of practice for our staff and volunteers. At the same time, we required the schools we subsidized to carry out the same practice to its teaching staff, and to post it in printed form in noticeable areas to inform their students. In line with our transparent working style, we have been working hard to optimize and simplify our purchase, tendering and reporting system, so as to make our daily operation and financial management smoother. In addition, to have an effective and swift response to emergencies, we have set up a risk management taskforce to provide in-time support for our staff and board members.





此刻，我們肩負的使命更加重大，面對的挑戰亦越見棘手。其中，物價上漲令籌款活動的收費相應提高，參加人數下跌，籌款額亦隨之減少。同時，近年租金不斷攀升，令運作成本大增，財政壓力日益沉重。隨著領導層平均年齡上升，我們也面對青黃不接的問題。在可見的將來，這將會是苗圃的三大挑戰。

然而，苗圃人深信，只要上下一心，群策群力，我們沒有克服不了的挑戰，更沒有闖不過的難關。畢竟，助學之路從來都不是坦途。困難，令我們的努力更加有意義。展望未來，我們會繼續努力，在堅守助學理念的同時積極尋求突破，確保我們的所得都會用得其所，惠及社會。

全賴您的支持，我們才能夠走到現在；無論前路有多困難，我們都會一直走下去。您，願意與我們繼續同行嗎？

董事局主席
程淑瑩

With an ever greater mission at the moment, it is no doubt a challenging time for us. Take fundraising as an example, as the cost keeps rising, we have no choice but to raise our activity charges, leading to a decrease in participation and thus the money we raised. Soaring rents in recent year have also placed a heavy financial burden on us. With the average age of our board members keeps rising, talent shortage is another of our major headaches. In the foreseeable future, these will be the three major challenges for us.

We, however, believe that no problem is unsolvable, and will keep on pooling the wisdoms and efforts of everyone to counter the challenges head-on. There is no easy path to improve China's education, but it is certainly worth the efforts. Looking into the future, we will keep up with our work with a flexible mindset, ensuring that every dollar we received will be well spent and can benefit the society.

Only with your support can we come this far, and we are determined to move forward, no matter how difficult it is. Let us keep on going together, shall we?

2011–2012 Chairperson of the Board of Directors
Vanessa Ching

