

Review and outlook 2021 - 2022



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If I have a wish deep in my heart, then I will say ...

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the founding of Sowers Action, and throughout this time I was deeply touched by all that we have experienced. A provincial official in mainland China once described us this way: “Sowers’ workers selflessly contributed their golden years to our country to improve our country’ s education” . Throughout the years, we walk with China on its path of education and welfare development, evolving from the practice of “limited schooling” to “schooling” to “encouraging schooling” . Thinking back, our beginning was humble, often using restaurants as our work space, later borrowing, renting, and now owning our office. As well, our Article of Association was revised three times to keep pace with changing social needs. Despite we have accomplished a lot over 30 years, we are always mindful that while quantifying the benefits of our programs is important, what ultimately matters is how one’ s action help change societal mindset towards public welfare and philanthropy. Philanthropy has become a mindset in China nowadays, and as public welfare resources continue to rise in China, we recognize that we can re-focus our effort in more needy areas outside of the mainland.

As a result, Sowers Action took the opportunity in 2007 to expand our reach into different parts of the world – Myanmar, northern Thailand, and Nepal – as well as diversifying our as diversifying our services from education to basic livelihood,



humanitarian relief and anti-epidemic programs; and have achieved great results. Recently, we have registered “Sowers Action Nepal” with aim to promote Chinese education overseas. And as soon as the epidemic subsides, work will resume everywhere.

These achievements may appear easy in words, but looking back on this 30-year journey, the road has been bumpy, fraught with challenges especially when operating overseas. Fortunately, the biggest skills we have is finding capable and caring people to help. However, the dual impact of the recent COVID pandemic and social movement have caused many of our supporters to immigrate from Hong Kong, resign from our organization, or being busy with their own livelihood. This caused a significant drop in fundraising and cut-backs in social programs. This unfortunate situation is seen industry-wide where most non-profits in Hong Kong are facing this sad reality.

As a result, welfare groups in Sham Shui Po referred to us households, who as a result of COVID or unemployment, are living in sub-divided flats and some by means of welfare assistance. These families live hand to mouth in extreme condition with scarcely any money, food, or medications. Such families urgently need our assistance. At the onset of our program, there was no donation and no one dared to help deliver food and medication to the needy households. However, after 3 short weeks, the number of beneficiary households increased from 150 to more than 600. Sowers Action is indeed in action, raising nearly HK\$4 million to help more than 1,100 households in the ensuing 3 months.



Through this program and extensive visits to and contacts with the community, we learned a great deal about the hardships and problems faced by subsistence families that have limited means. And this 3-month period made us realize that there are many real and urgent social needs in our backyard waiting for solutions, and if Sowers can help, why not take prompt actions? The results, in less than a month, we set up the "Sowers Action Shum Shui Po" service center with a two-year term to provide caring services to the community. In the center, we are mindful that while we have to provide instant relief – the fish itself, we also have to provide tools to anticipate future needs – teaching how to fish. Providing subsidy is can only solve the issue temporarily as once subsidy stops, the problem returns. Our founding motto still stands true today, "To cure poverty, we need to cure the root cause, and education is the root cure. "

No doubt we will face great challenges in operating the "Sowers Action Sham Shui Po" service center, but I am hopeful and confident that we will succeed. A big announcement will be released shortly and we ask you to please keep an eye on it and for your generous support. We will continue to work hard in improving the workings and programs of the center and we look forward to using this service model to rolling out centers to other areas.

At the moment as I write, Hong Kong is under the influence of typhoon Siamba with signal 8 hoisted, and outside my window I can see and hear the gusting wind and torrential rain. However, "Sowers Action Shum Shui Po" can confidently tell those who are now facing difficult times, the storm will no doubt end and pass us by one day.

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