

China Philanthropy News

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China Philanthropy News is produced by Grantmakers Without Borders for grantmaking organizations and donors interested in philanthropic engagement with China. For more information about Grantmakers Without Borders, visit www.gwob.net.

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– Current NEWS –

1) Chinese philanthropy continues to grow

Bolstered by the outpouring of support for the Sichuan earthquake, the philanthropy sector in China is on an upward growth curve. This month, China held its first Global Philanthropy Forum. Bill Clinton is also hosting an event for donors in Hong Kong. The government has said there is a favorable environment for the development of the sector in the country. However, there continues to be barriers, including a confusing tax system and caution towards human rights groups. As reported by the Chronicle of Philanthropy.

<http://philanthropy.com/giveandtake/index.php?id=782>

2) Cooperation needed for developing global philanthropy

The China Global Philanthropy Forum that took place in Beijing on November 1 highlighted the emergence of a national philanthropy that has garnered the support and attention of key state officials. As a leading speaker, Jet Li's One Foundation was praised by the government as a model organization, and Li pledged his support to promote a sense of help and love as a universal value. Speakers urged better management and transparency of charities and advocated for more commitment to justice and morality. As reported by china.org.cn.

http://www.china.org.cn/china/national/2008-11/03/content_16704202_2.htm

3) Beijing exhibition highlights creativity of grassroots NGOs

The China Development Marketplace is organized each year by the World Bank and brings together non-governmental organizations from around the country to showcase their many innovative projects. This year, the number of projects increased significantly, reflecting the rapid development of the sector. The China country director for the World Bank highlighted the government's continuing support for the development of grassroots NGOs targeting poor and vulnerable groups. As reported by People's Daily Online.

<http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90882/6519154.html>

4) China: Grassroots green groups grow

A recent report released by the All-China Environmental Federation shows that the number of NGOs dedicated to environmental protection has doubled in the past three years. There are 406 organizations as of October of this year, up from 300 in 2005. Most of these groups are involved in energy-saving and emission-

cutting work while others are working on environmental protections. As reported by Digital Journal. <http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/262187>

5) China tells rich polluting nations to change lifestyle

At the opening of a two day conference, China said the rich nations must abandon their “unsustainable lifestyle” to fight climate change. China, while believed to be the biggest emitter of carbon dioxide, has urged wealthier nations to take more responsible and duty towards climate change. Officials have said that rich nations should divert as much as 1 percent of their economic worth to pay for clean technology transfers. As reported by Reuters.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/vcCandidateFeed2/idUSPEK56602>

6) China’s coal fires belch fumes, worsening global warming

Many scientists blame uncontrolled coal fires as a significant source of greenhouse gases, which leads to global warming. The underground coal fires in China are the worst in the world and destroy as much as 20 million tons of coal annually. Scientists have called for increasing efforts to extinguish these fires in China as the best way to stop greenhouse gas emissions. Beyond the environmental consequences, such fires pose risks to miners, thousands of whom die each year from pollution-related causes. As reported by McClatchy Newspapers.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/mcclatchy/20081116/wl_mcclatchy/3098670_1

7) Mr Hu, tear down this wall

The Chinese government has decided to allow 700 million of the country’ 900 million peasants to sell the rights to the land they till, a huge change in China’s development. In recent years, the party has been plagued by more and more peasant protests, and this may be a way to break the power and corruption of village chiefs. Moreover, this decision may have been made to play catch up with market reality: Millions of peasants already sell land rights illegally. As reported by the Christian Science Monitor.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/1028/p08s01-comv.html>

8) In southeast China, skepticism on land reforms

The new land reform packages introduced by the government have been met with some skepticism by farmers in Hebei, who protested plans to build a plastics factory on their land last month. The new reforms allow farmers to transfer their land, which is still technically owned by the government, to developers or other business; the state will compensate farmers for land lost. However, farmers say that reforms do not address their main concern, which is corruption by local officials. As reported by the Washington Post.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/10/28/AR2008102803315.html>

9) Factories shut, China workers are suffering

In light of the global economic downturn, the export slowdown in China earlier this year has resulted in the closure of thousands of small and mid-size factories around the country. In turn, this has caused labor disputes and protests, igniting fear in both local and national officials. Many local governments have been paying back wages to workers in factories that have shut down. The national government, in response to these anxieties, has announced a stimulus package over the next two years to help rebuild the economy. As reported by the New York Times.

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/14/world/asia/14china.html?_r=1&em

10) China to strive for grain self-sufficiency

China is aiming to produce virtually all the grain it needs for at least the next decade despite a growing population and declining farmland. The goal is for China to keep producing more than 95 percent of its grain needs until 2020, said a representative from the National Development and Reform Commission, China's powerful economic planning body. A policy paper said farms have to become more efficient. To improve productivity, exchanges of land rights by rural dwellers should be promoted to enable development of bigger and more intensive farming businesses, it said. As reported by the Associated Press.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20081113/ap_on_re_as/as_china_food_security_1

11) UN says China should improve rural public services

The UN Development Programme, in its recent China Human Development Report publication, stated that the country needs to improve public sector services in the rural areas. Poorer areas still lag behind in education, health, social security and employment, and China should move quickly to provide better access in order to sustain the economic growth during the global economic slowdown. As reported by the Associated Press.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hR7hlqNFni-fp1JUaOpYZBpz7cAwD94G0CEO0>

12) UN torture panel to question China in abuses

The UN Committee Against Torture will question Chinese officials about alleged human rights abuses this month. Rights activists hope that this will put pressure on China to increase its monitoring and reduce the incidence of torture. Questions are set to address sexual violence in prisons, attacks on human rights campaigners, and the fate of detained protesters. China responded with a document that rejected the claims as “groundless.” As reported by Reuters.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20081106/wl_nm/us_un_china_torture_1

13) China's 'action plan' on human rights meets with skepticism

Months before the UN Human Rights Council was to review the status of rights programs in China, the government issued a national action plan on issues of torture and freedom. The State Council Information Office said the plan would involve expanding democracy, strengthening the rule of law, improving livelihoods, and protecting the rights of women, children and ethnic minorities.

However, many remain skeptical and have called the move a public relations ploy. As reported by LA Times.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-rights7-2008nov07,0,2674520.story?track=rss>

14) China order termination for mum-to-be

Chinese authorities have ordered an abortion for a Muslim Uighur woman who is 26 weeks pregnant in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region. The woman and her husband fled their village when they found out she was pregnant. Under the birth population plan, Han couples are limited to one child, while minority couples may have two, and rural farmers may have three. Authorities have threatened to take away their home unless they have the abortion. As reported by the Herald Sun.

<http://www.news.com.au/heraldsun/story/0,21985,24656719-663,00.html>

15) Media and business gearing up for AIDS awareness

For World AIDS Day on December 1, a number of domestic media groups will take the lead in creating a public awareness campaign around HIV and AIDS in China. As part of the growing attention to AIDS, the China HIV/AIDS Media Partnership initiative will be a multiyear campaign to counter stigma and reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS. Included in this effort will be more engagement and innovation with leveraging communications and the power of mass media with both civil society and state institutions. As reported by China.org.cn.

http://www.china.org.cn/health/2008-11/17/content_16778131.htm

16) China AIDS patients dying because of “tragic stigma”

In China, the stigma of AIDS is still significant, and recent surveys show a majority of people unwilling to live or care for someone infected with HIV. The study also showed that many people are still under misconceptions about how the disease can be transmitted. The government now offers free ARV drugs to people living with HIV/AIDS, but there is still widespread ignorance and stigma linked to the epidemic. This leads to many people not getting tested or seeking treatment for fear of the stigma. As reported by Reuters.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUSTRE49T2ZX20081030>

17) Female HIV infectors see sharp increase to 35%

The proportion of female HIV infectors has increased on the Chinese mainland, it was announced at the Tsinghua AIDS Conference last month. This was based on a study carried out in Yunnan province that showed the infection spreading among a generalized population, with an increase in heterosexual people. A new partnership will be formed between the Comprehensive AIDS Research Center and the Yunnan Provincial Health Department to undertake clinical research, focusing on preventing mother-to-child transmission. As reported by china.org.

http://www.china.org.cn/health/2008-10/20/content_16639913.htm

18) Cholera outbreak spreads across China resort island

An outbreak of cholera in Hainan has now spread to the province's capital, which has forced the quarantine of the local university. Seven students have been diagnosed, bringing the total number of cases to 51. Authorities traced the outbreak to a village dinner party; cholera can be transmitted by contaminated water and/or food. As reported by Reuters AlertNet.

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/PEK296703.htm>

– Useful RESOURCES –

19) Report: “From Labour to Capital: Intra-Village Inequality in Rural China, 1988-2006”

Economic inequality has increased greatly in China since the end of state socialist industry and collective agriculture, but the story of inequality is much more complex than just the rural–urban and coastal–inland dichotomies or the relative contributions of inter-regional and intra-regional inequality. Even within inland rural areas, inequality between villages and within villages has also increased greatly. In structural terms, the primary reason for this increase was the shift from labour power to small-scale capital as the primary source of family income. Available at

<http://faculty.washington.edu/stevehar/Zhou%20Han%20Harrell.pdf>.

20) Report: “Vulnerability, Trust and Microcredit: the Case of China's Rural Poor”
This paper investigates the economic conditions of rural households in China. Historical survey data indicate that over 80 per cent of rural households earn less than 4,500 yuan in net disposable income each year, that for the vast majority of rural households disposable income is insufficient to meet food consumption needs, and that in terms of economic growth rural households are receiving an ever decreasing percentage of China's growing economy with urban household income in 2004. Available at <http://ideas.repec.org/p/unu/wpaper/rp2008-52.html>.

21) Report: “AIDS-Related Knowledge, Attitudes, Behavior, and Practices: A Survey of 6 Chinese Cities”

This survey investigates knowledge, attitudes, behaviors and practices among different segments of society in six important Chinese cities: Kunming, Shenzhen, Shanghai, Wuhan, Zhengzhou and Beijing. This summary report of the survey results outlines key information regarding people's understanding of HIV and AIDS, their attitudes towards HIV and people living with HIV, their related behavior, and the ways in which their understanding, or lack of understanding, affects their attitudes and behavior. Available at

<http://www.unaids.org.cn/uploadfiles/20080925150557.pdf>

22) Report: “China's Clean Revolution”

This report is based on research conducted by The Climate Group's team in China. Its findings show that far from ignoring climate change, Chinese Government and business leaders are now acutely aware of both the dangers

and opportunities this environmental challenge brings. Even more importantly, it shows that significant actions to improve energy efficiency are already underway. Available at

http://www.theclimategroup.org/assets/resources/Chinas_Clean_Revolution.pdf.

– Upcoming EVENTS –

23) Financial Education Summit 2009, China World Hotel, November 25-26; Beijing, China

The Citi-FT Financial Education Summit 2008 will be a unique platform to share best practices in developing, delivering and evaluating financial education initiatives from around the world. Building on the success of previous Summits in Hong Kong, Malaysia, South Korea and India, the fifth Financial Education Summit in Beijing will be one of the largest and most significant international gatherings of financial education experts and advocates ever held, with more than 300 representatives of financial institutions, government agencies, multilateral bodies, non-governmental organisations, educational groups and private business -- from China, Asia Pacific and beyond. More at <http://www.financialeducationsummit.org/?lang=en>.

24) 2009 International Symposium on Environmental Science and Technology, Donghua University, June 2-5, 2009; Shanghai, China

The purpose of this symposium is to provide an up-to-date discussion in the field of environmental science and technology. Some of the topics covered will include air pollution and quality control, land pollution, waste recycling, environmental monitoring and assessment, toxicology, and chemistry. More at <http://www.isest.com.cn/>.

– Latest BOOKS –

25) *Privatizing China: Socialism from Afar*, Aiwha Ong & Li Zhang (eds), Cornell University Press, 2008

The following book review was written by Miri Kim, a graduate student in History at the University of California, Irvine (mkim31@uci.edu).

In this book, leading scholars in the fields of anthropology, geography, economics and politics present a fascinating but at places disjointed picture of some of the ongoing developments in the realms of governance and personhood in the People's Republic of China. Growing out of a 2004 workshop on the effects and implications of privatization on China's economy, this book is a collection of mostly urban case studies exploring some of the ways that the party-state's embrace of neoliberal economic policies have complicated the social life of China, as well as Chinese individuals' notions of self. This book is an ambitious

endeavor, covering issues ranging from property rights to internet café management to Buddhism on the internet and engaging many theoretical frameworks for understanding what is happening in China today.

In the introduction, editors Li Zhang and Aihwa Ong propose “assemblage” as a particularly apt method of charting and navigating the widely disparate conditions and numerous paradoxes engendered by economic globalization in China. Another inclusive concept invoked by the introduction is “the new social,” by which the mutually constituted and interconnected nature of state and society is emphasized. This multidimensional approach proves highly flexible in weaving together a great variety of analytical perspectives with cultural phenomena. Yet this strength is also the book’s weakness, giving us breadth at the expense of depth. The program laid out in the introduction appears unevenly applied. The overall effect of the book is akin to that of a photomontage, providing the reader with a snapshot of the present that contains many interesting diagnoses of changes in China without always offering the kind of grounding in historical contexts that would flesh out parts of the book. The lack of discussions on the effect of privatization in rural areas appears a significant omission, and some of the chapters are quite short, leaving little room for a full treatment of the existing literature on the topic or substantial analyses of empirical materials; however, many of the chapters are highly useful as introductions to the topics that they discuss.

Privatizing China is divided into two sections, ‘Powers of Property’ and ‘Powers of the Self.’ The studies presented in these sections suggest that the Chinese state has been engaged in a strategic retreat from certain sectors, most notably in the operations of the market, and at the same time that fostering a less obvious, but no less powerful, form of influence over social bodies. One of the most interesting trends that several authors seem to be pointing toward is the importance of assigning responsibility, and how middle-class individuals participate in this process in a way that allows the state to reduce the costs of governing without unduly sacrificing any of its authority. As Lisa M. Hoffman shows in her chapter, young urban professionals who exercise their new freedom of choice in employment do so in a way that remains compatible with feelings of patriotism for the party-state. Mei Zhan, in an intriguing chapter on SARS, argues that biomedical, official, and media discourse surrounding the 2003 outbreak puts the onus of staying healthy and safe on middle-class individuals by highlighting their role as consumers of suspect goods such as the “wild” animals suspected of being virus carriers. The studies featured in this book indicate that the shift toward a more hands-off style of state governance is underpinned by neoliberal principles that both officials and ordinary individuals have a hand in shaping, interpreting, and translating into practice. Benjamin L. Read demonstrates in his study of homeowners’ associations that while new middle-class neighborhoods in China’s coastal cities have allowed for homeowners’ rights activism, officials and developers still greatly limit the extent to which these rights can be claimed, maintaining conditions that make co-optation of homeowners’ associations likely

in some cases. The editors, however, are careful to point out that the state has not officially embarked on a neoliberal program for the country.

As noted in the acknowledgements, with the work of the book's contributors, this work embodies a kind of intellectual assemblage of its own. It successfully dismantles the dichotomy between state and society, private and public, the collective and the individual. In this volume, assemblage as a tool helps us see more broadly and make different kinds of connections, but how well this technique can identify and articulate the historical specificities of a given moment is less certain. As a work that appears simultaneously freeing and limited in the ambit of its analyses, *Privatizing China* offers the reader a range of diagnostic tools with which to engage the changes in a late-socialist, urbanizing China.

- China PROFILE -

26) Wu Fengshi, Assistant Professor, Department of Government and Public Administration, Chinese University of Hong Kong

This month, CPN speaks with Wu Fengshi, an assistant professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She has worked extensively in the environmental justice sector and served as an advisor to non-governmental organizations.

Q: Can you tell us a bit about your own work and research in China? What first sparked your interest in grassroots NGOs and civil society in China?

A: My research activities have led me to meet people from diverse fields of work (wonderful work), but my academic writing mainly has been on transnational advocacy in environmental protection and public health related to China.

Yet to be tested, the idea of civil society captured my passion of research at a very early stage of graduate school at the University of Maryland. It was through meetings with many environmentalists in Beijing during the summer of 2000 that nailed down my decision to pursue this area of study. I was persuaded by their genuine spirit and wide scope of community knowledge.

Q: You've been intimately involved with the environmental movement over the years. How have you seen this sector develop and/or change over the years?

A: I will just make some observations; these are not necessarily good or bad for the future, or considered by the environmentalists themselves good or bad, but just some interesting moments of change that have occurred over the years:

- The community has truly grown in both size and geographic coverage over the past 15 years;
- The new generation of leaders is younger, and more exposed to the global discourse. They might not have the same amount of public recognition the

first generation of environmental veterans enjoyed, but they make up for this by their (very often transnational) communication skills in social mobilization;

- Strategies of social mobilization, self-capacity building, interactions with the government, and community outreach have all been diversified;
- More groups are able to conduct public campaigns, provide policy recommendations, or even petitions against particular policies or governmental projects.

Q: What are the challenges you see for its potential growth in the future?

A: Sustainability is always a challenge, in terms of funding, human resources, and local knowledge, though this is not particular to grassroots activism in China. However, in China, there is a challenge of carrying the spirit and philosophy of environmentalism (both in a universal sense and in the special context of Chinese environmental movement) by the new generations of activists and NGO leaders. In my research, I observe that, despite all the controversies and internal fractions, the environmental activist community exhibits the highest level of solidarity, shared normative principles, and collective consciousness compared with other fields of social activism in today's China. However, this unique aspect can quickly dissolve, if "traditions" are dismissed and "memories" are lost.

Q: Do you think we can learn something from the environmental movement, or do you think there is something fundamentally unique about it?

A: Many things can be learned from the environmental movement, including transnational networking, non-contentious resistance, and community mobilization. What is unique is that the issue of the environment does not suffer from partisan/sectoral conflicts of interests; rather, it is an issue that calls upon the awareness of all human beings, regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, nationality, healthiness, wealth... In short, it promotes something that is fundamentally "public," in terms of effects, and the process of change. This is, I believe, a vital advantage for the environmental movement, even though sometimes this "advantage" does not bring the sense of urgency, or the feeling of injustice right away.

Q: Especially now, and in China, the issues of environmental justice has been highlighted dramatically, in large part due to the Olympics this past summer. What do you think is needed to sustain this momentum, and where do you see the role of grassroots NGOs fitting into this larger picture?

A: It is a golden opportunity now for NGOs to enhance environmental public education, and reach a part of the public that they have not yet been able to reach, to tackle the stubborn practices, and to change habits and pre-determined opinions.

Q: To a large degree, international donors have supported the environmental movement quite strongly. What do you see as the role of grantmakers interested in getting involved in this sector; that is, what responsibilities do you think they have?

A: International support has, in an overall sense, been important to the growth of the grassroots environmental groups in China. In various ways, for example, funding, moral support, international recognition, and opportunity for learning and professional development have been critical. In particular cases, it has caused a local brain drain, unnecessary competition among grassroots groups, further complication of environmental politics, and other problems. It is the responsibility of the international donors to pay serious attention to local cultures, socio-economic situations, and the needs of local conservation experts. It is not always effective or useful to give excessively, and considerably wrong to risk long-term effects with short-term outcomes. International donors should be prepared (practically and emotionally) to give ownership of the project back to local people and their own experts.

Q: Do you see much of a domestic donor community investing in this movement? And do they have different responsibilities, different objectives, than international donors?

A: Donations and support from Chinese companies have increased visibly in the past few years. For some, not all, environmental NGOs, this type of support was crucial from the very beginning of their organizational development. Different from the donation from international companies, Chinese business owners can give generously, and without an agenda, although it usually depends on personal connections and the social networks of NGO leaders. The Corporate Social Responsibility concept is still new to most Chinese companies, and it is going to take some time for the private sector to discuss among themselves to come up with some kind of common practice and norms about their responsibilities.

Right now, they are mostly being “taught” and “trained” by international NGOs on what and how to give. Or, in other cases, they just give without asking. I think they have not, collectively at least, come to realize that they are responsible for the development of activism in their own communities. Even though researchers like me can outline some points here, it is essentially up to them, and should be done by them to figure out why they need to give money to local environmental groups.

Q: How do you see grantmakers contributing to environmental justice in China? What kinds of impacts do you think they are making, and what are some challenges for them in doing their work?

A: Grantmakers’ contribution comes from their particular enthusiasm in the idea of environmental justice (including rule of law in the environmental field) and

support to environmental lawyers and other related professionals. This has generated interest and discussion within the legal and judicial circles. However, the scope of this impact is limited. And thus comes the challenge: How to push for the incorporation of environmental justice into the mainstream thinking of legal and political reform in China.

Q: If you could offer some advice to grantmakers working in China, or interested in working in China, what would it be?

A: Look for the right people. Go to the field, meet with activists, conservationists, village “elders,” middle school teachers, and learn about them. If that’s impossible, try to find the right consultants to conduct this. Do not only depend on assumptions, newspaper articles, or other types of secondary sources. All of these can offer references, but the real situation can be surprising. There can exist both an activist-minded county-level official and a conservative Maoist village leader, and it is important to understand how to work with both. Do not be deceived by their outlook, or more precisely, our own prejudices. China is a diverse country, and the enormous geographic, ethnic, economic, and political differences can often make “models of best practices” invalid.

ABOUT GRANTMAKERS WITHOUT BORDERS

Grantmakers Without Borders, a philanthropic network founded in 2000, is dedicated to increasing funding for international social justice and environmental sustainability and to improving the practice of international grantmaking. Our membership, currently numbering some 325 individuals from roughly 150 grantmaking entities, includes private foundations, grantmaking public charities, individual donors with a significant commitment to philanthropy, and philanthropic support organizations. Availing of this wealth of experience and expertise, Grantmakers Without Borders provides capacity-building support to international grantmakers both novice and experienced. We offer a space for education, community and collaboration among international social change grantmakers. We advocate before policymakers on behalf of social change grantmakers, and we work to leverage the philanthropic sector to increase funding to the global South. In all our efforts, Grantmakers Without Borders is committed to the ideals of justice, equity, peace, democracy, and respect for the environment. We value and respect the wisdom and experience of local communities in all their diversity, and we are dedicated to amplifying the voice of the global South in international philanthropy.

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