

# POF – Preschools Of the Future



**For  
children  
in  
poverty  
stricken  
areas  
of  
China**

A program from  
**HUMANA PEOPLE TO PEOPLE**

**PREVENT POOR CHILDREN FROM BECOMING POOR ADULTS**

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## **PRESCHOOLS OF THE FUTURE – POF – IN SHORT**

The purpose of the community preschool project is to prevent poor children in becoming poor adults. The preschool classes are established in natural villages in remote poverty stricken areas. Closed down spot schools are renovated or other rooms are found and used as classroom. The preschool teachers are recruited locally and trained by Humana People to People (HPP). By attending preschools the children are better prepared for primary school. Beside the traditional school subjects the children learn about nature, animals, nutrition, hygiene and how to express themselves through arts and music. The children are from 3-6 years. At this age children have the optimal possibilities for building up capacity and learning abilities and laying the foundation for their social and logic intelligence. In each village a Parents' Committee is established. It is responsible for the preschool in cooperation with the HPP project staff. Every month the parents are receiving training in child care, nutrition, hygiene and early childhood development. Surveys among primary school teachers have shown that the children who have attended HPP's preschools are more active, more eager and able to learn, more social and more responsible, and the present preschools have succeeded in bringing significantly down the drop-out rate.

For minority children it is particularly useful that they learn to speak Mandarin, so they are able to follow the lessons in the primary schools later on. Not being able to follow the lessons in Mandarin is a common reason for dropping out in the rural poverty areas. HPP's preschools build upon more than 20 years of experiences from The International Humana People to People movement in Africa and India. Worldwide 20,000 children are attending HPP's preschools.

Some characteristics about HPP's preschools in China are:

- They are rural community preschools and are deeply rooted in the local community
- Education is often bilingual
- The children are considered an important part of the society
- Multi level class is used as an advantage
- The preschool uses DmM – Determination of Modern Methods
- The preschool teacher is part of a team.
- The preschool teacher is supported from various sides.
- The preschool has a parents committee.
- The preschool teacher is on the job training, and always eager to improve.
- The preschool teacher is a role model in the community.
- The parents are reached with training
- The teacher and the parents have a good cooperation
- The preschool has its traditions and clear structure every month
- The preschool has a clear structure every week and each day has its routines
- The books and material are chosen in cooperation with the Education Department
- The Preschool is open for visitors
- The Preschool building has its special nurturing and inspiring environment

## WHY PRESCHOOLS?

### POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND EDUCATION ARE CLOSELY LINKED TOGETHER

Even though 250 million people have been lifted out of poverty in the last 30 years in China – an impressive number – the poor are still many and the poverty they are facing is grave. Where previously the poverty was the general state of the countryside, the present days remaining absolute poverty are situated in pockets of remote areas mostly in the South and West of China. 60 million people are living under the national poverty line of RMB 1196 (2009) – 36 million of them in rural areas.

In the most remote and poverty stricken areas of China little of the economic growth and increasing welfare can be felt. Luckily hunger is an issue of the past, but other issues as access to clean water, access to sanitation, lack of proper nutrition, low education level and lack of infrastructure are adding to the struggle it takes to make a living for only 50 – 100 RMB a month.

Compared to many other countries China is doing fine in promoting 9-year compulsory education, and has 99% enrollment rates for primary schools with 98% completion rates and 95% enrollment rates for lower middle school with 93% completion rates. But still at least 3.3 million children 6-14 are not enrolled in primary & lower secondary schools and an estimated 27.3 million children from 6 to 17 are out of school (UNICEF China, 2008). It is especially the rural poor who drop out of school.

Breaking the cycle of poverty takes many concerted efforts. Investment in infrastructure and access to markets and modern commodities and knowledge are important steps. But for children to develop confidence and trust in their own capacity



is crucial for changing their expectations for their own life. Most Chinese people know this, and as soon as families can afford it, they invest in education for their children. The old saying about teaching the man to fish instead of giving him fish to eat is something most people can agree

about.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Early childhood provides a foundation for the development of all cognitive abilities and personality. It is a critical time during which children need love, adequate nutrition, access to health care and mental stimulation.

Early childhood education is thus a wise investment for the society. Children who have attended preschools are showing greater learning capacities and future careers than children without. At Massachusetts Institute of Technology a conference on pre education researched the economical effects on pre education on society. The study concluded every dollar invested in early care and education saves taxpayers in US 13 \$ later on.

Poverty is an obstacle for poor families for giving their children the adequate resources in early childhood securing their development and protection. The parents often have little knowledge about child development and need to spend most of their time on working to secure sufficient income for the family. When given the opportunity to send their child to preschool, parents in rural areas are eager and happy to do so. HPP's experience from these areas is even families are poor they manage to find the 30-50 RMB a month it costs to send their children to the HPP community preschool.

## PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IN CHINA

The present prevalence of enrolment for 1 year preschool education in China is 74%.

The prevalence of 3 years preschool education is 50,9 %. The majority of the preschools in China are in the urban area. In the rural area, the enrolment for 3 years preschool education is 35,6 %.

There are both public and private preschools and public and private kindergartens. In total 26,7 million children in China are enrolled in preschools. There are no regulations



on the curriculum or the education of the teacher, but many preschool teachers have completed 3 years of education. There are also no regulations on school fees. There are big variations from 100 RMB/month for low income families in remote areas up to 10,000 RMB/month in big cities like Beijing and Shanghai. These private high-cost kindergartens are well equipped, well manned kindergartens following international pedagogy concepts.

## GOVERNMENT POLICIES

In the latest Education reform – published in March 2010, the Chinese government put much emphasize on improving the quality of the education system. The education reform is a frank assessment of how China intends to reposition itself to meet its economic and social needs of the 21st century and acknowledges a number of areas where its education systems could be strengthened.

Among them are:

- China's concept of education, teaching methodologies and content are outdated
- Education systems are inflexible
- Access to education is not equitably distributed across rural areas and ethnic groups

One of the areas of largest growth introduced in the reform is the goal for preschool enrolment. The goal is to increase preschool students with 25 % by 2020. As a comparison the goal for increase in higher education is 16 %. The education reform has a goal to increase the rate of from 2009 – 2020 for all three years of preschool enrolment:

- 1 year attendance shall increase from 74 % to 95 %
- 2 year attendance shall increase from 65 % - 80 %
- 3 year attendance shall increase from 50,9 % - 75 %

This shows an important focus on promoting pre-education. The reform wishes this to be done by a combination of government and private initiatives. Premier Wen Jiabao said the government should increase investment in preschool education. He added that, apart from infrastructure, attention should also be paid to preschool teachers, including raising their salaries and social status and training more teachers to qualify for the job. Wen also encouraged private investment in kindergartens, saying public and private kindergartens would have equal access to the same government policies.

The education reform proposes the preschool level to move towards a model of universal access to one and two year participation, with three year preschool access a desired long-term outcome. The plan flags the need to strengthen access to preschool in rural areas and to train a large contingent of high-quality kindergarten teachers. The local government leadership plays an important role in local preschool education. A 3 year planning about local preschool education should be prepared by all level governments and be recorded by the National Educational Structure Reform office by the end of March 2011

## THE PEOPLE INVOLVED

### THE PRESCHOOL CHILD

The preschool takes the child seriously. The preschool understands every child as unique in its own right. The child is not only there only to be pulled through whatever the adult finds best – on the contrary the child must from the very start of its own life process be an active part, sorting and utilizing the influence from the surrounding world, exerting influence itself. IT must be challenged, get responsibility and choices, it must perform acts and see the consequences of these acts. In short the child must be the main source of the propulsion in its own life. The recognition of this basic truth should guide the efforts of all adults close to the child, in and around the preschool. This is why “doing good” is a part of curriculum of the HPP’s preschool. This is why we consider the outside world as a part of the preschool classroom. This is why we pay attention to giving the children the possibility to develop in their own speed, according their own plans, wishes and capacity.

It is expected that the children will spend 4-6 hours in the preschool every day. A positive side effect of the preschools is that they will ease the burden of the mothers who have to take care of the children during their work and thus they can spend much time and energy on other tasks.



The program will provide training to children in basic hygiene and every day starts by washing face and hands and brushing teeth, which in many places it is not yet a part of the daily life. Every morning the preschool teacher will serve breakfast for the children consisting of soymilk, fruits and eggs. Further the children will learn where to relieve nature and wash hands afterwards. Each child will be equipped with basic personal hygiene

materials.

### THE MODERN RURAL CITIZEN

In 1949 500 million people lived in the countryside in China. Even though the proportion of rural citizens has shrunk from 90 to 54 %, there are now 720 million people living in the Chinese countryside. In the Southwest of China it is between 60 and 70 %. Since the total population is expected to raise to more than 1.5 billion, there will still be more than 700 million people in the Chinese countryside in 35 years. Some trends in the Chinese society suggest life in the cities is the only thing worth striving for. Urban lifestyle is glorified and promoted – especially in the strong consumerism drive China is experiencing these days. Many young people in the rural areas are dreaming of going to the big cities, and rural life is looked upon as backward, old fashioned – and with no prosperous future in sight. But in other parts of the world, more and more people realize that aggressive urbanization is no sustainable road forward, neither for people nor the environment. Half of this Worlds

population will live in rural areas – also in 100 years to come. So reversing the trend – making rural life a modern life – is the most futuristic approach. In Africa HPP is promoting the concept “Proud to be rural”. Eradicating poverty in rural areas is possible. And by efficiently and consciously creating access to education, health care and modern communication in the rural areas, life here is better for your health and for the health of our common planet.

To migrate to the cities is not the only way out of poverty. We want to contribute to making life in rural areas worth living. We want to make the preschool and the preschool teacher a hub for rural development, and to show a way for the future generation towards a modern, rural lifestyle. We want to strengthen the capacities of rural people and put people here in the centre of developing their villages. To do this, we aim at supplementing the preschool program with community development activities and projects and train the preschool teacher, the children and their parents to be active modern rural citizens.

### THE PARENTS COMMITTEE

The project will mobilize the communities to form parents’ committees, which are to be active in starting up and running the preschools. The parents’ committees will support with ideas, decide how many hours daily to run the preschool and collect a small amount of money from the parents for the preschool teacher allowance and hold special events. The parents’ committee will help to organize training for the parents, including children early education, children psychology, hygiene knowledge, nutrition and health knowledge, and how to encourage their children.

The parents’ committee will together with the village leader select 1 young person to be the preschool teacher for each preschool class. The parents’ committee will support the nutrition program of the preschools, by organizing the parents about breeding chicken for eggs, growing soybeans and sunflower seeds. The parents will give these ingredients to the preschool teacher so he can serve a healthy breakfast

for the children every morning.





## **THE PRESCHOOL TEACHER**

The preschool teacher at HPP's preschools has the following 4 characteristics:

The Preschool teacher is part of a team.

- Each preschool teacher closely cooperates closely with 2-4 Preschool teachers in the administrative village. They meet one Saturday every month for a day of studies and discussions.
- She/he is also part of a group of 20 teachers working in the same county. They meet one weekend every month for studies, training, planning and evaluation. The group of 20 support and inspire each other and exchanges ideas and materials.
- Where this is possible, the preschool teacher is part of a bigger group of Preschool teachers of 100 working in the entire county.

The Preschool teacher is supported from various sides:

- From the more experienced preschool teacher, who is teaching at the nearby primary school's preschool class
- From the headmaster of the nearby primary school
- From the project leader who is leading the team of 20 Preschool teachers
- From the project leader and program officers in charge of all 100 preschools in the county
- From the HPP national project office, who is supervising all preschools in China

The Preschool teacher is on the job training, and always eager to improve.

Being a preschool teacher means educating yourself while on the job

The teacher will during the 4 years of teaching parallel go through 11 months of education, whereof 1/3 of it is self studies. All studies take place outside working hours. In holidays, weekends, evenings.

- The teacher will be expected to do self studies 4 hours every week and will get feedback from study tasks from the project leader
- The teacher will have 3 weeks of initial training before startup: 2 weeks theoretical and 1 week of practical training
- The teacher takes part in the monthly study Saturday with the other teachers in the smaller cluster
- She/he takes part in the monthly 2 days training, taking place in the township with the 20 teacher
- She/e takes part in two times annual trainings of 2 weeks each

The Preschool teacher is a role model in the community.

The preschool teacher has an important role in serving the community together with the children, has developed many life skills and the children look up to her. She considers being a preschool teacher a dual responsibility: To educate the children in the village, and to be a hub for developing the village.

## THE PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

### THE GOALS OF THE PRESCHOOLS

The goals of HPP's preschools:

- Avoid poor children become poor adults
- Give poor rural children the best start in life and in school life
- Show a concrete model for how rural 3-6 year old children can experience a rich life and be prepared well for the future. The model should be replicable.
- Ensure that all rural children finalize at least Primary school level and best as well Middle school level



## **THE SPIRIT AND ATTITUDE OF THE PRESCHOOLS, REPRESENTED BY THE PRESCHOOL TEACHER**

China is developing at a rapid speed, and it is important for each person to learn fast, be flexible and adapt to the ever changing environment – but at the same time stand firmly on the ground with a high ethics and with strong and healthy relations – to one’s own soul as well as towards other people. The preschool children need to be creative – thus getting into the habit of creating what they want for themselves and their environment as well as being able to respond to the surrounding environment in a responsible way – bringing the best up in each child. HPP preschool teachers will be trained to teach the children to deal with problems of conflicts – to learn to solve their own problems, thus making them stronger as persons.

There is a need of revising and renewing old methods of learning and to bring new ways of looking upon the children into the education of children of China’s future. That is why the schools are called “Preschools of the Future”

The following are examples of the spirit and attitude HPP is promoting in the Preschools – and these attitudes will be discussed at the training sessions with the teachers and the parents.

- The children shall enjoy learning new things, learn to acquire new knowledge – and to use this acquired knowledge in a practical context.
- The children shall be encouraged to expressing themselves, and come to enjoy it – within the group as well as individually
- The preschool shall use art and crafts using local culture and local materials
- The children shall learn and come to understanding the life of parents and grandparents
- The children shall experience and come to enjoy the strength of the group – lifting tasks together, learning to cooperate and learn independently to solve issues in a good manner – not just waiting for the teacher to tell them what to do
- The children shall learn high ethics – focusing on valuing moral issues
- The children shall learn to enjoy using their body, their hands and their mind.
- The children shall learn to learn, learn to like changes and learn to put questions
- The children shall learn to study – and learn to finish their things
- They shall learn to communicate with the other children – and solve problems and conflicts
- Get to like books that the teacher or other children read for you, or you read yourself
- They shall learn about their own village, its people and its animals
- The children shall learn to be confident, be proud of themselves when presenting or performing for others, e.g. by presenting for the villagers what they have learned



## THE DETERMINATION OF THE MODERN METHOD

The preschool is using the methodology called “Determination of Modern Methods” – DmM. This methodology has as its core to put the student in the driver’s seat and make him/her an active and curious learner – not a passive recipient of the teachers accumulated knowledge. DmM divides learning into 3 elements:

- Studies
- Courses
- Experiences

### The studies take up half of the time.

Here the students are learning all the subjects they need. Much of this takes place by each student working in smaller groups or by themselves. The teacher is helping, guiding, instructing. The children must work in their own speed, as they are the ones who have to do the main work of learning all the new things they need to know. They will learn by drawing, writing, reading (as much as they can), counting, thinking, listening and talking to each other. They will work with the books developed for their age. Sometimes 2 children of the same age will help each other. Sometimes the older children will help the younger ones. Sometime everybody will just work by themselves while the teacher is there for those who need help. The studies are divided into different subjects, like Mandarin, science, health or mathematics.

### The courses take up one quarter of the time.

Here the teacher is in the centre. He or she is telling stories, explaining things, writing on the blackboard, showing a film or singing a song. As described above it can also be other people from the village who are holding the course, explaining about their field of work or telling or showing the children useful things from the daily life. The courses are divided in topics like “The stars and the sky”, “The animals in our village”, “the body”, “What is money?” or the like.

### The experiences take up one quarter of the time.

Here the students and teachers together are exploring what you cannot get from books: The nature, the animals, using the body, collecting plants, keeping the classroom clean, learning to make soymilk, planting tomatoes and playing games. The experiences section strives to use the rich potential of the body and the senses: smelling, moving, working, dancing, tasting, running, looking, listening, feeling and laughing.

The children compare themselves only with themselves. No competition is necessary. But celebrating and focusing on results is important. It can be results of each child, of a group of children having achieved something together or achievements of the whole class. Counting results is as well important for each child and their parents to see how they are progressing. How many characters can you write now? How much did your tomatoes grow? How many numbers can you tell me? How many songs can you sing? The preschool teacher must show the children that achieving results is really satisfying, and we all need to work hard to achieve as much as possible. Even life is long for a preschool child, time is running fast and there is a lot to be done!

## CHILDREN AS ACTIVE IN THE COMMUNITY

Rural children are much more a part of the community – compared to urban children. They see what their parents are working with, and even help out from small. They are not just people, that the adults wait for to grow up, but contributors to the community. We want to strengthen this valuable connection.

We support this in 2 ways

- We want local people to visit the Preschool – or Preschool children visit the local "resource person" – to learn about life and work.
- We want the children to contribute with what you could call community work once a month. This could be to help an old couple with cleaning inside and outside their house. Entertain at the monthly cultural evenings in the village. To do a needed work in the village – cleaning an area for garbage, beautify by planting flowers, grow herbs and give or sell to people.



Below is a list of possible resource persons with whom the Preschool teacher makes an appointment about teaching the children. Remember: "Everyone is my teacher"

Examples of visits from people in the community in the preschool:

1. The Bicycle repair man tells about his skills
2. A farmer tells about how to raise pigs
3. A farmer tells about what is important, when you grow the land
4. A farmer tells about how to raise chicken/ ducks /goats/ buffalos
7. An old man/woman tells about old days, and when he/she was a child
8. A Women Federation representative tells why it is necessary with a Women's Federation
9. A doctor tells why you get sick, and what you can do to keep healthy
10. A primary school teacher tells about what they are doing in the primary school
12. A Chinese medicine local doctor tells about plants and how to use them
13. A local woman who can do embroidery shows how to do
14. A driver tells about his work, how to take care of a car and how to take care in the traffic
15. A craftsman who can make baskets shows how to do
16. A villager who can play an instrument plays for the children and tells stories from his life
17. An old person who can sing old songs teaches the children some songs
18. A man who constructs houses tells what is important, when you build a house
19. A villager who has taken a higher education tells about it and what he learned

## THE WORLD IS OUR CLASSROOM

You must be mobile. You must get close to what you want to learn about.

Children should see the world outside of the classroom – hereby giving them a valuable opportunity to learn much more than between the 4 walls of the Preschool classroom. Education has changed.

It is no longer the teacher who has monopoly of all valuable knowledge! Too much knowledge exists today for one brain to be able to capture it all. But if we can give our children an interest in all important matters, teach them where to go to find more knowledge, encourage them to ask many questions – we have done well to prepare them for lifelong learning. They must learn: "There are no dumb questions" and they must be encouraged to ask "WHY?".

Examples of how to use the World as our classroom:

- Take the children to the river and learn about water – sedimentation, current and the life in the water – catch frogs and fish.
- Visit the mountain and learn about erosion
- Visit a farm – learn how to feed the animals and avoid diseases.
- Visit the local clinic – see the instruments, and hear what are the diseases people have in our area, and what can be done to prevent these
- Visit the Primary school – to ensure the Preschool children look forward to next step.
- Go outside the classroom and take care of the Preschools' animals
- Go outside the classroom and grow flowers, herbs, fruit trees and vegetables

## HEALTH AND NUTRITION EDUCATION

We want to give these children the best!

Therefore a good content of the preschool education is simply not enough.

We must ensure good building of the body and of the brain.

There are numerous studies during the last 40 years stating the importance of proper nutrition for the growth of the body and the brain development.

In the rural schools in China we are facing 2 issues – stunted growth and low marks. We see a double challenge as most of these children are talking minority language and are taught in Mandarin Chinese. We also face malnutrition, due to lack of essential fats, many minerals and vitamins, and as well poor teeth due to too much consumption of sugar.

In 2009-2010 HPP made a pilot project about nutrition, covering 11 Preschools and 137 children. The pilot included:

- A health survey – made with help of the clinic, including blood tests. The result: only 25% of the children were healthy!
- Training of all the parents. The training consisted of: child development, nutrition for children, childhood diseases, brain development of children – how to improve the IQ with 10 points, organizing of daily breakfast
- Implementation of a breakfast program: 1 egg per child every morning, a big cup of soymilk, - both items to ensure enough proteins as well as a full stomach before the

learning session starts and finally a hand full of sunflower seeds, which contain Omega 3 oils – a valuable essential fat acid important for brain development.

- In order to secure sustainability, each household with a preschool child received 2 egg layering hens, seeds for growing soybeans and for growing sunflowers. The parents or children brought the food items to the Preschool.
- The Preschool teacher or the parents took turns in preparing the breakfast for all the children as a start of the day in the preschool.
- The health checkup at the end of the pilot revealed that only 1 child out of the 137 was still unhealthy – all others had normal readings at the blood test.

Due to the good results Humana People to People has decided to include breakfast as an important element at all our preschools, to ensure a good start of the day, and to ensure optimal concentration and learning. The parents, the Preschool teacher and the parents' committee decide about how to organize the breakfast program.





## **LANGUAGE AND CULTURE – PARTICULARLY IN MINORITY COMMUNITIES**

Language is the main basis for your thoughts. Without words to express yourself, your thoughts are limited to the instincts of survival. So the choice of language is important. Many natural villages in the south west China are populated with minorities with their own language. To be able to accomplish an education the children need to learn Mandarin. Mandarin is also important for being an active part in the society, as the language of that society is Mandarin. Mandarin has kept the people of China together for thousands of year, and is an important reason for the unity of China today. But to be able to learn a new language, you need first to master your own language, to be able to have a reference, to be able to think clearly and to be able to express yourself to other people. So more and more educators are now using the mother tongue in learning new languages, and emphasizing the maintenance of the mother tongue throughout the education.

In HPP's preschools the parents committees must decide which language should be used in the preschools. There are several models:

- Using the minority language as the main language of the preschool, also when teaching Mandarin
- Using the minority language in some subjects and Mandarin in some subjects – also when teaching Mandarin
- Using Mandarin as the main language of the preschool, except for separate lessons in minority language and culture
- Using Mandarin as the only language of the preschool
- As some villages can consist of smaller and bigger part of Han-children and one or more minorities each parents' committee must decide what is best in their village. HPP will explain to the parents about the advantages of learning Mandarin in your own language, but will not have this as a standard. There might be villages where the teacher, the parents have selected does not speak minority language. If the parents then want to maintain the minority language they can organize villagers from that minority to come and tell stories, sing songs and teach some basic classes in the minority language.

It is as well important to teach the children about their own culture. Use songs, dances, story- telling and handicraft to give them an understanding of their roots and a feeling of belonging. Children with deep roots, confidence and a feeling of belonging are safer and more ready to through themselves into new environments, new relations, and new languages and they can look the future in its eyes and be an active part of it.

## DIFFERENT AGES – ONE CLASS

Due to the relatively low number of children in the natural villages, we often face the fact that in order to establish a preschool, we must have 10-15 children aged 3-5 in one classroom. How to deal with this?

A 5-6 years old is not just the double of a 3 years old – it is a very different child – with a wealth of knowledge and experiences, and with his own demands for learning.



The fact that the preschool room is full of so different persons is a challenge for the rural preschool teacher. He or she must be good at dealing with this issue in a progressive way.

Our experience is:

- Our best preschool teachers are able to deal with this situation and get the best out of it. This includes:
- Dividing the children according to level – teach one group, while the other group is working alone on individual tasks. Then switch – and the teacher is with the group, that before had individual tasks.
- Using the older children as role models for the smaller – having them help out, lead the games in the break, having them help solve issues when the children play outside in the breaks. Discuss with the older children about the responsibility of being a role model for the smaller, thus emphasizing development of high ethics, striving for implementing virtues.
- The fact that you have several ages together can be used as an advantage – in the process of learning to understand and accept people who are different than yourself, and to help each other. The children become more social and helpful, which also shows up in their behavior at home.

## EACH DAY HAS ITS ROUTINES:

"Routine health habits"	Wash hands and face, brush teeth, serve and enjoy healthy breakfast every day
"Morning assembly"	All children together sing a song
"Use your mind"	The Block of Studies of subjects in smaller groups or sometimes individually but guided by the teacher
"Use your body"	Sport, games – outside, the children lead in turns to learn leadership
" Use your mind"	Course by the teacher – for all or for part of the class, while others study
" The spiritual world"	Virtues education / ethics – lead by the teacher
"Use your hands"	Experiences - each child has his responsibility area – (e.g. clean the classroom, organize the library, take care of flowers, fruit trees, the animals or the vegetables, maintain the outside area)
"Be creative"	Songs, dance, creating and telling stories, reciting poems, playing theatre, create artworks with different materials
"The story of the teacher"	Science, a fairy tale, a story with good ethics, a local telling
"Outside the preschool"	Play by the lake, explore the nature, visit the oldest man in the village



## THE STRUCTURES

### THE ORGANIZING

- The natural village is the main unit.
- Here is the preschool with its 10-15 children, its teacher and its parents' committee.
- The children go to school 4-6 hours a day
- The parents are trained every month by the teacher
- The teacher is trained every month organized by the project leader
- In one class the children can be from 3-6 years.
- The parents pay 30-50 RMB for having their children in the school
- The school has two semesters:
- The first starting after the summer holiday
- The second starting after the spring festival

Prior to the start of the preschool HPP makes an agreement with local authorities

Villages with enough students for starting are identified

There should be at least 10 students left after the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the preschool.

Villages with an existing building are identified

- Meetings are held with the village leader about the coming preschool
- All parents are gathered and they are mobilized to form a parents committee
- The children are enrolled
- The building is found and plans for how to renovate is made
- The teacher is trained for 3 weeks
- The building is renovated
- Materials are bought
- The lessons are planned in cooperation with the project leader
- The preschool is ready to start with a nice celebration

A project unit is 20 preschools

Typically there will be 20 preschool in a township.

- The preschool teachers are organized in units of 2-4 who are living and working nearby each other and can meet within 3-4 hours of transport
- All 20 preschool teachers is a township unit, having trainings and meetings together monthly
- A preschool project of 20 schools is given a project leader and a co project leader from HPP.
- They are supporting, training and supervising the preschool teacher and the parents committees and are providing plans, materials, study materials for the teacher and are monitoring the preschool teachers' self-studies.
- The project leader and the co project leader is trained and supervised by HPP's national project office.
- A part time accountant is taking care of the financial administration.



A county unit is 100 preschools

5 township units is a county unit with 100 preschools

All 200 preschool teachers are having annual conferences and trainings.

A county unit is manned with a project coordinator, 2 program officers and an accountant.

## THE FACILITIES

- The preschool will typically be housed in a former spot school of a village.
- The building will be renovated so the basic structures are safe, complete, painted and clean.
- The school will be equipped with the necessary furniture:
- Chairs, tables, blackboard, shelves for books, desk for the teacher, a cupboard for equipment
- For the studies there will be: Textbooks, notebooks, pencils, papers, crayons, basic office supplies
- For the hygiene routines and daily cleaning the school will be equipped with:
- Toothbrush, cup, bowls etc. for each student, and cleaning materials for the school
- For the breakfast program there need to be a soymilk machine and an egg boiler plus bowls, spoons and cups for each students
- Each student will get a school bag and a pencil box
- The classroom will have maps and posters and drawings made by the children and the teacher
- The school will have materials for sports, arts, games and will have some toys for playing
- The school will have a small library with books on different topics

## THE MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS

The preschool teacher will be in charge of reporting / recording:

- The students attendance: Daily
- Each students' achievements in the studies: Weekly
- Notes on each student, contact with parents etc. Updated weekly
- The implementation of the planned activities: Weekly
- Records from training with parents
- Own notes with questions, issues, trouble spots, and difficulties to be brought to the monthly training
- Records of money usage with appropriate documentation

Monthly the parents will receive updates on their child's progress

To be able to celebrate the results achieved by each end of semester, the teacher must make a summary of each student's achievement in the period, and of what the whole class has achieved as a group.

At the monthly training with the township unit of 20 schools:

The training will be carried out according to a plan made by the project leader

The preschool teachers will deliver their reports on attendance, achievements, parents training and implemented activities.

Results, achievements, problems and lack of achievements will be discussed

- Plans for the next month will be made and approved by the project leader: The week plans for the school, the monthly training of the parents and other specific activities
- The group of 20 preschools will discuss the implementation of the breakfast program
- The group of 20 preschools will discuss the personal development of the students and how to carry out the spirit and attitude of the HPP's preschools in real life
- Each teacher will account for outstanding outlays and each teacher will be supplied with necessary books, papers, materials etc.

The project leader is responsible for

- All preparations necessary for starting new preschools, including local agreements, meeting with village leaders, mobilizing of parents, setting up parents committees
- Renovation and equipping the school till it is ready for the startup
- Training of the teacher throughout the full project period – from the initial training, the monthly training, supervising and giving input to the weekly studies, providing study materials, organizing biannual training
- Producing materials, manuals, curriculums. Providing books, arts- and sports materials, pens, paper etc. for the daily running of the school
- Giving input to the parents meeting and take turns in attending and leading the training in the different villages
- All cooperation with local authorities
- Monitoring all records and reports from the preschool teachers and take necessary action if they are not complete, or if the results are not satisfactory
- Be in charge of the financial administration and recording and send monthly financial status to the national project office
- Send monthly progress reports to the national project office
- Send monthly indicators to the national project office



## THE PARTNERS

For the successful implementation of the Preschools of the Future, Humana People to People will seek a wide range of cooperation partners, such as:

- Village leaders
- Bureau of education on various levels
- Fupinban on various levels
- Educational experts nationwide
- Other preschools and organizations working with education in China
- HPP's preschools in Africa and India

For donations in kind and volunteering, HPP will seek cooperation with:

- Yunnan institute of development
- Employees at donating companies
- Local residents in nearby towns
- Local enterprises in nearby towns
- Other interested volunteers

## THE VISION

The vision is to create a lively and active network of preschools in several provinces in China. The preschools being organized in County units of 100 schools, divided in 5 township units. The preschools will be situated in Yunnan, Sichuan and Chongqing. The preschools will have their roots deeply planted in rural China and will do their part in making rural China a better place to live.

The vision is furthermore to educate a solid group of enthusiastic, passionate and united preschool teachers, carrying out the noble task of educating the children of the future – while on the same task dedicating themselves to develop the local community by increasing the capacity – not only of the children but of also of their parents and fellow villagers. All of whom are recruited from the midst of rural China, supported by active and responsible parents' committees.

The mission is to prepare China's children for the future – being able and willing to carry the responsibility of creating a new harmonious countryside.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes for a unit of 20 preschools in 3 years:

- 10-20 buildings are renovated
- 20 preschools teaching 300 children are in function
- The children have acquired basic knowledge and skills
- The children have acquired basic hygiene and health habits
- 20 preschool teachers have been trained
- All children and their parents have got a health check
- No child will be mal-nourished
- The children will be ready for primary school and will not drop out
- 20 parents' committees have been trained
- The parents committees have been enabled to run the schools
- 300 parents have been trained in child care and nutrition
- 300 parents and have created a social network to build upon





## FROM HPP'S EXISTING PRESCHOOLS IN CHINA

### A YEAR PLAN

Month	Theme	Learning about	Practical actions and products
September	Sing a song and tell a story!	The children know 10 songs – they learn to sing them nicely – stand nicely and perform in a group They know 10 fairytales / good stories. Some have learned to tell some of the stories.	Singing competition – make a tape from each Preschool – the best choir will be rewarded!  The children perform the 3 best songs in the beginning of a local cultural arrangement in the village.
October	“My Preschool is the most beautiful!” Art and drawing	Colors + mixing colors Using crayon, pens, water color, make colors from plants in the nature	Decorate the walls with art – drawings, paper folding, paper cutting, art from nature glued on thick paper, pressed flowers, paint on stones Make one big painting to hang outside the Preschool e.g. on the end-wall – ALL children have participated in the production (Use wood and acrylic paint)
November	Keep clean and healthy! Hygiene competition  Poems are nice!	Brushing teeth correctly Washing hands 5 times a day Why both are important Learn to recite poems – learn to like poems	Daily check by the teacher each morning Each kid has a scoreboard - small rewards to the best kids Extra points if they promote these habits at home! Learn – and eventually make songs or poems promoting good hygiene habits!
December	Animals – our best friends!	Learn about many animals – their food, breeding, habits, their natural environment, where they come from, how to take care of them Watch films, read books about animals, see photos, make drawings	The Preschool decides what animals to keep. Build cages Get the animals Take good care of them – each child has his/her responsibility Grow food for them or collect the food Ideas: birds, mice, rabbits, turtles, hamster, cats Each child can tell well about his animal, has made a drawing of it.

January	Prepare end of term celebration	Making sure everyone knows the basic – make sure each child has progressed – from where to where	Each child prepares to tell what he/she has learned – e.g. tell about the animals, recites a poem, tells a story in Mandarin Chinese The best celebration ever! Takes place last week of January – before Chinese New year
March	Puppet Theatre is fun!	The kids decide which story they like best – and where there is a role for all of them Learn to make puppets Learn the roles Prepare the show Cooperate well on all tasks	Make the show 3 times! – 1 time for ourselves and the primary school students grade 1 1 time for visitors 1 time for cultural arrangement in the village The DIs will film the show – later everyone can see the show from each Preschool – reward to the best Preschool performance!
April	In good shape	10 different kinds of sport! Learn 1 new every 2 days, incl throw a ball, long jump, high jump, skip rope, relay, climb trees, stand on hands, acrobatic performances, 3 ball games e.g. village leader ball, crap ball, run fast, daily exercises with music	Scoreboard about the achievements – we are much better after 1 month Taking time – e.g one kid used to run 60 meter in xxx time, now in xxx time Learning to play together – team play – promoting team play and that everyone can participate
May	Prepare the Olympic Games	Improve the sports we learned last month. Moving forward on reading, writing and science	Special focus on intellectual achievements for each person
June	Children's day 1.6 – also Olympic Games	All kids are hosts for a good arrangement in the village – or perhaps altogether in main village? The oldest kids ready for grade 1 in Primary School – learn what is a Primary School – visit it (make a good arrangement together with the teacher)	Hosting a good arrangement – each child has its role in the arrangement (host, or put up chairs, or clean or make invitations, or make exhibition or ....)
July	End of term celebration	Finish the studies – rehearse everything – prepare a good arrangement for the parents	Special performances made by the kids who will leave the Preschool – for the parents arrangement – receive certificates – every child performs – this time just much better

## THE TEACHER TRAINING CURRICULUM

The basic content of the Preschool teacher training:	1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year
1. Education – history, purpose, approaches	5	10
2. Child Development – stages, physiological, emotional, social, intellectual	20	20
3. Communication with children	20	20
4. Team building	20	10
5. Class management – especially multi age class management	10	10
6. Teaching methods in general, including how to involve all in the group	20	20
7. Teaching methods – language – development of a child's language ability	10	10
8. Teaching methods – science – the power of examples,	20	5
9. Teaching methods – math, and content	10	10
10. Teaching methods – art and artful expressions: singing, dancing, painting, drama	30	30
11. Teaching methods – Standard Chinese, incl. how to tell stories	20	20
12. Teaching methods – local culture	5	5
13. Teaching practice	30	10
14. Ethics – virtues education	20	20
15. How to teach the children to solve own problems	10	10
16. Physical education – sports, games, Tai-Qi, ball games	20	20
17. Health – hygiene, nutrition	35	25
19. Parents communication and cooperation	20	20
18. Community work – serving the community	10	10
20. Agriculture – rearing animals, growing vegetables, flowers and fruit trees	20	20
21. Life skills	40	30
22. Environment	10	5
23. Science	10	5
24. Economy, budgeting and income generation	10	5
25. Management and leadership	30	20
26. The world in which we live	30	30
27. Production of teaching materials	30	20
28. Planning and production – goal setting	30	5
29. My hobby horse	20	20
30. My country, – my local area, history of both	20	20
Total number of hours	585	465

## CASE STORIES FROM EXISTING PRESCHOOLS

HPP and Yunnan Institute of Development have implemented Preschool programs since 2003. The overall lessons learned are:

The children who attended Preschool have continued their schooling – and did NOT drop out of Primary School.

They got a good foundation in life – enjoying creativity, learning good hygiene habits, got more friends, became more social – and generally had a happy life – compared to before, when just taken care of by a grandparent or taken to the field when farming.

The Primary school teachers express their satisfaction with the program, which makes it easier to teach the children in grade 1.

The former Preschool children perform better in Primary school – they are more social, eager to learn and they are not shy.

The program has had an impact on the entire natural village – focusing on education as an important foundation for development.

Below is excerpts from the assessment report on 8 years of Preschool education in Yunnan, implemented by YID:

Feedback from the Children, parents and Community Leaders:

### Feedback from the parents:

11 parents from Yale were interviewed. 10 of them responded that the child liked Preschool, 1 responded that the son thinks Primary school is more interesting.

On the question about what their children learned in Preschool, they have each their different answers, such as: *“writing”, “my son has more courage now”, “singing”, “reciting poems”, “my daughter is more polite”, “dancing”, “my daughter likes to study”, “hygiene”*. One person said *“nothing, he cannot follow in Primary school”*

From Zalahei 6 parents from were interviewed. 5 of them responded that the child liked Preschool, 1 said no. The replies on the question about what the children had learned were similar to the above mentioned – singing, drawing, reciting poems and writing.

*“I like preschool. I can draw pictures, write Chinese words, and sing a song and dance.”*

Zhu Qiongxiang(祝琼香), 6 years old

*“I like preschool. Preschool is interesting. I can draw pictures, write Chinese words, and sing songs and dances.”*

Zhu Qiongxiang(祝琼香), 6 years old

*“I can make friends in preschool and also study.”*

Zhu Hailong(祝海龙), 5 years old

*"I sent him to preschool to study. He knows the numbers below 5 and can write his name. I feel more relaxed when I do farming work after sending my kid to preschool. I hope my child will study hard and go outside to work in the future."*

Mu Xiaoyu(沐晓宇), mother: Zhu Yulan

*"We are farmers and very busy most of the year. We couldn't take care of him, so we sent him to preschool to study. Now it's easy to communicate with him. His talking changed. His teacher and we will teach him together. Kids in preschool are good. I hope he will not be like me, he can go outside and learn more as he grows up."*

Child: Zhu Hailong(祝海龙), mother: Zhu Meihua, father: Zhu Kaiming

*"We sent him to preschool for study. Now he knows the addition and subtraction. Now he is more social and helps. We hope he can go outside to find a good job."*

Zhu Fengying, grandmother of Zhu Xiaolin(祝小林)

*"The Preschools here have increased basic education and health and hygiene knowledge."*

Zhu Linsheng, village vice-director, Daxi.

*"Children in Daxi are behind compared to other places. Since the opening of preschools a lot of accomplishment about foundation in life has been achieved."*

Zhu Xueyong, Village Secretary





## **SURVEY ON CHILDREN’S HEALTH**

In 2009, HPP’s Child Aid Project in Yuxi ran a small-scale nutrition program in connection with the project’s preschools. Prior to the start of the program, project staff had noticed that in general, the children in that project area were smaller than other children of the same age. Our preschool teachers and project staff had known that the children did not eat breakfast before coming to school. People of the Yi minority usually only eat two meals per day, the first meal being after the preschool lessons finish in the morning.

Here are some examples of the findings:

What was originally suspected of being a rather minor nutrition problem in the rural communities of Yuxi, turned out to be much more serious than the project staff had realized. After the nutrition program started, a doctor conducted blood tests on 46 preschool students from 5 of the villages where the program was operating. Of the 46 students that received a health check from the town doctor, only 10 were found to be in good health; 21 were malnourished, and 24 had tooth decay (11 were both malnourished and had tooth decay).

This situation is common in many of the minority communities in Yunnan. In Nansan Town of Zhenkang County, where HPP operates one of its Community Ability Development (CAD) projects, project staff have noted some of the same characteristics in the Yi, Miao, Wa, De’Ang, and Dai minority communities. Project staff have noted that children in these villages appear to be smaller than other children of the same age. The habits in the local communities are for the adults to go to the fields early in the morning, without eating breakfast, then coming home for the first meal around 10:30-11:00 in the morning. The children also do not eat breakfast, but only eat two meals per day, the second in the evening after the day’s work has been completed, perhaps around 19:30-20:00.”



**PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS CONCLUDE:**

In 2010 the HPP staff in Zhenkang, Yunnan decided to evaluate the impact of the preschool on the children's readiness for primary schools and the capacities compared with the other children. It was based upon 193 preschool students after completion of the preschool and enrolment in the local primary school. 8 primary school teachers were asked how the preschool students performed and behaved compared with students who had not attended preschool:

The most obvious thing is discipline, the students who has received preschool education has more discipline, and are able to follow the teachers instructions and organizing.

They are more polite, compared with the other children, they respect the teacher, they are more concerned about the other students, and they have more respect for their parents.

They are harder working, and take their responsibilities on their duty instead of pushing it away. If they see garbage on the ground, they pick it up. They are actively doing cleaning.

Their learning ability is one of the key points, which the primary school teachers focused on.



In the process of teaching, it is much easier for them to receive knowledge from the teacher. The basic maths and language skills have been learned in the preschool education, and it makes the teaching process smoother for the primary teacher.

They have strong ability in adapting, strong ability in being in the collective, and they can more easily be together with other students.

They have all kinds of abilities (literature and art) – they are obviously more skilled than the other students who did not go to preschool.

They have good habits and a good behavior.

They are active, lively, and open minded.

## ABOUT HUMANA PEOPLE TO PEOPLE



*The Federation for Associations connected to the International HUMANA PEOPLE TO PEOPLE Movement (HUMANA People to People), is an international membership organization, which at present comprises 36 national non-profit organizations working in 43 countries on the basis of Solidary Humanism. The overall purpose of Humana People to People is to create development*

where it is needed in an effort to minimize the gap between the rich and the poor.

HUMANA People to People members work with pressing issues facing mankind around the globe. Education, health, HIV & AIDS and food Security represent 4 of its major pillars. The members presently operate more than 320 development projects reaching out to more than 12 million people on a yearly basis within the areas of basic health, HIV & AIDS, education, agriculture, environment, relief aid and community development.

Worldwide, 20.000 children are attending Humana's Preschools of the Future.

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