

Expansion to Neighbouring Counties

We have recently had the privilege of being invited to visit two more counties where there is great need. In Zaduo, health needs are particularly striking with extremely high levels of maternal and child mortality reported. In Qumalai, near the source of the Yellow River, health and education projects as well as environmental protection work are also being discussed.

Staff

Marc and Marion Foggin, biologist and doctor, lead PP's work.

Fiona Worthy, environmental biologist, now helps run the environmental work and carry the PP work load.

Peter Foggin has a dual role, working with PP in both Canada and on the field. This autumn he is overseeing the construction of several village clinics and immunisations.

Jane Torrance runs the UK office and oversees the accounts, despite fighting cancer.

Fredrik Bohler, a volunteer from Norway, has excellent skills in bird identification.

Larry continues to run the Xining office well and to translate Chinese documents.

Tarshin works with us as driver, but continues to have health problem.

Ted is an environmental graduate from Qinghai University ... and a computer wiz!

Helen recently joined the team as Tibetan translator. She has excellent English, Tibetan and Chinese language skills ... and a fun personality, too!

Gongji teaches Tibetan language to PP short- and long-term staff.

Xu Haiying cleans and organises the Xining office and guest apartments.

Colin and Sarah Wilcock - their time with us went rapidly as they helped bring the accounts up to date, organised logistics for development work, and also set up the *Yak to School* campaign. Many thanks for all your help!

Dorothy and Maynard Seaman braved the cold and high altitude to teach on the training courses and help run the PP house. Many, many thanks for your great support!

Many thanks to all of you for your support – for raising funds for the provision of yak and sheep, and in every other way as well.

SEARCHING... Do you enjoy the prospect of implementing challenging and fulfilling development work in a remote area of Central Asia, with a variety of administrative and accountancy (book-keeping) tasks? Are you keen to promote community health, education and environmental protection in the Tibetan Plateau region of China? Plateau Perspectives is currently seeking an appropriate person to fill the role of **Project Administrator**, as well as a **doctor** and/or **health expert** to assist in the expansion of its development work.

Please visit www.plateauperspectives.org for more information about our work. If you are interested in discussing your future with us, please contact info@plateauperspectives.org.

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www.plateauperspectives.org info@plateauperspectives.org
200 Walnut Ave, St-Lambert, Quebec, J4P 2T1, Canada Charity no. 88353 0511 RR0001
Kincapple House, Kincapple, St Andrews, KY16 9SH, UK Scottish Charity no. SC036202

The year has flown by and our projects have moved forward with good joint working with local community representatives, organisations and government. PP has expanded to two new areas within Zhiduo County. We have also been taken into two neighbouring counties, relating both to government leaders and local community leaders there to plan for new work starting in 2007.

Read more below...

Muqu Village Community

The Muqu Village School is run well. Both the kitchen and dining room have been completed and the community is trying out a new kind of stove which they designed to help the catering for larger numbers of students and staff.

Yak and sheep are being purchased through the '*Send a Yak to School*' project. The purchase has been spread over the year in order to decrease the overall cost of purchasing livestock. The entire school is now well on the road toward being run independent of external funding.

The leaders were also keen to have a community health clinic near the school and arranged for a village doctor who had been on the PP doctor training course in 2004 to staff such a clinic. With joint funding from county government, PP therefore arranged for the construction of a clinic with basic accommodation for the doctor.

The construction of the clinic, a toilet and a safe waste and needle disposal unit has now been completed. The health bureau will supply medical equipment and PP is in the process of purchasing other furniture and solar panels to provide electricity.



Jiongqu Village Community

The Jiongqu community hosted some Canadian and American visitors in their homes in July, and with the funds raised by this project they are going to purchase a large tent to enable community meetings and gatherings. This project was facilitated by PP.

Yaqu Village Community

A clinic has also been built in Yaqu with joint funding from PP, the government and the community itself. It is staffed by a village doctor and two women's health workers who all have attended PP's training course – amongst our best trainees to date. The construction is completed and the clinic is already an extremely busy medical facility. There is some concern, however, that the main doctor is overworked and discussions are therefore underway to find extra help. The purchase of solar panels and other equipment is also being organised.

The school dormitory roofs were repaired, enabling the children to stay at school, but the construction of new dormitories is still needed (but depends on local government decisions). Once the purchase of sheep and yak for the Muqu school is completed, then if and as further funding become available from the *'Send a Yak to School'* project, additional livestock can be purchased for this community school as well.

Two new communities within Zhiduo

Kouqian Village in Zhahe township, Zhiduo

Kouqian is a community in the neighbouring "township" in Zhiduo County which is extremely remote, cut off by a large river. The community is motivated and mobilised to work together, and they have requested help to build a health clinic. This clinic has now been built with joint funding from PP and the government. It will open shortly, to be staffed by doctors trained by PP.

Dasheng Village in Doucai township, Zhiduo

Dasheng is another remote community in an mountainous area where snow leopard can be found. The local community is interested in environmental protection, and also is in great need of improved health care. They already have a highly respected doctor, but like in other remote communities they must have access to a health care facility in order to receive assistance from the government health insurance scheme. The clinic has been built, together with a safe waste disposal unit and an underground medicine storage unit (to prevent medicines freezing), which were designed by a leader of a local NGO. The clinic will open shortly.



One women's health worker in the area has also been invited to attend the local village committee meetings (previously attended only by men) to explain preventative health strategies.

Environmental Protection with the National Nature Reserve and Local Communities



Environmental Awareness Wildlife Festivals

PP attended 3 community Wildlife Protection Festivals this year. The children of the schools sang songs about the need for protection, conservation training was given by PP staff, and discussions were held with community leaders together with the nature reserve and a local NGO.

Exclosures

Fencing has been erected in grassland sites chosen with Jiongqu, Yaqu and Muqu communities (who will ensure their protection). These experimental areas will allow biologists to study the grasses, etc, to see if over-grazing is a problem. Data collection will start next year when vegetation begins to grow again.

Focus Groups

Work has also begun with several groups of nomads (herders) to discuss key issues of natural resource management, grassland ecology and environmental protection.

Regular Bird Surveys and Monitoring

Bird surveys are now taking place throughout the year with a focus on migratory birds, many of which are internationally threatened, and several endemic species.

Training of Monitors

A training workshop has been given to the monitors of birds in a special wetland area, together with the Nature Reserve at the Suojia Environmental Protection Station. One important outcome of this training is to further involve local people in the work of the National Nature Reserve. A small **bird identification booklet** was produced by the PP environmental team, for use in the training workshop and on field trips.

Other Health Initiatives

Doctor & Women's Health Worker Training –

Training workshops were carried out, one for village doctors and another for women's health workers, focused on obstetrics and paediatrics. Following earlier trainings, the detection of TB has increased (it was previously thought not to exist in Zhiduo) and strategies to improve the situation are now being sought.



Immunisations – The immunisation of people in the Zhahe community will take place in the months ahead (i.e., in winter). Fiona's mobile laboratory!

Water – We have also begun to look at possible water contaminants and their effects on human health.