

Plateau Perspectives Newsletter

July 2010

On April 14th, we received a phonecall at 8:00 am to say that there had been an earthquake in Yushu, which changed people's lives and the whole emphasis of the work this year.

Yushu Earthquake Relief

Medical Camp

Plateau Perspectives was requested by the government and foreign affairs office of Yushu prefecture to assist initially with medical relief after the earthquake. We set up a medical camp, recognised as one of the formal camps, and we staffed it with rotating medical teams – bringing international doctors from all over China. After the first advance team of 5 people including a paediatrician and a surgeon set up our camp and began to see patients, the second team came with experience of the Sichuan Earthquake. Then other teams followed along the same pattern. Our vehicles served as ambulances, with permission given to transfer patients to the army camp near the airport for evacuation. Donations came in and the camp ran until the government established tent hospitals and closed the peripheral medical camps. We had seen over 1100 people.

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Yushu Earthquake Relief

General Provisions



After operation of the medical camp, we were asked for further emergency relief supplies and our staff continued to organise several trucks of tents, bedding, clothes, solar powered electric lighting, cooking utensils, etc. Our staff walked through the new 'settlements' to assess the need and give out tokens, which recipients had to bring to our camp to claim provisions. Local colleagues who had tested water purification systems after the Sichuan earthquake also were given means to set up these units.

Further Assistance

The government and army provided rapid relief and provisions, and our aim was to work with them to find any gaps that we could fill. Some patients who could not be treated on site have been helped, with a fund set up for those who needed surgery at a provincial hospital. The Yushu Disability Association is equally enthusiastic to work with Plateau Perspectives (PP). We are currently ordering 100 wheelchairs and 50 pairs of crutches, currently needed at the centre. PP will also provide a mobile rehabilitation service in which medical staff go out to the camps and homes of those who cannot reach the centre. PP has been requested to give food supplies to particular poor families and people in need. Further assistance is expected to be needed later in the year when the winter months are approaching.



The Recovery Period

Tourism is being promoted throughout China and also now, post-earthquake, specifically in the Yushu area. PP seeks to assist and promote only those forms of tourism that benefit local people and communities, as well as environmental protection. We are helping to develop a community development approach to tourism, with support for local communities. One of our staff has registered a Herders Cooperative to enable them to run ecotourism businesses. We hope this will be the first of many to enable the communities to benefit from the drive to encourage tourism as a means of financial recovery. Toward this end, we are currently developing a Yushu Tourism Network with membership from the industry, so that travel companies can sign up to good practices including environmental and social standards.

The government is now building a whole new town. However it will be a long road back to recovery for the people of Yushu.



Qinghai Universities

Our civil engineering work at Qinghai University has been well received over the past year, and now plans are underway to contribute to provincial plans for transport and trail bridges in rural areas – possibly to be integrated with a trial of trekking-oriented tourism development.

At Qinghai Normal University, we also continue to contribute toward the establishment of a post-graduate research and training institute, as well as organize occasional workshops on topics relevant to sustainable development in the Tibetan plateau region.

Veterinary Training

Two further veterinary (animal health) training courses have just been given in Zaiduo County for local veterinarians. The trainees received a new medical kit with instruments and supplies to treat the domestic animals as well as classroom and practical training.

Community Health

- An ultrasound machine was given to a township clinic serving earthquake survivors
- A village clinic is being built in Bomji County
- Leaders in a new county are planning for health development with PP's assistance

Environmental Conservation



Mitigation of human-wildlife conflict— injuries from bears are increasing and herders are increasingly keen to receive bear-proof fencing. We continue to install solar-powered electric fences, and are currently trialling 3 different models.

Left – damage by Tibetan brown bear



Right – setting up a new fence system

A study tour will be co-hosted by Plateau Perspectives and Parks Canada in September 2010, allowing local government and community leaders from Qinghai Province to learn from the Canadian experience of nature reserve management, rural tourism, environmental awareness, and engagement/relations with rural and indigenous communities.



Camera traps are still successfully photographing snow leopard and other wildlife, gathering data that will assist biodiversity conservation in the region. We are presently analyzing the photos to identify each snow leopard and to estimate population size. This approach will assist in the conservation of one of the world's most elusive and endangered cat species. It also is serving as focal point around which to further develop and promote a more people-centred approach to conservation, working closely with Tibetan herders. Snow leopard research is only the most recent activity in PP's long-term commitment to community-based conservation, which already spans over a decade.

Field Staff

Marc Foggin	Conservation biology (Executive Director)
Marion Foggin	Community child health (Medical Director)
Tim Foster	Electrical engineering (Consultant)
John Friberg	Civil engineering (Technical Advisor)
Gongbo Tashi	Environmental management (Projects Manager)
Ben Henderson	Regional planning and GIS (Assistant Projects Manager)
Shinay Henderson	Information technology (IT Specialist)
Huting	History and policy analysis (Xining Office Manager)
Jigme Rabden	Business management (Project Officer and Translator)
Ngoya Drolma	Accountancy (Accountant and Translator)
Jamie Nofsinger	Business management (Consultant)
Xu Haiying	Supplies management (Office Assistant)
Yishi Songbo	Community development (Project Officer and Translator)

We especially want to welcome **Tim Foster** and his wife **Lindsay** to Plateau Perspectives, together with their two children **Esther** and **Daniel**. Tim ran logistics for most of the Yushu Medical Relief Camp and has also been assisting with the fencing and snow leopard projects.

We extend a huge “thank you” to all who have supported Plateau Perspectives in so many ways to enable all this work and our contribution to the people of the Tibetan plateau region.

We also thank everyone who specifically gave generously and who worked so hard to bring relief to the people of Yushu, who still struggle to recover from the effects of the devastation there.



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Scottish charity no. SC036202

www.plateauperspectives.org
yushuearthquakerelief.org