

One Village One School, Grassroots Contribution: Plan for 2010 Zigen Projects

In fact, One Village One School is not simply a project, but a series of combined projects.

One Village One School covers the following:

A. In villages where there is a Zigen-supported primary school or junior high school, Zigen will support the basic needs of the villages as well.

B. For some groups of people, i.e. women, children, seniors, and migrant workers, Zigen will develop aid projects based on their special needs.

C. Zigen will encourage and develop interaction between the village and the school, strengthen the integration of school, community, and the family and promote the philosophy: “Life is our education and society is our school.”

D. Zigen will support health and environmental education, emphasize capacity-building, encourage villagers to manage village affairs, improve living qualities of the households and revitalize the local culture.

“One Village, One School” originated from the needs of China’s countryside. The rural areas in China face great challenges and there is still room for improvement in developmental programs: e.g. policies and economic development have been skewed to cities for a long time, rural areas have been neglected, and as a result the villages have been deserted. Public funding for education has been inadequate. Because educational resources are geared to cities, village schools have deteriorated and closed down. Migrant workers are separated from their families for a long time. They lack support from the communities; the school is cut-off from the village, lacking real lessons; students are also cut-off from the communities. The lessons are limited to textbooks, lacking a local focus and practical knowledge. This limited form of pedagogy neglects practical education and needs economic

investment.

“One Village, One School” will be geared to these issues and put forward related measures which are practical and feasible and comply with the ideas promoted by the Chinese government in “Construction of a New Countryside.” Zigen has worked for a long time for the education and development in rural areas and has established good relationships. The staff of Zigen has rich experience with a large number of student volunteers. All these will be beneficial to the new plan.

The projects in “One Village, One School” are in ten villages and ten schools in Leishan County, Taijiang County, Rongjiang County and Majiang County in Guizhou Province; one village and one school in Lankao County in Henan Province; four villages and four schools in Shilou County in Shanxi Province; five villages and five schools in Qinglong County in Hebei Province. In every village-school project the general budget is 60k – 80k RMB, the total budget being one hundred forty thousand RMB.

Now the Zigen staff is working diligently on the detailed plans of “One Village, One School” which cover the following:

A. Basic needs of the school:

Provide poor students with living subsidies:

1. Improve the nutrition and dormitory conditions of the boarders;
2. Provide books and recreational facilities;
3. Improve sanitation conditions of the school.

B. Projects for the village:

1. Micro-loans;
2. Education in environment and health care;
3. Promotion of applicable skills;
4. Associations for women and seniors.

C. Projects of village and school interaction and local development:

1. Establish Parent-Teacher Associations and promote villagers’ involvement in the education of

children;

2. Introduce local culture into the classroom and start local cultural activities;

3. Promote continuing-adult education.

“One Village, One School” is an extension of Zigen’s effort in long-term, sustainable, human-centered development. It is also the roadmap for our efforts.