



Fondazione Amici di Qinghai

Chiangmai, early February. 2016

Report on the activities in 2015

Dear friends and donors

The *Amici di Qinghai* paid six visits to the highlands in 2015, including one week by Yolanda. Furthermore, Xiao Song, Erwin's office clerk, joined all visits.

The purpose of the foundation's visits was:

1. To inaugurate the *Luohexiang* primary school whose completion was delayed due to extremely cold and dry weather in 2014.
2. To inaugurate three additional nomad moving schools, all realized in 2015: *Wangjia*, *Zequzhen* and *Batanmuchang*.
3. To control the renovation of the primary school at *Rushiqi* and the implementation of various small scale projects: *Quma* cement floor, *Qiakeri* sports ground, distribution of e-books and of scholarships for 2015-16.
4. To launch the construction of a new primary school, co-sponsored by a Swiss donor and the local Education Bureau, in *Yangzhigou*. This major project will be completed in late Spring of 2016.
5. To evaluate two additional moving nomad schools (*Duolong* and *Jisuzhi*) that will be launched next Spring and shall be completed in Summer of 2016,

The cooperation with the Education authorities and the nomad chiefs continued to be very smooth during the whole calendar year 2015, in spite of tighter controls for bank transfers from abroad to local Governments and authorities who were triggered by new regulations issued by the Central Government. The additional controls delayed slightly the implementation of some projects. But low key visibility of the foundation in the media, a strict avoidance of any politics, a full concentration on purely educational considerations and patience paid off. Ms. Liu Jing, former CFO at Swisstec-Beijing, continued to be very helpful in getting the green light from the Agricultural Bank of China and the supervisory authorities.

Updates on the various projects have been put on the website of the foundation or will be done soon, at www.schurtenberger.biz/swiss/ Please click on the name of the school you are looking for under projects 2014, 2015, 2016 or under **small projects**.

The provisional accounts of the *Amici di Qinghai* for 2015* were approved by the foundation's Board of Trustees on December 14, 2015**. The final accounts will be submitted to the external auditor, Mr. Cristiano Botta (Lugano) in Spring 2016, and then sent to the federal authorities in Berne (EDI) for regulatory approval. The foundation continues enjoying tax exemption in Switzerland.

As the year of the *Fire Monkey* will be starting very soon, we wish you and your beloved ones continued good health, all fortunes of this world in abundance, and last but not least, profound peace in your heart, thus enabling you to make a spiritually significant contribution to peace in the world. Because as we all know, peace in the world depends upon peace of us individuals.

Renewing our heartiest thanks for your highly appreciated, continued support, we remain

Yours truly & gratefully

Yolanda & Erwin, Chiang Mai, in early February 2016



• www.schurtenberger.biz/swiss/prov.accounts2014/pdf

** Avv. Eros Bergonzoli, Monica Cocchi del Ponte, Claudio Metzger, Yolanda and Erwin Schurtenberger

1. To inaugurate the *Luohexiang primary school* whose completion was delayed due to extremely cold and dry weather.

LUOHEXIANG: Mr. Guido Cherubini from Hongkong and Dr. Mark Qiu of the *Chongren Foundation* co-financed this modern, two floor primary school building for students of grades 1 to 3 in the farmers' village of *Luohexiang*, at an altitude of 3100 m above sea. The completion of the project took more time than originally anticipated, due to very harsh winter conditions and to new administrative approvals (deep soil inspections and stricter anti-earthquake regulations). But finally in mid August 2015, the new classroom building -- and the kindergarten building next door, financed by the *Bank of China* -- were all ready for the start of the new school year in early September. The villagers, students and authorities expressed all their heartfelt thanks to the donors at the inauguration ceremony on September 19.



2. To inaugurate three additional nomad moving schools, all realized in 2015: *Wangjia, Zequzhen and Batanmuchang*.

WANGJIA: The area covered by the Wangjia moving nomad school is very wide and with particularly harsh winter conditions (minus 20°C to 35°C). The teaching is given at six pre-school sites during winter (due to harsh weather) and at three sites in summer (15 to 25 °C above), when the nomads are living at higher altitude with their yaks, sheep and goats. The *Amici* have visited three teaching sites of the school in late October 2015 and were impressed by the enthusiasm of the students and the eagerness of the parents to see their children attending the pre-school teaching as soon as possible. Yolanda inaugurated the school on behalf of the *Amici* in April 2015, together with the Governor of Zeku. There were altogether 116 students at the Wangjia moving nomad school when it started, including 53 girls. This school has been fully financed by the many donors of the foundation.



ZEQUZHEN: This moving nomad school is located at 70 km north of the district city of Zeku.at an altitude of 3600-3800 m above sea. Zequzhen covers an area of 150 km², and is teaching around 170 students in the pre-school age, at present. The total population of the Zequzhen village amounts to 6500 people. The *Amici* visited the project for the first time in late October 2014, to evaluate the need for a moving nomad school. They got much impressed by the eagerness of the nomad parents to secure their children an opportunity to attend a moving nomad school, thus getting an opportunity to learn basic writing, reading and math. Moreover, they promised to engage a supervisor for each teaching site to supervise the children on the days when there will be no teacher around. The Zequzhen school was fully financed by Mr. Ernst Bärtschi from Switzerland and inaugurated on October 24, 2015.



BATANMUCHANG:, This moving nomad school is located at 60 km north of Zeku city, in a sparsely populated area with less than 1000 people. It covers an area of 10 km wide to 10-15 km long. There are five teaching sites for altogether 62 students to start with, including 32 girls. In two of the 5 sites teaching is given in a one-room pre-fabricated unit that protects the students with isolated walls from the outside. In two other sites instruction is given in nomads' private living quarters, and in one site teaching is offered in the former Party building. To start there were 37 students, including 17 girls. A soft opening was done on June 30 and the formal ceremony was held on October 24. The *Amici* offered 40 e-books to the students of this nomad school, enabling them to self study on the days when there is not teachers around. This project has been fully financed by the family of Prof. Ed Steinfeld at MIT & Brown University.



3. To control the renovation of the primary school at *Rushiqi* and the implementation of various small scale projects: *Quma* cement floor, *Qiakeri* sports ground, e-books and scholarships for 2015-16.

RUSHIQL: On July 10, 2015, the *Amici* celebrated the renovation of the Rushiqi primary school and the construction of the surrounding new wall, together with the Education authorities of the Huangnan Prefecture. This project was fully financed from the general funds of the *Amici di Qinghai*, i.e. by dozens of donors of the foundation. Because the *Swiss Friends* had co-financed the construction of the old primary school building in 2003, the foundation agreed to join the authorities to renovate the classroom building and the construction of a new brick wall, to replace the old mud wall. Rushiqi is a model school in terms of management and performance of the students.



SCHOLARSHIPS: 12 students who are still at the Quma primary school, or who pursue their studies at a college or university, were given a scholarship for the fourth consecutive year of the scholarship program of Mrs. and Mr. Ronner. The amount per student was RMB 1000 for primary and RMB 1500 for college students. Because older students were attending the college in town, the cash was remitted to their parents. -- Both, the students of Huangquhu and the parents of the Quma students, had to sign a receipt and to give their finger print.

HUANGQUHU: 12 scholarships of RMB 1000 each were given to needy students at the high altitude nomad school of Huangquhu (3800 m above sea), as a follow up by the *Amici* of the earlier program of Mrs. and Mr. Thomas Roth. Youngsters transported the students on their motorbikes from the school down to Quma in 2 ½ hours for one way.



QUMA cement floor: The big differences in temperatures during the year (summer up to 35°C and winter down to minus 20°C) have left strong traces on the brick floor. The villagers asked the *Amici* for help to finance the material (cement, gravels, etc.), while they offered their free labor to level the ground and to do the remaining work under the supervision of two specialized workers. As the need for a renovation was real and the contribution by the villagers noticeable, the Amici accepted the request to the relieve of the villagers and the Quma village head. The result is excellent by all standards for local conditions.



E-BOOK PROJECT: The overwhelming success with the so-called e-teacher in various moving nomad schools of the Zeku district during 2012-14 motivated the foundation to provide more young students in very sparsely populated areas with the most helpful electronic tool to enhance their self-learning. A great number of donors have offered to finance a specific number of e-books to help the students in their efforts to improve their reading and writing ability. More than 400 e-teachers could already be distributed to selected students on the highlands of the Zeku district so far, each set with the name of the sponsor concerned, including the 120 sets offered by Dr. Daniel and Lisa Christen to the Wangjia school.



QIAKERI: The *Amici* agreed to co-finance the costs for the cementing of the new play & sports ground with an amount of RMB 60'000 for this school, where the foundation had financed the construction of one classroom building in 2003. The nomads offered their labor free of charge to flatten the ground. The works were successfully completed during the Summer school holidays 2015.

4. To evaluate and launch the construction of a primary school, co-sponsored by a Swiss donor and the local Education Bureau, Yangzhigou that will be completed in late Spring of 2016.

The village school of *Yangzhigou* was built in the late 1970s. The building is today of such poor quality that a renovation would not make sense all the more that it would not withstand an earthquake of even a mild 3 to 4 grade on the Richter scale. The villagers have approached, therefore, the *Amici di Qinghai*, to explore a co-financing of a new classroom building (2 preschool classrooms, 1 large primary school class room, one office and two small living rooms for the 2 teachers). They offered their labor for building the wall around the compound and for flattening the ground as well as for the piling of the new classroom building.

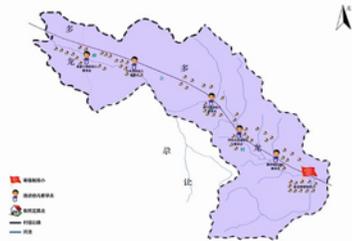
The conditions in the area are really harsh, allowing hardly anything more than planting potatoes, growing barley and wheat, and breeding sheep, goat and yaks. Furthermore, the village experiences frequent sand storms in spring and summer, and very cold gusty winds in winter. After discussing the project with the authorities, the *Amici* accepted the project for due consideration, and finally accepted a co-financing at a ratio of 50% by the local Education Bureau and 50% by the *Amici*. Happily a Zurich-based foundation that prefers to remain unknown, has offered to cover largely the amount of totally RMB 380'000, i.e. the part to be contributed by each of the two sponsors, namely the *Education Bureau of Tongren* district and the *Amici di Qinghai*.



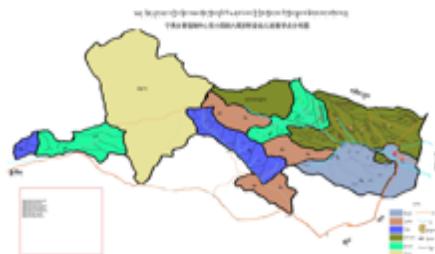
5. To evaluate two additional moving nomad schools (*Duolong* and *Jisuzhi*) to be launched and completed in 2016

DUOLONG: is at 30 km north of the district city of Zeku, in a very sparsely populated area with a population of 1800 people for an immensely wide area, at an altitude of 3800 m up to 4800 m above sea. Natural roads are of very poor quality and the distances enormous. Kids are too young to attend pre-school in a boarding establishment in a township of the prefecture. The nomad children in the area have today no chance to get any education, before entering the compulsory primary boarding school in a township. The need for a pre-school education for the children concerned in the area is, therefore, real. After due discussion with the nomad parents concerned in October 2015, the *Amici* and the education authorities agreed to consider launching a new nomad moving school for Duolong. A Geneva based businessman is happily fully financing this school that will be named after his daughter Alexa. - The planned school will start at 5 selected teaching sites for altogether 42 students in 2016, offering instruction in basic reading and writing of Tibetan and Chinese, simple math and a few words of English, and will be expanded to additional sites later. Another 34 of the kids of the area will have to wait for the extension of the sites in the near term.

泽库县麦秀镇多龙完小附设流动幼儿园示意图



NINGXIUXIANG: This moving nomad school will cover a surface of around 120 km² with a population of 3652 people, living in altogether 15 administrative sub-counties. There are 476 children in primary school age and 191 in the pre-school age. 79 kids do at the moment not attend any pre-school, because their parents live too far away from any existing pre-school site already established. The need for an additional moving nomad school for the kids concerned is therefore real. The planned school is located at 85 km west of the district city of Zeku, in the county of Ningxiu, at an altitude of 3600 to 3800 m above sea. The said school is following the teaching method of the previous 12 moving nomad schools on the highlands of Zeku, so far financed by the *Amici di Qinghai*. This project is being co-financed by the Ascona-based *Pende* foundation and the *Amici di Qinghai*. Formal inauguration is planned for next September.



Thank you so much for your generous help !



2015年为青海的瑞士朋友们

举行的长寿法会



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Cerenmony 2015 for a long, happy and healthy life of all
donors of the Amici-di-Qinghai and the Swiss Friends

Rebkhong 2015.7.10

