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Editorial

Ode to Yunnan

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浩氣如泉永不竭

ODE TO YUNNAN

East in Tung Cun we behold, red hills stacked in surreal terraces, (1)
West in Chung Dian, through mountain gorges, a raging river raced, (2)
Under the southern sky, Shi Ping's Lily ponds shimmer amidst their lunar
embrace, (3)
High north, a Jaded Dragon with its pristine glacier, in awe we gazed, (4)
O'er six Yunnan summers, we taught with joy, nurturing harmony with
friends we cherished, (5)
By fate we gathered, our goal accomplished, leaving memories to relish,
Our hearts though steadfast as the moon, likewise may wax and wane, (6)
Our stream of benevolence will never flow in vain.

- (1) Tung Cun is well known for its red earth rice terraces
- (2) Chung Dian, also known as Shangri-La is famous for the Nu Jiang (Angry River) that cuts through mountain gorges on its way eastward.
- (3) Shi Ping, located south of Kunming is noted for its lily ponds
- (4) Jaded Dragon or Yu Lung Snow Mountain over 5000 m. high has a glacier
- (5) The foundation spent 6 years (2006-2011) in their effort to train up all the doctors from the four corners of Yunnan in Neonatal Resuscitation. After 2011 they will move on to GuiZhou.
- (6) Leaving Yunnan is like the moon's lunar cycle

By Dr. Vincent T. C. Leung

Many of the local paediatricians are multi-talented and patriotic. In this editorial, I would like to share with you the above poem written by Dr. Vincent Tsz-Ching Leung, the Chairman of the Hong Kong College of Paediatricians Foundation. Over the past 6 years, a team of paediatricians from Hong Kong led by Dr. Leung have been so selflessly devoting their own precious time to help improve the neonatal care in the remote areas of Western China. The project was known as Neonatal Resuscitation Project (NRP) and it was all self-funded and every single cent of donation was used in purchasing necessary teaching materials and equipments. It may remain anonymous to many, therefore, it was my blessing indeed to have a chance to work with them in some of these missions.

The project was initially proposed and organised by Drs. Vincent Leung, Chan Man-Cheung, Cheung Kam-Lau and Yam Man-Ching. They were thinking of how to help the children in our motherland with limited manpower and resources. Eventually, the idea of providing neonatal resuscitation training was raised and it was unanimously agreed. Then a group of dedicated paediatric volunteers from various public and private hospitals were recruited (please refer to the picture attached). The reason why Yunnan was selected was simple. Yunnan is one of the developing provinces in China and her local health authority was very eager to seek assistance from us. They are very transparent, organised and have a clear objective to improve the local neonatal care especially in the deprived areas. According to the Yunnan Department of Health 2010 Annual Report, the population of Yunnan province is around 46 million and 65% of them are working in farm lands. The ethnic minorities account for 33% of the whole population and many of them live in area with difficult access to standard healthcare facilities. The healthcare providers are poorly equipped and not properly trained. There are 9.5 million children (0-14 years) and 0.52 million babies were born in the year 2010.

Over the 6 years period starting from 2006, training courses based on the contents of American Academy of Pediatrics Neonatal Resuscitation Course have been conducted in 13 different districts of Yunnan by the team. The team virtually visited local hospitals or healthcare facilities in all 4 corners of Yunnan. So far, 439 medical and paramedical professionals have been successfully trained. Among them, many were also trained as trainers so they can extend our mission to the future and the training centres were given manikins, laryngoscopes and endotracheal tubes for teaching and resuscitation purposes. The participants did

not only achieve their learning objectives by taking lectures, practicum and examinations, if they qualified, they were also given a resuscitation set including face mask, ambubag, portable suction pumps, oro-airways etc... These equipments will be life saving for the newborns in the rural areas.

Whether the group achieved the initial targets can be assessed by some objective parameters, such as the local healthcare indexes related to neonatal care. We witness a significant improvement in some neonatal and infant healthcare related indexes (Table 1). To claim sole responsibility for such success will be arrogance. We know that the causes of the improvement are multi-factorial but the resuscitation courses should no doubt be one of the significant contributory factors. On the other hand, the indexes also showed us that there is still significant leeway for future improvement and we should continue to monitor the progress and provide appropriate assistance in the future.

Table 1 Comparison of healthcare indexes of Yunnan between 2007 and 2010

Index	2007	2010	% Decrease
Children's mortality (<5 years)	22.55%	15.31%	-7.24%
Infant mortality	17.47%	12.24%	-5.23%
Neonatal mortality	11.09%	7.82%	-3.27%

Put the job aside, we also have the opportunity to visit some of the exclusive areas in China which are seldom visited by the ordinary tourists. Such as the places mentioned in Dr. Leung's poem. The astonishing variations of landscape, abundance of cultural history are all eye opener for us. Here, I would like to appeal to our fellow paediatricians to actively support this kind of meaningful activities that can benefit the children in China or even other parts of the World (i.e. Dr. Yau Fai-To also has been leading a group of paediatricians to serve in Cambodia). If you are interested to share your expertise and time, or you would like to sponsor this meaningful project, please contact the college secretary of the Hong Kong College of Paediatricians for details. The team will be moving to another province, Guizhou, in the next few years. Finally, I salute again to all the paediatricians and related healthcare professionals who have been contributing to the success of these missions.

GCF CHAN
Chief Editor



The Yunnan Mission Team 2011:

From left to right: Cheung Kam-Lau, Chan Man-Cheung, Yau Man-Mut, Eligina YL Poon, Chik Yuen-Man, Kwan Hoi-Sim, Yam Man-Ching, Monica LM Chan, *Director of Maternal and Child Health Services of Yunnan – Ma Li-Fai*, Vincent TC Leung (Chairman), Anna Leung, Joseph Y Ting, Carol Hon, Ellis KL Hon, Godfrey CF Chan. *[Not in the picture but joined the previous missions:* Chan Shu-Yan, Reann WP Chu, Ho Hing-Tung (deceased), Huen Kwai-Fun, Wilfred CW Leung, Li Po-Siu, Louis CK Low, Tsoi Nai-Shun, Lilian HL Wong, Rosanna MS Wong]



The Red Earth Rice Terraces of Tung Cun, Yunnan