

# Yunnan Left-Behind Children's Development Project

## Final Evaluation Report



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## Executive Summary

Shincon Kunming Rep. Office, Zhaotong Municipal Women's Federation, Xishuangbanna Legal Aid Center for Women and Children jointly launched a five-year Yunnan Left-behind Children's Development Project in January 2015, aiming to break cycle of leaving left-behind children, improve quality of life for left-behind children and reduce the number of children left. The specific objectives of the project are: 1) to improve left-behind children's living situation and confirm their self-value, 2) to promote children's participation in their own development, 3) to protect children's rights by enforcement and improvement of policies and laws systematically, 4) to enhance communities and families to take responsibility in helping left-behind children, 5) to enhance society to take responsibility in helping left-behind children, and 6) to increase local partners' capacity to run children-focused project.

The project is mainly implemented in Zhaotong Municipality, Jiangdi Township of Ludian County, Meng' A Township of Menghai County of Xishuangbanna Prefecture. The project has carried out many activities to target children (especially left-behind children and other children in difficulty) and caregivers (including parents, grandparents and relatives who look after children, teachers, volunteers, cadres of women's federation, community members etc.). The project will be completed on December 31, 2019. Entrusted by Shincon, Yunnan Pioneers for Health Consultancy Center conducted a final evaluation for the project in Zhaotong, Meng' A Township of Menghai County and Kunming between October and November 2019. According to Terms of Reference for Evaluation provided by Shincon, the purpose of the final evaluation is to generate participatory and systematic process that mainly focuses on learning at all levels from all involved parties. The main goal for the evaluation is to assess impact and sustainability of the project.

The evaluation employed participatory qualitative research methods, including literature review, participatory focus group discussions, group interviews, individual in-depth interviews, observations, measurement of empowerment by EAT and assessment of effectiveness of ICDP using existing ICDP tools. The main limitations of the evaluation include: lack of children's perspective of ICDP's impact on them, lack of quantitative assessment of children's self-value, and no analysis of cost-effectiveness of the project due to insufficient data and technique. .

The evaluation conducted 2 meetings, 3 focus group discussions, 8 group interviews and 12 individual interviews. A total of 129 persons were interviewed, including implementers, partners, beneficiaries, participants and informants of the project at all levels.

Based on the data collected, we have following main findings:

- The children's awareness of self-value in the project areas improved;
- The teachers of the project schools gained child-centered awareness, and their capacity to communicate with children and their teaching ability improved;
- Building upon normal curriculums, the project schools have expanded rich teaching contents for children in order to promote their development;
- In line with the supportive environment of caring for children of whole society, the project has expanded and strengthened the social network in providing care for children;
- The children in the project areas initiated participation in community affairs and started to strengthen their sense of social responsibility;
- Existing policies and laws related to child development haven been better implemented in the project areas and a new policy was issued In Menghai;
- A team of ICDP trainers/facilitators was established, and ways of communication between the caregivers and the children changed;
- The project partners reported project activities and children-related issues through various media;
- Women in some project communities have actively initiated local entrepreneurship;
- The capacity of all the parties to run project improved, some individuals gained significant personnel development;
- The top three favorable activities were ICDP, summer camp and teacher's training in Zhaotong, and children's follow-up group, policy advocacy and summer camp in Xishuangbanna. All the project activities are

consistent with the goal and the objectives of the project. An activity actually has contributed to multiple objectives. For example, the summer camp becomes a vehicle for children and adults to discover self-value and value of the others in their interactions; the Children's Home provides space for children to participate in their own development and community affairs; protection of child rights is strengthened through policy advocacy; and ICDP enables child rights to be reflected in daily interaction between caregivers and children.

The main experiences of the project include:

- The project design conformed to contemporary social and policy trends;
- The project partners have shared goal and mission. Their management teams remained stable;
- The project paid sufficient attention to human development;
- ICDP has universal applicability in China and has broad prospects of development;
- Shincon has provided strong technical supports to project implementation in various aspects , but the supports were not sufficient in some areas;
- The EAT empowerment level of the project is level 4.

We draw following conclusions based on the main findings:

- The project objectives were basically achieved. But level of achievement for each objective in Zhaotong and Xishuangbanna is not same, and each with its own advantages;
- The project carried out a high degree of consistency between the activities and the objectives. The expectations are achieved;
- All partners of the project gave high recognition to the project and have strong sense of accomplishment and ownership;
- The project has paid particular attention to human development. By providing continuous supports such as trainings and exchange meetings, the key stakeholders have been empowered and their motivations of making changes have been stimulated;
- The project partners have shared common goal and mutual trust;
- Unlike following traditional model of project management, Shincon has invited the partners to equally and fully participate in the project management in manners of respecting local opinions and experiences;
- The two project sites adopted different models of project implementation and both are effective. In Zhaotong, Zhaotong Municipal Women's Federation took lead, and the project has been expanded through school-based approach and channel of the Family Education Teacher Group of the Women's Federation. In Xishuangbanna the project was led by a local NGO and implemented through networks of local women's federation with focuses of community mobilization and empowerment;
- The management teams of the project partners have remained stable therefore experience and knowledge gained during the implementation of the project are able to be continuously accumulated and delivered inside the organizations;
- The important concepts introduced by the project have become common language among the partners, such as the term "caregiver" has been widely applied. This becomes an important part of the sustainability of the project;
- The practice of ICDP has achieved good results meanwhile it also answered questions about acceptability and applicability of ICDP in China. It shares light to direction for future development of ICDP;
- The implementation of the project has catalyzed the implementation and improvement of policies and laws in relation to child protection and development in the project areas;
- Women-led local entrepreneurship and employment have begun to appear, and the cycle of leaving left-behind children was partially curbed in a small area.

- With support of the project, a grassroots community organization was established. This unexpected outcome will have a profound impact on the local community;
- The activities of the Children's Home have cultivated children's sense of proud, responsibility and achievement being a member of ethnical groups. The Children's Home becomes an important base for children to improve their awareness of self-value and ability to participate in social affairs in rural communities.

Our recommendations are:

- For ICDP: it is necessary to develop a 3- to 5-year strategic plan for promotion of ICDP. There is a need to focus on further localization and cultural adaption of ICDP. It is necessary to consider a strategy on how to reduce attenuation of information during promotion of ICDP. In terms of management, it is important to explore a system of managing or maintaining trainers/ facilitators on top of agreement banding between ICDP China and the individuals. For research of ICDP, both effectiveness of ICDP and features of caregivers should be covered. Further explorations to reach parents using educational institutions such as schools as platforms are needed. At same time it is worth to promote ICDP to teachers, social work faculty, normal universities, and social work organizations serving children.
- Provide more comprehensive technical support to project partners, such as project management, gender equality, community mobilization, participatory methods, empowerment, policy advocacy, etc.

## **I. Introduction**

Shincon Kunming Rep. Office (hereinafter Shincon), Zhaotong Municipal Women's Federation (Zhaotong Women's Federation), Xishuangbanna Legal Aid Center for Women and Children (Banna Center) jointly launched a five-year Yunnan Left-behind Children's Development Project (the project) in January 2015, aiming to break cycle of leaving left-behind children, improve quality of life for left-behind children and reduce the number of children left. At the beginning of the project, the partners made cultural adaptations to the logical framework of the project in accordance with China's policies and social situation. Considering that staying behind is a changing situation rather than a fixed category, the project partners decided to not emphasize the term "left-behind", a sort of stereotyped concept in order to avoid labeling target beneficiary children. The project utilizes concept of children which the project definition is people under 18 years of age, including primary and secondary school students, children outside school (inclusive students who return to communities on holidays and vacations), and children in difficulty (inclusive children living with absence of one or both parents, lack of daily direct parental care and guardianship from father /mother). The specific objectives of the project are: 1) to improve left-behind children's living situation and confirm their self-value, 2) to promote children's participation in their own development, 3) to protect children's rights by enforcement and improvement of policies and laws systematically, 4) to enhance communities and families to take responsibility in helping left-behind children, 5) to enhance society to take responsibility in helping left-behind children, and 6) to increase local partners' capacity to run children-focused project.

The project is mainly implemented in Zhaotong Municipality (Zhaotong), Jiangdi Township (Jiangdi) of Ludian County (Ludian), Meng' A Township (Meng'A) of Menghai County (Menghai) of Xishuangbanna Prefecture (Banna). The project has carried out many activities to target children (especially left-behind children and other children in difficulty) and caregivers (including parents, grandparents and relatives who look after children, teachers, volunteers, cadres of women's federation, community members etc.). The project will be completed on December 31, 2019.

Entrusted by Shincon, Yunnan Pioneers for Health Consultancy Center (PFH) conducted a final evaluation for the project in Zhaotong, Meng' A and Kunming between October and November 2019.

## **II. Purpose and specific objectives for the evaluation**

According to the Terms of Reference for Evaluation (TOR) provided by Shincon, the main goal of the evaluation is to assess the impact and sustainability of the project. The purpose is to generate participatory and systematic process that mainly focuses on learning at all levels from all involved parties. The specific questions to be assessed cover aspects of relevance, impact, sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency as presented in the ToR.

Based on the TOR and after discussions with Shincon, PFH decided the main task of the evaluation was through participatory approaches involving all the partners to recognize main progresses and achievements of the project, generate experiences and lessons-learned, assess sustainability of the project. The scope of the evaluation covers all activities that have been carried out under the objectives of the project between 2015 and 2019.

## **III. Method and limitation**

The evaluation employed participatory qualitative research methods, including:

### **3.1 literature review**

Project documents were read and analyzed, including reports, activities' records, media reports, media reports and videos produced by the project and so forth. Relevant policies, studies and papers were reviewed.

### **3.2 Participatory focus group discussion**

Focus group discussions (FGD) for implementers, key stakeholders and informants of the project of Shincon and the partners in Zhaotong and Banna were conducted. Participatory tools were applied during FGDs so that interviewees' views and opinions were collect systematically. The interviewees of the FGDs were recommended by Zhaotong Women's Federation, Banna Center and Shincon, and ideally managers, implementers, active, inactive and potential trainers/facilitators of the International Child Development Programme (ICDP) from schools and communities at all levels would be covered.

### 3.2 Group interview

Group interviews with children, teachers and participants of various ICDP activities were conducted.

### 3.4 Individual in-depth interview

Following leads of significant changes introduced by the project which would be discovered during the FGDs, in-depth interviews with key informants were carried out in order to identify driving factors of changes as well as successful stories.

### 3.5 Observation

During field visit of the evaluation, activities in schools, communities and Children's Homes as well as the interactions between adults and children were observed.

### 3.6 EAT and ICDP existing measurement

As request by the TOR, Digni' s empowerment measurement tool (EAT) was used to measure degree of empowerment of the project. Existing ICDP measurements were utilized to measure effect of ICDP.

There are three main limitations of the evaluation. Firstly, it was difficult to arrange interviews with children whose caregivers received ICDP training. So that direct impact of ICDP on children from children's perspective was lacking. Secondly, child's awareness of self-value was not measured in a quantitative way. It was assessed mainly based on opinions of the adults interviewed and our observation and interpretation of children's performance in the interviews. Thirdly, cost-effectiveness of the project was not analyzed due to insufficient techniques and data.

## IV. Main findings and analysis

### 4.1 Basic demographic information of the interviewees

During filed visit of the evaluation, we conducted 1 preparatory meeting in Zhaotong, 1 project briefing meeting in Meng' A, 3 FGDs in Zhaotong, Meng'A and Kunming respectively, 8 group interviews and 12 individual interviews. A total of 129 persons were interviewed, including implementers, partners, participants of various activities, beneficiaries and key informants at all levels of the project.

Fifty-nine interviewees were adults (15 males and 44 females), of which 25 were from Zhaotong (8 males and 17 females), 26 from Banna (3 males and 23 females), and 8 from Kunming (4 males and 4 females). Among the 59 adult interviewees, 22 participated in the FGD on ICDP (4 males and 18 females), including 9 from Zhaotong, 5 from Banna and 8 from Kunming. The 22 interviewees of the FGD on ICDP included 7 trainers, 2 facilitators, 5 penitential facilitators, 7 caregivers and 1 key informant.

Seventy children participated in the evaluation, including 30 students of Jiangdi Central Primary School (15 of grade 5 and 15 of grade 6), 40 children (19 boys and 21 girls) from the Children's Home in Longzhupeng village and Manyan Village in Meng' A.

### 4.2 Degree of achievement of the objectives

Table 1: Scores of achievement of project objectives given by the FGDs

Objectives	Average score (lowest~highest)	
	Zhaotong	Banna
1. Improve left-behind children's living situation and confirm their self-value	9.7 (9~10)	9.4 (5~10)
2. Promote children's participation in their own development	9.6 (8.8~10)	9.8 (9.5~10)
3. Protect children's rights by enforcement and improvement of policies and laws systematically	8.4 (7.5~10)	9.6 (9~10)
4. Enhance communities and families to take responsibility in helping left-behind children	8.8 (7.5~10)	9.7 (9~10)
5. Enhance society to take responsibility in helping left-behind children	8.3 (7~9)	9.1 (9~9.5)
6. Increase local partners' capacity to run children-focused project	9.4 (8.5~10)	9 (9~9)

In the FGDs, we asked each participant to rate degree of achievement of each objective ranging 1 to 10 (1 is not achieved, 10 is fully achieved). The participants of Zhaotong (16 persons) and Banna (19 persons) all gave high scores to each objective (Table 1). They believed that all the objectives of the project were achieved. The achievement of each objective is analyzed below.

#### **4.2.1 The children's living situation in the project areas were partially improved, and their awareness of self-value were improved**

The data suggested that some positive changes in both direct beneficiary children and indirect beneficiary adults who provided care and services to children in the project areas.

##### **4.2.1.1 The children's awareness of self-value improved**

During the field visits to Jiangdi Central Primary School in Zhaotong and the Children's Homes in two villages of Meng'A in Banna, we noticed that most children greeted us warmly in a manner of self-confidence, although some of them were extremely shy when we met them for the midterm evaluation in mid 2017. During the interviews, most children actively answered questions. When their peers spoke, they listened quietly without urging or interruption. Throughout whole process of the interviews, we felt that they were relaxed and happy. Their appearances and behaviors reflected their self-esteem and self-confidence, and they considered themselves valuable, needed and loved.

In the group interviews, the students of Jiangdi Central Primary School talked about summer camp. *"We put colors on our hands and made our hand's prints on a white cloth which was given to those brothers and sisters as a souvenir".* They felt that the souvenir with their own handprints was *"extremely meaningful"*. Another memorable activity was an outdoor picnic which their teachers took them to a nice view mountain for barbecue. They were satisfied with the roast chicken which was prepared by the teachers beforehand. They said, *"the roast chicken is really delicious! The chicken was marinated by our teachers. The day before the picnic our teachers prepared food for us till very late at night"*. As can be seen from their descriptions, they felt that they were valued. They were also proud of their ability to do housework. For example, a girl who usually cooks at home was praised by the teachers due to her good skill of cutting vegetables during the picnic, she said *"I was praised and felt proud"*. They also have expectations for their future. Many of them mentioned that they want to be top students, teachers, super stars and so forth.

In the group interview, the children of the Children's Home in Longzhupeng Village obviously showed their great sense of identity of being Lahu ethnic group and they were proud of Lahu culture. They said *"I do love our music; I also like to inherit it. I want to translate Lahu music into Chinese and spread them"*, *"We should have an ambition, and people should have wonderful lives"*. *"I hope that everyone in the Children's Home won't give up because of one failure. We should believe in ourselves that we will be better"*. *"I used to be an introvert person and did not like talking to people. After coming here (the Children's Home), I have made a lot of friends. After communicating with them, I became more courageous and can talk to people outside"*. It seems that the Children's Home strengthened their sense of self-identity and responsibility.

Other obvious changes of the children in the project sites include following aspects.

First of all, they are more active, cheerful and confident. They have more friends, are eager to take part in various group activities, and willing to help and accept with each other.

The children in Longzhupeng in Banna felt that they have more friends and thought *"the more friends, the better, because they share their happiness with us and we also share our happiness with them. We can communicate with each other"*. They love all kinds of festival events, such as *"making dumplings, Zongzi<sup>1</sup> and glutinous rice dumplings together"* and outdoor activities and picnics because they can *"go to the mountain, prepare food by yourself and share with others."*

The children of Jiangdi Central Primary School in Zhaotong also enjoyed the collective activities such as summer camps and picnics. In these activities, they learned to take care of each other and to cooperate. A student told us how she took care of her sick classmate during a summer camp. They said although they would quarrel, break up even fight with classmates, but *"slowly we make it up and come together again"*. *"If he/she is wrong, I will be generous and forgive him/her. If I am wrong, I will give apology to him/her"*. Their teachers also noticed that the students who had participated in such activities became *"active and daring ... those who did not like to talk and took part in group activities became more active and willing to play with classmates"*. Ms. Jiang of Ludian Women's Federation believed

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<sup>1</sup> Pyramid-shaped dumpling of glutinous rice wrapped in reed leaves

*"the left-behind children in the project school are more active and happier". In a summer camp she saw "in the beginning, the children were still a little timid, and they didn't believe they could do it. During participating in the activities, slowly they felt that they were able to do it and do it very well".*

*My class is grade three. There are a few introvert students who were usually timid, and hardly heard their voices when they answered questions in a class. After attending the activity, I asked a student how he/she felt. He/she was happy and told me a lot about it. Suddenly, I felt that it would be good to let children to participate in such events in future because a timid kid was able to talk so much to me. -Mr. Ma, teacher of Jiangdi Central Primary School*

Secondly, the children have a strong ability to live independently, their skills of taking care of themselves and personal hygiene improved. Most of the students interviewed in Jiangdi Central Primary School were left-behind children *who "taking care of ourselves all the time"*. Some of their parents went to other places to work, some worked nearby but no time to take care of them. *"My dad goes out to work, and my mother works overtime every day until one or two at night"*. Most of them did laundry by themselves. The 15 children of grade 5 started washing their own clothes between ages of 5 and 9, and all of them washed their clothes this month. Most children also cooked for themselves. The 15 children of grade 6 said *"everyone cooks"*. The students who participated in the picnic activities said that they learned better ways to cut vegetables and to cook different dishes during the event; they said *"learned how to cut vegetables in an easier way and in different shapes for better cooking", "learned how to fry potato, and green onions need to be cut in small pieces so that the dish looks nice"*. To the question if they brushed teeth today, they all answered yes. A teacher also mentioned that she reminded her students to brush teeth every morning in order to help them in fostering good hygiene habits. The children interviewed were neatly dressed, their clothes and shoes were relatively clean, and their hairs were clean. The children's personal hygiene has improved significantly comparing with the situation in 2014 when we conducted the needs assessment for the project.

Similar situation happened in Banna. For example, a single father in Nabing Village told us that his 8-year-old daughter could help with housework, *"when I went out to do farm work she usually cooked. She is too young to cook delicious dishes, but what she does is her regard from her heart"*.

Thirdly, the children's performance in classroom improved, and their interests in learning became broad. The teachers at Jiangdi Primary School found that *"the students who participated in the activities tended to actively answer questions in the classroom and sometime competing", "the students have clearer understanding about their daily life and study schedule, and their studying habits have changed a lot"*. The students told us in the interview that they had not liked to take physical education class or painting in the past. After attending the summer camps, they fell in love with physical education and painting classes. Some students obtained school's award of *"Certificate of Honor in Painting"*.

After being exposed to Lahu language, culture and music, the children in Longzhupeng Children's Home are proud of their culture. Some children have kept in learning Lahu traditional instruments and music for a long time, and some can even write words and compose songs. Several junior and senior high schools students made their mind to further study Lahu culture and culture inheritance as their future life direction.

*I did not even know that Lahu ethnic group has characters and songs before. After I came to the Children's Home here, I learned a little bit, and then I learned more about Lahu in school. I want to learn all Lahu culture and then pass it down and reserve it. - A high school boy in Longzhupeng*

Fourthly, the children are more willing to communicate with teachers, and the relationships between themselves and their teachers are more harmonious. In the interview, we gained deep impression of the students of Jiangdi Central Primary School for their strong willingness to communicate with teachers, as long as a teacher gives them a little help, an invitation or even with *"tender" attitude*. We observed a short meeting that Mr. Shen, a leader of the school asked the students about their opinions on the school's nutritional meals. The students actively spoke without any worries. Ms. Li, a teacher of Ciyuan Primary School mentioned that in order to help a single-parent family student to integrate into the classmates, she purposely organized an event. After that the student always greeted her when they met, and told her what happened.

#### **Our favorite teachers**

(Based on the interview with the students of Jiangdi Central Primary School )

We cannot forget Teacher Gao, because he used to be very, very fierce and strict. Now he is not so fierce and becomes gentler, a little bit tender. We did badly to the last exam. Then teacher Gao asked

us to tell him or write to him what we thought about it. Since we were afraid to talk to him face to face, we wrote him a letter "Teacher Gao, I want to tell you". We hoped that Mr. Gao could be tender. After we wrote a letter to him, he became tender little by little. We can feel it and were happy. If Teacher Gao is listening outside now, he would surely become more and more tender.

We also like Teacher Ge, Teacher Zhao, Teacher Ma, and Teacher Shen. Teacher Ge is hardly angry, but he would be when he is pushed too much. He used to invite us to eat ice cream, and he gave one Yuan reward to the students who obtained full marks at exam. We were not for this money; we knew that it was his encouragement to us. We also remember a substitute teacher who taught us for half a semester in the second grade. He was very gentle and tender, and showed us movies.

We like Teacher Yu. She is our language teacher. Teacher Yu always comes up with a new game to play with us every time at physical education class, which is especially interesting. If we perform well, she would play with us. Our physical education classes were won for obedience in the Chinese class. Now things are good. Unlike the past, our physical education classes were replaced by other subjects when teachers were available or we just studied by ourselves.

There was an intern Teacher Zhao in the past. We especially liked him/her because he/she played games with us. Moreover, he/she was only a little older than us and we could play together.

Fifthly, the children obtained some knowledge of physical growth and self-protection. The students from Jiangdi Central Primary School said that the whole class participated in activities of *"recognize body organs"*. In the interview, they told terms such as fertilized eggs, sperm, eggs, uterus, vagina and so forth. They said they knew *"how to protect your body organs"* after attending the trainings. Ms. Yan, a former teacher of Xicheng Primary School noticed that students of grade 5 were shy when they have the first sex education class. *"The girls bowed their heads because of shy"*, then some students took initiative to ask the teacher when would be the next class. In the past, students might make fun of terms of reproductive organs due to curiosity, and then such things disappeared. Mr. Ma, principle of Jiangdi Central Primary School believed that in result of this kind of trainings, *"the children's ability to protect themselves increased"*.

#### **4.2.1.2 The teachers of the project schools gained child-centered awareness, and their capacity to communicate with children and teaching ability improved**

All the teachers interviewed mentioned that the project brought brand new concepts, and they learned getting along with children in better ways. For example, Mr. Zang, principal of Ciyuan Primary School said he *"looking at a problem more objectively and calmly after participating in the project"*. Ms. Wu Xushu, focal contact person of the project on-behalf of Zhaotong Women's Federation, noticed changes of the teachers, *"the teacher's awareness was changed. Their ability of serving children was enhanced, and their communication with students was intensified"*. During the interviews, we could feel that the teacher were sensitive to children's states and able to discover children's problems or needs; they tended to be more tolerant to children and better understand children, and could effectively communicate with children. The changes of the teachers have driven change of the children. The teachers said in the interview, the students were more confident, active and cheerful. In fact in the schools the students' relations, teacher-student relations, managerial- teacher relations have become more harmonious.

#### **What I obtained from the project, I pass it to my students**

##### **Ms. Chen, a teacher of Ciyuan Primary School**

I learned to accept from the project. The acceptance not only refers to me, but also to the students. Slowly I started to apply empathy and putting in someone's shoes which I learnt from ICDP to things facing me. Then I found out that I could always found a reason to accept. Even for those students with learning difficulties, I can understand them from their perspectives. I used to more or less reject those students with poor learning performance. Slowly I have learned to accept it, and can always find bright sides of them.

I realized that when a person could really accept himself/herself, he/she is actually a more mature person. I'm glad to see the changes of the students induced by my changes. I want to bring what the project gave to me to the students, so that they have chance to recognize themselves. Last year, I brought together some left-behind children and children with single-parent who were born in December and January to celebrate their birthday together. I bought a big cake for them and took them playing in the classroom for two classes. I found that these children actually have love in their hearts, and they all yearn for love. Then I noticed that our relationships have slowly improved and we can accept each other.

*The average age of our teachers are relatively high. Their concepts are more traditional and they generally do not want to change. However, through several trainings of the project, the teachers have made great changes in their concepts of education. Even some of them took initiative to take care of the students with learning difficulties. No matter what works the school arranges, they have no complaints.-Ms Yan, a former teacher of Xicheng Primary School*

*I have two students, the father of one died in a car accident and the mother of another ran away. During my communication with them, I got to know that they felt rejection by other children because they did not have father or mother. Then I arranged some children to play with them together. After that, they found that actually other children did not reject them. They became active to play with other children.-Ms. Li, a teacher of Ciyuan Primary School*

The teachers of the project schools in Zhaotong have learned new teaching concepts and methods from the project and applied these to their routine teaching. During the interviews, many teachers mentioned that the project invited some outstanding teachers, such as Ms. Li Xiaodan to train them. The teachers were impressed by Ms. Li Xiaodan's "teaching by reading and happy learning", and still remember details of her trainings and demonstration classes of Chinese. ICDP trainings have also contributed to improvement of the teachers' teaching ability. Mr. Ma, former principal of Xicheng Primary School thought "ICDP is a new thing, but its teaching methods begun to be integrated into the teachers' existing knowledge structure". Ms. Song, a teacher of Jiangdi Central Primary School said that she has applied half of what she learned in her teaching. In fact she did not only use the games learned from the various project activities, but also intentionally "collected the games that can be used at class". She told us "I bought a book which is specifically about how to play games during and after class. I played with my students in physical education classes and they were very interested". Several teachers from the project schools won awards in teaching competitions using those new ideas and methods.

In addition, the teachers of the project schools showed their strong ability of organizing and coordinating in various project activities. Some teachers were noticed by leaders and have been promoted to leadership positions. For instance, Mr. Ma who used to be the principal of Xicheng Primary School was recently promoted as principle to another primary school with larger scales in Zhaoyang District in Zhaotong. Mr. Ma told us "I noticed that Ms. Yan's organizing ability during the project activities, therefore she was promoted from a teacher of Xicheng Primary School to principal of a brunch school of a another large school".

*I saw our teachers' development. In the teaching competition organized by the Bureau of Education in the spring semester, Ms. Chen participated in the Chinese class and won award. Ms. Chen used the teaching by reading and happy teaching methods of Ms. Li Xiaodan ... I also watched a physical education class given by Ms. Li. She seized the core of physical education class which is making children enjoying...The teachers in our school have made progresses at all aspects such as the ability to manage the classroom, the ability to manage the class etc.-Mr. Zang, principle of Ciyuan primary School*

#### **4.2.1.3 Building upon normal curriculums, the project schools have expanded rich teaching contents for children in order to promote their development.**

The project schools have provided students with trainings on child rights, gender and sex education, environmental protection, accident prevention, etc. which were beyond the curriculums of school education. The teachers thought that the students extremely needed sex education, since many children got insane answers from their parents to their question where they came from, such as they were picked "up the mountain", "in a ditch". Mr. Shen of Jiangdi Central Primary School said, "The parents and also the teachers of primary schools usually avoided talking about this issue, and they didn't know how to talk to children ... I think that these trainings of the project have added the missing contents for the primary schools in the mountains". However, due to lack of capable teachers who could provide sex education and gender awareness raising training, the project schools mainly relied on Zhaotong Women's Federation in providing trainings. It would be more sustainable and effective if the teachers could be trained to run such trainings and class by themselves.

#### **4.2.1.4 In line with supportive environment of caring for children of whole society, the project has expanded and strengthened the social network in providing care for children**

Caring for children in difficulty has been one of governments' important works at all levels and an area to which social resources have paid great attention in recent years. Starting from the national level, caring for children in difficulty,

left-behind children and unattended children has been strengthened, and the relevant working goals, systems and mechanisms have been further improved. The networks at three levels of county/ city, township and village have been established in various places. The responsibilities of each the layer at different levels have been clarified. Positions of child directors and child welfare officers have been set up and assigned<sup>2</sup>. Under such social phenomenon of caring for children, the networks of caring for children in the project schools and the communities have been further expanded and strengthened.

Prior to the launch of the project, the project schools and the communities had provided caring for left-behind children. The implementation of the project has increased capital investment in this area, and more importantly, introduced new concepts and methods, which has catalyzed the construction and development of the network. With the active efforts of the project local partners, the project effectively mobilized and brought in various resources to provide children with more comprehensive services.

In Zhaotong, after the earthquake in Ludian, Jiangdi Central Primary School has received long-term support from the China Poverty Alleviation Foundation's "Fuel Plan Project" which has provided teacher trainings and "dream-seeking classes". During the implementation of the project, the project schools established internal mechanisms aiming to help children in need, to identify needs of children and mobilize resources in a timely manner.

*Influenced by the project, we have organized many activities. For example, during our home visits we saw that 5 students had no beds and no bedding in their homes. We immediately organized teachers to donate more than 3,000 Yuan. Then five beds and quilts were bought for them. There was 1,000 Yuan left which we spent to support those students without warm bedding. - Mr. Ma, principle of Jiangdi Central Primary School*

*Our school has tried best in helping children in need and has done a lot of works. I was inspired by the project and determined to mobilize more social forces to enrich our work in school. Therefore, I specifically contacted the United Front Work Department of Zhaotong Municipal Party Committee, and brought three democratic parties to help our school in family education. They came to our school to train parents and left-behind children. -Mr. Ma, former principal of Xicheng Primary School*

In Banna, there was a good foundation for helping children and women in difficulty. Banna Center has many years of experience working in women's and children's empowerment and protection, and has accumulated sound social resources before the project began. While Menghai Women's Federation led establishment of a local NGO, Menghai County Aid Association for Women and Children (Menghai Aid Association) in 2014, which mainly provided assistance and support to poor single mothers, orphans, left-behind women and children, and women entrepreneurs in need. Another local NGO Meng' A Township Association of Dripping Water to Sea (Meng' A Dripping Water) was initiated by the township party committee and the township government in 2012, and its main purpose is to assist orphans and left-behind children by raising social funds . Moreover, there were 5 Children's Homes in Meng' A Town before the launch of the project<sup>3</sup>. However, the implementation of the project has strengthened collaboration among these existing organizations and the social resource. The functions of the four of five Children's Homes have been enriched and expanded, and 4 children's follow-up groups were newly established. These grassroots organizations or groups have played leading roles in women's and children's empowerment and protection in local communities. For example, the Longzhupeng Children's Home was awarded as an Excellent Model by Banna Prefecture Women's Federation. In 2019, 4 Children's Homes received investment of 30,000 Yuan each from Menghai Civil Affairs Bureau. The managers of the 4 Children's Homes and the 4 children's follow-up groups have been appointed as the child director in the villages by the Civil Affairs Department. In addition those 14 managers who are also women carders in 7 villages set up a community organization Meng' A Sisters Mutual Support Group (Meng' A Sisters Group), and it was successfully registered in Menghai Civil Affairs Bureau in 2019. The formation of this community organization provides important guarantee for continuous services for development of women and children in the local communities. Banna Center, Menghai Women's Federation and Meng' A Women's Federation jointly compiled a Manual of Child Protection in Village (Picture 1), which guides grassroots women cadres in providing protection, assistance, intervention and resources mobilization for children.

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<sup>2</sup>Source: A Booklet of Child Protection Policies composed jointly by Banna Center, Menghai Women's Federation and Meng' A Women's Federation

<sup>3</sup>Source: Baseline Survey Report of Yunnan Left-behind Children's Development Project

#### 4.2.2 The children in the project areas initiated participation in community affairs and started to strengthen their sense of social responsibility

Jiangdi Central Primary School has organized social activities for students for several years to cultivate their spirit of devotion, such as paying visits to the elderly without family or with disabilities, cleaning common space in community. The students told us during the interview, *"the whole class and the whole school participated in cleaning the community"*. They were happy because they *"can contribute to the environmental sanitation of the town"*. Many students wanted to take part in the visits to the elderly but could not due to limitation in numbers.

Children's participation in community affairs was also reflected in the fact that the children can make suggestions for class activities in the school. The teachers intentionally provided space for children's suggestions, which gave them great satisfaction because *"things at home are impossible" to be discussed with them.*

*Our class is about to start an in class culture event. We have just discussed with the teacher to arrange a biology corner in classroom. We are going to bring some plants to the classroom for exhibition...I plan to bring a prickly pear. I want to bring succulents. I want to bring a little turtle ... This was from a task of spoken communication for Chinese class. The teacher asked for our ideas. So we proposed a biology corner, and the teacher agreed with us.- the students of grade 6 of Jiangdi Central Primary School*

Picture 1: Manual of Child Protection in Village



Picture 2: Children's Activity Manual



The three project partners in Banna compiled a booklet "Children's Activity Manual" (Picture 2) to guide the managers of the Children's Homes, children's follow-up groups and grass-roots workers in promoting children's participation. In the Children's Homes, some children have taken part in management of the home. When we visited the two Children's Homes, we saw some junior and senior high school children organizing activities. The Longzhupeng Children's Home has been established for several years. Several children who have participated in the activities there since the beginning are high school students. They still took opportunities of returning home on weekends and holidays to the Children's Home to organize activities for younger children. In Manyan Village, a brother and a sister have participated in the activities since the establishment of the Children's Home. The brother firstly led other children to do activities. After the brother went to college, his younger sister Renxian who is now a student of grade 9 in Menghai Middle School started to spend time in managing the Children's Home by leading younger children to read books and play games. Renxian's mother has been very supportive to her son and daughter to managing the Children's Home.

*The older children who are now in high school have become our volunteers in the Children's Home. They participate in teaching younger children to learn, draw, and ethnic culture. They have started serving others. —Ms. Jinying, manager of Longzhupeng Children's Home*

In the Longzhupeng Children's Home, we were deeply impressed by the children's strong sense of proud being Lahu and strong motivation and sense of responsibility to learn, inherit and spread their Lahu culture. Several high school children said that they decided to learn Lahu language and music after graduation, *"after learning from the teacher in the village, I will teach other children"*. When there were festival performances in the village, the children performed Lahu music instruments, songs and dances. Ms. Jinying said, *"The children showed their talents in front of the villagers for the first time during the Spring Festival performance, so the seniors in the village were moved. They were satisfied that Lahu culture has inheritors"*. Then for every festival *"the children were invited to perform on stage"*. The children themselves were encouraged after performing in the village and want to *"dance in other villages"*. Ms. Jinying supports their ideas and hopes that they can make it happen soon.

*I started learning music here. When I came to the Children's Home for the first time, I thought that the Children's Home was not welcomed by adults. After a few visits, I slowly discovered that the Children's Home was also supported by the adults. I want to make this event bigger, and expand scope to other villages ... The Lahu people have a traditional festival called Men's Day. On the day before Men's Day, we play Lusheng (a traditional Lahu musical instrument) to door of every household in the village to ask for money. They give us money, and we thanks and then go to dance that night or the next night. I organized this event for two years. This is the tradition of Lahu, and we just want to inherit it.*

*When the teacher came here to teach us Lahu language, I didn't like to learn. Later I went to my grandmother's house where I saw some box of audio tapes with Lahu characters on them. I gradually understood the texts so I wanted to learn and spread Lahu language. I used to think that Lahu people only lived in Banna and Lancang County. Learning from a teacher who taught Lahu culture at my school, I got to know that Lahu people are in the United States, in Taiwan. I never expected that wide distribution of Lahu people. I want to learn more so that I can teach younger children here, and let them to pass on, and continuously pass, so that more people will pay attention to us. Almost all Lahu written language here is lost, even my parents do not know how to write. They only know how to speak.*

*-Two high school students in the Longzhupeng Children's Home*

#### **4.2.3 Existing policies and laws related to child development haven been better implemented and a new policy was issued in Menghai**

Since 2016, China has issued 4 important policies on child protection and welfare: the Opinion on Strengthening Care and Protection of Rural Left-behind Children and the Opinion on Safeguarding Children in Difficulty issued by the State Council, the Opinion on Further Improving Care and Service System for Rural Left-behind Children and Children in Difficulty issued jointly by 10 ministries such as the Ministries of Civil Affairs, Education and Public Security, and the Opinion on Further Strengthening Protection of Unattended Children issued jointly by 10 ministries and omissions such as the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the Supreme People's Court and<sup>4</sup>. In the past few years, the governments' efforts to combat poverty have made Eliminating Drop-out<sup>5</sup> a key task of poverty alleviation. The project local partners have combined project activities with implementation of the national policies so that the children in the project areas can access benefits of the policies. This is particularly prominent in Menghai and Meng' A in Banna.

According to several project managers of the partner organizations, including the director of Banna Center, the former and current chairperson of Menghai Women's Federation and the chairperson of Meng' A Women's Federations, these three organizations had conducted a baseline survey on situation of local children before the project, and a data base on children in the communities was established. After the project was launched, they have continued to monitor the children's situation and updated data base of children so that they could identify children in need timely. Then they could provide follow- up case management and bridge the children to relevant departments for helps. In result, the policies could be effectively implemented in children and their families. A survey in Meng' A discovered that many children did not have *Hukou*<sup>6</sup> due to various reasons. Those children without *Hukou* were not able to enjoy the benefits entitled by the existing policies. With the continuous advocacy of the three organizations, Menghai County Government finally issued a policy to solve this problem in 2016 (Picture 3). The three organizations as well we jointly composed A Booklet on Child Protection Policies (Picture 4) for use by grassroots women cadres, the managers of the Children's Homes and community caregivers to help and seek policy support.

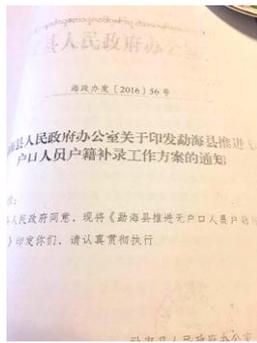
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<sup>4</sup>Source: A Booklet on Child Protection Policies composed jointly by Banna Center, Menghai Women's Federation and Meng'A Women's Federation

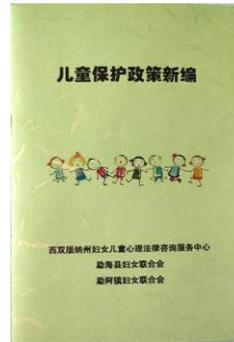
<sup>5</sup>Eliminating Drop-out: to Intensify efforts to control dropouts and to ensure all children and adolescents to complete nine-year compulsory education, and improve the quality of the compulsory education.

<sup>6</sup> Registered permanent residence

Picture 3: The policy document of solving problem of Hukou



Picture 4: A Booklet of Child Protection Policies



*We followed up with different families and helped them in enjoying the benefits of different policies according to their different needs ... There are many single fathers in our community who needed policies' benefits badly. Based on their needs, we identified relevant policies for them, such as register of Hukou, poverty alleviation, minimum living allowance, and medical assistance. Taking some disabled children as examples, we provided them assistance in getting wheelchairs. For their needs which we could not help we would report to our superiors. —Ms. Jia Mei, manager of the Children's Home*

#### **Addressing the problem of children without *Hukou* through policy advocacy**

(Based on the interview with Ms. Qiu the former Chairperson of Menghai Women's Federation)

Menghai County Government issued a policy which specifically deals with the issue of children without *Hukou*. To make it happen we have gone through many channels and done enormous work. The first step was to investigate situation. The initial survey was carried out in Meng' A because the children there have various difficulties in various forms. There were children from single-parent families, children whose parents imprisoned; children whose parents divorced looking after by their relatives or grandparents, and children without *Hukou*. The difficulty of every child was different. Although they were not in poverty according to the current national poverty standards, they generally faced a series of problems such as lacking emotional support and company of parents. All sorts of difficulties facing children in Meng' A also happened more or less in other townships. Therefore, the investigation in Meng' A reflected a whole picture of Menghai county.

We then reported the findings of the investigation to the government. Our Secretary of the Political and Legal Committee concerned this issue very much. We exchanged opinions several times. After awhile the secretary was promoted to be a member of the County Standing Committee. We decided to submit a special report to the County Standing Committee jointly by the Political and Legal Committee and the Women's Federation. Later on, coordination and negotiation with the government have been carried out many times. And this policy was finally issued after being signed directly by the county governor.

To Zhaotong, Mr. Ma , principle of Jiangdi Central Primary School believed that the implementation of the project also contributed to eliminating drop out. Because if children felt happy in school and loved to go to school, they intended to stay in school. According to him, Jiangdi Central Primary School has not had a child who dropped out of school in the last two years.

#### **4.2.4 A team of ICDP trainers/facilitators was established, and ways of communication between the caregivers and the children changed**

Since its introduction into the project, the weight of ICDP in the project has increased year by year, and gradually integrated and penetrated into other activities such as summer camp and school education. The project has so far carried out various types of ICDP trainings, lectures, conferences, seminars, games, themed activities etc. A total of 17 trainers were trained and 14 obtained certificates. 200 facilitators were trained and 100 obtained certificates. 2,500 person-times received caregivers' training and 2,000 caregivers obtained certificates. ICDP was also officially registered as Zhennuo Education Information Consulting Company in China (hereinafter ICDP China) on December 19, 2017. ICDP

China's official *WeChat* was launched in October 2017. By November 19 2019 it attracted 623 fans and published 75 articles, including ICDP introductions, event announcements and so forth. ICDP China regularly organizes ICDP salons every Friday night starting from March 2019. The salons chose topics that caregivers most concerned about so that participants can experience, share and reflect together. By the mid November, a total of 30 salons were organized and about 350 persons participated. ICDP China has also formed a team of core volunteers with different backgrounds, including trainers, facilitators, caregivers and those interested in ICDP. Currently 70 volunteers are active.

Almost all interviewees gave high recognitions to ICDP in the interviews. They said that they gained benefit from ICDP and they changed themselves. One of the high-frequency words we heard during the evaluation is "caregiver", which is a rare term in Chinese society. Parent, grandparent, teacher and other names are commonly used to describe their relationships with children in homes and schools. This is a good for the project. Since caregivers can be defined as those individuals responsible for children's development, so those individuals could be parents, teachers, social workers, grassroots women cadres, etc. This makes that caring for children not limited within families, and it highlights the concept of child-centered of the project. In addition, ICDP terms and expressions, such as the ICDP house, the 3 dialogues and 8 topics, together with caregiver have become common vocabulary for promoting ICDP. People who received ICDP training seems to form a community in which they share the concepts of ICDP and use ICDP vocabulary. After entering the ICDP community, they have more or less changed their perceptions on children and themselves. In practice, their relationships with their children, family members and colleagues have been improved to various degrees. Thereby their trust in and acceptance of ICDP deepened. One respondent used "*Poisoned by ICDP*" to describe such feelings. Mr. Zang of Ciyuan Primary School, also a trainer thought that ICDP brought a new meaning to his life, so he uses "*ICDP with colleagues, with family.*"

Members of the ICDP core team (including core trainers, facilitators and volunteers) have become strong advocates because they have benefited from ICDP. Ms. Jean, director of ICDP China thought the growth and impact of ICDP in China was "unexpected". "*Such a good team, and everyone is willing to promote ICDP*", this is beyond her expectation.

*The biggest help of ICDP for me is to let me to be patient. In the past, I was very anxiously to solve superficial problems when I was working on projects, dealing with difficulties and communicating with my kid. ICDP gave me a shock, that what you see may not necessarily be true. It gives you the tools to see what is going on, so I can find the root cause from the surface problem, and then solve it bit by bit ... Now when I urgently respond to some things, I can slow down and think about it first. - Ms. Jean, director of ICDP China*

*My family had some problems, and then it caused me some problems. No matter what you experienced as a child, it had happened when you understood nothing. I did not seem to have a chance to think about those experiences afterwards. Jean used ICDP to give me some help and made me thinking that ICDP was very useful. It seems to me that there is one more opportunity that I can sort out some childhood experiences and some confusion. It is a kind of second chance that I can go over again and realize still many possibilities for life ... If adults can be exposed to ICDP before marriage or even earlier, fewer problematic children may be produced.- Ms. Xiao Qian, a core volunteer of ICDP China*

*My child was in the fifth grade when I got to know ICDP. Our relationship was very bad at that time and she had refused to communicate with me. I thought I was about to collapse. At first the biggest impact of ICDP on me was my perception of children. It pointed out that a child should be treated as a person. It really shocked me a lot and subverted everything. Then I adjusted myself, really rethought myself in other way around. Then I have changed. When my child felt my changes, we started to communicate again. Now she is almost 16 years old and we have maintained a very good relationship. - Ms. Chen, trainer from Banna Center*

Many caregivers who received ICDP training have begun to reflect on their own problems. After understanding the characteristics of child development, they can get along with their children in more equal, understanding, and emotional communication manners.

#### **I have changed, so have my kids- Ms Lian' s story**

I have two children. When their father died six years ago, my daughter was eight and my son was seven. I determined that I should work hard in order to give them better life. I have worked extremely hard and no time and energy to look after them and communicate with them.

Later on, I remarried. My husband communicated with these two kids very well and their relationship was good. But I was irritable, domineering and fierce. Coupled with hard work, whoever said two more words when I got home, I shouted to them. It has happened that they were happily talking in home, as soon as I went back, they immediately stopped and keeping quite. They were a little afraid of me. Gradually I found that my kids become strange to me. My daughter often got angry, and my son was extremely slow to do his homework. I thought that my children worked against me. It was very hard for me.

It was at this time that I caught up with ICDP. When I first heard from Teacher Jean, I thought that I also had a childhood, I also had been rebellion, and I also had challenged my parents. Why did not I understand my children and even beat them? I was eager to learn. After eight lessons, I realized that I have too many problems and I wanted to change. After work I spent time with my children to understand their ideas. And I would not lose my temper easily. For example, if they did something wrong I would think about it before I talk to them. They started to talk to me more since I have changed. The family atmosphere has become better.

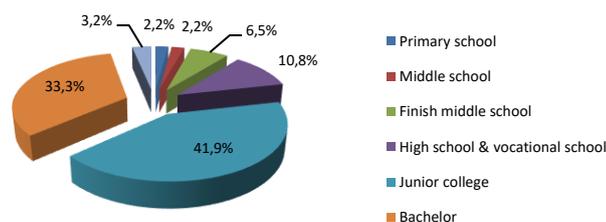
I gradually became patient and more able to control my temper when I was angry. I also learned to communicate with my children in different ways. If they cleaned up the room, I would say who did such good cleaning work today, and it would be better if do it in this way. The children would be very happy after being praised. And slowly they take initiative to do housework.

When I firstly made changes, my kids were a little surprised. They felt incredible and a little scared because their mother suddenly changed. Over time, they have changed slowly, especially my daughter. She used to not tell me anything because I didn't have patience to listen. Now when she comes back, she follows me and tells me what happened in school. She is close to me. A few days ago, two of us stayed in a bed and talked. I asked her "why did you keep in calling me when I came back late for work? You affected my work, it was too annoying". She said, "Mom, I want to tell you the truth, because I'm worried about you when you do not come home. I'm too scared at night worrying if you don't come back like my dad." Suddenly I though she grown up.

ICDP China recently conducted an on-line questionnaire survey which received despondence of 93 caregivers, including 3 facilitators and 90 caregivers with certificate on completion of the training courses. The results show that all the respondents improved their emotions and relationships with their children after ICDP training. For example, 35% (33 people) respondents reported that their anxiety was reduced, their temper was better managed, and their mental health was improved. Many respondents answered that they have got better communication with their children, better understood their children's feelings and being more sensitive to child statues and so forth.

Given limitation of the survey that the respondents were basically from Kunming and Zhaotong, its results can hardly be used to assess effect of ICDP. However, the results suggest some issues to which attention should be given. First, majority of the respondent caregivers were women, and the men only made up 7.5% (7 persons) of the total. Although this reflects current situation of female-led parenting in Chinese families, it also suggests a need for more promotion of male participation in ICDP training. Next, among the total respondents 78.5% received education of junior college and above (Figure 1). This proportion is much higher than the distribution of education level among people in Yunnan. To answer the question of the effectiveness of ICDP, more data on low-income, low-education populations may be needed. It also suggests it may be challenge to promote ICDP among rural people and people with lower education. Furthermore, 14 out of the total respondents don't have children. We found that many trainers and facilitators do not have children as well. This shows that ICDP China has not excluded identity of the trainer, and in fact the use of ICDP has not been limited to parent-child relationships. This approach would allow ICDP China to recruit more appropriate potential trainers/ facilitators, and it would be able to expand areas of using ICDP as well.

Figure 1: Distribution of the respondents' education level (n = 93)



In Zhaotong , leading by Zhaotong Women's Federation and with its administrative force(Picture 5), ICDP has been promoted relying on system of women’s federation and platforms of schools, kindergartens and other educational institutions . Therefore ICDP has gradually become the main activity in the past two years in Zhaotong. The partner in Zhaotong composed a booklet "ICDP in Zhaotong" (Picture 6) to sum up their experience in promoting ICDP. So far, a total of 854 caregivers were trained, including 2 trainers, 22 facilitators and 14 potential facilitators, who mainly came from cities, counties and towns. Fewer trained caregivers came from rural communities.

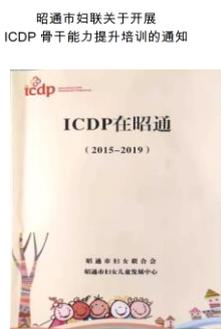
Picture 5 :Official notice of ICDP training



Picture 7: A handbook of Lahu ethnic family education



Picture 6: ICDP in Zhaotong



In contrast, ICDP has a relatively small scale in Banna. So far, there are 2 active trainers and 4 facilitators. Over 100 caregivers were trained. It may be because the project sites in Banna are in rural communities, and these ethnic communities have different cultures. Nevertheless, Banna Center has kept in promoting child development through family education. Together with other partners, they compiled “A Handbook of Lahu Family Education (Draft)” (Picture7) and provided training to 240 caregivers. In the process, they also found that there was no conflict between the concepts of ICDP and the parenting concepts of the ethnic groups. The both can be integrated with each other. But Hover ICDP provides more systematic conceptual framework.

**4.2.5 The project partners reported project activities and children-related issues through various media**

According to Ms. Li, chairman of Menghai Women's Federation, 7 reports on project-related activities were published between January 2015 and April 2018 by Xishuangbanna Newspaper, Banna Hotline, Xishuangbanna News Network, Yunnan Daily, China Women’s News and Xinhua Net. More media reports were produced by the project partners’ social media or their official website. Banna Center’s WeChat published 55 articles between 2015 to the time when the evaluation happened. The official websites of Banna Prefecture Government, Zhaotong Bureau of Education and a couple of other government agencies also reported some project activities from time to time. In addition, some ICDP trainers’ /facilitators’ activities were reported by their Danwei (Figure 8). To some extent, these reports have increased visibility of the project and ICDP in circles of local governments and communities, and have played a role in drawing social attention to child development and related issues.

Figure 8: Some media reports



#### 4.2.6 Women in some project communities have actively initiated local entrepreneurship

In order to keep caregivers home and reduce the number of left-behind children, the project in Banna has tried to support caregivers, especially women to start their own business and work locally. Ms. Long, director of Banna Center told us, Mengkang Village in Meng' A had about 70 households which had went out to work in 2015; and by the end of 2018 the number of such householders was only 12. According to Ms. Long's analysis on reasons of change, it is reasonable to say that reducing number of parents to do migrant work is a result of a variety of social factors in a larger scale.

##### **Factors driving the parents returning to Mengkang village from migrant work**

(According to the interview with Ms. Long of Banna Center)

The first factor is growing sugarcane industry in Mengkang Village in recent years. There is a sugar refinery in Meng' A. The village committee has led the villagers to negotiate collectively with the sugar refinery. Mechanized operations were implemented so that labor input and difficulty of sugarcane planting reduced. The villagers' income increased. Those parents gradually realized that the income from planting sugarcane was more than salary of migrant work. Meanwhile they could stay home living with their children. Slowly they stopped to do migrant work.

Secondly, awareness of the leadership of village committee played an important role. The party secretary of the village committee believes that no matter how good other people could take care of children, they cannot replace the parents. More importantly Ms. Xiaohui who is the manager of the children's follow-up group in the village was appointed as the chairperson of village women's federation and then became a member of the village committee. With her representative, women and children related issues can be discussed directly at the village committee. The idea of giving priority to children of the project is consistent with the Dai ethnic tradition and is well accept by the villagers. In addition, Ms. Xiaohui and other members of Meng' A Sisters Group learned benefits of ecological agriculture during a study tour of the project. Then they came up with an idea of starting their own businesses on their own land. Actually the ownership of land gives the villagers more power in negotiating deals with sugar refinery.

The third factor is that wild elephant herds have frequently appeared in villages in Meng'A in recent years, and sometimes hurt people. In this case children dearly need parents to take care of them.

#### 4.2.7 The capacity of all the parties to run project improved, and some individuals gained significant personal development

During the implementation of the project, the project partners have become familiar with elements of an international project, such as targeting needs of beneficiaries, people-centered, addressing whole processes of project planning, implementation, monitoring and improving. In result they have obtained more systematic understanding of project management. The personal capabilities of staffs involved in the project have also been improved. For example, Ms. Li of Zhaotong Women's Federation joined the project in 2018, and in the eyes of the project focal contact person Ms. Wu Xushu, Ms. Li quickly picked up and her ability was rapidly increased. Ms. Li noticed her progress as well, having "*ability to conduct in-depth exchanges and discuss project implementation with others*".

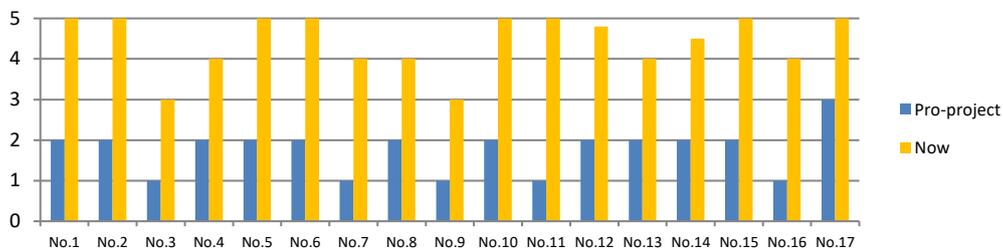
*During the project, we have increased our ability. Now writing an activity plan is a piece of cake for each of us. We also learned how to monitor project management and how to improve efficiency of the project. -Ms. Wu Xushu of Zhaotong Women's Federation*

*When planning activities, expected effect will be considered from the beginning. The pros and cons will be summarized after completion of an activity. I might focus on one point in the past but now on system. After I went through project management and implementation, I have clearer roadmap for planning and evaluation of a project.- Mr. Liu of Ludian Women's Federation*

In Banna, the establishment of Meng' A Sisters Group is the best evidence to show that the managers of the Children's Home and the children follow-up groups were empowered and their leaderships strengthened. We invited the participants of FGD in Banna to measure changes of their ability by scoring (1 refers to lowest ability, 5 refers to highest ability). Everyone believed that their ability gained increment of 2 to 4 (Figure 2). Although the 3 employees of Banna Center have many years of experience in implementing various projects, they thought that their capacity increased by 2-3 through implementing this project as well. Ms. Long felt that in the past she had paid great efforts to complete

tasks requested by project rather than real meaning of projects. She gained new power and feeling from the project in Meng 'A. The villages in Meng' A never give up any child; this is a "warm power" which helped her to rethink "what is real meaning". The other 2 employees, Ms. Chen and Ms. Lin, said that they have expanded their ability to work with children and writing skills. The members of Meng' A Sisters Group have grown up during implementing all kinds of activities. As aforementioned, all of them were appointed by Meng' A Women's Federation as chairperson or vice-chairperson of women's federation in their villages.

Figure 2: 17 participants in Banna self-scoring to their ability

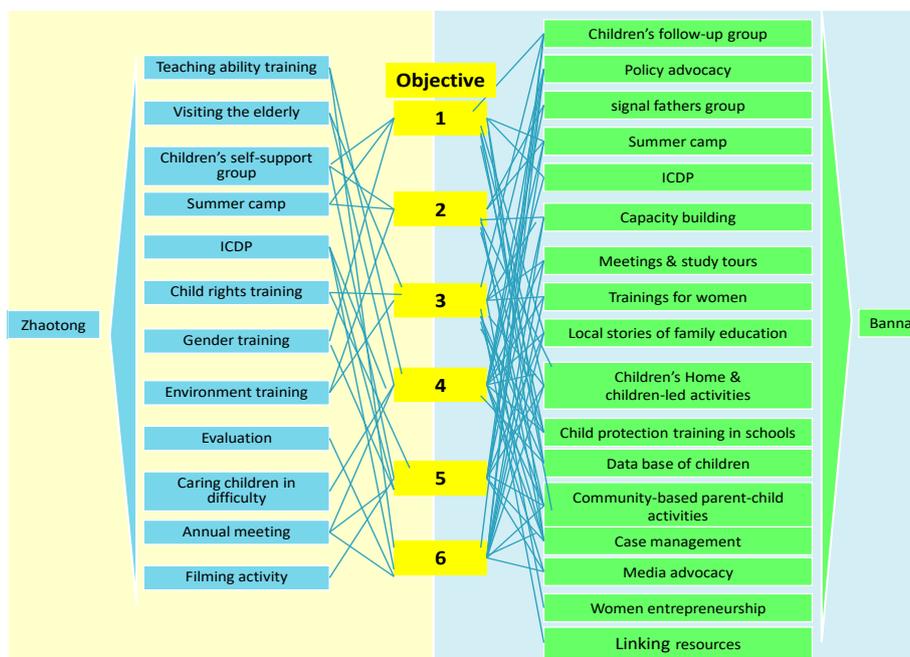


*I give 2 points before, 5 points now. In the past I didn't speak much because I was very shy at meetings and didn't dare to come on to stage. After joining the project, I went to meetings and training. The more events attended, less fear I felt. Now I can give broadcast through village speaker. I'm confident and I don't have worry in future. -Ms. Feng Ying, a member of Meng' A Sisters Group*

*Now I give myself full scores, 2 points in the past. I had not known these before and I had not dared to talk. After these project activities, I can operate computer, use mobile platform to work. I also can speak at meeting. -Ms. Yu, a member of Meng' A Sisters Group*

### 4.3 Means of achieving the objectives

Figure 3: The activities contributed to the project objectives<sup>7</sup>



<sup>7</sup> Teaching ability trainings include teaching trainings, class demonstration etc for teachers. Child rights training include other policies and regulations training for children. Gender training Includes awareness of gender differences and sex education for students. ICDP Includes training, conferences, games, theme activities, annual meetings and assessments etc. Annual Meeting Includes project preparation meetings and regional annual meetings held by local partners. Children's self-support group refers to the activities organized by the teachers for children in need in Jiangdi Central Primacy School, such as outdoor picnics while teaching children cooking and personal hygiene. Children's Home includes activities on children's safety awareness, discussing differences of boys and girls, building beautiful homes, cultural heritage activities and self-confidence.

In the FGDs, we used participatory tools to ask the participants to sort out linkages among the project activities and the objectives. The results showed that all the activities were consistent with the objectives, and one activity contributed to multiple objectives (Figure 3). It means that the objectives of the project have been upheld during the implementation, and each objective was interrelated with each other. For instance, the objective 4 the community, schools and families' changed their perception of children, increased their awareness and capability to support children's development. As result, they could provide possibility and space for children to realize their self-value under the objective 1, as well as children's participation under the objective 2.

To the favorite project activities voted by the participants of the FGDs, the top three are ICDP, summer camp, and teaching ability training for teacher in Zhaotong, and children's follow-up group, policy advocacy and summer camp in Banna(Figure 4). Some activities are analyzed in detail below.

Figure 4: The participants' favorite activities

Zhaotong			Banna		
votes	Activities	Rank	Activities	votes	
21	ICDP	1	Children's follow-up group	10	
14	Summer camp	2	Policy advocacy	7	
13	Training on teaching ability	3	Summer camp	6	
4	Students paying visit to the elderly	4	single fathers' group	5	
4	Children's self-support group activity	5	establishment & update children's data base	4	
3	Child rights training for students	6	Capacity building	4	
3	Gender training for students	7	Meeting & study tours	3	
2	Needs assessment & evaluation	8	Various trainings for women	3	
2	Caring for children in difficulties	9	Collecting & using stories of local family education	3	
2	Project annual meeting	10	Children's Home & children-led activity	3	
2	Environmental protection training for students	11	Child protection training in school	1	
1	Filming project activities	12	Women' entrepreneurship	1	
		13	ICDP	1	
		14	Community-based parent-child activity	1	
		15	Case management	1	
		16	Media advocacy	1	
			<i>Negotiation, linking recourse, children's participation in meeting</i>		

#### 4.3.1 The summer camp became a vehicle for children and adults to discover self-value and others 'value in their interactions

For children, the summer camp is a window to now outside world. They met and played with the volunteers from different countries or regions, with different cultural backgrounds, at different ages etc. The children got on with the adults in a way of being equally and sincerely treated. This might be entirely new experience from which they could feel be valued and loved. As Mr. Lin, a core volunteer of ICDP China pointed out, children could feel that "adults are not terrible. Some adults do not beat them or verbally abuse them. Some adults can really understand their world and be willing to grow up with them". For many rural children, especially those in difficulty such experience may be "unforgettable for lifetime" and "proud of". The interviewed children mentioned the most and favorite activity was also the summer camp. They described details of the activities of the summer camps as well as names of the adult-volunteers. It can be seen that the summer camp had a profound impact on the children.

The summer camp is also a platform for children to learn together in happiness and cooperation. As Mr. Zang of Ciyuan Primary School pointed out, "every summer camp is carefully planned and has a theme...the children are influenced by these themes as they participated in such activities".

*Our students participated in the summer camp for the first time in this July with students from another school. They were reassigned into groups with student of another school. They were very shy at first, because they didn't know each other. Later, they were worked as a team to complete tasks which were asked by those activities or games. Usually the children felt that they were the best, but they realized during the activities that they have to work together with each team member to finish the tasks. Then they figured out ways together to obtained gems (award of successfully complete tasks). Although they were young, they got to know that they could not do it alone. They must move as a team with an organizer and collective efforts. - Ms. Yan, a former teacher of Xicheng Primary School*

*In the summer camp, the kids got opportunities to contact with outsiders who we never encounter. We have never met foreigners. They also learned some new knowledge and new games and were very happy. A summer camp was held in our village. Afterwards, the children asked me every year if summer camp would happen, if they could come.- Ms. Yu a member of Meng' A Sisters Group*

For adults, the summer camp is also a platform to broaden their horizons, meet different ideas, and learn to get along with children. It may also stimulate their motivation for learning. Some teachers after attending summer camp said, "it seems we have too little in our heads, we should study continually". In addition, the summer camp could reflect effects of routine teaching and other activities as well.

*Summer camp is a great way to comprehensively test children, teachers, volunteers and organizers. The first test is the organizer's organizational ability. The second test is quality of the volunteer's service. The third test is organizational ability, mentality and service quality of our school. Children's behaviors and performance are also tested in summer camp. Their ability of organizing, cooperation, communication and so forth will be reflected during the activities. -Mr. Ma of Jiangdi Central Primary School*

#### **4.3.2 The Children's Home provide space for children to participate in their own development and community affairs**

As afore mentioned, the children who have took part in the activities in the Children's Home for longer time showed better awareness of self-value and more participation in community life. During our visits in the two Children's Homes, the children there appeared relax and comfortable. They knew where to find equipment and instruments in the Children's Home as if they were in their home. Many children in the interviews expressed their strong desire to learn and inherit their own culture. They actually received the enlightenment of their culture in the Children's Home. Some children have come to the Children's Home since the establishment 5 or 6 years ago. They have strong sense of ownership and still come to the Children's Home on weekends and holidays for activities or offering helps. The managers of the Children's Home have grown together with the project, and have continually created positive, healthy and friendly environment for the children.

The children of Longzhupeng village considered the Children's Home as "Family", "Mother", "River", "Bird's Nest", "Treasure in My Heart", etc. They said that they enjoyed friendship, fun and happy childhood in the Children's Home.

*The Children's Home taught me things that were different from the school. We danced while we were here, and then we danced in other villages.*

*Without the Children's Home, my character may become lonely and introverted because there would be no friends to make and no place to talk.*

All the children who participated in the interviews expressed good wishes for the future of the Children's Home.

*I hope that the Children's Home is getting more and more popular, and more and more classmates and children are coming here.*

*I hope that the Children's Home will always be an extended family and we never separate.*

*I hope to carry out many interesting activities and games so that people in other villages and other places will know about our activities and music.*

#### **4.3.3 Protection of child rights is strengthened through policy advocacy**

The project partners in Banna have attached great importance to policy advocacy. They thought policy advocacy "most practical" for the project. On the one hand, they actively advocated implementation of existing policies, "letting every policy be implemented for any child". On the other hand, they identified gaps of policies, then "calling for new policies to benefit more children, their families, and even the community". The partners in Banna have developed a unique model and experience in policy advocacy. They carried out policy advocacy through following linked routine activities: establishing and updating data base of children, identifying children's needs, providing services of case management to children in need by the children's follow-up group, helping them in obtaining benefits of existing policies and linking resources for them. For any shortcomings or gaps in the existing policies which were explored during the process, they reported to decision makers to promote improvement of the policies.

#### 4.3.4 ICDP enables child rights to be reflected in the daily interaction between caregivers and children

The concepts, strategies and activities of the project were designed to fulfill child rights. Although ICDP does not use vocabulary of child rights, it "*expresses the humanitarian spirit of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in another way*"<sup>8</sup>. Because ICDP can fundamentally change caregiver's perception of children and their parenting behaviors, it inevitably has a profound and long-term impact on child development. In the interviews, we noticed that the caregivers who received ICDP training tended to be more able to listen to the children in their daily lives. They respected the children's ideas more; and to some extent the rule that child is subordinate to adult in traditional family changed. Therefore they provided better environment for child development.

#### 4.4 The main experience of the project

##### 4.4.1 The project design in line with contemporary social and policy trends

The project was launched at the time when the governments and social resources began to pay attention to address survival and development of left-behind children. The project partners in Zhaotong and Banna had worked on issues facing children in difficulty. Under such context, the project applied child rights framework to carry out multiple-level activities which involved rights holders, children and rights bearers such as parents, teachers, communities, and society aiming to expand and improve their awareness and capabilities in child development. So that local partners and stakeholders could integrate the project into the implementation and improvement of relevant policies.

*The project fitted the needs of women's and children's development which are promoted by the State. Actually the State has increasingly demanded for qualified organizations in providing sound child services. For example, every village now has a child welfare home, which is the result of policy promotion. ... Our previous efforts have also provided reference for decision-makers. - Ms. Qiu, former chairperson of Menghai Women's Federation*

During the period of the project, China introduced several policies to further strengthen family education, such as The Guidance of the Ministry of Education on Strengthening Family Education in 2015 and The Five-year Plan for Guiding and Promoting Family Education (2016-2020). The 2019 Focus of the Basic Education Department of the Ministry of Education requires "*to carry out family education and themed publicity activities, to publicize importance and scientific concepts of family education, to promote correct family education methods, to guide parents paying attention to family education*". The project seized the right moment, and bringing ICDP in China to responded needs of the policy direction and social development. It became a good entry point for the implementation of the entire project.

*ICDP makes up for the shortcomings of Chinese family education and improves communication between parents and children with new ideas ... It is built upon breakthrough results of researches on children's psychological development and it does not conflict with traditional Chinese culture.- Mr. Wang, ICDP trainer, director of Shincon*

*The "China Child Development Outline" and "Yunnan Child Development Plan" require to building a family education system in ten years. ICDP is a very easy-to-use system I have seen. Its framework can be used to build a family education system that suits our national context. The current social background, policy environment and parents' needs are all supportive to development of ICDP. - Ms. Tian, ICDP trainer*

##### 4.4.2 The project partners have shared goal and mission, their management teams remained stable

It is an important element of successful project that chooses right partners and builds trust relationships. The main partners of the project, Shincon, Zhaotong Women's Federation and Banna Center share some goal which is to promote living situation and development of children and women. Shincon and Zhaotong Women's Federation have cooperated for nearly two decades, and the cooperation between Shincon and Banna Center began at stage of needs assessment. The implementation of the project has strengthened their cooperation which further consolidated their mutual trust. This is most evident in the project management. As afore analyzed, under the same goal and objectives the local partners in Zhaotong and Banna actually managed the project in different path with different priorities. In Zhaotong, leading by Zhaotong Women's Federation the project was implemented through channels of the Family Education Teacher Group as well as schools with intensive technical guidance and supports from Shincon. In Banna, since Banna Center has rich experience of project management, solid relationships with communities and insights of women and

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<sup>8</sup> Karsten Hundeide. International Child Development Project Training Materials

children related issues in community, the project was implemented through platform of grassroots women's federation system by providing social work services; and women's and children's empowerment was focused, policy advocacy was carried out across all activities. It suggests that Shincon has managed the project in a way that fully respected, recognized and accepted opinions and experiences of the local partners, and allowed partners to actively participate in project planning and management. As result, the project adopted most suitable paths of management in responding local situation to achieve the objectives.

The project brought together participants from all regions, levels, and backgrounds into a team with common goals. The members of the team have a sense of belongings and felt they could "get support from all team members". Therefore, Ms. Li the project coordinator of Zhaotong Women's Federation regarded this team a "Think Tank". When we asked about factors of success of the project, many interviewees answered "team trust, mutual understanding" and "everyone can participate in the planning, development and reflection of the event".

In addition, the management teams of the three main partners remained stable during period of the project. This made cost of maintaining relationships and trust low. Moreover the ideas, knowledge and skills brought by project can be continuously accumulated and inherited in these parties.

#### **4.4.3 The project paid sufficient attention to human development**

The project employed development approach and putting human development at the core of all activities. It aims to change awareness of children and caregivers and enhance their capabilities. This approach was fully recognized and supported by the local partners. For example, Ms. Jiang of Ludian Women's Federation thought that the most valuable property of the project was "spiritual wealth". She said, "The project method focuses on children's psychology and help them to grow up healthily and happily, unlike other projects which donated clothes and stationeries to children". The establishment of Meng' A Sisters Group and the warmth of the Children's Homes to children have confirmed that putting human development at core was essential, and it also ensured the sustainability of the project.

The Shincon project team which was composed of the employees, the volunteers, the technical consultants has showed cheerful and positive spirit, professionalism, respect and caring for people in the project activities. These influenced many people and made the project more acceptable.

*From the teachers of Shincon, we got very positive, very cheerful feeling. The students liked it very much ... Inspired by Shincon teachers, we recognized that education does not just making students to understand knowledge in textbooks. It is also about to let them feel a sense of joy from the teachers, so that the class would not be boring. - Mr. Lin, a teacher of Jiangdi Central Primary School*

*Their professionalism, caring for people, working styles, child-centered methods, paying attention to children's invisible needs have great impacts on us ... Shincon brought in a kind of spiritual power which quietly influenced us. - Mr. Zang, principle of Ciyuan Primary School*

#### **4.4.4 ICDP has universal applicability and broad prospects for development in China**

ICDP itself is an international project system that is relatively complete from content to operational mechanism. Its international experience shows that "seeing children's confusion and making a difference in their lives"<sup>9</sup>. Because of this ICDP's unique value, ICDP has been promoted in many places around the world. At the same time, ICDP can also be combined with various types of work and projects to become an integral part of achieving greater goals.

The analysis done by ICDP China core team (Table 2) indicates that ICDP has universal applicability in culture and interpersonal relationship. It means that ICDP can not only improve communication between caregivers and children, but also adults' various relationships in family and work life. Therefore, numbers of potential beneficiaries of ICDP is enormous. In addition, conditions for promoting ICDP in China have gradually matured. For example, ICDP China has established a team of trainers, facilitators and volunteers who have strong sense of mission for the well-being of children; ICDP International can continually provide technical and management support; and ICDP's popularity has gradually spread beyond Yunnan to whole country. In the context of favorable social environment, we can foresee good prospects for development of ICDP in China.

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<sup>9</sup> Karsten Hundeide. International Child Development Project Training Materials

However, promotion of ICDP also faces many challenges. The core of ICDP is to stimulate potentials of caregivers, let the caregivers to discover their confidence and ability to make changes, pay attention to self-awareness and change in the use. It suggests that trainers, facilitators and caregivers can only maximize the gains through continually improve their understanding through long-term use. It is a "life-long learning" process. This feature is the essence of ICDP but also gives challenges to its expansion.

Table 2: Analysis on ICDP by ICDP China core team

<p><b>The deepest impressions to ICDP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve interpersonal relationships and stimulate potential of caregivers</li> <li>▪ Explain in simple language</li> <li>▪ Understand and be understood</li> <li>▪ Make people believe "you can "</li> <li>▪ Always see the positive part</li> <li>▪ Try to feel others 'feeling</li> <li>▪ Understand love and rules</li> </ul>	<p><b>The most important experience of ICDP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can apply to any relationship</li> <li>▪ The ability of trainers/facilitators must be continuously improved through practice</li> <li>▪ Proved the feasibility of localization</li> <li>▪ Love and rules</li> <li>▪ To apply what you have learned</li> <li>▪ To gain acceptance of caregivers by respect and accept</li> </ul>
<p><b>The most important output of ICDP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Activate potential</li> <li>▪ the caregiver slow down to think about it</li> <li>▪ Promotion platform is established</li> <li>▪ Stable and dynamic ICDP team to promote ICDP</li> <li>▪ Gain ability of self-reflection</li> <li>▪ Meet more friends in same camp</li> </ul>	<p><b>The biggest challenges to promoting ICDP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of awareness on business among current partners</li> <li>▪ Need lifelong learning</li> <li>▪ Traditional parenting concepts and perspectives on children</li> <li>▪ Charge to caregivers / marketing ICDP</li> <li>▪ Government has not offered purchasing</li> <li>▪ Hard to find qualified candidates for facilitator</li> <li>▪ Available time and energy of caregivers are limited</li> <li>▪ Weak awareness of ICDP copyright</li> <li>▪ Competition from training institutions in the market</li> <li>▪ Phenomenon of eager for quick success</li> </ul>

First of all, quality of ICDP relies on individual trainers/ facilitators ' understanding of ICDP and ability to communicate effectively. According to the caregivers' feedback in the interviews, they could understand better by "telling examples, speaking in language easy to understand ". One caregiver said, "I can't understand the words of the ICDP house, land, scaffolding, etc." In contrast, they obtained profound impressions and experience by playing games. The feedback of the caregivers may indicate that trainers/facilitators are various in their abilities. It is a challenge to standardization of trainers and facilitators too, how to establish standards to ensure quality of ICDP during promotion?

Secondly, the project practice has proved that ICDP is indeed applicable to different cultures, nationalities, ethnic groups and backgrounds, but interpretation of ICDP in specific context is still a challenge in promotion, especially when the trainers/ facilitators have insufficient insights of ICDP. Ms. Chen a trainer from Banna Center collected stories of family education in Dai ethnic communities. She found out that there was no substantial conflict between ICDP and Dai's traditional concepts and experiences of parenting. Ms. Jinying, a Luhu facilitator thought that Luhu people's experience of family education could be integrated with ICDP. The problem is that simply copying concepts and terminology of ICDP in training often confused caregivers. They believed "It is very important to integrate ICDP's theory with local people's situation" and "the principles of ICDP must be told in their own language".

Thirdly, the target group of the project basically lived in rural areas. Due to the procedures and requirements of ICDP, it was difficult for rural caregivers to enter ICDP. Those need it most were most difficult to access.

Fourthly, who pays for ICDP is one of the key questions during its promotion. So far, entirely relying on project funding ICDP established teams of trainers/ facilitators in Kunming, Zhaotong, Banna and other places. In the long run, ICDP could only ensure sustainable development if it is success in commercialization or becomes a long-term supplier of government-purchase services. And quality will become the key factor of ICDP's commercialization in market.

**4.4.5 Shincon has provided strong technical support to project implementation in various aspects, but the supports were not sufficient in some areas**

The project provided sufficient and effective technical supports in several areas such as ICDP, summer camp and teaching skills training. But in some relevant areas, such as gender equality, ten thinking skills, media advocacy, policy advocacy, project management and activity planning , the technical supports tended to be insufficient. For instance,

some teachers of the project schools thought that gender equality was same as sex education, and individuals of local partner organizations who were new to the project lacked comprehensive understanding of project management.

#### 4.5 EAT

As request of the TOR, we used Digni's empowerment evaluation tool (EAT) <sup>10</sup> to briefly assess empowerment of the project (Table 3). Digni defines empowerment as enhancing people's capabilities, enabling people to make strategic life choices and leading a worthy life. Digni's empowerment includes three aspects: resources, agency and achievement<sup>11</sup>.

Table 3: EAT of the project

Thematic areas of results	Degree and level of empowerment				
	Level 1 output Individual or community	level 2 output Individual or community	Level 3 outcome Individual or community	level 4 outcome Community and / or society	Level 5 impact Community / society / structural
Strengthening civil society					<b>X</b>
Promote child development			<b>X</b>		
Gender equality				<b>X</b>	
Total assessment of project				<b>X</b>	

We believe that the project obtains a high degree of empowerment in strengthening civil society, reaches level 5. To resources, funds, new knowledge and skills were provided to Zhaotong Women's Federation (government-supported NGO) and Banna Center (NGO) to support the implementation of the project. The project has built and strengthened international, domestic, project school and community networks for supporting children. At the same time, Zhaotong Women's Federation, Menghai Women's Federation and Meng' A Women's Federation also mobilized local government and social resources to expand and continue project activities. To agency, the women's federations in the project sites have trained groups of persons who dedicated to child development. Zhaotong Women's Federation relies on the Family Education Teacher Group to actively promoting ICDP and supporting children in need. The members of the Family Education Teacher Group come from all sectors of society, such as women's federations, schools, hospitals, government departments, etc. In Banna, the newly established Meng' A Sisters Group continues to serve the village's children, women and the elderly in collective effort. To achievement, living situation of children in difficulty in the project schools in Zhaotong has improved. The children's awareness of self-value and their participation in the Children's Homes in Banna have significantly increased. The governments at all levels have strengthened poverty alleviation and care for children in difficulty. The Women's Federations in the project sites have made implementation of policies routine. The registration of Meng' A Sisters Group makes for sustainable mobilization of social resources.

The project's empowerment in promoting child development reaches level 3. To resources, the governments have invested enormous human and material resources in child development and caring for children in difficulty. The project has brought in new funds, ideas, knowledge and skills to child development in the project sites. In addition, other social resources have been invested to this area, such as musical instruments donated to the Children's Homes by local cultural institution. To agency, the children we met were positive, optimistic and cheerful. They have strong ability of taking care of themselves. They actively participated in various activities in schools and communities. The children of the Children's Home showed sense of proud of their culture and responsibility to cultural heritage. The children of the project schools in Zhaotong were keen to communicate with their teachers and begun to organize activities by themselves. The improvement of children's agency is actually a result of the changes of the caregivers. The teachers and managers of the Children's Homes provided space for children to get perception of self-value, protection and participation. However the parents as primary caregivers for children in rural areas have made limited progress in providing care, communication and development support for their children.

The project empowerment in gender equality is level 4. The main implementers of the project are actually government-support and non-governmental women's organizations and individuals who play a leading role in all

<sup>10</sup>Fully adopt the definitions, classifications and standards described in Empowerment Assessment Tool: A Framework for assessing the degree of empowerment achievement in Digni-funded projects (EAT).

<sup>11</sup>According to EAT, resources - the conditions under which choices are made (being) ; agency - the process /power by which choices are made (doing) ; achievements - the outcomes of choices, i.e. the outcome of a person's resources and agency (capability)

aspects of the project. In addition, the project brought concept of gender equality to children in various ways such as lectures and discussions. Nevertheless the participation of men in children's education and development is extremely lacking.

The overall project empowerment level is 4.

## V. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the evaluation we draw following conclusions:

- The project objectives were basically achieved. But level of achievement for each objective in Zhaotong and Xishuangbanna is not same, and each with its own advantages;
- The project carried out a high degree of consistency between the activities and the objectives. The expectations were achieved;
- All partners of the project gave high recognition to the project and have strong sense of accomplishment and ownership;
- The project has paid particular attention to human development. By providing continuous supports such as trainings and exchange communications, the key stakeholders have been empowered and their motivations of making changes have been stimulated;
- The project partners have shared common goal and mutual trust;
- Unlike following traditional model of project management, Shincon has invited the partners to participate equally and fully in the project management in manners of respecting local opinions and experiences;
- The two project sites adopted different models of project implementation and both are effective. In Zhaotong, Zhaotong Women's Federation took lead, and the project has been expanded through school-based approach and channel of the Family Education Teacher Group of the Women's Federation. In Banna the project has led by a local NGO and implemented through networks of local women's federation with focuses of community mobilization and empowerment;
- The management teams of the project partners have remained stable therefore experience and knowledge gained during the implementation of the project are able to be continuously accumulated and delivered inside the organizations. The cost of maintaining relationship has remained low;
- The important concepts introduced by the project have become common language among the partners, such as the term "caregiver" has been widely applied. This becomes an important part of the sustainability of the project;
- The practice of ICDP has achieved good results meanwhile it also answered questions about the acceptability and applicability of ICDP in China. It shares light to direction for future development of ICDP;
- The implementation of the project has catalyzed the implementation and improvement of policies and laws in relation to child protection and development in the project areas;
- Women-led local entrepreneurship and employment have begun to appear, and the cycle of leaving left-behind children was partially curbed in a small area;
- With support of the project, a grassroots community organization was established. This unexpected outcome will have a profound impact to the local communities;
- The activities of the Children's Home have cultivated children's sense of proud, responsibility and achievement being a member of ethnical groups. The Children's Home becomes an important base for children to improve their awareness of self-value and ability to participate in social affairs in rural communities.

## 5.2 Recommendations

### 5.2.1 To establish and improve technology and management system of ICDP China in multi-dimensions

- It is necessary to develop a 3-to 5- year strategic plan for the promotion of ICDP. When determining direction and path of ICDP development, the key question that needs to be carefully considered is what the ultimate goal of promoting ICDP is? This is extremely important for choosing main development path of ICDP. If the future resource channel is government purchase or international fund, more consideration needs to be given to the broader social benefits of ICDP.
- There is a need to further focus on the localization and cultural adoption of ICDP. ICDP must be integrated with local culture to take root. ICDP needs to enrich its framework with local experience and cases during its promotion. ICDP needs to be communicated in a language that local people can understand.
- It is necessary to consider how to reduce attenuation of information during promotion of ICDP. As previously discussed, ICDP is a lifelong learning process. Trainer/facilitator's understanding of ICDP and ability of effective communication determine whether and to what extent caregivers could benefit. In fact, for most non-professional ICDP trainers/ facilitators, it is difficult for them to fully master ICDP and provide training in appropriate ways within 1 to 2 years. Possible solutions may include: to consider raising standards of selecting trainers/ facilitators; to develop manual of ICDP cases and games for trainers/facilitators; to form an ICDP technical guidance group which could provide regular on-site coaching to trainers/ facilitators or at time to time basis.
- ICDP headquarter already has a mature model to manage individual trainers/ facilitators. There are advantages and disadvantages to this agreement -based management model. The advantage lies in broadening potential sources of ICDP trainers/ facilitators. And network of trainers/ facilitators is also resource for ICDP's expansion. The obvious disadvantage is that apart from the agreement between ICDP China and trainers/facilitators, the management relationship is relatively loose. The trainers/facilitators are scattered in various institutions. Coordination could be difficult when ICDP China needs to rely of intensive input from the trainers/facilitators. It is important to explore a system of managing or maintaining trainer/facilitator on top of agreement banding.
- For research of ICDP, both effectiveness of ICDP and features of caregivers should be considered. Although ICDP training emphasizes expiring and feeling, its goal is to change behavior of caregivers. Then research on characteristics and sub-groups of caregivers would be useful. Tailored strategies of recruiting caregivers may attract certain populations. Tailored training methods to certain type of caregivers may improve quality of training. For example, to respond issue that a few of male caregivers participated in ICDP training, it is necessary to explore possibilities and an obstacle of male's participation before to develop a copying strategy.
- At present, it seems that ICDP faces challenge in providing direct training to caregivers in rural areas. Further explorations to reach caregivers using educational institutions as platforms are needed. At same time it is worth to try to promote ICDP to teachers, social work faculty, normal universities, and social work organizations that serve children.

### 5.2.2 Provide more comprehensive technical support for the project

Empowerment and development-type project requires managers and implementers to have awareness and ability on across-cutting issues, such as project management, gender equality, community mobilization, participatory methods, empowerment, and policy advocacy and so on. Project managerial need to be able to sensitively identify technical needs during implementation of project and to work with partners and implementers at all levels to develop and mobilize available resources as much as possible aiming to provide necessary and relatively comprehensive technical support. For example, if the partners could get professional guidance before giving sex education lectures to local students, the effect would be better.