



## *Fondazione Amici-di-Qinghai*

### **Annual report for the calendar year 2019**

Dear donors

In 2019, the *Amici-di-Qinghai* visited the *Zeku* highlands four times, including a week-long visit by Yolanda in April. As in previous years, Xiao Song, the loyal employee of Erwin, joined in on all the activities, and Mrs. Liu Jing, the retired Swisstec accountant, took again care *bona fide* of the even more closely controlled money transfers from Switzerland to China and within China. Mrs Veronica Mannhart, CEO of Mannhart Management Co. Ltd. in Chiang Mai, prepared the accounts for the auditors in Switzerland *pro bono*.

The purpose of the visits was as follows:

1. Inaugurating two more moving nomad schools that were financed in 2019: *Maixiu* and *Saiwang-Saiqing*. Furthermore, to celebrate the existence of the 25 moving nomad schools financed by the Foundation. The authorities organised an impressive nomad festival in September in honour of the large *Rotary delegation from Zurich* and a Chinese delegation from *Wuxi*.
2. Supervising and accepting the extensive renovation of three primary schools built more than 15 years ago: the *Adrien Firmenich Gerongte* school, the *Quma* school, the *Geri* school.
3. Inspecting and accepting minor renovation works on primary schools previously financed by the Foundation: *Jicang* and *Yangzhigou*.
4. Implementing the extended scholarship programme: *Quma*, *Huanquhu*, *Jicang*, *Zeku*.
5. Distributing 34 more e-books.
6. Organizing a meaningful ceremony for a *Long Healthy Life* of all donors of the foundation.
7. Evaluating another moving nomad school for the calendar year 2020.

Updates on all the above mentioned projects are being published continuously, though with a 2-3 months delay, on the Foundation's website, available at [www.fondazione-amici-di-qinghai.org/](http://www.fondazione-amici-di-qinghai.org/) Please click on the name of the school you are looking for, under *major projects* or under *small projects*. The 2019 projects have been updated in the meantime.

Contacts with the local authorities continued to run smoothly throughout the calendar year 2019, albeit with much stricter controls on all non-governmental organisations active in China. The strict focus on purely educational activities, the intensive cultivation of contacts with the authorities and the low visibility of the Foundation in the media continued to pay off. -- Since Erwin will be 80 years old at the beginning of March 2020, the Foundation has intensified its efforts to find a successor.

The provisional financial statements of the *Amici di Qinghai* for 2019\* were approved by the Foundation Board on 4 December 2019\*\*. The final financial statements, which were already approved by the Board of Trustees in a digital meeting in February, have since been submitted to the external auditor, Mr. Cristiano Botta (Lugano). The final financial statements for 2019 will be published on the website in summer 2020, after approval by the competent authority in the Federal Ministry of Interior. (EDI) The Foundation continues to enjoy tax exemption in Switzerland.

As the year of the smart and vibrant Rat have begun on January 24th, the Trustees of the Foundation and the two of us, send you and all your loved ones, the very best wishes for a generous amount of personal happiness in 2020, above all, continued optimal health and deep peace in your heart.

With heartfelt thanks for your generous support  
and with kind regards we remain

Yours truly and gratefully

Yolanda & Erwin,  
Chiang Mai, mid February 2020



\* [https://www.fondazione-amici-di-qinghai.org/allegati\\_pdf/allegati\\_pdf\\_allegato\\_34.pdf](https://www.fondazione-amici-di-qinghai.org/allegati_pdf/allegati_pdf_allegato_34.pdf)

\*\* Avv. Eros Bergonzoli, Monica Cocchi del Ponte, Maurizio Checchi, Yolanda and Erwin Schurtenberger

## 1. inauguration of the moving nomad schools of *Maixiu* and *Saiwang&Saiqing* as well as holding a nomadic festival

### SAIWANG & SAIQING

During their on-site visit at the beginning of April 2019, the education authorities of *Zeku* asked the *Amici* to finance, if possible, another Moving Nomad School. The nomad school, which will be located in the south of the remote Ningxiu district, will serve students from the villages of *Saiqing* with 1565 inhabitants and *Saiwang* with 876 inhabitants. In both villages the nomads live in a wide, very sparsely populated area. Life in the region is harsh in winter with temperatures of minus 10° to 30° C and gusty winds.

After the Trustees of the foundation approved the project at the end of May, the employees of the Wuxi-Bühler joint venture and the Bühler China company offered to finance the total costs of the project of 180,000 RMB with donations from their employees. The realization of this school proceeded, therefore, rapidly. The ceremonial opening and formal "launching" of the vehicle took place on September 9, 2019, in the presence of a high-ranking delegation from Wuxi, in beautiful summer weather at the *Ningxuduo* school site. The *Saiqing & Saiwang Moving Nomad School* offers education to a total of 73 pre-school children.





## MAIXIU

Following the on-site visit in April 2019, the Board of Trustees reviewed the application for funding for the Moving Nomad School of *Longzang* and *Guanxiu*, which serves students in two very remote areas of *Maixiu*. The mentioned region is really not spoiled by Mother Nature: three to four winter months are extremely cold with gusty winds and temperatures of minus 10° to 30°C.

This Moving Nomad School, which is providing pre-school education, is located in an area 30-40 km east of the district city of *Zeku*, at an average altitude of 3500 m above sea level. The region has a total population of about 2700 people, including children and young people. The remote mountain area is very wide and only sparsely populated. Lessons will be given by a specially trained teacher, initially in *Zongmari* (10 students) and *Sailong* (10 students), and from spring 2020 in a third location. Since the natural roads have not yet been modernized, it is understandable that the teacher visits the pupils, and not the children have to visit the teacher in a school building.

A considerable donation by Mr. *Ernst Bärtschi* contributed to the financing to the *Maixiu* School. The »launching« of the vehicle in the name of the *Amici-di-Qinghai* took place at the *Chongmari* site on September 11, 2019 in the presence of a member of the Foundation.





## NOMAD FESTIVAL SEPTEMBER 10, 2019

The education authorities and the Party organization of Zeku invited a prestigious *Rotary delegation from Zurich* and a delegation from *Wuxi-Buhler* to a ceremonial nomad festival to celebrate the existence of the already launched 25 Moving Nomad Schools.





## 2. Supervising and accepting extensive renovation works of three primary schools built more than 15 years ago

### Adrien Firmenich school in Gerongte: constructing a new, safer access

Unfortunately, in 2018, after a pupil fell 6 metres from the narrow path leading to the school down to the agricultural field below and broke his leg, it was decided to build a less dangerous access to the school. The first alternative could not be realized due to the resistance of a neighbor. It was therefore decided to build a new gate from the east side, using the space of a room. A steel railing was also built along the path leading to the new gate of the school.



### Qumaschool: Construction of a storage facility

The roof of the room, where fuel and school supplies are stored, has become very permeable in the last 2 years due to the extreme differences in temperature between summer and winter. After an on-site inspection and the commitment of the villagers to make a noticeable contribution in the form of voluntary work, the Foundation agreed to finance the material.



## Geri school: construction of a new school building

The school building of the small village school of *Geri* in the district of *Jianzha*, which was financed by the Foundation in 2005, has shown increasingly serious damage in recent years, mainly caused by extreme temperature differences between winter and summer. The *Amici* discussed with the authorities and an entrepreneur at the beginning of June 2019 about a complete renovation of the building and came to the conclusion that a new construction of the small village school would cost the same as a full renovation. Since the authorities contributed to the costs and Mrs. Hanna Anderson Kaufmann made a considerable special donation, the construction of a new building was decided.



### 3. Inspection and acceptance of minor renovation work on primary schools formerly financed by the Foundation: *Jicang* and *Yangzhigou*

#### JICANG

The *Jicang Primary School*, located about 18 km east of *Tongren City*, currently has a total of 87 pupils, including 33 preschoolers. The *Amici* have enjoyed a pleasant cooperation with this school for several years. In the calendar year 2019, the Foundation has financed three small projects. - Construction of a new gate for the school grounds - Renovation of the school canteen, where the 87 pupils are getting their lunch - Financing of the building materials for the construction of a new, stable wall in the south of the school.



## YANGZHIGOU

Die Zementierung des Schulplatzes an dieser Dorfschule unweit der Distriktstadt *Tongren*, die in einem extrem unwirtlichen Gebiet liegt, und oft von heftigen Böen bei tiefen Temperaturen heimgesucht wird, hat wesentlich mehr Zeit beansprucht, als erwartet. Im Sommer 2019 war es dann schliesslich soweit, dass der grosse Spielplatz endlich benutzt werden konnte.



### 4. Umsetzung des erweiterten Stipendienprogramms für das Schuljahr 2019-2020

Im Kalenderjahr 2019 konnte die Stiftung insgesamt 94 Stipendien an bedürftige Studenten/Studentinnen abgeben. Die finanzielle Lage der Eltern, die meistens nur Schafe-Ziegen-Yaks besitzen, aber selten über genügend Bargeld verfügen, wurde vom zuständigen Erziehungsbüro zusammen mit den betroffenen Dorfältesten geprüft, und einmal zugesprochen, den Stipendiaten im Beisein von Vertretern der *Amici* übergeben.

**QUMA:** 12 Stipendien wurden an bedürftige Schüler dieser Bauerndorfschule, die 5 km von der Stadt Tongren entfernt liegt, vergeben. Da die Studenten auf College-Ebene an Orten weit entfernt von Tongren studierten, erhielten die Eltern das Geld im Namen ihrer Kinder.





**HUANQUHU** is a nomadic school located at 3800 meters above sea level. The Amici handed over 1000 RMB each to each of the 20 needy nomadic students, on behalf of *Mr. Guido Cherubini*, from his five-year scholarship program (2019-23), to needy nomadic students. The scholarship holders came down to Quma School to receive the stipends.



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**ZEKU** major scholarship program: A total of 50 scholarships were awarded to needy nomadic students for the school year 2019-20. The scholarship holders were selected by a three-persons team consisting of one representative each from the educational authorities, the village elders and the Foundation.



**JICANG:** The ...-E ... from ... dents of this traditional Tibetan mountain village, which is under the protection of the government.



## 5. Distributing 34 additional e-books

The overwhelming success with the so-called e-book in various mobile nomadic schools in the *Zeku* district since 2012-13 motivated the Amici to provide more young students in the very sparsely populated areas with this helpful tool to improve their self-education. The "electronic teacher" consists of a series of printed books which, when touched by a battery-powered needle, pronounce the given text in the chosen language (Tibetan, Chinese, English). The battery is a rechargeable solar device.



## 6. Organizing a ceremony for a long and healthy life for all donors of the *Amici-di-Qinghai Foundation*

On June 18, 2019, a few monks of *Rebkhong* Monastery conducted a 40-minute ceremony for a Long and Healthy Life for all donors of the foundation. They wanted to express their great gratitude for the Foundation's support of education on the Zeku plateau.





## 7. Reviewing the request for funding of a further Moving Nomad School in the calendar year 2020

During the visit in September 2019, the *Zeku* Education Bureau asked the *Amici* for funding, if possible, for another Moving Nomad School, namely the *Yangqi* Moving Nomad School, in a very remote region of *Heri* County. The planned school will provide education for the students of the nomadic villages of *Zhigenmu* and *Yangcun*. The mentioned region is really not spoiled by Mother Nature. The 3-4 winter months are extremely cold with gusty winds and temperatures of minus 30°C. The remote area of the school is large and very sparsely populated, and 30-40 km east of the district town of *Heri*, an average of 3600 m above sea level. The total population of the area is about 2700 inhabitants. The planned school will have a total of 61 students at three teaching locations.



表册1 流动幼儿园幼儿名册									
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For the *Amici-di-Qinghai*

Erwin, Chiang Mai, mid February 2020