

Newsletter

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HADA

Health And
Development Aid
Abroad — Australia
Fund Inc.

ABN 43 739 862 351

HADA'S VISION

To see medical, educational,
agricultural and sanitation
programs established in
countries as needed.

All projects listed in our
Newsletter are tax deduct-
ible. All monies for these
projects and personnel work-
ing on them go in their en-
tirety except for bank charg-
es. HADA does not use these
funds for administration.

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2008-2009

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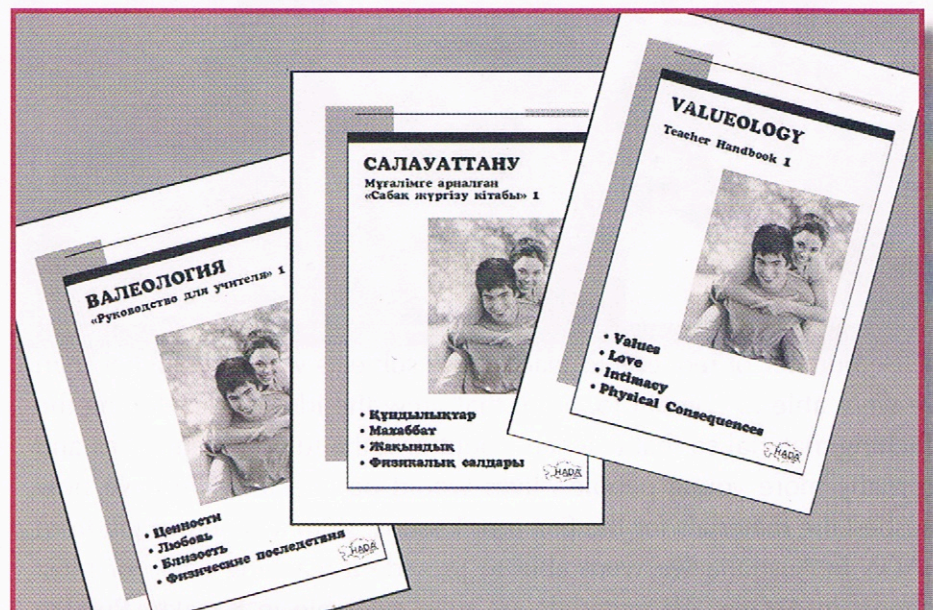
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Teaching Life-Style Values in Kazakhstan

Since the beginning of HADA-Astana in 1999, we have been involved in the teaching of *Valueology* in schools, colleges and universities. Valueology is the teaching of values to young people and was introduced in the schools to replace the teaching of the communist ideology after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Sadly, even though the subject has been part of the curriculum for many years, still no teaching materials are available. Volunteers of HADA-Astana have been going into the schools to help staff teach some of the subjects.



We have been teaching on healthy life-styles, informing the young people on the dangers of smoking, alcohol and drugs. Even more important, we have been helping them to understand how to build healthy relationships, showing them why it is important to first give lots of attention to psychological and emotional aspects before committing to more physical intimacy. We are warning them about the consequences of physical intimacy such as unwanted pregnancies, AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. These lessons are always very well received by the students and teachers.

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Some impressions:

- Finding twenty small safety pins in a small amount of long-grain rice seems simple enough, but blindfolded people normally only find one or two in two minutes. We use this to illustrate that finding and holding on to your values isn't easy in a world full of advertising with its distorted ethics and negative peer pressure.
- Older students encourage the younger ones to go to our optional lessons at their college because they find the video on the developing baby so impressive. They have not seen anything like this before. There are twice as many abortions here than live births.
- One teacher told us that, like we do, she buys a rose from her own money to illustrate how in physical intimacy you give away a part of yourself each time, and like the petals of a rose you lose your beauty and value.
- Many times we taught the material in English classes as a listening exercise, but it influences the young people in their daily choices.



The number of requests to teach these subjects was a lot higher than we were able to commit to. From that grew the idea of developing the teaching material so that teachers could give the tuition themselves and so many more young people's lives would be affected. We have now finished the materials for the first four lessons. With a generous gift from HADA in Australia we were able to provide a teaching pack for most schools in Astana. All materials are now available in Kazakh, Russian and English.

We organised two seminars to introduce the teachers to the material and to show them how to use it in the classroom. All were very enthusiastic and some told how they were still using the notes from our volunteers from years ago. The all received a teaching pack that included a teacher's manual, student workbooks, a video "Life before Birth" and a CD with all the materials so that they can print and copy it themselves and share it with others.

We will shortly commence preparing the next set of four lessons, and would love to see them spread more widely than Kazakhstan's capital, Astana.

Hubert de Vos

Urgent Appeal for Disaster Relief in Burma and China

In recent weeks we have all heard of the disastrous situation in Burma after the cyclone with tens of thousands of people dead and many more thousands in desperate need of assistance with clothing, housing, health issues etc. Only four weeks later we were all shocked to hear of the massive earthquake in Sichuan Province in China. Thousands of lives have been lost and many thousands more are in need of medical supplies, housing and the basics to be able to rebuild their shattered lives.

We personally know ex-pats living and working in both Burma and China who can personally oversee the distribution of greatly-needed funds in these disaster areas. HADA is able to send funds directly to them. ***Are you able to help these people in need?***



All funds received by HADA for projects are sent in their entirety except for bank fees. We can also offer tax deductibility for these disaster appeals as we do with all our other projects. The "support slip" with this newsletter can be completed and mailed with your cheque or credit/debit card details to our treasurer at PO Box 733, Ashmore City, QLD 4214.

Open Doors Community Centre

Open Doors is the name of our community centre in Astana, Kazakhstan's capital. Through it we try to have a positive influence in a small part of this growing city. Economically, the city is doing well after the hard time that followed independence with the breakdown of the Soviet Union. But still, not everybody is profiting. We organise several diverse activities in the centre.

Mums & Toddlers

It is always great on Wednesday afternoons to hear the noise from a group of children playing together and mothers chatting with each other. Some of our own mums run a Mums & Toddlers group where the mothers can exchange experiences while the children play with each other and do creative activities. Some would never miss it.

Recently we started a special group for pregnant women. This really provides necessary information that isn't readily available and can stop some of the 'old wives tales'. The women love it!

The divorce rate in this country is very high. Therefore, we started to regularly provide marriage enrichment seminars for couples that want to work on their marriages. Through this we hope that these couples will be examples so that others will raise their expectation of marriage and be willing to work harder at it.

Administrative skills

We organise computer courses and English conversation clubs. Both are a step to better employ-

ment for those who have come from smaller towns and villages with little or no skills. With Astana now being the capital, administrative skills are in demand and embassies and foreign companies still can't find enough people with good English. It is encouraging

to see them give it their best to work towards a better future.

Another important aspect is supporting people and giving them good information. We have general health brochures available for anybody walking in.

Another major social problem is alcohol abuse and addiction. Even the Kazakhs who say that they are Muslims drink vodka a lot. We are



in the phase of starting support groups for alcoholics and their families. Centres to stop the addiction are available but very little emotional support is given afterwards and family members often know very little about how alcoholism works and how their own behaviour doesn't discourage it. We would love to offer a way out and see many of them start a new life.

Our centre is based in a basement under one of the flat buildings in the middle of a local community. Sadly the basement gets flooded every year, which means that we have to stop the activities for about a month. We would love to move to a drier place but the rents (and property prices) have sky-rocketed since some years ago the oil money started to flow towards the elite and slowly trickling down to the less well-off.

But still, the money doesn't solve the social issues that these people are wrestling with. The government's eyes are mainly concentrating on the economy. So we are willing to play our role: *to be an open door to a brighter future.*

Giving *Dignity* Back to the Poor in Yunnan

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for interest in my Micro Loan Project among the poor farmers in Yunnan Province, China.

My plan over the first two years was to research and conduct a feasibility study beginning with six micro-loans in my area as a pilot test. Authorities found this concept very innovative, but were concerned that the loans might not be repaid. My study showed their fears to be unfounded. All six families repaid their loans, and went into their second year with added changes and refinements. I believed six micro-loans were minimal, but sufficient to provide us with information for putting this project into place. My goal was to give these poor families ownership back over their own lives and return dignity to their thinking. I hope to develop the micro-loan count to thirty new families, some individual and some with larger community loans. For this type of project I need assistance from those who share my vision to help poor Chinese families to achieve a stronger, more secure future. This innovative method will bring independence and training to many Chinese families over these next years. At the present time, we now have twenty-six active micro-loans.

The project is sustainable, as this is how it works: the loans are made for one year. During this time all children in the family are sponsored in school. The businesses we helped to create have been varied in nature and amount. At the end of the year the money is repaid and we look at their business and extend it in ways that will make them more independent. Then the money is returned for a second year and they support their own children in school. Twice a semester I check with each family to help waylay any possible threats to their

success so we can fix the problems before they become a deterrent. The third year, when money is repaid, it is given to another Chinese family. Because of this, all micro-loans continue to roll over to others for many years to come. A member of the Women's Association, a national in my town, helps with choosing these families. She and her staff and I work as a team to implement this program and ensure its success.

As a result of the original feasibility study, I realized the need to incorporate an added dimension to

NAMES:

WANG LIANG RONG 38
XIONG MAO RONG 38



Micro Loan # 15

Y5, 000.00 for a tractor

An amazingly busy business with cartage for many villagers and farmers on the outskirts. Has thyroid sickness now and taking pills daily to correct internal problem. His eyes are badly affected. He can only work for a few hours and then has to come home for a rest. Wife is also not too healthy. I will arrange for Dr David and Kunming doctor to see both of them. Want to re-loan but also want to understand health issues. They might need to see health specialists in Kunming. Plan is to re-loan the money and have an extension to the business.

LOAN DUE: September 2008

this project. There is a real need for those who have benefited from this program to be involved in reaching out to someone else in their community and to have involvement in mentoring someone else who receives part of their benefit. I believe this component will add even more replicability along with the roll-over of funds, which is on-going.

Any way you can support these projects will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely, Ruth Brandon

NAME:

WAN XIU ZHEN



Micro Loan #16

Y5, 000.00

Began with a traveling business making lang feng. Now has stretched out in permanent market place. Makes 4 kinds of lang feng. Will re-loan in September and she will expand her business. Husband passed away and her adult son helps her with the business so they can expand more completely. He also does a small vegetable plot.

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