

GLOBAL YOUNG LEADERS PROGRAMME

China Anti-Desertification and Rural Prosperity Project

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GIFT
GLOBAL INSTITUTE FOR TOMORROW

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"I think we are often {too} focused on our work, our industry {and} our local environment because it is directly applicable and impacts our day to day responsibilities. YLP helped to put things back into perspective. It helped me remember that I can't operate in a box in today's global environment."

King King Wang, JP Morgan
Participant, 2007

"Participating in the course has helped grow my confidence enormously. In sometimes trying circumstances [I had] to stand up, focus, perform and motivate others among a group of very impressive and successful people."

Travis McCardle, Meinhardt Engineering
Participant, 2007

TOMORROW MATTERS

Introduction

The Global Institute For Tomorrow (GIFT) is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to engaging business leaders and policy makers on the challenges of globalisation. Our work encompasses advisory projects, research and leadership development, through which we bring technical and commercial expertise to contemporary business and social challenges.

GIFT's Global Young Leaders Programme (YLP) is a unique leadership development programme. It is the first of its kind in Asia. The programme incorporates cross-sectoral and action learning, sustainable benefits and the experience of working on real world issues within a multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary team setting. By taking part in an Asian field project, YLP participants will learn through the eyes of others, expand their world view, witness how decisions made in one part of the world have impacts elsewhere, and importantly use their skills to help with a specific development issue. Our hand-picked projects are directly linked to globalisation issues and have a real bearing on business and public-sector policies. Through this experience, young leaders will be much better equipped to understand future markets and customers and the complexities of doing business in Asia.

Since 2006, GIFT has organised five YLP projects in China, India and Cambodia, with executives from companies such as Hewlett-Packard, Shell, Cathay Pacific Airways, the Hong Kong Mass Transit Railway Corporation, Gammon Construction, J.P. Morgan, UBS, CLSA, and the Cheung Kong Group taking part.

The China Anti-Desertification and Rural Prosperity Young Leaders Programme (YLP) will be held during the Beijing Olympics from August 16-30 2008, in Beijing and Yinchuan, the capital of Ningxia Province. The group of Young Leaders will work closely with the Yinchuan Jinhua Eco-agriculture Tourism Company Limited (Jinhua Enterprise) - an enterprise that has adopted a sustainable development model to create prosperity while fighting desertification in the area. Young Leaders will develop a business plan detailing how the Enterprise can best expand its wine-making and eco-tourism businesses to achieve its objectives.

The Yinchuan YLP Project

The YLP comprises three modules:

Module 1: Pre-Site Learning

This rigorous one-week workshop, to be held in Beijing, is intended to prepare the Young Leaders for the tasks they will face on their field project. It will look at the impacts and challenges of globalisation in Asia, and will include sessions on civil society, corporate social responsibility, diversity, business ethics and the role of government. In connection with the Yinchuan field project, the course will also address the challenges of rural poverty in developing countries, eco-agriculture operations, desertification issues and poverty-environmental-degradation cycles. Young Leaders will be briefed by practitioners, business advisors, academics and community development experts.

Module 2: Site Visit

Young Leaders will spend seven days on site working with the Yinchuan Jihu Eco-agriculture Tourism Company Limited (Jihu Enterprise). While on site, Young Leaders will work to develop a business plan for the expansion of the Enterprise.

A. Background of Ningxia Province and the Jihu Enterprise

Ningxia is located in arid temperate zones of Northwest China. The province is home to expanding reaches of deserts. The Provincial Government has been actively promoting efforts to fight desertification and sandstorms, which greatly limit local livelihood options and wreak havoc on the environment. The Central Government in Beijing recognises the extent of the problem and actively encourages tree-planting and other private sector activities to contain it across Northern China.

In 1997, Ms. Yang Hai Lan left her job to start Jihu Enterprise with the goal of turning the deserts of Ningxia province into a green belt via a commercial approach. With some startup capital, Ms. Yang leased 520 acres from the local Government and started flattening the sand dunes on her leased land to make way for a tree and crop plantation.



Source: www.maps-of-china.com

By the third year of its operation, Jihu Enterprise had 20 rows of wind-belt trees which served to stabilise the local ecosystem. The Enterprise also had soybean crops which generated steady income. It subsequently grew high-value grape species covering about 350 acres and set up greenhouses, and the grapes brought in revenue for the company. Protein-rich grass species planted on another 100 acres served as feedstuff for cattle, goats, chickens and ducks, while a fish pond was also established. Two biogas chambers utilised the animal manure to enable lighting and heating on the premises, while sludge from the chambers was used as bio-fertiliser for crops. The company is now ten years into its eco-agriculture operation and employs 40 staff. It recently built an eco-tourism lodge on its premises and now receives about 15,000 guests per year to generate additional revenue. Jihu Enterprise further takes these opportunities to educate visitors about its anti-desertification approach.



Eco-tourism lodges have been built on the Jinhu premises which used to be barren desert land.
Photo: Jinhu Enterprise

in 2002, and her company was selected by the Yinchuan City government as a “Green Demonstration Site”. The company also won a Ford Motor Environmental Award in 2003, and has received recognition from the Japanese Embassy in China as an environmental training unit.

Besides growing her business, Ms. Yang has set up initiatives to help other women escape the poverty-environmental-degradation vicious cycle. She started a non-profit organization – the Yinchuan City Women Development Association - to train women on grape growing and goat raising skills. About 500 women have been trained to date, and they were given free tree saplings by the company to spread the tree planting approach to their farms. The training has helped many rural households improve their income levels.

In recognition of the Enterprise’s effort, the Yinchuan City Women Federation named Ms. Yang “Outstanding Woman in Environmental Protection”

B. The Jinhu Business Plan



High quality grapes grown at the Jinhu farm are processed to make wine.
Photo: Jinhu Enterprise

In Module 2 of the YLP, Young Leaders will work closely with Jinhu company representatives and local community members during their seven day field trip, to produce a short and action-directed business plan addressing major facets of the Jinhu expansion initiative. During this time they will meet key players including community leaders, as well as review and analyse data and formulate business solutions. Preparatory work will be done by GIFT and Jinhu Enterprise to compile background information to facilitate the Young Leaders’ work.

Young Leaders will look at the following aspects of this YLP:

- ❑ The company is seeking investment to modernise its winery processes and adopt new wine-making technology, so that it can upgrade its facility to an annual production capacity of 50-100 tons. Young Leaders will investigate various aspects involved in this investment opportunity. Investment is also sought to upgrade the Enterprise’s tourism lodges;
- ❑ Understand the overall model adopted by the company which converts desert areas into an eco-agriculture plantation and eco-tourism zone. Explore how this commercially-oriented sustainable development model can be effectively replicated in other desert zones;
- ❑ Look at marketing, branding, logistics, and regulatory issues pertaining to the company’s crop and livestock products; and
- ❑ Understand key environmental issues related to development in a desertification prone Province like Ningxia.

YLP facilitators will advise the Young Leaders on the plan's business logic, practicability and deliverables.

Module 3: Implementation

The YLP business plan will become the vehicle for soliciting investor interest in developing a viable business project to be implemented in concert with Jinhu Enterprise. This will lead to opportunities to bring positive change to local communities through a sustainable venture. Potential investment could be in the form of seed support from the various corporations that send their executives to participate in the YLP, though GIFT will also be seeking investments from other sources to finance the implementation of the Jinhu Enterprise expansion.

A number of stages are necessary before implementation can be achieved.

Stage 1. Business Plan

The Business Plan created by Young Leaders on site will be refined by GIFT in collaboration with the Jinhu Enterprise. This will be done in two weeks after completion of the YLP.

Stage 2. Investment Note

An Investment Note summarising the financial projections, potential scalability of the project and equity options will be prepared by GIFT for dissemination to potential investors two weeks after the Business Plan is finalised.

GIFT will distribute the Investment Note to various investor networks to determine levels of interest and answer preliminary questions as well as help organize initial meetings and site visits as necessary.

Stage 3. Feasibility Study

If after this there is interest in proceeding to the next stage, the investor will need to commission a third party to conduct a Feasibility Study in order to establish the viability of the business project. A decision on whether to invest will depend on the outcome of the study. GIFT will be available to take part in the Feasibility Study as deemed necessary by the potential investor.

GIFT's Role:

GIFT's role through the Feasibility Study stage in Module 3 covers project management and liaison between investors and the social enterprise. If an investor decides to proceed with financing the project, GIFT's role will vary depending on whether the investor requires further involvement from the GIFT team.

GIFT's projects are alternatives to mainstream investments and focus on the positive impacts to society; as such these projects will take time to gain widespread acceptance by the investment community. GIFT will endeavor to bring about implementation as rapidly as possible but, there is no guarantee how quickly and by when this will happen.

Previous Projects:

Yunnan, China

Module 3 projects from previous GIFT YLP projects include an ongoing initiative to certify organic non-timber forest products such as pine nuts, walnuts, mushrooms and medicinal plants in Yunnan province, China, for export markets. Farmers' marketing co-operatives are leveraged to

help participating farmers standardise how they produce, harvest and market their crops in response to buyer and certification requirements. Some initial investment has already been put towards the construction of a much needed water supply system for domestic and livestock use in this area. This project is entering the feasibility study stage.



Hebei, China

Another project underway is the Hebei Biogas and Organic Production Initiative in China, where an agricultural enterprise aims to generate electricity from biogas chambers, produce bio-fertiliser using the sludge as raw materials, and eventually supply certified organic pork and produce to burgeoning national markets. This project is currently being considered by a number of investors on whether to proceed with a more detailed feasibility study.

Both of these projects have a strong potential to deliver financial returns and improved livelihood prospects for investors and farmers respectively, in a way that is sensitive to the ecological and cultural needs of local communities.

Benefits of Participation

The benefits of the YLP are multi-dimensional and can be summed up as follows:

<p>Participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of Asian globalisation challenges across sectors • Hands-on experience to understand future customers and future markets • Increased knowledge of local Asian business-development challenges • Valuable cross-cultural leadership skills • An opportunity to deliver real benefit to local communities through partnership and business plans • Professional facilitation during training sessions • Membership of the GIFT alumni with access to business, community and government leaders across Asia 	<p>Companies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A tailored programme that can be used to groom managers for the future in the real sense • Multicultural experience to provide long-term solutions • Cross-functional development • Key knowledge of Asian perspectives of business and the impact these have on local communities • Accelerated career development • An understanding of the corporate value chain and how corporate responsibility can be put to practical use in an Asian community • Filling a gap in leadership development treatment that goes beyond classrooms
	
<p>NGOs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workable solutions in a business plan for the project • Shared learning and the experience of working with young business leaders • Links with corporations that will foster long-term relationships in the future • Training in tackling development issues through business-related approaches • Help in realising the common goal of building bridges between business, civil society and government 	<p>Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable solutions to pressing needs that are amenable to business problem-solving approaches • Opportunities to develop business-led solutions in the long term, so that the community can better itself without relying on subsidy or aid • Lasting value and self-sufficiency as well as economic independence

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who is the YLP for?

The YLP is designed for anyone with leadership potential, is interested in globalisation and development issues, and wants to work for positive solutions, regardless of his or her nationality, industry or subject discipline. Normally, participants are from 28 to 45 years of age.

The course is ideal for individuals who:

- Are poised for rapid career progression
- Have demonstrated leadership ability and need international exposure
- Have worked in demanding management positions in a global organisation
- Are at the stage in their careers where a posting to an overseas location under unusual circumstances is likely
- Have worked in a multi-disciplinary and multicultural team
- Are proficient in English and have a working knowledge of one or more other languages
- Have a growing understanding of the role of business in society in a globalised world
- Have an interest in how leadership in Asia will need to evolve to meet the challenge of the next 25 years
- Desire to complement formal business training such as an MBA with experiential immersion learning
- Are flexible and adaptable, with a curiosity for the different

Participants include individuals from multinationals, SMEs, consulting firms, NGOs, donor and government agencies from around the world. An MBA is not a pre-requisite to take part in the YLP.

2. Where will the modules take place? How do I travel to the site?

Module 1 is a teaching component that participants take in Beijing. Module 2 will take place in Yinchuan City, Ningxia Province, China.

Domestic travel arrangements between Beijing and Ningxia Province will be covered by GIFT. Participants have to organise their own travel between their home countries and Beijing.

3. How much does it cost?

The fee for the YLP will vary depending on location, number of participants, the nature of partnering organisations, and duration in the field. A fixed fee will be established for the entire course and project work. This includes all training costs (all training materials, tuition, classroom rental, guest lecturers, project management and direction, accommodation and food costs, domestic travel, study tour and work with an YLP facilitator).

The fee will not cover travel to/from Beijing from participants' home country and insurance.

What they say about the YLP

The YLP has a growing network of alumni from both multinational corporations and locally based companies of strong reputation. Here are assessments of the YLP by some of the alumni:

"The YLP taught us to think differently and to look at things in a more diverse way. I understood the true meaning of leadership by going through this programme."

Alex Chiang, Gammon Construction Limited, Jardines
Haitang project, August 2006

"I saw how people living in totally different worlds came to understand each other."

Sandy Hu, Shell China Exploration and Production Co. Ltd
Pingzhang project, June 2007

"[The YLP] is indeed life-changing, it is very hard work and it is highly engaging at the most socially responsible level of life quality."

Jonathan Pyke, Innovation Environment Limited
Pingzhang project, June 2007

"I learnt a lot ... [especially] identifying potential for improving livelihoods, and finalising them in a plan"

Lokanadham TV, Hewlett-Packard
Pingzhang project, June 2007

"[Through the YLP], one major element [I learned about leadership] is that it is not about oneself but about a group of people [working together to] achieve a target."

Lily Lai, Cathay Pacific Airways
Hebei project, October 2007




"I really think the programme is unique and very helpful from many perspectives. What impressed me most is GIFT's creative model that benefits so many parties and the entire society."

Xu Rui, Beijing Li-Ning Sports Goods Company
Hebei project, October 2007

"Two words to describe the YLP, "fantastic", and "unforgettable". It gave me insights into many things, including how a leader should be."

Christianne Lam, MTR Corporation
Haitang project, August 2006

Previous Projects

Title and Location	Description
<p>Rural Electrification Enterprise Project</p> <p>Vientiane, Laos</p> <p>May 2008</p>	 <p>During the Laos YLP, participants from CLSA worked with Sunlabob Rural Energy Limited whose overall goal is to scale up its existing businesses to provide renewable energy and value-added services to remote rural communities through a commercially sustainable operation. Participants focused on a solar-powered water pumping and purification initiative and were tasked with developing a business plan for this project. The water initiative represents an exciting opportunity to harness renewable energy in the delivery of clean water – an essential basic necessity which 60% of the Lao population still lacks access to.</p>
<p>Rural Agricultural Enterprise Project</p> <p>Phnom Penh, Takeo Province, Cambodia</p> <p>March 2008</p>	 <p>The Cambodia project involved participants working closely with community members to produce a robust business plan for a Cambodian social enterprise.</p> <p>While in the field, participants explored issues related to organic food supply chain management, environmental management and local entrepreneurship. They examined organic rice supply chains and proposed a plan aimed at helping farmers to adopt a self-reliant business-oriented approach to growing and marketing rice in a commercial but ecologically acceptable way.</p>
<p>Farming Enterprise Development</p> <p>Jingxian County, Hebei Province, China</p> <p>October 2007</p>	 <p>The Hebei Programme was held in Jingxian County in China's north-eastern Hebei province from October 8-20, 2007. Participants explored issues including; renewable energy, sustainable farming, food supply chain management, environmental management and social revitalisation. The plan was to expand the enterprise's existing biogas infrastructure to generate renewable energy for the enterprise and nearby farms, develop organic pork and crop production based on the biogas infrastructure and improve rural sanitation conditions.</p>

<p>Certification of Rural Non-Timber Forest Products</p> <p>Pingzhang Administrative Village, Yunnan Province, China</p> <p>June 2007</p>		<p>The Pingzhang Programme in Yunnan Province, China followed on the progress of neighbouring Haitang Administrative Village where the inaugural YLP was held in 2006. Participants focused on the warehousing and packaging of cash crops, in particular walnuts and medicinal plants, which would allow farmers to meet seasonal variations to maximise profits. The plan also included an initiative to certify organic non-timber forest products for sale in domestic markets and for export to Europe.</p>
<p>Harnessing Eco-Tourism to help Rural Indian Villages</p> <p>Gir National Park and Sanctuary and Chitrod, Gujarat State, India</p> <p>January 2007</p>		<p>The Gir National Park and Sanctuary in Gujarat, India, was selected for our second YLP project. The project took into account the existing challenges to the conservation of the Gir forests, the threat to the endangered Asiatic lions, and the potential for improving the livelihood of the villagers through eco-tourism.</p>
<p>Rural Supply Chain Strategy</p> <p>Haitang Administrative Village, Yunnan Province, China</p> <p>August 2006</p>		<p>The first YLP was held in July and August 2006. The field project took Young Leaders to Haitang Administrative Village in Baoshan prefecture, Yunnan province, in China. Participants worked with farmers and the NGO to develop a supply chain management strategy to enable villagers to sell their products at a fair price. The resulting plan also proposed governance structures so that the revenue generated can be used to finance the development of the community in a sustainable manner. Update: Construction of an irrigation and water supply scheme for the Haitang village has recently been completed.</p>

Teaching Staff and Guest Speakers

Mr Chandran Nair



Founder and chief executive of the Global Institute For Tomorrow. Previously, Asia-Pacific chairman of Asia's leading international environmental firm with a worldwide reputation, he is also an advisor to leading multinational corporations and governments, and a visiting scholar to the HKUST-School of Business programme, teaching "Leadership in Asia for the Future". Mr. Nair is a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (RSA).

Dr Thomas Tang



Academic tutor for Henley Management College and the University of Hong Kong. Also, academic advisor to Lingnan University, City University, and Chinese University of Hong Kong. A senior advisor to the Business Environment Council, an affiliate of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. Specialist subjects cover CSR, environment, climate change, government policy, civil society and sustainable communities.

Guest speakers will be invited to address the Young Leaders. Typically they are prominent members of the business community, civil society and senior public-sector representatives. Past speakers have included executives such as; **Mr Cassian Cheung**, former president of Walmart China, **Mr James Thompson**, chairman of Crown Worldwide, **Mr Subhash Agrawal**, founder of India Focus, **Mr Lew Husted**, ethics advisor, Asia of Boeing, **Dr Guo Peiyuan**, general manager & co-founder of SynTao China, **Dr Stephan Rothlin**, vice-director of the Center for Business Ethics, China and **Mr Thomas Abraham**, director of the Public Health Media Project & assistant professor, HKU.

How to Apply

To take part in the Ningxia YLP or learn more about the YLP in general or GIFT, please contact:

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