

CANGO Local Committee Program Project Proposal

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1. Purpose:

To establish a student-run system of CANGO Local Committees on university campuses throughout China that focuses on raising awareness on social issues and NGO work pertinent to China and to give Chinese students a means to be active in their communities by both promoting and being involved in social development issues.

Outcomes:

1. Self-autonomous CANGO Local Committees on university campuses in Beijing; the student leaders trained in leadership, financial responsibility and so forth by CANGO staff.
2. Increased understanding of social issues in China.
3. Increased opportunities for students to be actively involved in development issues in China and raising awareness on social issues to other community members, such as environmental protection and poverty alleviation.
4. Increased social responsibility as a result of student participation and awareness promoted through the CANGO Local Committees.
5. Increased awareness of CANGO and its projects.

2. Introduction

The civil society in China is growing at an expedient rate. More and more citizens are becoming interested in helping improve factors effecting Chinese society. However, the public believes that change is next to impossible so instead they focus on more self-interested pursuits. With greater public awareness, this could initiate a change in thinking and actions. The establishment of the CANGO Local Committee Program on university campuses will enable students with not only the knowledge about current social issues in China but also the ability to effect change.

The project will involve CANGO, university administrators, university faculty, and university students. The university administrators have yet to be approached about this project, however, according to Mr. Huang there is interest from certain university faculties. In general, many students would "like to make a difference" in improving social conditions in China, however, at the moment there are few opportunities available for them. The CANGO Local Committee Program will benefit all partners.

The plan is to first implement a pilot project on two university campuses in Beijing for one school semester. Based on the results from the pilot project, if deemed feasible, the project will be expanded to other universities in China.

3. Background

An increasing number of university students in China are concerned about a variety of social issues from the environment, education, governance to rural poverty. However, there is a lack of student organizations on university/college campuses in China. A conflict arises. Students want

to help but they are unable to. People are typically their most idealistic and energetic when they are younger, yet this optimism can be easily jaded by the “realities” of society. If people are, from a young age, given ample opportunities through volunteerism or student organizations to actively involve themselves in their communities, this will encourage continuous involvement upon graduation. In addition, their future career paths could be influenced by participation in such organizations.

Education most Chinese students receive is founded on the traditional sense of learning in the classroom. The dynamic of learning both inside and outside of the classroom is a method that isn't too encouraged or existent in Chinese universities. Learning outside of the classroom includes participation in student organizations, such as social issues clubs. By involving oneself in social issues clubs one is able to develop different skills: people skills, organizational skills, and leadership skills; life skills that will help students when looking for jobs. Furthermore, the student educates himself about these issues. He becomes an informed citizen. Social issues clubs provide the student with an opportunity to meet people who have similar interests and it provides them with the opportunity to try to make a difference. In this kind of environment, with like-minded people, it's almost like a spark. It becomes a community where enthusiasm towards improving social issues will flourish. Not only do the club members become informed, their vibrant activities inform other members in their community from students, professors to other community members.

The importance of student organizations is to contribute to the students' education. Organizations like the CANGO Local Committee would create an educational environment in all aspects.

In Canada every university each has a wide variety of student organizations, all student-administered and governed. To take McMaster University as an example, the McMaster Student Union supports a total of 153 student clubs from Academic, Religious, Cultural, Athletic, to Social Issues clubs, with participation available to a total of 17000 students. 30 of the clubs are Social Issues Clubs dealing with issues ranging from human rights, refugees, international development, international health to homelessness. The student union provides the clubs with minor funding every year. One of the Social Issues Clubs is a bit more unique. The World University Service of Canada (WUSC) is a non-governmental organization whose mission is to foster human development and global understanding through education and training (www.wusc.ca). WUSC operates many development projects overseas, however, they also run projects within Canada. The WUSC Local Committee Program in Canadian universities has been highly successful. The WUSC Local Committees are responsible for promoting the understanding of international development and other world cultures. The Local Committees are allowed the freedom to pursue any other kind of activity related to the understanding of international development/social issues.

The WUSC Local Committees are provided with \$800.00 annually to administer the committee (i.e. to cover photocopying expenses, hiring lecturers). The WUSC-McMaster Local Committee has adhered to the WUSC mission statement by educating students in creative ways. For example, the Local Committee's theatre group performs plays on human rights, women's rights and aboriginal issues. In addition, they also raise money for a scholarship program in El Salvador and disaster victims throughout the world. To further enhance its fundraising efforts, WUSC-McMaster joined a student organization coalition, which united all of the social issues clubs under one banner. Together they collaborate every year to raise money for a particular event. In a sense, the way a local committee conducts itself is similar to the way NGOs operate. The target group is smaller and most of the student leaders are untrained, learning as they go along, however, this only prepares the students for the future. Every year there are conferences and workshops hosted by one Local Committee, organized by that particular committee. WUSC has a unique aspect in that they provide trainings for the Local Committee leaders.

Students in this type of club develop quite a few skills. During their participation, they are continually educating themselves on international development/social issues and, in turn, they are

also educating others. They also learn more practical skills essential to any occupation: leadership, budgeting, teamwork, and organizational. One of the greatest attributes of the Local Committees is the independence and autonomy students are allowed. The main organization does not interfere. The students are treated as free-thinking adults, with the emphasis placed on both self-learning and learning with your classmates. It's a dynamic and dialectic arrangement. Through the Local Committee they learn how to work in a club that functions like an NGO. Not every Canadian student is involved in campus clubs. Typically only a minority of students is interested in using their own time to improve social conditions in their community or overseas. Those that are heavily involved in social issues clubs continue their passion for social justice upon graduation.

For more information on structural organization of the McMaster University Student Union please visit <http://www-msu.mcmaster.ca/>.

Based on the success of the WUSC Local Committee Program, CANGO plans to adopt a similar program, with the focus transferred from social issues related to other developing countries to issues China faces. With the growing wealth of China, there has also been a drastic increase in poverty. However, there are many dedicated citizens willing to bridge the gap, which has led to a growing civil society. The nascent civil society in China is comprised of passionate and dedicated, yet sometimes untrained individuals. The LC is one method of training students prior to entering the NGO sector. It provides civil society organizations with young, passionate, knowledgeable and skilled workers with an experienced background in NGO-related activities. In addition, the LC helps society by directly educating other community members.

4. Goal and Purpose

Goal:

With a populace more knowledgeable and educated on the social issues in China and with the 'know-how' on how to make a difference, social change can proceed at a more efficient and sustainable direction.

To strengthen China's growing civil society by providing a local, self-sustainable, trained workforce passionate to improving China's social conditions; to create a socially responsible society; and, to create a society aware of social issues in China with the ability to invoke change.

CANGO

By becoming the prime administrator of the project CANGO raises awareness of Chinese social issues, civil society and social responsibility. The Local Committee Program raises CANGO's profile among the Chinese populace. In addition, an extensive volunteer base will be established for CANGO, which it can rely on to conduct and promote its projects.

Students

The prime beneficiaries are the students. The CANGO Local Committee will develop a more responsible and educated student populace. It will also give them practical experiences, which help them find work upon graduation. The students will be given the opportunity to be socially active in their communities, and will become aware of social issues facing China. By collaborating with CANGO, students are also able to meet actual NGO workers in China, which will only further encourages their interest in this field. Eventually, it is foreseen that the LC program will spread to university campuses all over China.

As the LC Program is in its initial stages, the main purpose is to establish a pilot Local Committee on two university campuses in Beijing.

5. Activities/Methodology

Immediate Project:

As the CANGO Local Committee Program is in its initial stages, the purpose of this project is to establish a framework for the Program at CANGO and to establish a Local Committee on two university campuses in Beijing.

Activities:

1) Appoint a Local Committee Coordinator

The Local Committee Coordinator will be responsible for a variety of tasks: selecting universities; maintaining contact with the Local Committees (LC); keeping the LCs informed of CANGO's activities; developing resources for the LCs; writing an annual formal report on LC activities; organizing trainings for LC leaders; organizing regional/sub-regional meetings and workshops for LCs (where local LCs meet for exchanging ideas, establishing a working relationship between LCs); and, contributing articles to the CANGO NGO Forum. The LC Coordinator should also compile a list of all LC leaders and their contact information, accessible to all other LCs.

2) Find two local universities interested in participating in the Local Committee Program.

a) Appoint a faculty advisor for the Local Committee

The faculty advisor is responsible for providing the students with advice and support in their activities. After LC members graduate, it is possible that the LC will not survive. Therefore, the faculty advisor provides continuity and sustainability for the Local Committee by promoting the program on campus to attract new members for the LC if by chance the LC no longer has any members. He/she is also responsible for maintaining contact with the LC Coordinator.

b) Find student members

With the help of the faculty advisor, the CANGO Local Committee Program will be advertised to the student populace. The LC should have a minimum of five dedicated members. Positions in the LC will be democratically selected (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Finance). If the committee attracts a large number of students, then some students can also be appointed Sub-Committee Organizers (ex. Fundraising Coordinator).

c) Conduct Trainings for student leaders

A four-day workshop will be conducted for the student leaders (two weekends in succession). They will be trained on the following topics: leadership, how to conduct meetings, budgeting, types of activities, introduction to CANGO, social issues in China, public participation, civil society, fundraising and NGO work in China.

d) Potential Student Activities

- Fundraising can be conducted for the Chun Hua High School in Chun Hua County, Shaanxi to help them construct a student dormitory. A 'book-drive' could also be held to provide books for the school library.
- Environmental Clean-Ups can be conducted at Xiang Shan or the Great Wall
- Summer Internships at CANGO or CANGO member organizations for candidates selected by committee.
- 26 Degree Campaign
- Green Tree Program (more information provided in the materials attached). It is a program designed to promote Environmental Protection to school children.
- Student-coordinated Conferences on a variety of topics (AIDS, Environmental Protection, Rural Poverty, development work in China)
- German/China Internship Program – provides candidates
- Educational activities to make other students aware of social issues in China. For example, movie nights ("Not One Less" by Zhang Yimou) could be arranged

3) Develop Resources for Students

- Local Committee Handbook: The handbook outlines information related to maintaining a sustainable and well-functioning Local Committee. It informs the members how to establish a Local Committee, to conduct meetings, to manage accounts, to establish organizational structure, to create a strategic action plan for the school year.
- CANGO Posters: Design posters for the committee members to promote both CANGO and the Local Committee within the university.
- CANGO Information Package: A small package for Local Committees to provide them with information on CANGO (i.e. projects, annual reports, newsletters)
- Activity Handbook: This handbook will provide a list of activities the students could conduct on campus and in their communities.

Some of the resources are already in development. Please refer to the materials attached to the proposal for more detailed information. All of the handbooks and information must be translated into Chinese.

4) CANGO Local Committee Program Web Page: Design a web page devoted to the Local Committee Program to promote the program and to provide Local Committees with resources and information.

Evaluation of Results

- 1) Annual reports/summaries by local committees submitted to LC Coordinator/faculty advisor (includes budget reports, summary of activities)
- 2) Local Committee Coordinator Summary and Evaluation Report
- 3) Constant contact with local committee through the LC Coordinator

Methodology:

Work Plan

	Activity
December 2004	1) Develop Local Committee Resources 2) Appoint Local Committee Coordinator
January 2005	1) Appoint Faculty Advisor

	2) Develop Local Committee Resources
February 2005	Establish Local Committees on two universities
March 2005	Conduct Trainings for the Local Committee Leaders
April 2005	1) Design Web Page
May 2005	
June 2005	Local Committee Summary and Evaluation of Activities
July 2005	Local Committee Coordinator Summary and Evaluation of project
August 2005	Preparation for the expansion of the CANGO Local Committee Program to other universities in Beijing summer based on lessons learned from the pilot project

6. Outcomes

Cumulative Results:

- 1) The establishment of a functioning CANGO Local Committee Program with a Local Committee Coordinator.
- 2) Two active and sustainable Local Committees at two universities located in Beijing.

The CANGO Local Committee Program will be monitored over time by the following methods:

- 1) CANGO Local Committees will submit to CANGO brief mid-term summary reports at the end of the first school semester and a final summary report at the end of the school year.
- 2) Based on the Local Committee reports the Local Committee Coordinator will submit annual reports summarizing and evaluating the program.
- 3) The CANGO Local Committee Program website will provide updated information on the program, including LC activities, successes and experiences.

7. Budget

The major expense for the project is the annual allowance provided to the CANGO Local Committees. The allowance aids the LCs in certain administrative expenses such as photocopying fees.

	Amount (RMB)
Faculty Advisor	Voluntary (no salary)
Local Committee Coordinator	An Existing CANGO employee
Local Committee Members	Voluntary (no salary)
Website Design	No fee (designed and maintained by CANGO)
Posters (Design and Printing)	??
CANGO Local Committee Annual Allowance	400 RMB
CANGO Summer Internship Program	Voluntary ??
Green Tree Program	??