



2022 STEPPING STONES ANNUAL REPORT

IMPROVING THE EDUCATION AND GENERAL WELFARE OF
DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN IN CHINA



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Director's Words

2022 was a tough year in Shanghai, with a full lockdown for 2-3 months in the spring, and full breakout of the covid epidemic in the winter. In between, under epidemic controls, schools were off-limits to outsiders and large gatherings were restricted. In spite of this, building on the experience gained over two years of epidemic controls, Stepping Stones China Ltd (SSCL)'s Shanghai partner organisation managed to recruit and train 791 volunteers to deliver an impressive 8,128 English and digital literacy lessons online and offline to 5,305 students in Shanghai and rural China, proving yet again the dedication and flexibility of the staff and volunteers, and the resilience and impressive commitment to education of students and parents throughout China.

From 2020 to 2022, I have spent less time in China than in previous years, and have been delighted to see the program thriving during my absence, with an experienced and committed team each taking full responsibility for their work, and collaborating professionally together. I am grateful to them for rising to all the challenges, especially during those difficult times, and I would also like to thank all our donors and volunteers for their continued valuable support, without this none of the wonderful work detailed in this annual report would be possible.

Corinne Richeux Hua
Executive Director

About Us

Our Mission

To improve the education and general welfare of disadvantaged children in China.

Our Vision

Equal access to a quality education and general welfare for all children in China.

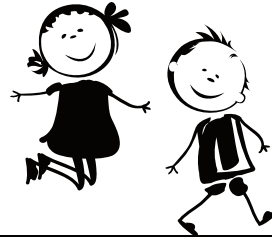
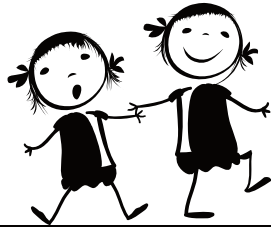
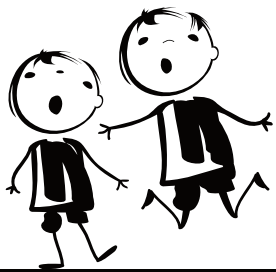
Our Purpose

Stepping Stones China Ltd (SSCL) was established to raise funds and recruit and train volunteers to support registered charitable organisations to run programs focused on improving the education and general welfare of disadvantaged children and youth in China.

Legal Status

On 2 September 2011, Stepping Stones China Ltd was incorporated in Hong Kong under the Companies Ordinance (Chapter 32 of the laws of Hong Kong). The Association's official Chinese name is 铺路石中国有限公司. SSCL was confirmed to be a charitable institution or trust of a public character on 30 March 2012, and is exempt from tax under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance. Stepping Stones China Ltd established a representative office in Shanghai in 2018.

Core Values



S

STAMINA
锲而不舍

We are hard-working and resilient.

我们坚持不懈、努力奋进。

T

TEAMWORK
团结合作

We work together with trust and respect to bring about change.

我们赤诚相待、稳步前行。

E

EMPATHY
同感共情

We are open-minded and inclusive, and embrace diverse opinions.

我们开放包容、兼容并济。

P

PASSION
热忱砥砺

We are proactive and courageous, and put our beneficiaries' needs at the heart of all we do.

我们锐意进取、坚守初心。



Volunteers

SSCL's greatest asset is its large community of volunteers, who are eager for high-impact volunteering opportunities in China.

Our task is to recruit and train volunteers to provide the services needed by our beneficiaries.

We take volunteers aged 16+ from all over the world to teach English and digital literacy to disadvantaged children and youth in China, online as well as offline. Volunteers also take a myriad of other roles, including fundraising, communications, design, photography, curriculum development, volunteer coordination, translation, etc.

Beneficiaries

Our main beneficiaries are children and youth, whose education has been negatively impacted by rural-urban migration in China. Some of these young people have moved with their parents to cities where they do not have access to regular public schools due to residence issues, and are enrolled in schools for the children of migrant workers, whose educational standards fall behind the urban public schools. Others are enrolled in public schools, but need extra help with their schoolwork, which their parents are often unable to provide.

Other migrant workers' children are unable to go with their parents to the cities, and are left behind in rural boarding schools or living with other family members. The educational standards in rural schools lag significantly behind urban schools, with the standards in minority areas being even lower than in more central areas. In addition to the disadvantages faced by other rural children, "left-behind" children also lack parental support.

In addition, we assist organisations who are serving the children of low-income households in the cities, and children with special educational needs. Most of our students are primary-school age, but we also have middle school, high school and vocational school students.

We support registered organisations in China who provide educational support, enrichment activities and vocational training to these beneficiaries, in particular in the areas of English and digital literacy, but also in other subjects which tend to be neglected in disadvantaged communities.



Our Board



Wang Lin
Chair

BSR Advisory Services Ltd.
- Director



Joy Chen
Director

Oscar Winson Ltd.
- Office Manager



Whooper Huang
Director

PAAT (Shanghai) IT Co., Ltd.
- Partner



Leo Jia
Director

Save the Children in China
- Area Manager



Laura Mitchelson
Director

Leadership Consultant

Digital Literacy



Students



Volunteers



Lessons



Teaching Sites

Sponsored by the Ping and Amy Chao Family Foundation through Transparent Fish Fund, and inspired by Orphan Impact's pioneering program in Vietnam, our Chinese partner organisation (上海闵行区华漕铺路石青少年发展中心) has been running an innovative digital and life skills program for disadvantaged children in China since 2016.

Digital literacy is basic for survival in the modern world. Unfortunately, many rural and migrant Chinese children have no computers at home or school, and no computer lessons, so their digital literacy skills are very poor. This contributes to a low rate of high school or vocational school enrollment, and the risk of exploitation, abuse and disadvantage when they enter the workplace from junior middle school.

The objective of our digital literacy program is to help disadvantaged students improve their digital literacy and life skills, and to increase their self-esteem, critical thinking and confidence in order to optimize their access to appropriate further education and to better work opportunities in the future. This program equips students with a wide array of soft and hard skills, such as Microsoft Office, resume preparation, online searching, online safety, programming, coding and embedded system design, so that they are better prepared to meet the challenges of a tech-focused society.

In 2022, thanks to the support of many individual donors, private foundations and corporate partners, our teachers and volunteers were able to teach 1,145 lessons to more than 729 students at 16 online or offline teaching sites in Shanghai, Zhejiang, Henan and Jiangxi.



Training & Resources for English Teaching

Ten years' experience of working with volunteers has proven the critical importance of a good volunteer training and support program. We are extremely grateful to Target Foundation for sponsoring our training for English teaching volunteers since 2012. We would also like to thank Children's Helpers Worldwide for all their hard work to raise funds to provide resources for our volunteers and staff to use in the classroom since 2015.

English is the third most important subject in the Chinese school curriculum after Chinese and maths, and the one that poses the most challenges to rural and other disadvantaged children, due to lack of access to adequate English language learning resources. Lack of attainment in English skills restricts educational and employment opportunities for these children. We are proud to train volunteers from all over the world to help Chinese children to improve their foreign language skills, as well as to give them a window onto the outside world.

This year, we continued to provide our volunteers with trainings and workshops to help improve teaching quality and optimise the quality of interactions with their students, both offline and online. After a spring dominated by school closures due to covid controls, we were excited to welcome volunteers back to in-person training sessions in the autumn term, as students in Shanghai were making their way back into their classrooms too.

As we incorporated ever more fun and educational teaching materials into our curriculum, our training sessions have also evolved to provide volunteers with specific skills to deliver engaging and creative content such as English songs, English games and activities as well as watching and acting out short movie clips.

A total of five public training sessions were conducted for the Shanghai English Teaching (SET) Program, and two training sessions were organised for the Rural Individual Volunteers (RIV) Program. In addition, we also conducted training sessions for high school students from Shanghai American School (SAS) Pudong and Yew Cheung International School (YCIS). Thanks to volunteer Venice Yang, we also organised a workshop on how to transfer drama skills to English teaching, which was well received by the attendees.

For our online programs, volunteers were given access to an online briefing and training video to watch before attending an online demo class with Stepping Stones, where trainees practise their online teaching skills in front of our trainer. We facilitated 230 such demo classes for the Home Classroom (HCR) Program as well as 155 for the School Videolink (SVL) Program. We regularly review and update training videos prior to the start of each semester.

Our staff members observed a total of 101 classes, providing teaching tips and feedback to volunteers based on the challenges that they faced in the classroom. We would like to thank volunteer Pearl Tan for helping us to produce a video highlighting the teaching skills that she has uses when teaching young learners in a kindergarten for migrant children in Shanghai.

Volunteers trained and resourced through this program delivered 6,983 English lessons to 4,841 beneficiaries at 22 project sites in Shanghai and 30 sites in other provinces (some sites with both online and onsite programs), as well as at thousands of students' homes through the internet.



Volunteers Trained



Training Sessions



Individual Demo Classes



Students Receiving English Lessons



Lesson Observations



Finance

In 2022, SSCL's revenue was HKD845,443, and expenses were HKD560,025, making a net gain of HKD285,418.

The opening balance was HKD647,374 and the closing balance was HKD932,792. This includes all foreign currency revenue and expenses at the exchange rate at the year end.

SSCL's accounts are audited annually by an independent accountant.

Revenue

Revenue (HKD)	
Donations and Grants	812,518
Bank Interest	896
Sundry Income	32,029
TOTAL	845,443

Expenses

Expenses (HKD)	
Accountancy Fee	1,800
Auditors' Remuneration	3,800
Bank Charge	1,822
Exchange Loss	5,298
Legal and Professional Fees	4,210
Project Costs	253,364
Salaries	289,731
TOTAL	560,025
Net Gain	285,418

* All numbers are in units of HKD.

Donors



Thank you to everyone who donated to SSCL in 2022. Every donation of whatever size is always appreciated.

Donor (HKD)	
UPS Foundation	252,548
Charities Aid Foundation America - Target	219,995
Ping and Amy Chao Family Foundation through Transparent Fish Fund	180,113
Children's Helpers Worldwide	24,113
Yili Huang	89,161
Inna Van	23,294
Kit Ling Lau	23,294
DONATIONS SUB-TOTAL	812,518

Thank you to the following program partner for their financial support.

Corporate Partner (HKD)	
PricewaterhouseCoopers Foundation	32,029
SERVICE CHARGES SUB-TOTAL	32,029



Pro Bono Supporters

A special thank you to the following companies, who generously contributed high quality professional services to us for free, thus helping us to significantly reduce our operational costs and improve the quality of our program.



O'MELVENY & MYERS LLP
美国美迈斯律师事务所

O'Melveny & Myers for professional legal advice.

Rödl & Partner

Roedl & Partner for financial accounting and secretarial services.

上海沪瑞实业有限公司
Shanghai Hurui Industries

Shanghai Hurui Industries for providing our Shanghai office space.





www.steppingstoneschina.org