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**SWISS EMBASSY IN BEIJING**

**THE AMBASSADOR**

## **TRANSLATION**

**To the Jacobs Foundation**

BEIJING, 17 MARCH 2016

### **Letter of recommendation: TADRA Project Tibet**

Dear Sir or Madam,

I recently learned that the TADRA Children's Villages in the Tibetan regions of China have been nominated for the Jacobs Foundation "Best Practice Prize". As such I am happy to describe to you my impressions of the project and my evaluation of the work achieved by TADRA.

In July 2014 I undertook the long journey to the Tibetan high plateau in the Province of Qinghai with a view to visiting the TADRA Children's Village in Golog on the occasion of the annual celebration there. This remote region is still marked by the traditional nomadic way of life and poor living conditions. The number of children who become orphaned or whose parents cannot afford to fulfil their parental duties is relatively high, and as such these young people's prospects are particularly limited.

It is precisely here, in the Provinces of Sichuan and Qinghai, that the TADRA Villages are located, financed principally by individual Swiss and German donations. In the course of my long stay at Golog I saw and experienced how TADRA offers over 500 orphaned and forgotten children a decent roof over their heads, three meals a day and a very comprehensive education which on the one hand incorporates traditional Tibetan elements and respects the children's roots. On the other hand it also prepares them for the real world of China and transmits optimum tools both for the children's successful future and the sustainable development of their community. Since the inception, the first generation of "TADRA children" have graduated from university and now stand on their own feet. More important still, the Villages offer a family to these children, many of whom are encumbered by their early experiences. As I became convinced during my whole stay in the Village, and especially during a dance festival evening with barbecue, the children are well cared for and happy, indeed full of the zest of life!

The success of the TADRA Villages, as I experienced it, in addition to the donations, is doubtless due above all to the comprehensive and competent engagement of the Tibetan Village leaders, teachers and carers, but also to the foreign volunteers, especially Mr Beat Renz. From time to time the Golog Children's Village receives support from the local government. Yet the situation is not easy: the original founders are no longer granted an entry visa, and depending on the current political activity various obstacles may be put in the way of the Villages and foreign helpers. At the same time costs are increasing with the growing number of children taken care of and the need for new investments. I was happy to be able to bring certain concerns at TADRA to the notice of the Governor of Sichuan Province. All acknowledgement of the work of TADRA - whether financial or symbolic - is an important contribution not only to these children's development, but also to the lasting, stable development of the region.

I remain at your disposal to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

The Ambassador of Switzerland  
(signed)  
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