

## **China Everbright Charitable Foundation Joins Social Workers Across Borders to Launch “Project Companion - Professional Social Workers in Greater China Scheme”**

(6 January 2013) – The “Project Companion - Professional Social Workers in Greater China Scheme” (“Project Companion”), which China Everbright Charitable Foundation is supporting, today held its launch ceremony at the headquarters of Social Workers Across Borders. Tsang Tak-sing, Secretary for Home Affairs in the HKSAR Government; Gui Lan, vice counsel of the Social Services Department of the Central People's Government Liaison Office, Chen Shuang, CEO of China Everbright Limited (“Everbright”); Chan Yuen-han, vice president of Social Workers Across Borders and member of the Legislative Council; and Stephen H.B. Yau, chief executive of International Social Service attended the ceremony.

Project Companion aims to recruit seasoned social workers and volunteer teachers from Hong Kong to train social workers in mainland China and help them to acquire the knowledge and skills required for post-disaster counselling. The scheme will also establish and train a team of social workers in China who will be able to provide crisis support at any given time. Project Companion will operate in the provinces of Sichuan, Hubei and Heilongjiang for two years. During this period, 70 volunteer teachers will be recruited to train 900 social workers.

Chen Shuang, CEO of Everbright, said, “After a disaster, it is essential to reconstruct buildings and facilities. But it is also essential to rebuild the confidence and drive of people who have lost family members and homes, so that they can go on to live in a positive way. Therefore, as well as addressing the need for post-disaster resources, we also hope through Project Companion to provide mental care and guidance in order to help them return to normal daily life.”

Established in 2006, Social Workers Across Borders provides mental rehabilitation services to citizens affected by disasters. So far, it has set up service centres in eight provinces and cities in mainland China, which service the needs of over 60,000 people.

Giving back to society is an important part of Everbright’s corporate social responsibility efforts. In 2008, the China Everbright Charitable Foundation, a charitable organisation approved by the Hong Kong Government, was established to promote local community development charity projects. The foundation also actively responds to disasters around the world to provide immediate support and care for victims.



(From left) Chan Man Luen Ying, president of the Social Workers Across Borders; Chen Shuang, CEO of Everbright; Gui Lan, vice counsel of the Social Services Department of the Central People's Government Liaison Office; Tsang Tak-sing, Secretary for Home Affairs of the HKSAR; Chan Yuen-han, vice president of Social Workers Across Borders and member of the Legislative Council Stephen H.B. Yau, chief executive of International Social Service.

- Ends -