

# "TOMORROW-iCAN" PROGRAM

Spring 2024 factsheet



## 1. Situation Analysis

Two thousand counties in China accommodate more than 50% of China's students. Those families within these counties that cannot achieve cross-regional mobility have seen their economic and educational status decline even as the general population has moved out of poverty. In contrast, those families that can achieve cross-regional mobility are able to rely on their personal wealth to seek the most suitable educational resources for their children.

Students in these counties often face challenges, for example:

- **Survival dilemmas:** The students have divorced parents or absent parents who left to make a living. They need to take care of sick parents or grandparents, are dealing with living a great distance from the parents, and often as a result face economic difficulties.
- **Lack an academic background within the family:** These students have parents who have no experience in guiding their children to a successful academic future and are unaware of available resources that other families utilize.
- **Limited school support:** Often these counties' level of education support to students is lower than urban schools, and notably for high schools that might otherwise be preparing students for higher education.
- **Limited vision for future possibilities:** Many high school students in these counties do not see a way toward greater prosperity based on what examples are available to them day to day.

To address these challenges, the "Tomorrow I Can" program hopes to change destiny through education. This program supports high school students who have not yet had college students in their immediate families, have relatively difficult family conditions, and lack educational resources in the region, but the students themselves strive to improve.

## 2. Mission & Goal

"Tomorrow I Can" implements a charity-supported educational program, providing participants who meet the program requirements to help them improve learning conditions, habits, methods, abilities, and moral cultivation. The goal of the program is for these students to be successful as the family's first generation of college students. Changing one's destiny and the family's fate can also heighten the importance of education in their community.

### 3. A New Model of Assistance and Inspiration

The target families for the “Tomorrow I Can” program have never had a family member attend college. In addition, they are limited in their financial ability and community resources to supports students seeking a college degree. Without external assistance, these students are trapped in a cycle that limits the future prospects of their community: Poor family conditions, leading to poor education resources, leading to an inability to reach college, leading to limited job opportunities, leading to poor family conditions for their children.

The “Tomorrow I Can” program has assisted over 3,000 county high school students.

- A mentor team composed of professors, scholars, and successful individuals from top universities and various sectors of society imparts knowledge, inspires, and cultivates a sense of social responsibility to participant students through training, meetings, and teachings.
- A volunteer team composed of outstanding college students works hand-in-hand with participant to improve their learning abilities and prepare for the college entrance examination. These volunteers provide learning assistance to students participating in the Program, enhancing their learning abilities, including but not limited to online and offline lecture demonstration courses.
- Scholarships provide 1,600 to 2,000 RMB per year for each student participating in the program. The scholarship distribution ceremony has become a platform for communication and encouragement.

These programs have shown great success. Many high school graduates participating in the program gain access to the university admittance process every year. But the program goes further to help the students with important decisions that will affect the life direction. Which school to attend? What major is suitable for choosing? These students also lack resources within their family and local school to help with these choices. Volunteers help them understand their college enrollment preferences, learn about university majors, and improve the success rate of their application, thus setting these students on their desired career direction.

### 4. Target Beneficiaries

- **High school students from target families:** High school students whose families have never had an immediate member attend college are the most direct beneficiaries of this program.

To date, 3,340 high school students from over 50 high schools in Henna, Xinjiang, Shanxi, and Gansu have received funding and support. Many of them were admitted to universities as a result.

- **County high schools and teachers:** This program improves the professional teaching level and comprehensive workability of county high school teachers by providing training and communication platforms for teachers from participating schools.
- **College student volunteers:** The volunteer team, mainly composed of college students, express that they have a better understanding of the value of education and future leadership opportunities when participating in volunteer activities with the opportunity to consolidate and share their knowledge. More importantly, they have learned love and responsibility. Some of the students who have already benefit from the program by being admitted to university have decided to stay engaged and become part of the student volunteer team.

## 5. Outcomes

The Program has been running for three years and has supported 3,340 students in Henan, Xinjiang, Shanxi, and Gansu.

### 2021-2022 Academic Year

During this year 630 high schools from 23 schools received funding and support, including:

- 10 high schools in 8 counties in Xinyang, Henan Province,
- 5 high schools in northern Henan Province, and
- 8 high schools in Xinjiang Province.

In 2022, 210 program graduates participated in the national college entrance examination, and 94% of these entered the university admission score line; 16 were admitted to Peking University and Tsinghua University.

### 2022-2023 Academic Year

During this year 1,420 high schools from 49 schools received funding and support, including:

- 11 high schools in eight counties in Xinyang, Henan Province,
- 7 high schools in northern Henan Province,
- 8 high schools in Xinjiang Province,
- 22 high schools in Shanxi Province, and
- 1 high school in Gansu Province.

In 2023, 709 program graduates participated in the national college entrance examination, and 91% entered the university admission score line; 25 were admitted to Peking University and Tsinghua University.

### **2023-2024 Academic Year**

For the current academic year, 1,290 high schools from 45 schools are receiving funding and support, including schools in Henan Province, Xinjiang Province, and Shanxi Province.

Nearly 900 high school students in the Program will participate in the 2024 national college entrance examination.

## **6. Program Executors**

**Give2Asia:** Give2Asia provides overall planning, strategic guidance, and financial support for the program. We have conducted preliminary research, communicated and mobilized internal and external resources, and developed program progress plans. We have provided various support for the smooth progress of the program, and regularly conduct audits and risk control reviews.

**China Friendship Foundation for Peace and Development:** CFFPD plays a significant role in coordination and communication within the education sector of China. They contact and communicate with local government departments, education institutions, etc., and provide strong support for the smooth implementation of the program.

**Professional and Student Mentor Volunteers:** The mentor team led by Professor Zhang Haixia and the university volunteers are responsible for designing program content and implementing the teaching/learning process. Remote learning activities operate on multiple online platforms and open more opportunities for students participating in the program to access the world's new scientific knowledge and technical content.

## **7. The Activities**

To effectively improve opportunities for students, the “Tomorrow I Can” program operates a diverse set of online and offline activities:

- **Online Master Class:** Led by professors and mentors, this class brings cutting-edge scientific knowledge to students and broadens their horizons.

- **Offline Winter Vacation Activities:** When the program team arranges for the distribution of scholarship funds, schools participating in the program are responsible for organizing the distribution ceremony. During the activity, university student volunteers share their stories about college entrance examinations, college study, and academic life at the university level, helping them understand what to expect when they get into college.
- **Offline Exchange Activities:** Based on the condition of schools in different regions, the program organizes mentors to go to a site to give lectures at the participating school during the spring semester, encouraging students to prepare for the upcoming college entrance examination.
- **National College Entrance Application Consultations:** These consultations are provided by university teachers, student mentors, and university student volunteers who have successfully applied and entered the university they wished. Consultants objectively evaluate students' exam scores and overall competitiveness in various subjects, guiding them to apply for a suitable major for their career development.
- **Schoolteacher Workshops:** The program invites participating schoolteachers to come to Beijing to take part in a workshop. The workshop content is led by teachers and professors with rich teaching experience in Beijing. The workshops help to improve the teaching level of teachers in the participating schools, help the "Tomorrow I Can" organizers to better grasp first-hand information on education needs and challenges, and improves overall cooperation to improve the program.

## 8. What We Learn

- In recent years, the Give2Asia team has visited remote rural and mountainous areas in China. With China's poverty alleviation efforts, many county high schools have adequate physical facilities but have found it challenging to ensure adequate teaching staff and educational quality. The "Tomorrow I Can" program can help county high school students and teachers who urgently need improvement.
- Helping the target student population, based on family conditions and learning environments, is multidimensional. Program success will continue by having a broad perspective on the personal efforts of students, offering effective learning methods and correct guidance, making available the appropriate financial support, etc. A vibrant charitable program should constantly discover needs and create solutions.
- A program such as "Tomorrow I Can" requires coordination and communication from multiple parties, and continued effective communication and coordination are necessary to ensure the program's smooth implementation.