

Education for a more compassionate world



ACT
Asia

Foreword

A word from Pei Su, our CEO



When I was a child in Asia, not many of us grew up with pets. It was unusual to show empathy towards animals, but more fundamentally, it was unusual for Asian parents to openly demonstrate love towards their children.

This emotional reserve tends to inhibit children from developing social and emotional intelligence, the kind of intelligence necessary to become a responsible adult.

As children, we learnt respect for our elders and for authority, we learnt etiquette too, but an emotional connection was missing. Rarely was it suggested we should extend any feelings towards animals, or indeed that animals have feelings. And because of this, Asian children mostly grow up assuming animals exist to serve us, feed us, entertain and clothe us; animals are useful 'moving objects', a literal translation of the Chinese word for animal.

I co-founded ACTAsia in 2006 aiming to support the development of caring societies in Asia. We started by raising the agenda of animal welfare and protection of the natural environment in China, considering the interdependence of people, animals and our natural habitat.

We began to prioritise an education for school children and the general public of consumers, as well as training courses for teachers, veterinarians, and social workers. In China, 82 million people live below the poverty line, and 61 million left-behind children live without their parents, so our first concern was to widen a sense of responsibility for others.

With the future in mind, education is at the core of all we do. We teach children about respect and kindness, promote responsibility among consumers for the goods they buy, and collaborate with influential professionals in government, education, law, and veterinary practice.

We believe that a sense of individual responsibility is empowering. Given the chance to understand the truth about life on earth, many people – but children in particular – will choose compassion over cruelty. In doing so, they will develop a keen sense of respect, for each other, for all species and our natural environment, but also for themselves.

About ACTAsia

Our Vision

We believe that respect for people, animals and the environment will lead to a more compassionate and sustainable world.

Our Mission

By educating children, consumers and professionals, ACTAsia promotes kindness and compassion for people, animals and the environment among Asian societies.

ACTAsia initiates education programmes for gradual and sustainable change.

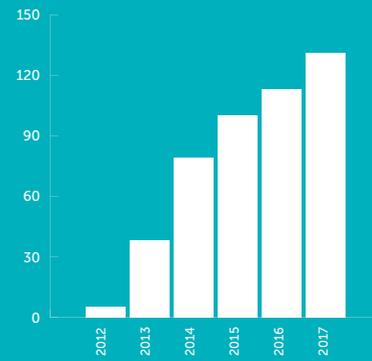
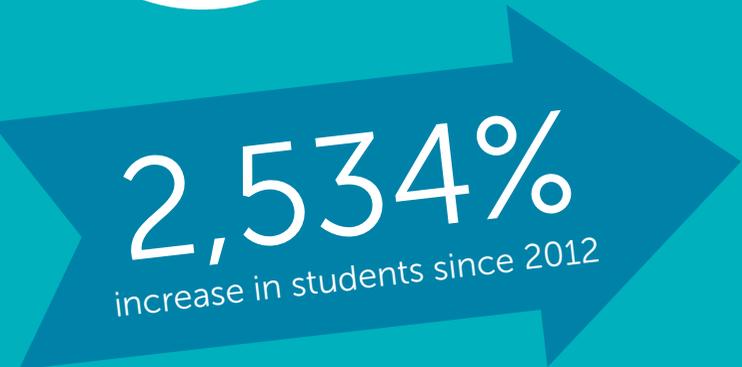
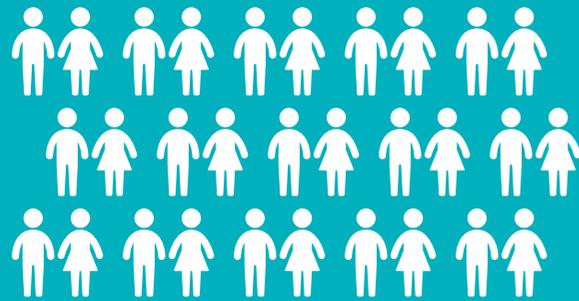
- 1** We aim to cultivate a deeper level of understanding of the interdependence of all living things among the next generation – because children will eventually be responsible for a better future.
- 2** We aim to inform consumers about the production processes behind the goods they buy, so that each person has the ability to make informed choices.
- 3** We aim to build a network of professionals in Asian societies who have access to best-practice knowledge and skills to ensure high quality animal welfare standards are in place and upheld.

Our Values

- **Compassion** – for the welfare of animals, for people, and the environment is at the heart of all our work
- **Integrity** – in everything we do, we are committed to the highest standards of honesty and respect
- **Strategic** – we take a planned and persistent approach based on a clear vision
- **Collaborative** – we respect and value our partners, and aspire to work together with others, such as governments, universities and other non-profits, to build trusted relationships and to ensure gradual and sustainable change
- **Resourceful** – we take pride in solving problems in a variety of ways, making efficient use of funds
- **Determination** – we are committed to long term and sustainable change, regardless of difficulty, and have faith in gradual improvements
- **Influence** – we aim to effect change through providing alternative points of view and enabling others to make informed choices

ACTAsia in numbers

Compassion in the classroom



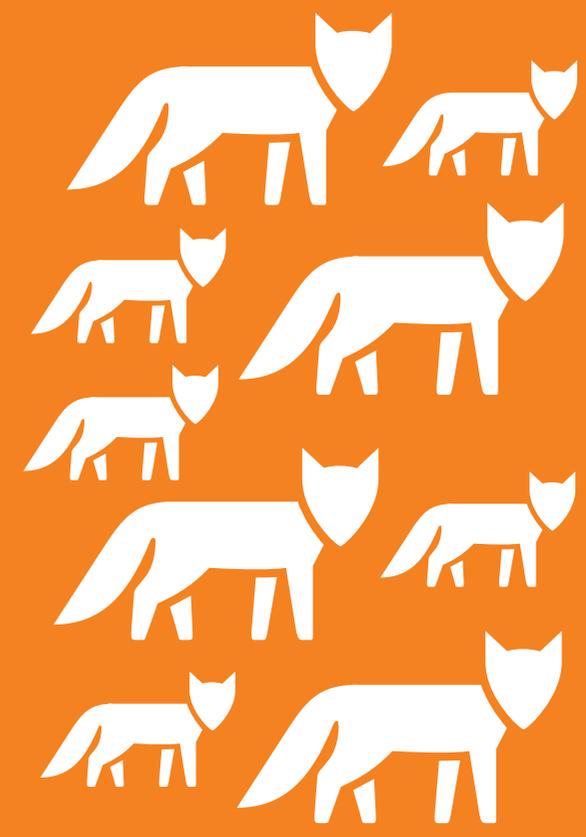
Schools that taught at least one CFL course

The reach of CFL Education by year

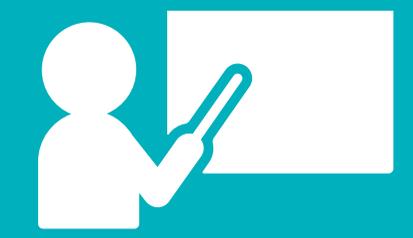


Fur Free Retailers

28 Chinese + 7 International



Professional targets



1,697 teachers trained as humane educators
1,186 veterinarians trained in professional standards



Media reach
Over 170,000 million

Education for everyone

Since 2012, we have steadily extended our capacity in all three of our programme areas. Year-on-year we have reached more children, more consumers, and more professionals through education and training courses. This consistent growth relies on raising awareness of our work with partners, governments, corporations, and the general public to fund expansion. We do this through media campaigns, information videos, TV advertising, bill-board posters, and regular social media updates of programme developments and relevant international news.

Caring for Life Education

Caring for Life Education (CFL) is ACTAsia's unique six year curriculum for all primary school years.

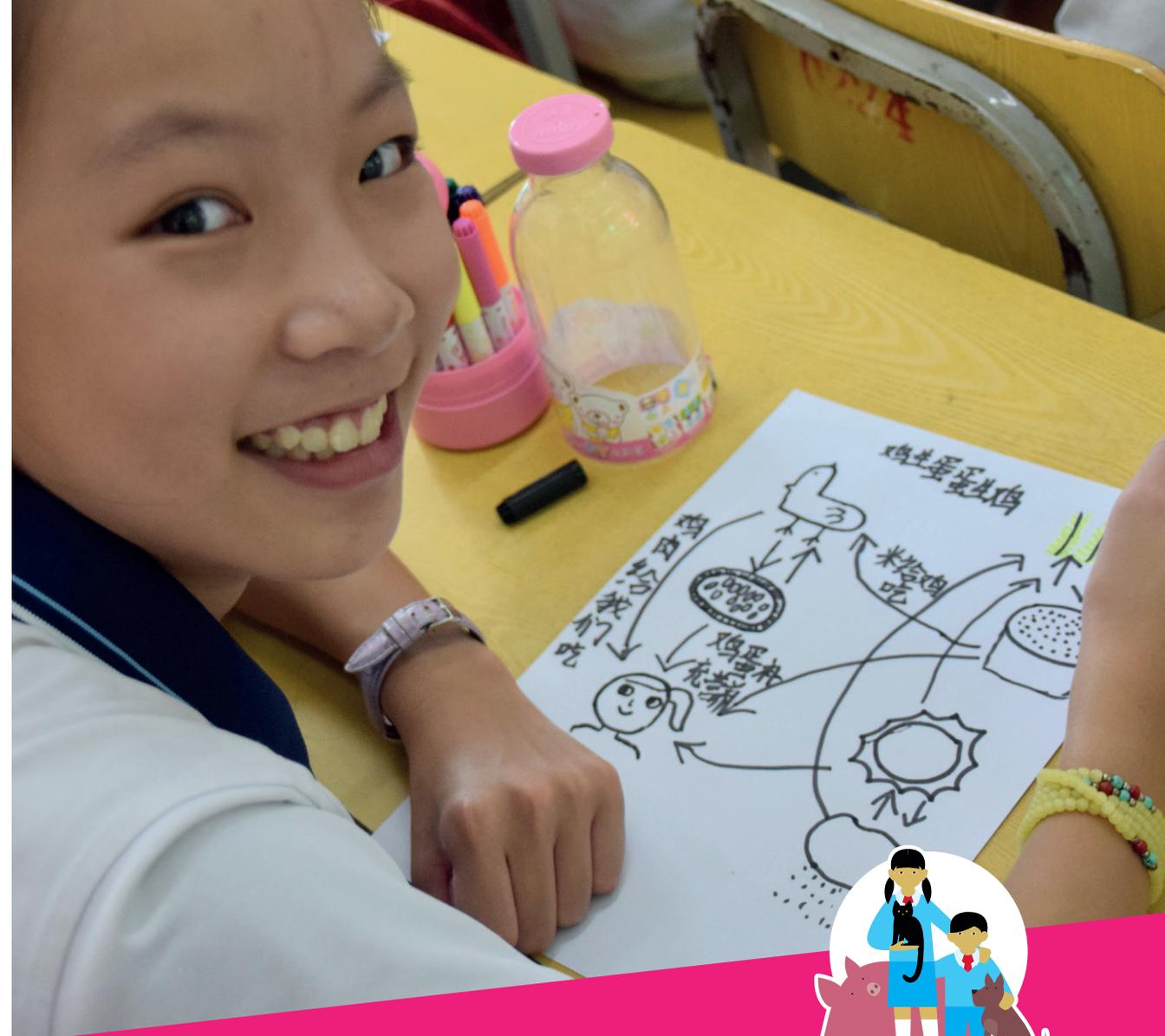
It encompasses social welfare and citizenship, animal welfare and environmental issues, and recognises the interdependence of all living things.

CFL was developed from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Four Pillars of Education, and is a foundation course in Learning to Live Together. It supports the mandatory Chinese curriculum for moral and quality education, and has been welcomed by the authorities since it was introduced in 2012.

Although created specifically for primary schools in China by ACTAsia's international staff and curriculum developer, with cultural adaptation CFL can be used as a foundation for education across the world.

In China, 61 million left-behind children live in remote rural areas without their parents, who have gone to developing urban areas for economic benefits. Left behind to fend for themselves, sometimes in the care of elderly relatives, CFL plays a key role for these children, promoting the moral guidance necessary for healthy social development.

The impact of CFL is closely monitored and independently evaluated through scientific analysis, and the results shared with the Chinese education authorities. Outcomes repeatedly show positive behaviour changes in children after a course of CFL Education.



How small children can make a big difference



Kiki goes to school in Zhuhai City, Guangdong Province. She doesn't have a pet, and is a little bit scared of dogs. When Kiki was seven years old, she discovered how fur is produced in Asia. Kiki was so upset by what she'd learnt that she asked ACTAsia for some FUR FREE badges to take to school, and share with her friends. Her teacher allowed her to explain to the class why she felt people should reject fur. Kiki asked her classmates "Go home and tell your parents they shouldn't buy fur products."

Kiki's teacher, Mrs Luo, was truly inspired by Kiki's talk, and it was agreed that she could address the whole school in assembly. It was a great success, and the school invited ACTAsia to give a presentation about animal protection. It was just the start of a long and fruitful relationship between ACTAsia and Kiki's school, which became the pilot for Caring for Life Education.

At its launch, Kiki was awarded the title 'Best Ambassador for Animals'.

Consumer Education

ACTAsia raises awareness about the exploitation of people, animals and the environment in consumer product industries.

Mass production places the highest value on cost-cutting and profits. This leads to brutality and environmental damage, especially in the production of animal-based products, such as meat, fur, or traditional Chinese medicine.

ACTAsia works to educate consumers about the industrialised cruelty behind the goods they buy, and offers alternative, more compassionate lifestyle choices.

Fur Free Life

Our first programme began in 2011 with Fur Free Life, an awareness campaign to help consumers and retailers understand the cruelties behind the fur trade.

As the representative organisation in China for the global Fur Free Alliance, we garner support from the fashion industry by recruiting fur-free Chinese suppliers. Numerous international brands have pledged to keep their fashions fur-free, including Gucci, Michael Kors, Jimmy Choo, Jack Wolfskin and Zara.

Our awareness programme in Australia emphasises the widespread use of dogs and cats for fur trim, so popular for pom-poms, hoods, boots and other accessories. We use social media to inform as many consumers as possible, also alerting them to the false labelling of real fur as faux fur, and sharing tips on how to tell the difference.

Every year, we host a Fur Free Fashion show in China to raise our international profile and put the issue of fur onto the global fashion agenda.

When the truth is enough to change minds

"When I read ACTAsia's post on social media about the origins of fur trim, I was in shock. I looked from the photo of cat and dog skins to the fur pom-pom key ring on my desk, then to the happy dog on my lap at the time. I shuddered at the resemblance between all three. The first thing I did was throw away the key ring, then share the post with all my friends and family. I can't believe now I ever bought it, but I just didn't think. Ignorance might be bliss for us, but the price paid by the animals involved is reprehensible."

A new ACTAsia supporter



Professional training

We all turn to professionals for guidance at times, trusting the knowledge of experts to help resolve our problems.

That's why ACTAsia offers training and professional development to the influential members of our communities, such as veterinarians, lawyers, doctors, social workers, teachers, journalists, NGO members and government officials. They are essential respected participants with authority in our work for a more humane society.

Veterinary training

Our veterinary training programme, Train the Trainer, helps promote fundamental standards in the treatment of companion animals, which are growing in popularity in China. We work in partnership with Vets for Compassion, Australia, to host regular workshops, where veterinarians can learn best practice. This includes the sentience of the animals they treat, proper anaesthesia techniques for surgery, current spay and neuter methods, the importance of pain management, and how vaccinations can control rabies.

We promote responsible pet ownership, ensuring veterinarians fully understand animal sentience and act as ambassadors within society. We also encourage collaboration between vets, government officials and local animal protection groups.

Professional development is also part of our Caring for Life Education programme. We train existing and student teachers to become humane educators, and under the umbrella of CFL have certified more than 1,700 teachers to-date.



How understanding can lead to respect and responsibility

"One day when I was 13 years old, I came home from school and was told that our dog had died. I burst into tears and my family was puzzled. They couldn't understand why I was so sad.

I grew up in rural China, where my family, like many others, believed a dog's purpose was to guard the home. In return, we gave her food, but very little else. When she died, my family simply bought a new one. The spirit of our nameless dog followed me, and eventually propelled me to veterinary school. Like most other students, I was taught only farm animal medicine to support a safe, abundant supply of meat. The care of companion animals in China was almost unheard of.

But things are changing now, partly because of the veterinary training programme run by ACTAsia and Vets for Compassion, Australia. We learn that it is not enough to treat physical symptoms, we have an obligation to teach an awareness that animals have needs and feelings.

While this concept may be self-evident in some societies, it is not taught in Chinese veterinary schools. I'm proud to be part of a programme that trains more and more vets, who spread ripples of compassion further and further into China."

Dr Jane Yin, Veterinarian and Advanced Trainer on ACTAsia's team of 15



Awards and achievements

2016 Chinese Government on Urbanisation: Top 10 Most Influential Organisations in China

Granted by the Chinese Government at the 8th International Summit on Chinese Urbanisation, this recognises ACTAsia's contribution to progressive and sustainable urban development.

'ACTAsia's CFL programme is encouraging empathy, compassion and responsible development. It is cultivating among children a valuable sense of concern for life, welfare and environmental protection, which is in turn influencing responsible entrepreneurship.'
Government representative

2017 Shenzhen Youth Development Foundation Awards: Best Charity Partner for Caring for Life Education

ACTAsia was awarded by the foundation for excellent cooperation on the CFL Education programme in the city of Shenzhen.

2017 Ceva: International Cat Care Award for Pei Su's overall commitment to animal welfare

This award celebrates ACTAsia's contribution and dedication to educating children, professionals and consumers on issues of animal welfare in China, by encouraging compassionate choices.

2017 Asia for Animals: Next Generation Award at the 10th AfA conference hosted by the Jane Goodall Institute, in Kathmandu Nepal

This award recognises the importance of ACTAsia's Caring for Life Education programme for creating a more compassionate and caring next generation in Asia.

2016 Ceva Animal Welfare Awards: ACTAsia as Charity Team of the Year

This award from Ceva Animal Health acknowledges ACTAsia's contribution to animal welfare and education, and the team's tireless efforts to encourage social progress in China.

2016 Dalang, Shenzhen: for the construction and innovation of Caring for Life community project

ACTAsia received this award for its CFL Education programme with youth and social workers in the Dalang district of Shenzhen.



Our plans for the future

Caring for Life Education (CFL)

- Establish a Caring for Life Academic Research & Education Institute in collaboration with international universities, to improve our curriculum, training and evaluation
- Extend our reach to more than 100,000 children in China through thousands of teachers trained by ACTAsia
- Complete six full years of Caring for Life curriculum to cover primary education
- Introduce CFL into other Asian countries, reaching even more children
- Enable on-going teacher training and research through annual scholarships, international study visits, and the first CFL International Conference in China

Consumer Education

- Conduct research into the Chinese fur industry, including the treatment of animals, the chemicals used in fur clothing and the true origins of products labelled 'faux fur'
- Promote our research through media campaigns to consumers, designers, retailers, and manufacturers to encourage compassionate and responsible trading and shopping
- Develop and promote a Fur Free curriculum for professors and design students at fashion education institutes
- Expand the international network of Fur Free Retailers to recruit more members, and introduce our Fur Free programme into other Asian countries
- Promote a compassionate lifestyle programme through traditional and social media, including cruelty-free consumer products and a compassionate diet

Professional Education

- Ensure veterinarians fully understand animal sentience and welfare, and empower them to act as ambassadors and educators within society
- Create and maintain a structured certification system for veterinary trainers, with Trial, Trainer, and Advanced Trainer levels
- Encourage vets to collaborate with government and protection groups to promote responsible pet ownership, rabies vaccines, and enlightened government regulations
- Collaborate with Vets for Compassion, Australia, universities, and guest speakers to provide at least one annual training event for Continued Professional Development
- Develop systems in partnership with academic bodies to certify professional training for teachers, social workers, veterinarians, and fashion designers





www.actasia.org · info@actasia.org

ACTAsia is registered as a non-profit organisation in the UK, the Netherlands, and Australia, with 501(c)3 in the USA. It also has offices in China, as well as several international representatives. ACTAsia was established in 2006 by an Asian sociologist and an Asian veterinarian, with the aim to help Asian cultures evolve into caring societies, respecting all forms of life.

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