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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Many of us are trying different things to offer help to the people of Sichuan after the earthquake. I believe that it might be helpful for us to have the opportunity to sit down together to share our experiences, keep each other informed of our initiatives so we can avoid duplication or potential blind alleys, and may be also develop future strategies collaboratively.

I understand that many of us are supporting emergency relief efforts, and we have also been trying our best to facilitate knowledge transfer by circulating manuals and protocols for different forms of emergency and/or crisis intervention. While such efforts are valuable, I believe the real challenge is probably longer term. Joe Ng's earlier email articulates this position very well:

"Disaster relief--whether in China or anywhere else globally--is a humanitarian effort/commitment that transcends nationalities, races, religions & politics.

In the case of the 5.12 Sichuan earthquake disaster, there are numerous fundraising initiatives underway in Toronto--all well-intentioned and hopefully will benefit the victims/survivors directly & efficiently.

The biggest challenge down the road, however, will begin when the world media's spotlight shifts away while people's compassion fatigue sets in & enthusiasm fades out. Yet, the survivors will become even more vulnerable if their post-traumatic stress & other emotional/psychological damages are not dealt with effectively.

I think it is a marvelous idea for your China Project at U of T to convene a round-table for various interested/concerned individuals to brainstorm together within a larger context & longer perspective. No doubt there are immediate crisis-intervention required to meet the basic survival needs of the millions, but--as you suggest--the Toronto community should also ponder its role in contributing towards the longer-term psycho-social recovery & community re-development in a practical & respectful manner. (Rather than starting from scratch, we may also borrow the experience & research outcome from other jurisdictions such as Hong Kong & Taiwan.)"

I am therefore inviting everyone to a round table meeting to share information, experience, and ideas. Please feel free to bring literature or a PowerPoint presentation you wish to share. You can also send the materials to us in advance. This is an open meeting, so you can feel free to invite friends and colleagues. Please RSVP with us by Monday, June 9 so that we can prepare enough food.

**Date: Thursday, June 12, 2008**

**Time: 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. (light dinner provided)**

**Place: AMNI Centre, Room 100,**

**Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work**

**246 Bloor Street West (directions detailed below)**

**RSVP: Ms Sherlyn Hu (Phone: 416-978-3270, email: [sherlyn.hu@utoronto.ca](mailto:sherlyn.hu@utoronto.ca))**

I will look forward to seeing you.

Sincerely,

Professor Ka Tat Tsang

Dean Cheryl Regehr

**Direction to the Faculty:**

The Faculty of Social Work building is right at the intersection of Bedford and Bloor Street West, right opposite to the Varsity Stadium.

We have our in-house Tim Hortons. You won't miss it.

If you're driving, there is parking right behind the Faculty Building (\$7). You can also park right next to the Stadium. There are hourly street meters on Bedford as well.

If you're taking the subway, get off St. George Station, take the Bedford Road (not St George Street) exit. As you come out of the station, our building is right on your right hand side.